

## **Eviction Diversion**

Peggy Gagen, Associate Director of Community Investment for the United Way of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region

### **Important partnership we have with our local DHS**

Eviction Diversion Project is a collaboration of the district court, DHS, non profit and philanthropic organizations.

### **Purpose:**

Enhance the integration of community systems for eviction and homeless prevention

### **Partners**

- 2-1-1 – enhance centralized intake and scheduling
- Kalamazoo County 8<sup>th</sup> District Court – provide support for DHS staff
- Department of Human Services – provide DHS staff
- Housing Resources Inc. – provide second tier financial assistance
- Legal Aid of Western Michigan – provides legal assistance & education
- United Way - Fiduciary
- Fair Housing - Chair of Steering Committee
- Landlords and attorneys – Steering Committee
- Community funders

### **Overall Goals**

- Prevent eviction and reduce homelessness
- Change eviction prevention service delivery system - responding to overwhelming need & limited resources
- Resolve eviction early at summons phase before judgment
- Reduce processing time for SER and provide coordinated access to additional public and private dollars beyond SER and tenant contributions
- Provide a centralized information, intake and screening process pre and post summons phase of the eviction

### **Criteria for Program**

- Voluntary agreement and undisputed rent owed between tenant and landlord
- Tenants must be 3 months or less behind in rent
- Housing must be sustainable

### **Unique Characteristics**

- Communication with landlords/tenants before court summons through eviction process
- DHS staff on site at court for State Emergency Relief processing and linkages to resources beyond SER
- Prevents entry of court Judgment-helping to preserve tenant credit (use Stipulation and Order for Conditional Dismissal without Prejudice)
- Community Housing Hour – weekly sessions for tenants/landlords/partners
- Information on multiple partner web sites

### **Centralized Intake/Assessment/Scheduling Provided by 2-1-1**

- Skilled staff who are knowledgeable on Eviction process and court paperwork
- Referral for housing services other than eviction diversion assistance

- Web-based scheduling DHS appointment @ Court

**Results are from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013)**

- The DHS staff processed 812 applications for State Emergency Relief (SER), resulting in 457 financial awards.
- HRI provided additional assistance to 301 of the 457 DHS awards and 59 households that did not receive DHS assistance.
- 360 Evictions were diverted consisting of 1,082 individuals: 719 adults (66%) and 363 children (34%)
- The Community Housing Information Center consisting of 10 partner agencies served 1,571 people in the weekly sessions,
- 2-1-1 provided 1,158 Eviction Diversion screenings, and responded to another 1,160 Eviction Diversion or other housing related calls.
- \$205,886 total funds were awarded to clear back rent
- \$14,187 total funds were awarded to Landlords for short subsidies (3-6 months) by HRI for housing stabilization in concert with back rent funds.
- \$1,067 was the average cost to clear back rent and divert an eviction -

**Benefits of the Eviction Diversion Program**

Eviction Diversion is a community collaborative, homeless prevention program.

Resolving an eviction reduces the potential for emergency shelter stays.

Resolving an eviction prevents unnecessary school mobility issues for children.

Linkages to community resources and referrals for families directly from 2-1-1 as well as the court location.

Landlords get paid - small business owners

Improved rental stock due to inspections

Attempts to settle back rent issues early in the judicial process reducing the overall cost.

Prevents a judgment and eviction.

Reduces parties' trips to court.

Screening and appointment scheduling is available 24-7 for the program via 2-1-1.

DHS workers are available in the court room. SER determination is expedited and communicated to tenants, landlords and all partners. DHS staff educates both tenants and landlords about resources early in the judicial process.

HRI staff is available in court for possible second tier funding in addition to SER. HRI packages financial resources from a variety of public and private dollars. This packaging is seamless to the tenant, landlord and court. If eviction is not resolvable, alternative affordable housing information is provided.

Cost for Eviction Diversion			Costs resulting from Eviction	
Cost of Program				
Staffing - both DHS and HRI		\$ 319,095.00	Cost to Landlord to Evict	\$ 3,575.00
Financial Assistance including SER		\$ 578,222.00	Avg. cost for 1 night shelter per person	\$ 49.00
Total cost for 2 years (not including in-kind)		\$ 897,317.00	Cost for family 3 for shelter for 30 days	\$ 4,410.00
cost per year		\$ 448,658.50	Average DHS cost to relocate (first months rent & security deposit)	\$ 305.00
Number Evictions Diverted 2010-2011		\$ 464.00		
Program cost per number served		\$ 1,933.87	HARA contribution to relocation	\$ 580.00
Avg. Financial Assistance to resolve		\$ 1,076.00	HARA average rent subsidy to stabilize (3-6 months subsidy)	\$ 2,120.00
			Costs does not include client contribution	
			Cost of Eviction/Shelter/Relocation/Stabilization	\$ 10,990.00
<b>Intangible Benefits</b>			<b>Cost to Community</b>	
Landlords get paid - small business owners			Families with children - disruption to education	
People connecting to DHS even if they don't qualify for assistance but pay and stay			Court costs	
Connection to additional services to aid tenants			Replacement of household goods after Eviction	
Improved rental stock due to inspections			Credit damaged due to eviction	

