

# Catalyst Training and Technical Assistance FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

The Florida Housing Coalition recently held SHIP workshops in Tallahassee and Ft. Lauderdale to assist individuals with special housing needs, sponsored by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation's Catalyst program. Participants considered new approaches for committing a minimum of 20 percent of their SHIP allocations to special needs assistance.

## USING TARGETED STRATEGIES

Although some SHIP offices comply with the set-aside using their primary strategies, other have adopted separate strategies targeted to special needs populations. Some strategies are designed to repair or construct group homes for individuals with developmental disabilities, wounded veterans, youth formerly in foster care, or other special needs groups.



ESCAMBIA COUNTY AND THE CITY OF PENSACOLA ARE HELPING TO FINANCE THE NEW CONSTRUCTION OF A GROUP HOME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ARC GATEWAY

## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Bill Aldinger, Florida Housing's Assistant Policy Director, discussed principles of permanent supportive housing for those with special needs. Most often, property management functions are completely separate from supportive services functions, so that participation in services is not a condition of tenancy.

## WORKSHOP EXERCISE

### CAN YOU PASS THE QUIZ?

"An elderly applicant is in good health, mobile, capable of driving and living on her own at 68 without any independent living supports— Is she a Special Needs applicant?"



PARTICIPANTS USED THE STATUTORY DEFINITION LISTED BELOW AS THEY IDENTIFIED APPLICANTS WHO ARE (AND ARE NOT) SPECIAL NEEDS.

"A rehab applicant has a letter from the local Center for Independent Living offering him independent living supports. But his rehab will not include accessibility-related renovations. Special Needs or not?"

**ANSWERS:** 1. She is not. Elderly individuals are not mentioned in the special needs definition. However, a frail elderly person is special needs if he or she has a disabling condition and receives independent living supports. 2. Definitely special needs—any type of SHIP assistance received counts towards the 20% set-aside.

**DEFINITION:** Persons with Special Needs defined in s.420.0004, Florida Statutes

- An adult person requiring independent living services in order to maintain housing or develop independent living skills and who has a disabling condition 420.0004(7) FL Statutes
- A young adult formerly in foster care who is eligible for services under s. 409.1451(5);
- A survivor of domestic violence as defined in s. 741.28; or
- A person receiving benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program or from veterans' disability benefits.



**BILL NOTED THAT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS FINANCED AND MADE AFFORDABLE USING A NUMBER OF SUBSIDIES, INCLUDING SHIP AS WELL AS HOME, SAIL, HOUSING CREDITS AND RFAS FROM FLORIDA HOUSING.**



**SHERYL SOUKUP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS OF FLORIDA (ROOF) DISCUSSED THE SUPPORT SERVICES RECEIVED BY INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES THAT HELP THEM TO LIVE INTEGRATED AND INDEPENDENTLY IN THE COMMUNITY.**



**BROWARD HOUSING SOLUTIONS OFFERS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE AND FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.**

## HOMELESS

Although “homeless” is technically not included in the special needs definition, if a person who is experiencing homelessness has a disabling condition or mental illness, is a survivor of domestic violence, or meets some other criterion in the definition, homeless can also be served under the special needs set-aside. Several participants expressed interest in the SHIP Rapid Rehousing strategy recently started in West Palm Beach, intended to assist 25 households in the coming months. Other presenters discussed permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals offered by Carrfour, Boley Centers, and other Florida developers.



**CARRFOUR**



**BOLEY DUVAL PARK**

## PARTNERSHIP & LEVERAGING

Community partners use SHIP to leverage other resources



**CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL) PRESENTERS DISCUSSED HOW THEY CONTRACT WITH THEIR LOCAL SHIP OFFICES TO PROVIDE CLIENTS WITH BARRIER REMOVAL AND HOME REPAIR. MANY CILS BUILD RAMPS WITH VOLUNTEER LABOR, CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY, AND DONATED OR REDUCED PRICE MATERIALS. THESE MAY BE COUNTED AS LEVERAGE ON THE SHIP ANNUAL REPORT, WHEN THEY ARE COMBINED WITH SHIP FUNDED REPAIRS TO A HOUSE. [HNN](#)**