

PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
RESIDENT SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE JULY 2021 REPORT

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RESIDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

COVID 19 Updates:

The RSD's approach to COVID 19 has been to serve Residents through an interdepartmental approach.

- 1) **Emergency Resident Outreach Log (EROL)**-The EROL for all **public housing residents** started at the beginning of the crisis and has evolved with multiple phases. See current phases below:

PHASE 9: Continued identification and outreach to potential partners to support food delivery. Food Task Force and Delivery Service – RIFB Senior box deliveries continued through June, and **PHA food boxes available for emergencies**. In June there were **146 RIFB** (34 at Parenti Villa, 61 at Dominica Manor, and 51 at Dexter Manor) Senior boxes, and **0 emergency PHA food boxes** delivered. **At Parenti Villa 78 Food Pantry boxes were distributed.**

PHASE 10: PHA continues to up-date the COVID 19 Hotline daily – In June there were **4 Covid calls** and **21 calls for vaccination questions/registration**

PHASE 11: Covid vaccination outreach calls to high rise and elderly in family developments – *this is phasing out with decrease in clinics and increased use of CallMax for outreach.*

Program Updates:

- Resident Services Associate Director, **Nicole Morillo has been appointed to the Providence/Cranston Workforce Investment Board (WIB)**
- Lead RSC, Bartola Ovalles, completed a **comprehensive outreach project to High Rise Development residents (over 900 calls) regarding utilization of CNA/Homemaker services** and is working on next steps
- RSD Leadership is working with OSD on Year 2 Strategic plan goals, metrics, and activities
- See additional program updates within program categories below

1) WELLNESS PROGRAMS:

Wellness Coordinator/SOR

- In June, the SOR Coordinator conducted **4 risk assessments to his caseload and 3 follow up assessments.**
- The Coordinator received and followed up on 10 referrals from Security in June and was able to contact 8 of the referrals.
- **CODAC** provided their pop-up clinic services on June 30th at Dexter Manor, and will continue to do so monthly. The pop-up clinic is designed to perform opioid assessments and help individuals get services and enroll for detox. The pop-up clinic is staffed by three nurses that perform high blood pressure, HIV, and hepatitis C testing. If the person is interested in detox, an assessment will be performed concerning SUD

VOCA Coordinator

- **39 new clients** in June, for a total caseload of **300 Victims of Crime clients served** to date.
- VOCA Coordinators outreached to 54 residents identified in the June Security report as needing or potentially needing information on the VOCA program
- Continuous review of weekly Security Reports and weekly check-ins with the Institute of Nonviolence, Sojourner House, and the PHA Wellness Team
- Weekly meeting with the Critical Response Team, who develop a Critical Response Plan for emergency and critical cases. There have been 7 Critical Response Plans to date
- A site visit was conducted June 29th for the VOCA grant by the Rhode Island Public Safety Grant Administration Office

Community Health Worker

- **4 new Residents** who completed a health screening tool in June with the Community Health Worker, for a **total of 54 Residents** who have completed screening Year-to-date.
- The CHW outreached to 58 residents identified in the June Security report
- Participated in the weekly Security Report review, and Critical Response Team
- During June, the CHW has participated in all Covid testing and vaccination events at the PHA

LICSW

- **8 new clients in Jun, 120 total clients to date**
- **Participates in the bi-weekly Critical Response team meeting**
- Spearheaded a **Wellness Team Meet and Greet at all 9 Developments.** Team members introduced themselves and their services to 220 residents from 220 different households, resulting in **14 new referrals.** Coffee and Munchkins were provided, and informational flyers were handed out to residents regarding Wellness Team services



Dominica Manor Wellness Team Meet and Greet

2) WORKFORCE PROGRAMS:

WIOA

- **A total of 16 additional out-of-school** were recruited and processed for WIOA. WIOA Recruitment continues for out-of-school youth
- **In development:** WIOA has been granted another program year. **Contracts and budgets are being finalized to continue to serve 21 youth currently enrolled and an additional 18 youth.**
- The WIOA youth had several success stories for June; one of our youth completed an EMT training and has gained an industry-recognized credential, 2 youth graduated from high school and earned their Diplomas.
- Staff participate in monthly WIOA provider meetings

Workforce Development Coordinator

- **32 residents received employment counseling**
- **3 new employer partners established, for a total of 28 YTD**

- Continued partnership and participation with DCYF Youth Voluntary Extension of Care (VEC) Program -Academic and Career Engagement
- Continues to support JPP participants that are looking for employment

