



## MOVING ON PROGRAM PROFILE: ATLANTA, GA

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### Background and Program Description:

In 2014, the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) worked with the Bloomberg Innovation Delivery Team to develop the FLOW pilot program to allow tenants in supportive housing who have stabilized and are no longer in need of intensive supports to transition to more independent housing. This project was born out of conversations within the Atlanta Continuum of Care (CoC) around the need to quickly and creatively expand supportive housing capacity in the community to meet the need. AHA Board of Directors initially approved 50 vouchers for the pilot in 2014 with the possibility of more commitments contingent on success of the program. The United Way of Greater Atlanta is coordinating the program, working with housing providers to screen and approve tenants that are referred to the FLOW program and connecting them with housing vouchers through AHA. Referrals for FLOW come from three supportive housing providers – CaringWorks, Nicholas House and City of Refuge.

To date, the project has helped between 35 – 40 formerly homeless tenants move on to independent housing. In addition to permanent supportive housing tenants, the community realized the benefit of using FLOW to fill another major housing gap in the community - rental supports for individuals who are homeless and transitioning out of addiction treatment facilities. As a result of HUD's recent policy changes around the definition of homeless, individuals moving out of transitional housing programs no longer qualify for CoC funded homeless programs – including rapid re-housing and supportive housing. To rectify this gap and prevent individuals from returning to homelessness after treatment, the AHA approved the use of these vouchers for individuals graduating from CaringWorks' transitional recovery housing program.

### Identification and Assessment Process

Individuals are identified by case managers and counselors that are working directly with clients in the housing or treatment programs. Clients need to meet three basic criteria in order to be qualify for the program: 1) a good rental history of on-time payments, 2) evidence of “good neighbor” behavior without any complaints or property management conflicts, and 3) low service needs. Once individuals are identified, case managers refer them to the United Way for a brief interview and screening process to ensure they meet the criteria for receiving a housing voucher. Once approved, clients are brought back for a second meeting with United Way to complete the paperwork required for receiving a voucher. At that point tenants can begin working with their case managers to identify housing and begin the transition process.

### Initiative Partners

Atlanta Housing Authority  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
CaringWorks, Inc.  
City of Refuge  
Nicholas House

## **Funding Sources**

AHA is funding 50 Housing Choice Vouchers dedicated to the pilot and provided \$50,000 in grant funding to the United Way of Greater Atlanta for coordinating services. Currently there are no service dollars attached to this initiative for housing providers. While providers do incur additional service costs related to moving tenants into independent housing, they have found this program to be highly beneficial for helping their organizations, and the community as a whole, achieve their mission of ending homelessness in Atlanta.

## **Housing Resources**

Atlanta Housing Authority - \$500,000 (50 vouchers) for the original pilot. AHA may commit additional vouchers to the program if the pilot is successful.

## **Services**

Services are individualized to meet the unique needs of tenants and vary in scope and duration depending on the existing service capacity of the housing provider. CaringWorks, the largest housing provider participating in the initiative, is a Medicaid approved Core provider of mental health and addiction services. Tenants living in supportive housing operated by CaringWorks who receive Medicaid-reimbursed case management and clinical services can continue to receive these services even after they transition out of supportive housing for as long as they need. In most cases, given the nature of referrals to FLOW, tenants are relatively stable and require only light to moderate-touch services after transitioning to independent housing. CaringWorks also uses peer support specialists to provide light touch services to FLOW participants after transitioning to more independent living.

## **Backfilling Supportive Housing Units**

As supportive housing and transitional housing tenants move to more independent housing through FLOW, housing providers coordinate with Atlanta's Coordinated Entry System to backfill vacated units with high-need chronically homeless individuals.

## **Contact Information**

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