



# TEN THINGS TO DO NOW TO PREVENT FAMILY EVICTIONS



30 Years of Supportive  
Housing Solutions

***This brief provides ten steps that child welfare and family support leaders and their communities can take to advance a family eviction prevention plan. This plan aligns with broader shifts in child welfare policy and practice to build community-based preventative supports that strengthen families and keep children safe.***

Safe, stable, affordable housing is essential to the health and well-being of families from all walks of life. Children and youth who have a reliable place to call home are more likely to flourish in their development and be healthy later in life. Conversely, housing instability caused by any reason, including eviction, can negatively impact a family's health and well-being and have detrimental effects on childhood development.

**Leaders in the child welfare and family support sectors do not need expertise in housing solutions or knowledge of housing resources for the families that come to their attention. Instead, a multi-sector strategy can support these leaders and help public agencies and providers augment their work with families facing multiple challenges.**

Child welfare agencies make strong cross-sector partners with connections to families and resources. They can assess risks and needs, assist in crisis response, provide compassionate family counselors and help families navigate and connect to other community resources. The key to successful cross-sector partnerships is streamlining coordination to fill gaps, avoid duplicating services, and mitigate trauma. Supporting housing stability and preventing evictions is foundational to strengthening families and helping them to thrive. Here are ten things communities are doing now to prevent family evictions.



# 1

## Assess what eviction prevention looks like in your community today

- Determine the status of eviction moratoriums or other local mandates. Federal, state and local moratoriums and mandates are rapidly changing. Communities are working quickly to put protections in place and assemble collaborations and resources.
- Connect with current legal aid, tenant advocacy organizations, and courts to assess existing efforts. Understand and identify the partners involved, their roles, available resources, gaps in the system, and determine the need for additional resources. Find rental assistance programs for your location via the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#).
- Expand expertise and voices within eviction prevention planning efforts. Cast a wide net of potential partners with expertise and/or an ‘interest at stake’ in the eviction crisis. Develop a plan to bring diverse voices into active participation, and secure ‘a seat at the table.’

# 2

## Identify existing and new resources that can be coordinated to address a comprehensive eviction strategy

- The potential for new resources exists with community partners that are currently expanding efforts to address the repercussions resulting from evictions. Obvious partners are housing and Continuum of Care homelessness assistance organizations, community action agencies, legal assistance and the justice system. New partners include: property owners’ associations, health systems, schools, family resource centers, parent councils and child welfare agencies. [Ensuring families have access to high quality legal representation can improve eviction outcomes.](#)
- Examine the costs associated with an eviction to identify where an infusion or redeployment of financial resources will aid the prevention effort. Explore how to combine funding to complement efforts and fill gaps based on eligibility criteria.
- The [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) and the previous CARES Act of 2020 include housing and service funding allocated to state and local communities so they can address housing instability, services, rental assistance, and housing quality.
- Public Benefits such as [TANF](#), emergency/general assistance – state/county human/social services agencies may be available or have the flexibility to support housing stability or guide partners through grants or sub-contracts that can provide vital supports to tenants facing eviction.

# 3

## Build and strengthen partnerships in your eviction prevention program

- Educate partners on the true costs of evictions on families, property owners and the broad community, and how evictions impact each organization's mission and clients. Task each organization with identifying the specific role they can contribute to a comprehensive program and collectively explore eligibility criteria to determine how to blend resources to address gaps.
- Build on trusted relationships to share information. Eviction is not just about the investment of financial resources. Community partners like child welfare case managers with trusted family access play a key role in identifying risks and connecting families to available resources.
- Include families in planning and design. Families with lived expertise can expand support partner understanding of information gaps, effective outreach strategies, barriers to accessing support, and strategies specific to families' circumstances.

# 4

## Educate, support and empower families

- Confirm the steps property managers and service providers are taking to help tenants understand their rights and responsibilities long before a delinquent payment or landlord dispute occurs. As part of the tenant move-in process (and at other meetings and events), property and service managers can review lease provisions with tenants to emphasize responsibilities: 1) rent payment, 2) safety and cleanliness, 3) procedures, and 4) being a good neighbor/community member.
- Help families build the skills that are necessary for them to stay housed. Service providers work with tenants to access resources like childcare and job training, manage financial resources, and develop conflict resolution strategies.
- Engage families in policymaking and service delivery. Incorporating the voice of tenants and families into an eviction prevention strategy will help develop a program that addresses their needs and responds to barriers they experience. However, a seat at the table is not enough. It is equally important to build trust in the design and implementation process. Provide the support for peer specialists and tenant associations to advocate for tenants and increase the capacity for tenants to advocate for themselves. [The Birth Parent National Network](#) has resources to encourage and engage parents in policy and planning.
- Connect families to eligible services and concrete supports, including income supports, direct cash payments, financial resources, public benefits, tax credits and help families build assets and savings. Refer to: [Communications and Outreach Strategies to Bring Awareness to Residents about Eviction Prevention Programs - National League of Cities](#)

