

CEDAR HILL APARTMENTS
RESIDENT SELECTION PLAN

Definitions:

Owner:	Cedar Hill Associates, L.P. (HOME INC., General Partner), represented by Managing Agent
Service Provider:	Columbus House, Inc.
Managing Agent:	HOME INC.
S+C:	Shelter Plus Care
CMHC:	CT Mental Health Center
DMH:	CT Department of Mental Health
CHFA:	CT Housing Finance Authority
DECD:	CT Department of Economic and Community Development

Summary Project Description:

Cedar Hill Apartments is a 25-unit apartment building; all of the apartments are studios. 18 of the units are set aside for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Of these, 13 are set aside for people with disabilities. All 13 of these units have project-based Shelter Plus Care rent subsidies. The building also features a resident lounge, laundry and vending areas, a meeting space, two offices for service providers, and a property manager's office. Each resident (as well as the service professionals) will have one parking space.

Phase I: Identification of Potential Residents

1. The Managing Agent will begin the marketing process for all units at least 90 days before initial occupancy; all notices will state an application deadline such that the resident selection process will be completed at least 30 days before occupancy. (A) Marketing will be done according to the Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan submitted in the CHFA/DECD financing application. This plan includes outreach to at least one newspaper targeting the minority population. All display advertisements will include the Fair Housing logo.
2. Reports will be filed with DECD during the marketing phase as required. This includes reports on the racial, gender and disability status of the applicant pool.
3. The Service Provider will engage in outreach efforts in the community (S, R) to make known vacancies to persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless or who have special needs. The Service Provider will secure assistance from other organizations in identifying such individuals.
4. The Service Provider will maintain a referral list of individuals who are homeless or at risk who are interested in applying for the housing. The Service Provider will indicate on the referral list whether the individual is homeless or at risk and whether the individual has an identified special need which makes the potential resident eligible for housing at Cedar Hill Apartments. (R) The Service Provider will also

note whether the individual has been determined eligible for S+C (see #4). The Service Provider will provide the referral list to the Managing Agent upon request. (R)

- a. The Service Provider will accept referrals from the Managing Agent at any time for inclusion on the referral list if the Service Provider determines that the individuals qualify for the list.(R)
 - b. The Service Provider will create a confidential file for each individual on its referral list which includes an intake assessment form and any supporting documentation. (R)
5. For S+C units, outreach workers will identify potential residents who are homeless and disabled, complete S+C screening forms with them, and submit forms to CMHC. (S) If the individual is determined eligible for S+C by CMHC, the application will be forwarded to DMH for review; if DMH approves the individual for S+C, the person gets a lease application from the Service Provider. The Service Provider will place the individual on its referral list.
 6. If marketing and outreach efforts do not generate a sufficient number of interested persons for the apartments, the Managing Agent will initiate additional marketing efforts by placing appropriate advertisements in the local newspapers and sending flyers to community groups as per the marketing plan. Such marketing shall include the name and telephone number of the rental office; the approximate date the units will be available; and the size of the units available. The advertisements will request that interested individuals contact the rental office. (L)

Phase 2: Establishing the Application List

1. All persons interested in applying for residency will be mailed an application package by the Managing Agent upon request or they can pick up an application package at the rental office or at agencies provided with them.(L) The Service Provider will provide individuals on its referral list with an application package.
2. The lease application will consist of (i) a form asking about current and previous living situations, income and assets, household size, address where applicant can be reached, and other pertinent information, and (ii) verification forms for applicant to execute for references and release of verification information. Applicants will indicate if they require a wheelchair accessible unit or if they qualify for any marketing preferences approved by the State of Connecticut. Applicants will also provide an address and phone number where they can be reached. In the case of a homeless individual, this may be the location of a shelter, a case worker, or the Service Provider.
3. Applicants who need help completing the application will be provided assistance by the Managing Agent, or by the Service Provider if the Service Provider is the referral source. (A)
4. All applications are submitted to the Managing Agent via the rental office. Every lease application received by the Managing Agent will be immediately stamped with the date and time. The applicant will receive a receipt with date and time. The applicant is informed upon submission of the application that it is his/her own responsibility to inform the Managing Agent of changes of address and/or telephone number. (L)
5. The Managing Agent will establish a confidential file for each applicant.

