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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
AND FOREWORD



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES THROUGH RESIDENT SERVICES: A PRACTITIONER'S MANUAL

Volume One: Implementing a Basic Resident Services Program
Revised and Expanded Edition

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Community-based resident services managers and coordinators continue to partner with us and share their real-world knowledge, graciously allowing us to disseminate strategies that define, enhance and further develop 'best practices' in the field of resident services programming. We are grateful to these partners and their staff members who supported our efforts. They include Jennifer Endo, Jennifer Cavaliere and Mary Zambrano of AHC Inc., Arlington, VA; Carol Carter, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA; Rachel Ginsberg of the Columbus Housing Partnership, Inc., Columbus, OH; Pamela Lyons and Christopher Goett of the Community Preservation and Development Corporation, Washington, DC; John Garcia and Roxanna Chowdhry of Fordham Bedford Children's Services, Bronx, NY; Joy Gendzel and Wesley Walsman of Jubilee Housing, Washington DC; Donna Brown of Marshall Heights Community Development Center, Washington, DC; Ivy Taylor, Merced Housing Texas, San Antonio, TX; Sulema Middleton-Stewart and Gloria Castro of the Montgomery Housing Partnership, Silver Spring, MD; Margaux Morisseau, NeighborWorks, Blackstone River Valley, RI; Christopher Bentivegna, NHP Foundation, Gulf-Coast Properties, Westwego, LA; Tammy Crumpton, Providence Community Housing, New Orleans, LA; Debbie Lowder and Hazel Schnider of REACH CDC, Portland, OR; Ed Raskin, Rural Opportunities Inc., Rochester, NY.

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FOREWORD

Sometimes affordable housing alone is not enough for low-income people to achieve housing stability and prevent homelessness or to enable families and individuals to move up and out of poverty. It takes an extra hand to help most disadvantaged adults attain quality education or a good job and career advancement. They need extra help to access quality health services or effective education programs to help their children succeed in school. Extra encouragement or coaching may be required to enable people to grow to reach their potential.

The combination of quality services and the affordable housing platform has enormous potential to create a brighter future for tens of thousands of low-income families. But the nation's complex service delivery system is daunting to navigate for most low-income, single-headed families working long hours for low pay. As the nonprofit affordable housing industry has grown in this country to manage an estimated 1.3 million units of multifamily housing, the movement to provide resident services to low-income residents has also grown. About one-third of nonprofit-managed housing was estimated to be supplemented with resident services, in a 2005 industry census by the former National Congress for Community Economic Development.

Relative to the billions the nation spends on affordable housing and social services, the investment needed to ensure service coordination in all affordable housing is modest. Yet these modest, asset-building investments will pay back the nation, communities and families in meaningful returns over a lifetime.

It is critical for the industry to track family and property outcomes so the industry can move beyond anecdotal evidence of positive outcomes. Toward that end, Enterprise, NeighborWorks and service coordinators in our respective nonprofit developer networks have collaborated with the Pangea Foundation to develop low-cost, web-based software, FamilyMetrics, described in this manual.

Resident services in affordable family housing have grown in recent years as a means to provide a true avenue out of poverty and a path for low-income families to overcome the barriers that prevent them from improving their life prospects. Resident services coordinators connect housing residents to quality services in the community, fill service gaps with direct services on-site and encourage residents to succeed in housing stability and moving toward financial self sufficiency. In addition to positive outcomes for families like better jobs, increased income, increased savings, better credit scores and qualifying for home mortgages, properties can experience savings from resident services. Recent data reviews have shown that properties with resident services have lower bad debts, legal fees and vacancy losses.

But there remains a strong need for sharing best practices with the field. Toward that end, since 2004, we have collaborated to provide training, print and

Internet-based information in partnership with NeighborWorks America, The Housing Partnership Network, The Community Builders, Stewards for Affordable Housing for the Future, the American Association of Service Coordinators, Mercy Housing, REACH CDC and the other members of the National Resident Services Collaborative.

Enterprise developed a practitioner's manual first published in 2006. Based on our experiences working with practitioners in the field over the past three years, we have significantly revised the practitioner's manual. We added information on government funding of resident services; eviction prevention through better communication and procedures between resident services and property management staffs; best practices in developing services partnerships; how to get the best workforce services for residents from one-stop career centers; free tax preparation services to help people access the Earned Income Tax Credit; and best practices in after-school programs. In addition, we have added entire new sections on how to work with victims of domestic violence, helping residents be "green" and engaging residents in health and wellness programs.

The positive impact of social services on people's lives has been widely studied and documented: Early childhood education and after-school programs improve school success and likelihood of graduation. Attainment of high school diplomas and GEDs can mean additional lifetime earnings of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Job readiness, skills training and job placement services help wage earners get better paying jobs with benefits. And financial literacy and savings support help families prepare for self-sufficiency and market rental housing or homeownership.

But the key for success for affordable housing residents is site-based, knowledgeable staff to help people take advantage of these asset-building services. We hope this revised manual will help practitioners facilitate the best possible outcomes for their residents.