Financial Coach/Homeownership Program

- **Served 18 residents in June**
- The partnership with HarborOne Bank has enabled us to continue financial counseling services

Homeownership Counseling

- **The HUD Homeownership Counselor passed his HUD Counselor examination and is now a certified HUD Homeownership Counselor**
- Partnership established with Washington Trust to host a financial literacy and a homeownership workshop in July

FSS

- **\$182,844.80 escrow dollars disbursed FYTD (for June \$10,547.43)**, and \$12,189.74 escrow dollars forfeited FYTD (for June \$1,126.00)
- FSS staff have been scheduling progress report meetings with FSS participants outside. For the month of June **90 progress report follow up appointments** have been completed
- **50% of FSS participants showed an increase in Earned Income** in June (with 50% having no increase in earned income) with **an average increase of \$18,029.75**
- There have been 0 extension requests due to Covid in June
- Success story: E.N. completed the 5 years with FSS, her ultimate goal was to purchase property but given the market, she is unable to afford a house at this time. She has maintained employment and cleaned-up her credit and raised her credit score.

Adult Education Programs:

- **Genesis Center**-conducting on-line distance learning for Adult Basic Education classes through the summer and reviewing a hybrid approach for the fall . Due to the partnership, PHA residents do have priority. COVID-19 continues to impact our educational partners' ability to post-test. They are working on trying to provide testing virtually.
- **Progreso Latino**-Continues to serve PHA residents in achieving their Spanish GED through their regular programming sessions.

3) RESIDENT SERVICE COORDINATION:

- On-site support to Residents by appointments only in June:
 - **Family RSC's have a combined caseload of 203 Residents**
 - Manton Heights: 89
 - Chad Brown: 33
 - Coddling Court: 15
 - Scattered Sites: 15

- Hartford Park: 51
 - **High-Rise RSC's have a combined caseload of 116 Residents.** Resident follow up was strong in June, with 129 residents receiving follow-up assessments.
- **Lead RSC has conducted over 900 Outreach calls to High Rise buildings**
 - 102 Residents confirmed having a CNA/Homemaker
 - 14 Residents have applied for services and services are pending
 - 16 Residents would like services
- Housing Retention with the RentRelief RI collaboration with Property Management. RSC's will provide assistance to Residents participating with uploading documentation into the portal
- The Manton Heights RSC continues to manage the **food distribution program with the YMCA that started April 12, 2021, in which 18 families 50 children between the ages of 2-18 are provided one hot meal and two cold meals every Monday and Thursday.** This program has remained very strong all 18 families continue to participate and very happy for the support of the YMCA providing these meals to their children
- The Hartford Park RSC, who started in June has made great strides in connecting with Residents.
- Although this work has slowed down considerably, the High Rise RSC is continuing to lead the Covid Hotline project, and respond to residents with questions
- Program planning and outreach for One Providence Summer Youth Internship program, with a focus at Chad Brown Family Development. The Chad Brown RSC is recruiting 35 youth, with a target **of 25 Chad Brown Youth to be served by this program. Although the target was 25 the number of CB youth participating is 2,** a debrief is scheduled.

RSD Partnerships:

- **Boys and Girls Club**-The Boys and Girls Club have opened their program at 50 Laurel Hill Ave, and as well as Manton Heights and Chad Brown. They are limiting the children to groups/pods of 20.
- **Children's Friend**- Programming moved to other locations due to enrollment.
- **YMCA** -food distribution partnership at Manton Heights through August
- **Urban Greens** – Contracted to provide paid internship experience for WIOA youth
- **Lifespan** – MOU to provide paid internship experience for WIOA youth
- **Providence Public Library (PPL)** – is supporting on-going computer literacy through on-line teacher guided learning.
- **Progreso Latino**-is supporting adult HSE learning through on-line teacher guided learning
- **ONE**-Community Health Workers
- **RIFB**-Senior Box program at Dexter Manor, Dominica Manor, and Parenti Villa as well as Parenti Villa Food Pantry agreements for 2021

- **HarborOne**-financial coaching partnership.
- **JPP HUD**- these calls will continue quarterly, as HUD has requested continued engagement to build upon the PHA's lessons learned for JPP

RSD Planning Updates:

1. Re-vamping the MMR data collection from staff to streamline and more accurately reflect outcomes based on function (i.e.: Wellness programs, Workforce programs, Education programs, and Resident Service Coordination) and alignment to the 5-year Strategic Plan
2. TAAG data entry protocols for new staff
3. Begin reviewing other Case Management data systems that could better meet RSD needs
4. FSS Program Coordinating Committee (PCC), MOUs for partner agencies
5. RSD section of the PHA Website with OSD

OFFICE OF STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19 Activities

High-level communications with partners, funders, and government – OSD is in communication with government partners at all levels.