Phase 3: Ordering of Applications

1. Ordering for Set-Asides

- a. All applications will be categorized by the Managing Agent as follows:
 - 1. Individual is not on Service Provider's referral list and has not been determined eligible to receive a S+C subsidy.
 - 2. Individual has been determined eligible for S+C.
 - 3. Individual is on Service Provider's referral list as homeless or at risk but has not been determined eligible for S+C.
 - 4. Individual is on Service Provider's referral list as homeless or at risk and having an identified special need, but has not been determined eligible for S+C.
- b. Applications will then be separated by code into four application lists and ordered within each list by the date and time the application was received prior to application processing.

2. Ordering for State Preferences

- a. The goal of the State preferences in this project is to ensure that those with the most urgent housing needs will be given opportunity to be housed while maintaining economic integration of the housing.
- b. State preferences will not apply in the case of units set-aside for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including S+C units. Applicants will be drawn from these set-aside lists on the basis of chronological order.
- c. The Managing Agent will inform all applicants on the remaining application list of the availability of the State preferences, and will give all applicants on this list an opportunity to show that they qualify for a preference. Applicants may claim a State preference at any time while they are on the waiting lists. Applicants claiming a State preference must certify to the Managing Agent that they qualify for such preferred status. The Managing Agent will accept this certification unless it verifies that the applicant is not qualified for the preferred status.
- d. Preference priority numbers will be assigned to each applicant on the application list. Each applications will be filed according to the total number of preference points for which the applicant is eligible. In the case where two or more State preference applicants are weighted identically, the applications will then be filed according to the order in which the applications are received.
- e. Calculation of points: The applicant will receive the full point score or none. Points determined as follows:

Maximum 25 points:

Current housing (if any) has:

- been condemned or has verified serious housing code violations (25 points)
- inadequate heating, plumbing or cooking facilities (20 points)

Maximum 25 points:

Applicant lives in:

- documented physically or emotionally abusive situation (25 points)
- overcrowded conditions in own housing unit (e.g. 1.5 or more persons per room) (15 points)

Maximum 15 points:

Payment for current rent or housing is:

- more than 50% of income (15 points)
- Between 31% and 50% of income (10 points)

Maximum 10 points:

Applicant is:

- least likely to apply (10 points)
- local resident (10 points)

- f. Applicants will not receive preference points by virtue of being homeless. However, if an individual is homeless, the applicant will have the option of applying for a set-aside unit. If the applicant wishes to apply for a set-aside unit, the Managing Agent will refer the individual to the Service Provider for inclusion on the Service Provider's referral list.

Phase 4: Application Processing

1. An application fee of \$0 will be collected.
2. Eligibility requirements:
 - a. *Income:* the annual income of the applicant must be less than or equal to 60% of median area gross income adjusted for family size, as published by HUD.
 - b. *Household/Unit Size Limitations:* The project consists of 25 efficiency units, several of which contain special features for thee physically disabled. All of the units are designed for occupancy by one person.
 - c. *Set-Aside Units:* 18 of the project units are set-aside for occupancy by persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Of these units, 13 are set aside for occupancy by persons determined eligible for S+C. To be considered for a set-aside unit, an applicant must be referred by the Service Provider. This referral is evidence of eligibility for the set aside units. (R) The fact that an applicant is eligible for a set-aside unit does not in itself mean that the applicant is acceptable and will be a suitable resident. In determining whether the applicant will be selected, the Managing Agent will use the criteria described in Section 5.
3. Applicants will be processed in the order that they appear in the waiting lists. Each application will be reviewed for completeness. Applicant must provide all required information on application, including signatures authorizing release of verification information. (L) Applicants will be notified by mail once of any incomplete items.

4. For every application received, the following actions will be taken:
 - a. A credit report will be ordered;
 - b. A criminal background check will be ordered;
 - c. The requests for verification of income, landlord history, personal references, etc. will be mailed.
 - d. All application and verification material will go into the applicant's confidential file will be maintained for at least five years by the Managing Agent. (A)

5. The Managing Agent will review the application, verify income and determine eligibility and appropriateness for size and types of units available for each household. If the applicant meets eligibility requirements and when the application is substantially complete, the person will be set up for the next available interview time.

6. Interviews.
 - a. When possible, interviews will be scheduled for at least 20% more individuals than the number of units available under each waiting list.
 - b. The Managing Agent will try to contact applicant at least three times by telephone to schedule the interview, and once by certified mail if unsuccessful by telephone. If referred by the Service Provider, the Managing Agent will try to contact the applicant through the Service Provider to schedule the interview. If the applicant does not respond within five business days of the date the certified letter was mailed, the individual will be placed in the inactive file. Until the applicant responds, his/her application will be placed in the inactive file, and the applicant's position on the application list will drop behind those who can be processed in the interim.
 - c. Should an appointment be made but the applicant fail to attend, the Managing Agent will attempt to contact the applicant once more. If there is no response after the second attempt, the applicant's name will be stricken from the list and considered inactive.

