MAXIMIZING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES AND RESIDENTS

Jennifer Bert

11/29/23
Introduction

- The importance of stable housing
- Pairing housing and social services
- Lessons learned and future opportunities
The importance of stable housing

Housing insecurity is a crisis.

Families that are in temporary housing or rent burdened or facing eviction are often operating in survival mode.

Income-based affordable housing aims to provide stable housing that can serve as a platform for enabling residents to thrive.
Pairing public housing with social services

Recent efforts include:

• Family Self-Sufficiency Program
• Resident Opportunity and Social Service Coordinator Program
• Choice Neighborhoods
• Envision Centers
Family Self Sufficiency Program

- Mixed success – for some families, this works as designed

- Participants receive educational/employment related services leading to higher incomes and in turn, escrow savings that they receive upon completion of the 5-year program.

- For others, the program is too rigid, or they don’t remain in public housing long enough to complete the program and benefit fully.
Limited Resources

• The Choice Neighborhood Initiative is extremely competitive, and few communities receive grants.

• ROSS program also has limited funding.

• Envision Centers had no funding attached and were dependent upon local resources.
Post – COVID Needs

• The eviction moratorium and Emergency Rental Assistance Program helped many families to remain in their homes.

• Resources are needed long before a family is at risk of eviction.

• Public Housing Authorities are reporting that their residents still need support.
Location and Communities Matter

• There are big differences in the availability of supportive programs and services.

• Large PHAs in larger cities tend to have larger staffs and better access to community resources followed by smaller cities and then smaller rural PHAs.
Importance of Community

• Building a community of residents in Public Housing Developments can be beneficial.

• Developing partnerships with community-based organizations when available is critical.

• Getting creative.
Continued Work

• Identifying any funding opportunities or new resources for residents.

• Emphasizing the importance of services in keeping residents housed.

• Emphasis on flexible resources that respond to community needs.