


**HOUSING POLICY AND SYSTEMS  
ADVOCACY FOR DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE SURVIVORS**

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in partnership with  
 **CENTER FOR SURVIVOR  
AGENCY & JUSTICE**

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**AGENDA**

- Introduction
- Researching current policy & potential solutions
- Gathering data and building a case for change
- How to craft a winning strategy




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**WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF  
EXISTING HOUSING POLICY?**

- Federal Legislation & Guidance
- Local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs)
- Local Housing Related Agencies
- Continuum of Care
- Local Planning Commissions
- State and local legislatures

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FEDERAL LEGISLATION

- THUD bills (appropriations)
  - Funds Section 8, Public Housing and a host of other programs used to house the homeless (including survivors)
- VAWA
  - Protections and opportunities for homeless and at risk survivors
- HEARTH
  - Definition of homelessness now includes domestic violence survivors fleeing for their safety (see [https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/HEARTH\\_HomelessDefinition\\_FinalRule.pdf](https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf))

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FEDERAL GUIDANCE

- HUD Rules and Recommendations
  - Includes survivors as a potential priority population (see 24 CFR 5.655(c)(1)-(c)(5), <http://1.usa.gov/12OXeCa> ) and [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental\\_assistance/phprog](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental_assistance/phprog) .
  - Includes possible preference for families <http://nlihc.org/article/office-multifamily-housing-expands-admissions-preferences-homeless-families>
- The National Plan to End Homelessness
  - Includes survivors and families as target groups for homeless re-housing (see <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=pih2013-15.pdf>)

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LOCAL PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES (PHAS)

- Annual Plans, Substantial Amendments
  - Plans must how VAWA will be implemented (see <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/vawa.cfm> and <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=vawa.pdf>)
  - Spell out tenant selection plans, priority populations, and may include specific provisions for priority housing and transfers for survivors
    - Good examples of PHAs working with survivors can be found here and used as model policies <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=dvhr-bestpr.pdf>
- General Memoranda
  - Nuts and bolts give guidance to PHA staff on how to carry out policy – this is how survivors experience the policy on the ground level and are important tools for advocacy

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### LOCAL HOUSING RELATED AGENCIES

- o Entities that disperse low income housing tax credits, capital dollars (city, state and federal – e.g. HOME)
  - o Look at Qualified Annual Plans (QAPs) for priority populations



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### CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)

- o Dictate how homeless housing money will be spent and author sections of local consolidated plans which must include DV provisions
  - Meetings are generally open to the public but not all attendees may vote
  - Find your CoC:  
<http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewCocMaps>



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### LOCAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

- o These commissions are responsible for creating Consolidated Plans
- o Generally, the CoC crafts the homeless section but the commission must follow procedures regarding comment periods and amendments and publishes the report annually
  - o Plans contain useful data in addition to spelling out priorities, programs and plans



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STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATURES

- State law created the PHA and can be amended to determine how they operate
- Cities/municipalities have the power to appoint board members and decision makers
- Fair housing laws may cover survivors of domestic violence/IPV



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**GATHERING DATA AND MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

How many homeless or at risk survivors are there?  
What do they need?  
How do you know?  
Why aren't existing policies adequate?

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WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK A SURVIVOR

- Focus groups
- Town hall meetings
- Collect outcomes from shelters and other programs



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IDENTIFYING PROMISING MODELS AND PRACTICES

- Survey your community/state or other similar regions – are others doing this well?
- Review academic research
- Conduct budget analysis to test feasibility of implementing identified solutions



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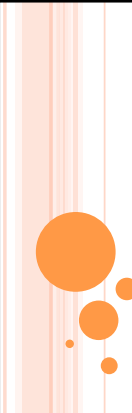
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**BUILDING A STRATEGY**  
Budget Advocacy  
Leveraging Existing Resources  
Legislative Advocacy  
Coalition Building and Strategic Partnerships  
Public Campaigns

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BUDGET ADVOCACY

- Identify committee chairs and other key decision makers to educate them on your issue
  - Present your case in a meeting using district specific facts, bring a client or a story as well as addressing big picture issues
  - Create fact sheets with established data, especially on cost savings of housing versus shelter or other emergency services.
    - Help justify why this is both morally and fiscally sound. Ask to circulate “dear colleague letters”, host press conference, tour a program
  - Send letters, organize call-ins, let leaders know MANY constituents care about this issue



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LEVERAGING EXISTING RESOURCES

- Partner with your PHA or private owners of low-income housing
- Participate in the CoC to focus attention and resources
- Comment on PHA Annual Plans, QAPs, Consolidated Plans in writing and via testimony at hearings to present recommendations
- Meet with elected and appointed officials on the local level to educate them on survivors' needs and push your proposals



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LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

- Fair housing laws
- PHA legislation amendments to require preferences
- Meet and greets with elected officials to secure sponsors or champions for your issue. Meet with legislative and policy aides for ideas on how to move forward
- Lobby days to increase pressure
  - Time with DV awareness month, budget season, election years, news stories etc. to get a "hook" and traction



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COALITION BUILDING AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- Join existing groups in your community (even if not DV/IPV specific)
  - Broad support for large issues where awareness already exists is easier to get
  - DV and housing can be a part of other platforms



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PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS

- Grass roots / community organizing approaches
- Direct Actions (marches, rallies, occupations, etc.)
- Public Education Campaigns
  - Traditional and social media
  - Use of spokespersons



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EXECUTING STRATEGY

- Decide on capacity and what fits for your organization in terms of tactics
- Think about impact relative to effort
- Identify partners, assign roles, calendar out the year's activities to ensure follow up and appropriate planning



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QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



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