



Housing Broker Team

Norfolk, Virginia

2009

Central Intake

- In 2007, the City of Norfolk launched a Central Intake program as part of its Housing First strategy.
- The goal is to place high risk families with housing barriers* directly into permanent housing with follow-up support services.
- Families enter the program either from one of 3 family shelters or from the streets.
- Financial assistance is provided in the way of security deposit, first month's rent (and up to 3 months assistance when necessary).

*Housing barriers include histories of incarceration, domestic violence, bad credit, etc.

Funding for the Program

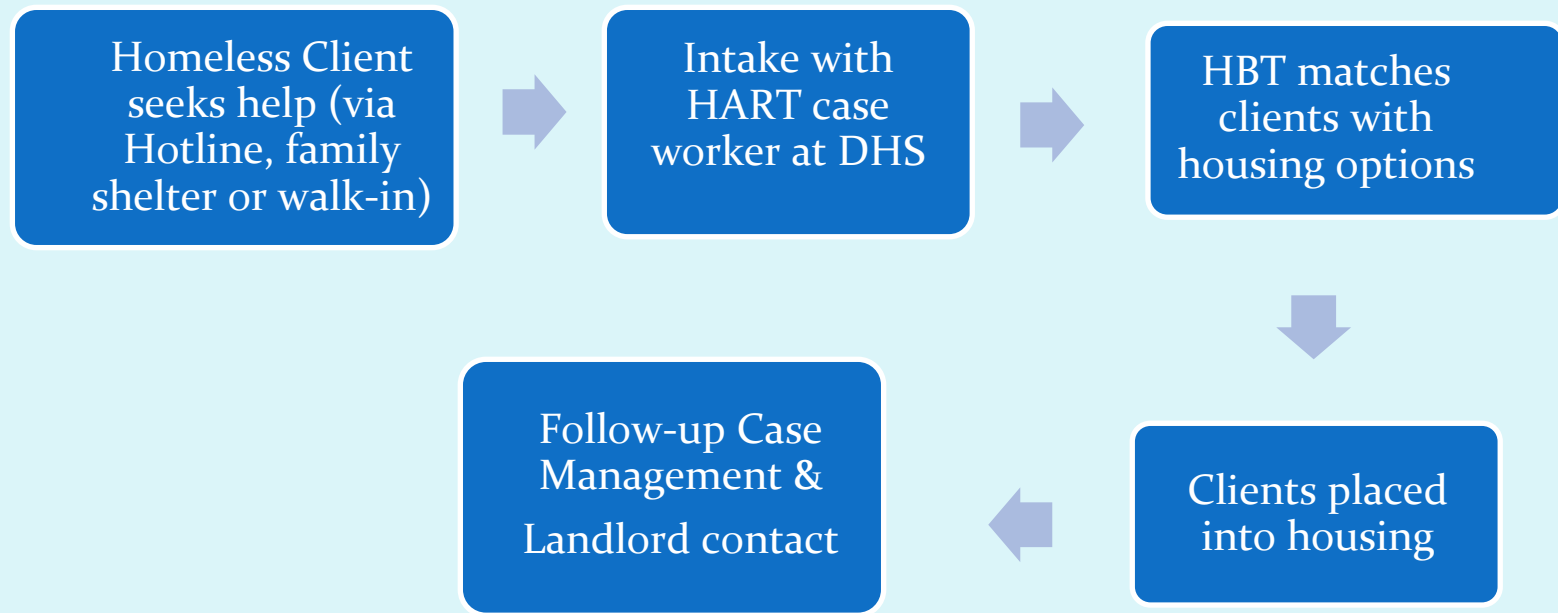
- The Central Intake program currently is funded using a mixture of funds from HOME and other City of Norfolk funds.
- Also, the Norfolk Foundation provides funding for one Housing Specialist
- Additional funds are being sought from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



The Central Intake Team

1. Hotline – manned 24 hours to receive calls
2. Family shelters – exit families into permanent housing and also let families sleep one night on the floor of the shelter if they have nowhere else to go
3. Homeless Action Response Team – provide intake and processing for families seeking assistance
4. **Housing Broker Team – recruit landlords into program**
5. Case Managers – provide follow-up support to families that have been placed

Central Intake Flow Chart



Housing Broker Team

- The Housing Broker Team is made up of two Housing Specialists that:
 - Seek and connect with landlords of affordable housing
 - Explain program benefits of Central Intake
 - Increase the City's inventory of affordable housing units available to low-income persons / families
 - Act as liaison between landlord and HART case worker, as well as after care case manager
 - Provide tenant education to improve families' understanding of their lease, rights and behaviors

Tasks of Housing Specialists

- Landlord recruitment:
 - Housing Specialists make contact with private landlords and property management companies (who may have multiple units)
 - Explain program, types of clients that need affordable housing, types of assistance from the City of Norfolk
 - Explain benefits such as regular payments, landlord contingency fund that covers damages, wrap-around support from case managers
 - Offer free advertising through Housing Connect website

Tasks of Housing Specialists

- Inspections:
 - Housing Specialists inspect every new property that is brought into the program using the checklist from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to ensure all housing meets code and is appropriate for clients

Tasks of Housing Specialists

- Linking families with housing:
 - Housing Specialists receive referral information from case workers and match suitable housing options for the family (number of bedrooms, location to schools, jobs, bus routes, etc.)
 - Clients select housing and do a walk-through with Housing Specialists for signing leases and to establish a relationship with the landlord

Tasks of Housing Specialists

- Follow up with landlords:
 - Housing Specialists -
 - Ensure that move-in issues are resolved
 - Ensure that payment is received by landlords
 - Intervene when issues arise, such as rental payment is late, tenant is demonstrating bad behaviors, unit is damaged, etc.

Other Tasks...

- Participate in monthly shelter meetings to resolve family or shelter issues for placement into housing
- Maintain regular contact with landlords for positive relationships and future connections
- Maintain regular contact with case managers once family is placed

Benefits for the City

- Since the inception of the Housing Broker Team in August 2007:
 - Over **600** families have been placed into or sustained in permanent housing
 - Over **4300** units have become available for the City to use for placing low- and very-low income clients
 - Over **\$83,000** has been saved due to waiving of late fees, double security deposits and other fees

Housing Brokerage and Case Management

- Landlord Advocacy
- Maintaining active affordable property database
- Reliable, singular information flow to and from Landlords/Property Managers
- Housing recommendations based on consistent, uniform criteria

Other Benefits

- Less homeless families in the City of Norfolk, living in motels / hotels or worse
- Families understand how to be good tenants
- Relationships are built between landlords and families
- Improved housing quality for low- and very-low income families
- Opportunities to stabilize families and link them to other programs



Thank you!

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