

Section B Narrative

Our main goal is to decentralize the concentration of assisted families in low-income areas and gain new landlords in opportunity areas. An aggressive outreach to landlords in opportunity areas combined with the landlord incentives will increase housing choices for families giving them incentives to live in opportunity areas with better schools. The cost effectiveness will balance out as those in the work force retain their employment and thus result in lower Housing Assistance Payments in addition to funding received from Lake County, IL.

Our short-term goal is to decrease the current 67% of voucher holders living in low income areas. Ongoing efforts to increase landlord participation in opportunity areas will increase the supply of rental units for the families to choose from. They have a better chance to realize Self-Sufficiency with seeking employment, retaining employment, or gain better employment. More housing choices will be available when the new landlords in opportunity areas agree to participate in the HCV program. LCHA will try to bridge the Landlord-Tenant gap the families have had to overcome on their own.

The current Family Self-Sufficiency staff will encourage participation in the FSS program to all families including those gaining residence in the landlord incentive program. Individualized consistent contact with the families will help ensure any issues are addressed to help them succeed.

The Housing Counseling staff will continue to assist all families in areas where their needs require credit counseling or managing finances. As new landlords and families renting in opportunities area are tracked, additional support will be given and encouraged frequently.

LCHA will continuously hold landlord information meetings, both in person and online. Funding received through the County will enable an additional staff member to specialize in landlord outreach and communicate the incentives being offered. Local realtors and leasing agents will be contacted in hopes of educating them on the benefits to the Housing Choice Voucher program. An additional goal is to have many rentals to choose from in the opportunity areas.

Opportunity areas will be defined by the current standards set forth by the State of Illinois in processing tax abatements in HCV rentals. The property must be located in a qualified Township whose tax capacity exceeds 80% of the average tax capacity of Lake County. Currently there are 10 Townships that qualify, but as the tax capacity changes every year, this is re-evaluated each year. The property must also be located in a census tract where less than 10% of the residents live below the poverty level. The poverty level is determined by the most recent US Census.

New landlords to the program will be given one month's rent as an incentive to lease to a HCV family. One on one contact with staff will help maintain relationships during the leasing process.

Landlords in opportunity areas will be given one month's rent as a vacancy payment in between tenants if they rent to another HCV family.