# 5

## Identify risk factors for housing instability

- Community agencies and service providers can work proactively with property owners to help them understand the barriers to housing that face many low-income families. Develop programs that minimize housing entry screening criteria but also mitigate risk for owners. Wrap-around services, landlord call centers, funding for security deposits and risk funds have been successful in helping families stay housed.
- Screen families for housing instability, including risk factors that could lead to housing loss or eviction. Schools, child welfare agencies, health providers and others working with children, youth and families, can work with housing experts to screen for housing instability and connect tenants to legal supports and services before a serious problem develops.
- Design and deliver screening tools that are sensitive to families' needs and vulnerabilities. It is important to gain honest input to design supports for families. However, overly aggressive questioning can cause distrust and delay the assistance families need.

# 6

## Determine the housing resources in the community to support eviction prevention

- Review resources available from the [American Rescue Plan](#) to prevent evictions and help families pay back rent and utilities. Partner with state and local Public Housing Agencies or Housing Finance Agencies to understand the rental assistance funding levels and criteria available to support low-income families. The Family Unification Program (FUP) is a federal rental assistance program administered by public housing authorities specifically designed to support child welfare-involved families. Other programs, rapid rehousing or emergency rental assistance, may also aid households at risk of eviction.
- Leverage resources from multiple partners to address housing insecurities and eviction preventions. Communities have developed [Flexible Housing Pools](#) utilizing investment resources from public and private partners to support move-in costs, security deposits and repairs benefiting tenants and property owners.



# 7

## Engage property owners, directly or through housing partners, to prevent or mitigate evictions

- Community partners often provide mediation and legal advocacy to negotiate with property owners to prevent eviction and allow the family to stay. Support tenants in negotiating a payment plan or pay what is owed. Studies show that engaging with landlords before the legal filing process begins can effectively reduce evictions.
- Connect tenants with legal counsel to address property condition disputes. Legal actions and mediation on behalf of tenants is generally more effective for generating property improvements and protecting their tenancy.
- Continue supports to the family with housing case management services. Supportive services can provide assurances to a landlord and mitigate future challenges.
- If it is not possible for the family to remain in their current housing, negotiate for a mutual rescission of the lease in lieu of eviction. Negotiated agreements that facilitate a move while keeping the eviction off the tenant's record could help prevent the long-term impact of eviction on the family stability, future housing options and financial status.

# 8

## Engage with courts systems as vital partners in an effective eviction prevention program

- Courts can design alternate processes to address evictions. Examples of court interventions include designating special housing courts and officials acquainted with eviction prevention strategies, mandating evidence of mediation before eviction filings and hearings, promoting access to tenant counseling, and the investment of funding and human resources.



# 9

## Prioritize new or planned family strengthening and child welfare prevention/intervention resources to support housing stability and eviction prevention

- Leverage the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and other child welfare services. Incorporate strategies and programs that recognize housing stability as a key element to keeping families safely together and facilitating timely and successful family reunification.
- Ensure families get the concrete supports they need to remain whole or to reunify successfully. Such supports may include direct payments to property owners for up to the full balance of the rent arrears, pay outstanding balances to prevent the shutoff of utilities, and facilitate access to high-quality legal representation.

# 10

## Share and utilize data to design and direct programs

- Collecting and analyzing eviction data for the local community will help understand the causes and impacts of evictions. Cross-sector data analysis will highlight eviction patterns, equity and racial disparities, and impact on families with children to inform solutions that address long-standing barriers and change the negative trajectory for families.
- Identify opportunities to redirect resources to address 'upstream' conditions'. A cost analysis of a community's investments in solutions like eviction prevention or employment training compared to costs for shelter programs or family separation will highlight opportunities to redirect resources to address pre-conditions for preventing evictions.
- Data sharing across housing and child welfare systems can be effective in identifying a family in crisis early for deploying strategies to coordinate and streamline comprehensive services.



# Resources

- [Comprehensive Step-by-Step Guide for People At Risk of Eviction - United States Interagency Council on Homelessness](#)
- [Rental Housing Counseling and Eviction Prevention - HUD Exchange](#)

*This publication was made possible in collaboration with Casey Family Programs, whose mission is to provide, improve – and ultimately prevent the need for – foster care.*

## About CSH

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) is the national champion for supportive housing, demonstrating its potential to improve the lives of very vulnerable individuals and families by helping communities create more than 385,000 real homes for people who desperately need them. CSH funding, expertise and advocacy have provided \$1 billion in direct loans and grants for supportive housing across the country. Building on 30 years of success developing multiple and cross-sector partnerships, CSH engages broader systems to fully invest in solutions that drive equity, help people thrive, and harness data to generate concrete and sustainable results. By aligning affordable housing with services and other sectors, CSH helps communities move away from crisis, optimize their public resources, and ensure a better future for everyone. Visit us at [www.csh.org](http://www.csh.org).