Federal:

OSD has been in communication with HUD partners on the eviction moratorium flyer that HUD developed and how to ensure that tenants receive the right information about the moratorium.

Partners Locally:

We maintain PHA participation in the Central Providence and West End Health Equity Zone projects and with the current Accessing Home AmeriCorps program cohort of host sites.

Homes RI– OSD staff continue to participate in monthly Zoom meeting convened by Homes RI. These meetings highlight issues related to homelessness prevention and affordable housing, as well as developing advocacy strategies and building partnerships.

COVID-19 Funding and Resource Development

Recent funding notifications and updates

FEMA – In June, FEMA reversed its directive for agencies to submit separate applications for vaccination-related activities and other Covid-19 activities. During June, OSD staff worked with FEMA to provide detailed PHA information about equitable vaccine access. The PHA's request for reimbursement for Covid expenses totals \$315,567.72 for Covid costs associated with testing and vaccination clinics from May 2020 to May 5, 2021, PuroClean's high rise sanitation services, and NESS security guard services that were not covered by Cares Act funds. Contract costs, testing and vaccination expenses incurred prior to 1/21/21 will be reimbursed at 75%; testing and vaccination expenses incurred after 1/21/21 will be reimbursed at 100%.

City of Providence CDBG – The PHA was officially awarded \$112,000 to conduct COVID response work relating to health, including testing, vaccinations, and connections to other health resources. This funding will support several staff in Resident Services working in the health and wellness area. In addition, PHA received two CDBG grants for support of Resident

Services self-sufficiency programming at the Anton Center (\$43,000) and for the installation of new building entry doors at Carroll Tower and Dominica Manor (\$85,000).

COVID-19 Communications and Resident Outreach

Covid 19 Testing and Vaccinations

OSD staff continued to work cross-departmentally to support messaging regarding vaccinations including announcements, informative handouts (including translations of vaccine fact sheets), call scripting, mass messaging, and then provided event support by taking photographs and filling in as needed. June's COVID vaccination events have included residents as young as 12.



HUD Covid-19 Webinars

OSD participated in HUD's Covid-19 Best Practices webinars to keep abreast of initiatives being undertaken by PHAs and their partners across the country. PHA's efforts meet or exceed those of peers nationwide.

All OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other Funding and Resource Development

Recent funding notifications and updates

Ameri-Corps VISTA Volunteer- PHA has been again been awarded an Ameri-Corps volunteer who will be assigned to support housing search assistance for homeless families participating in the Mainstream Voucher and Emergency Housing Voucher programs. Pending our ability to find a member, we will have someone in place for the beginning of September to work until August of 2022.

State of RI Office of Housing and Community Development – We were provided preliminary oral notification that our request for \$154,655 for workforce development services to support residents who are seeking employment will be awarded from the state of RI with CDBG-COVID funds. The grant is expected to have a two year term and support addition of a new member to the PHA's resident services team. We hope to have a contract by the end of July.

Manton Heights Legislative grant - Staff submitted a FY 2021 Legislative grant proposal for the Manton Heights Planning Committee sponsored by State Representative Hull for a grant in the amount of \$3,000. It was approved and the grant award was received on July 12. The fund will be used towards community building events and digital literacy.

New and pending applications:

HUD Emergency Health and Safety Grant – Working with the Facilities Management Department, OSD developed and submitted a grant application to HUD, in the amount of \$4 million to address mold issues at units in family units at Hartford Park.

HAI – PHA submitted two grants to the Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAI) for funding to install fire suppression canister device above stoves in all family units (\$30,217) and fire suppression safety burners in all high rise and elderly/disabled units (\$148,460)

State of Rhode Island Community Development Covid Response Block Grants- While we did hear back on our other request for workforce development funding as noted above , we were informed that our request for \$128,050 to address needed services for homeless Mainstream Voucher participants to assist them in securing housing and maintaining tenancies is still under consideration.

