

Roles & Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of Link Referral Agencies and Owners

Link enhances the ability of extremely low-income (ELI) households with special needs to access and retain affordable rental housing in their communities. Florida Housing requires developers to provide a specified percentage of a Development's ELI units for special needs households receiving community-based supportive services who are referred by a designated supportive services agency in the community where the Development is located. The owner and a Referral Agency execute a Memorandum of Understanding specifying the roles and responsibilities of each party to the MOU.

Referral Agency's Responsibilities. The Referral Agency shall be responsible for providing the following services at the Development:

- a) Develop and maintain a list of eligible Special Needs Households interested in applying for reserved Link units as they become available.
- b) Be knowledgeable and informed about the specific property's rents and related costs, household income limits or restrictions, resident rights and responsibilities, the resident application process, as well as the information and documents the household will need when applying for the reserved unit. Pre-screen Special Needs Households that are suitable for tenancy based on this information.
- c) Designate a point of contact to receive notices from the Owner/Management when there is a reserved unit available.
- d) Work with the Development during the leasing and occupancy period for all Special Needs Household residents.

- e) Upon notification that a reserved unit is available, select the Special Needs Household at the top of the list waiting for that unit type.
- f) Coordinate the first contact between the selected special needs household and the Development within a timely manner.
- g) Assist in addressing appropriate application or tenancy issues or concerns by the Owner and/or household if the concerns or issues are not able to be adequately resolved or handled by the primary parties.
- h) Provide or ensure that the Owner/Management receives the Special Needs Household's required documentation pursuant to applicable compliance requirements established by the Corporation.
- i) Become knowledgeable about the specific property's process for Reasonable Accommodation under the federal Fair Housing Act and assist referred Special Needs Household with requesting a Reasonable Accommodation if applicable.

Owner's Responsibilities. The Owner (or the Management under a management agreement with the Owner) shall be responsible for the following:

- a) Holding Link units available for Special Needs Households sent to property by Referral Agency. Link Unit vacancies must be held open for referrals for, at least, a period of 30 calendar days starting from the date the unit is vacant and ready to lease. The Owner must notify the Referral Agency(s) that the Link Unit is available on or before the unit becomes vacant and ready to lease.
 - i. If a Special Needs Household referral is denied, Owner must notify the Referral Agency when that denial is made and continue to hold the Link unit available to allow the Referral Agency to make referrals within the 30-calendar day-hold period.

- b) Notifying the Referral Agency as to the disposition of applications for Link Units and consider requests for Reasonable Accommodations for those not accepted.
- c) Working with Referral Agency to coordinate the first contact with the Special Needs Working with Referral Agency to coordinate the first contact with the Special Needs Household and to initiate the application process.
- d) Designating a point person on-site at the Development to send notice of unit availability to the designated point person from the Referral Agency and to work with the Referral Agency during the leasing and occupancy period for all referred Special Needs Household residents.
 - i. Employ and maintain a communications plan between Management and Referral Agency that will accommodate staff turnover and assure continuing linkages for the duration of the compliance period.
- e) Collaborating with the Referral Agency as appropriate and applicable, to address the household's needs for assistance at application.
- f) Notifying the Referral Agency regarding anticipated and actual vacancies in Link Units.
- g) Notifying the Referral Agency, in a timely manner, of issues or concerns that may adversely affect the tenancy of the household.
- h) Contacting Referral Agency if there are any issues or concerns that have not been satisfactorily resolved with the household.

- i) Informing the Referral Agency about the property and unit characteristics and features, rents and related costs, household income limits or restrictions, resident rights and responsibilities, the resident application process, as well as the information and documents each household will need when applying for the reserved unit.

- j) Developing and maintaining a written policy and procedures information document to be given to the Referral Agency that describes the procedures to be used to help referred households apply for, get accepted, and maintain tenancy in a Link Unit. Owner shall inform the Referral Agency of any changes in these procedures. Owner shall include a section on Reasonable Accommodation under the federal Fair Housing Act in this document and the property's process for applying for a Reasonable Accommodation.