- d. The interview will be conducted by the Managing Agent. The Service Provider may participate in the interview in order to orient the applicant to the available service program. The Service Provider may not provide information to the Managing Agent that would violate the confidentiality of the applicant or lead to discrimination on the basis of disability. However, the Service Provider can serve as a reference for the applicant if the applicant provides a written release.
- e. The interview will be used for purposes of verifying and clarifying information in the application, to familiarize the applicant with the project, and to explore the ability and willingness of the applicant to meet financial commitments and to assume the other responsibilities of tenancy. At the interview, the following items will be reviewed:
 - i. Eligibility requirements and reasons for rejection.
 - ii. Information on application and verification forms. Applicant will be given an opportunity to explain negative credit history, history of rental non-payment, behavioral history, and any discrepancies between information they reported and the verified information. (A)
 - iii. Recertification policies and the applicant's responsibility to inform Managing Agent of changes in income and household composition. (L)
 - iv. House rules and policies. (L)
 - v. Supportive services to be offered at the project.
 - vi. Any other questions the applicant may have.
- 7. Home Visits. Unless the applicant is homeless or living outside the geographic area, the Managing Agent will schedule a home visit to assess housekeeping standards (see Selection Criteria, Phase 5). The home visit will be the last step in the approval of the applicant. All other steps in the approval process will be completed prior to the home visit. (L)
- 8. The interviewer will complete an interview form, recording applicant explanations and the housekeeping assessment. This form will be added to the applicant's confidential file. (L)

Phase 5: Selection and rejection

1. In determining whether the applicant will be selected, the Managing Agent will consider the various criteria, along with any related explanation offered by the applicant concerning the facts involved, including changes in the circumstances and extenuating circumstances. Applicants may be rejected based upon documentary verification of any of the following:
 - a. The applicant has knowingly falsified information in the application or refuses to provide the Managing Agent with information necessary to complete the application. (A)(L)
 - b. The applicant displays an insufficient ability to pay rent in a timely manner.
 - i. For persons on the S+C application list, the Managing Agent will consider the presence of the subsidy to be evidence of the ability of the applicant to meet the subsidy portion of the rent.
 - ii. The Managing Agent will consider whether the applicant has a satisfactory history of meeting financial obligations, including timely payment of rent within the past 12 months, outstanding judgments or a history of late payment of bills. Consideration will be given to reasonable justification for nonpayment, such as substandard housing, loss of a job, etc. (A). If the Managing Agent rejects an applicant based upon the credit report, the applicant will be provided with the cause for rejection and given the name of the credit bureau which performed the credit check. Applicants will also be given the opportunity to have corrections made to the credit report. (L)
 - iii. The Managing Agent will consider special circumstances in which credit has not been established (homelessness, income, age, marital status, etc.). Lack of credit history will not cause an applicant to be rejected. The Managing Agent may review the applicant's history of making other kinds of regular payments, such as utility, telephone or cable charges, or layaways;
 - iv. The Managing Agent will consider whether the applicant demonstrates financial ability to pay the monthly contribution toward the rent of the unit. This means that the total of the applicant's monthly contribution plus other long term obligations (payment more than 12 months), should be less than fifty five percent of his/her monthly gross income. Income ratios higher than 55 percent will not automatically disqualify an applicant. The ratios must be considered in the context of the applicant's credit and employment history, potential for increases in income, etc. The Managing Agent's decision on the credit

worthiness of the applicant will be based upon a determination of whether the applicant, considering all relevant factors including the income-to-debt ratio, is capable and willing to pay rent on the apartment leased. (L)

- c. The applicant displays an insufficient ability to care for and avoid damaging the apartment and respect the rights of others
 - i. An applicant will not be selected if he/she or any member of the applicant's household has a recent history of physical violence to persons or property. Persons who have a history of disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, living habits at prior residences or criminal activity which could adversely affect the health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of other residents will not be selected for occupancy. The Managing Agent will consider all circumstances regarding this type of activity as well as the period during which it occurred.
 - ii. The Managing Agent will verify and document the previous two years of housing for each applicant. This includes all types of living situations. (L)
 - iii. Gross unsanitary and hazardous housekeeping will be grounds for rejection. This category is not intended to exclude households whose housekeeping is only superficially unclean or disorderly, if such conditions do not appear to affect the health, safety and comfortable possession of other residents. A home visit, as described in Phase 4, will be conducted to assess housekeeping standards.