United Way of RI Olneyville Fund- OSD Submitted a grant proposal to the United Way’s Olneyville Fund for funds that would support the coordination of services and referrals for residents of Manton Heights who are seeking Wellness resources, including access to treatment and recovery services for substance use disorders and mental health needs. Short term goals include providing 30 Manton Heights households with referrals to service, providing direct service and case management, and integrating prevention education concerning opioids and other substance use in existing youth programs. PHA expects long-term impact to include: establishing referral partnerships with service providers with bi-lingual and bi-cultural capacities; increasing opportunities for diverse members of the PHA community to access culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate SUD treatment and behavioral health services; and decreasing PHA community stigma concerning substance use disorders and mental health treatment by engaging the community in an awareness campaign and engaging community allies, including community agencies, organizations, and faith communities.

Communications and Resident Outreach

Mass Messaging

OSD has selected a new vendor, Rave Mobile Safety, for its mass messaging operations. During July, OSD worked with the vendor to migrate PHA information to the new software system and Department staff received training on the use of the system. PHA launched its first mass messaging with Rave on July 1st.

	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021
Total number of “bulletin” messages sent	4	38*	67*	115*	75*	56	45	43	62	27	47

** In part because messages were sent twice in an English and Spanish version or floor by floor notices about COVID testing.*

	Apr 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	Aug 2021	Sept 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Mar 2021
Total number of “bulletin” messages sent	37 Month ending 4/13	45 Month ending 5/13	25 Month total for June								

** In part because messages were sent twice in an English and Spanish version or floor by floor notices about COVID testing*

Messages reflected the following: emergency response (cooling centers for high-rise residents due to heat wave and etc.), COVID vaccinations and testing, outdoor gatherings, WOIA Recruitment Training/Internship, Senior Food Box distributions and much more.

PHA's Facebook reach continues to grow as we are now at 1,087 page "Likes" and 1282 accounts following the PHA on Facebook right now. From June 17 to July 15, our posts had a combined reach of 2,381, with 938 of that reach through a \$28 paid ad and the rest through "organic" unpaid reach.

PHA Website

OSD is spearheading a refresh of the PHA's website (www.ProvHousing.org) with vendor EpikSolutions. The refresh will include an updated look and newly organized content once completed. This month we worked with Resident Services on updating all of their content and worked with the vendor approving most elements of the new design.

RAB communications and report

OSD staff members continued to do regular Zoom check in calls with RAB members to identify resident community concerns and needs and to provide information and updates. OSD continued a series of two RAB conference calls (one in English, one in Spanish) each month in the first week of the month and then a full RAB meeting on the third Wednesday of the month. OSD promptly advises Departments of any issues identified in RAB contacts.

We have worked to address issues identified by RAB members on an ongoing basis, such as

- Violation of parking policies;
- Fireworks,
- Illegal dumping by outsiders;
- Elevator and laundry machine breakdown; and
- Ways to rebuild a sense of community in the midst of the pandemic and in its wake.

The RAB meeting on June 23 featured a presentation by representatives of the Central Providence Health Equity Zone about their efforts to conduct a needs assessment involving residents of the City's 02908 and 02909 zip codes (an area of the City that includes 3 PHA high rises and three family developments). Nelson Morales, the the PHA's Wellness Resource Center provided a presentation about trends in the opioid addiction crisis in the area and the value and use of Narcan as an antidote to overdose.

Resident Activities Update

Peoples Garden Project - OSD and PM staff and resident volunteers tended vegetable garden plots at Coddington Court and Chad Brown. To encourage healthy eating habits, expose residents to new foods, and show how residents can use fresh produce, PHA staff demonstrated how to make pesto from basil grown in the Coddington Court garden. Staff has been meeting with the gardeners on a regular basis to monitor and assist with its progress. Currently the gardens at both developments are doing well. Under the NRICD grant, Chad Brown received a much-needed water tank to facilitate and efficiently water their garden.

Chad Brown



Codding Court



Sunset Village- At Sunset Village, OSD staff and resident volunteers continue to tend flower beds in two areas of this development.

Kilmartin Plaza- OSD, working with RAB members Diana Freeman, Elizabeth Gillins and Antonio Rivera organized an ice cream social event at the development. Approximately 58 residents were served free ice cream on June 30, amidst the June heatwave. The event was designed to provide an opportunity for residents especially the new ones to the building to meet and greet the RAB members and the neighbors. Our goal is to bring a sense of normalcy and morale boost to the social isolation brought upon by the pandemic. OSD staff will bring similar ice cream social events to other high-rise locations over the course of the summer.



Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Residents

OSD continued a partnership with CaptionCall, an organization that provides no cost phones with features needed by residents who are deaf or hard of hearing, including amplification and closed captioning of audio. CaptionCall has also partnered with the RI Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. OSD arranging dates for CaptionCall to provide information tables (outside and in compliance with Covid safety requirements) at Parenti Villa and Kilmartin Plaza in June; nine residents were provided with the specialized phones. OSD will work with CaptionCall to bring an outreach table to any health fairs or events at family developments this summer and fall.

Other OSD updates

State Opioid Reduction Grant – OSD staff continued to gather and track program activity outcome data from both Providence and Pawtucket Housing Authorities and author monthly reports to the funder (BHDDH).

Youth Police Initiative- OSD and RSD developed a proposal for a year-long internship in which a 2nd year Masters-level social work student would assist PHA in researching and implementing best practices for strengthening the YPI program and developing a follow-up component. PHA submitted the proposal to Rhode Island College's School of Social Work to secure an intern for the fall 2021 and winter 2022 semesters.

Strategic Planning and Plan Implementation -OSD met with all Departments in June to complete draft actions for Year 2 of the PHA's Strategic Plan, including reviewing which Year 1 actions will continue to be pursued in Year 2, considering actions scheduled for Year and identifying additional actions made necessary by the Covid-19 experience. Once approved Year 2 actions are approved, OSD will work with Departments to develop metrics that track performance in carrying our actions and measuring achievement of strategies and goals.

OSD staff is reviewing Departments' 4th Strategic Plan Reports and has begun to develop the Year 1 report for the Board.

Project Based Vouchers – In an effort to support the expansion of affordable housing for low-income families, OSD has issued PHA's request for proposals for project-based vouchers, incorporating lessons learned from the last RFP that was issued in late 2018. OSD conducted

a pre-proposal workshop for interested parties on June 14 with 13 people registering or attending; proposals are due to PHA by 3pm on July 16th.

Also during June, OSD meet with representatives of Joseph Caffey Development LLC to compile information needed for a subsidy layering review that HUD must conduct prior to an approval of an Agreement to Enter into HAP Payment (AHAP) for 8 project based vouchers awarded to the development by the board of Commissioners in 2020.

Landlord Incentives – OSD continued working closely with Leased Housing to issue landlord incentives to attract and support our landlords and increase success of hard to house residents in finding housing. Through the end of June, we have approved 36 landlord incentives totaling \$19,500 with 32 of them going to new landlords, five receiving incentives for housing a formerly homeless family through the mainstream voucher program, and two incentives for a landlord leasing a new unit in an area of opportunity. Two incentives were issued in June 2021.

Emergency Housing Vouchers – OSD continues working with Leased Housing and an interdepartmental team on preparing for the beginning of the new Emergency Housing Voucher program. PHA was issued 42 emergency vouchers and will be able to begin issuing these to homeless families in individuals in July, upon completion of an MOU with the RI Continuum of Care. OSD Director Peter Asen serves on the Continuum of Care board of directors. On July 13, PHA and RICoC finalized an MOU and a meeting was scheduled on July 16 to finalize a new standard operating procedure for referrals and establish a schedule of referrals for these vouchers.

PHA 2021 Resident Characteristics Report – OSD staff completed the draft of the 2021 report, which provides a comprehensive analysis of PHA residents' socio-economic characteristics. The statistics are initially compared across developments. The statistics are then compared to public housing resident characteristics throughout the State of Rhode Island and across the nation.

Public Housing Repositioning – In June, OSD staff participated in HUD's repositioning webinar focused on the roles of housing authorities and developers during the repositioning process. Also in June, OSD compiled a list of repositioning/development consultants.

Nan McKay 2021 Housing Awards – OSD authored an application to Nan McKay & Associates, a national for its annual Resident Service Award. This award recognizes leaders in the affordable housing industry whose community outreach and similar efforts improve the future of the families they serve. PHA's application focused on its inter-departmental and inter-agency team approach to the Covid-19 epidemic. The Hartford Park and Carroll Tower Residents' Associations, the RAB, and the City of Providence Office of Healthy Communities provided letters of support for our application. The award winners will be announced in August.

Language Access Plan – OSD staff researched language diversity and limited English proficiency statistics, providing information to the Property Management Department for use in the Four Factor Analysis necessary for updating of the PHA's Language Access Plan.