2. Acceptance/Rejection procedures.

- a. Accepted applicants will be given the next available vacancy for which they qualify.
- b. If the next qualified applicant requires a wheelchair accessible unit, and the vacant unit is not accessible, and an accessible unit is currently occupied by a resident who does not require its accessible features, then the resident in the accessible unit will be moved, at the Managing Agent's expense, to the non-accessible vacant unit, provided the vacant unit is the same bedroom size as the accessible unit.
- c. S+C applicants: If the Managing Agent has questions or concerns regarding the ability of an applicant on the S+C application list to meet screening criteria, the Managing Agent will promptly notify the applicant prior to applicant's rejection of the concerns and of the applicant's right to explain mitigating circumstances. The Managing Agent will seek the assistance of the Service Provider in bringing the concerns to the applicant. If the applicant wishes to explain mitigating circumstances and to seek reasonable accommodation, but wishes the assistance of the Service Provider and/or the

S+C committee in doing so, the applicant must sign a release form to enable confidential matters to be discussed.

- d. All applicants deemed ineligible, for whatever reason(s), will be notified in writing before the final selection. The notice will state the reason(s) for rejection, will advise the applicant of their right to appeal within ten days of rejection, and will advise that an appeal should be made immediately to assure their return to the applicant pool if they prevail.(A) The letter shall also inform the applicant that responding to the notice does not preclude the applicant from other avenues available if he/she believes he/she is being discriminated against on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age or handicap.(L) If the letter is written to Shelter Plus Care applicant, a copy of the letter will be sent to the local Shelter Plus Care coordinator.
- e. If the applicant appeals, the Managing Agent will choose an impartial hearing officer who will issue a written opinion within five days of the hearing. All appeals will be heard within five business days of the request.(A)
- f. If the hearing officer finds in favor of the applicant, the applicant will be placed in a suitable vacant unit if available. If no such unit is available, he/she will be placed in the next available unit. (A)
- g. Applicants still aggrieved will be informed by the Managing Agent of their right to appeal the decision of the hearing officer to the Affirmative Action office of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. Such appeal must be made in writing and brought within 10 days of the adverse decision. (A)
- h. The Managing Agent will keep the following materials on file for at least 3 years: 1) application; 2) initial rejection notice; 3) any applicant reply; 4) Managing Agent's response; and 5) all interview and verified information on which the rejection was based.
- i. The Managing Agent, in conjunction with the Service Provider, will conduct a residency training program for all selected residents prior to occupancy.

Phase 6: Post-Initial Occupancy

1. Changes in Family Size for Current Residents

If the size of a household already residing at the building increases, the Managing Agent and Service Provider will assist the resident in locating alternative housing outside of the project.

2. Contacting persons on the waiting list after initial rent-up
 - a. When a unit becomes available after initial rent-up, the application with the top priority number within the waiting list for that unit type and size will be selected for an interview. The Managing Agent will attempt to make contact with the individual by telephone at least three (3) times during the next 48 hour period. If the contact cannot be made by telephone, a certified letter will be sent to the individual requesting a date and time for the interview. If the individual is on the Service Provider's referral list, the Service Provider will assist the Managing Agent in making contact with the applicant. If contact cannot be made by telephone, a certified letter will be sent to the individual requesting a date and time for the interview. If the Managing Agent does not receive a response to the certified letter within five (5) business days from the date the letter was mailed, the individual will forfeit the opportunity to apply for the available unit but will remain at the top of the waiting list. (L)
 - b. If the contacted person refuses a unit, s/he will remain at the top of the waiting list; however, a letter will be immediately sent informing him/her that after the second refusal, his/her name will be removed from the waiting list and placed in the inactive file. (L)
 - c. When an interview is scheduled but the applicant fails to attend, the Managing Agent will attempt to contact the applicant by telephone. If there is no contact after three (3) attempts within 48 hours, the applicant's application will be placed in the inactive file. If the Managing Agent contacts the applicant, another appointment will be scheduled, if the applicant has good cause such as illness or accident for failure to keep the appointment. If the applicant again fails to attend the interview, the applicant's application will be placed in the inactive file. (L)

Source notes:

(S)=Shelter Plus Care requirement

(A)=Affirmative Fair Housing Regulation requirement

(R)=Referral Protocol Agreement requirement

(L)=Lakefront SRO Corporation, Chicago

1.1146

