



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

## **New Opportunities for State & Local Disability Housing Advocates!**

Beginning in 2016, state and local advocates have two new opportunities to increase affordable, accessible, integrated housing in the community for people with disabilities.

*NOW is the time to get involved!*

Disability advocates may benefit from working closely with affordable housing advocates and civil rights advocates in their state on these new opportunities.

### **NATIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND (NHTF)**

The NHTF is a new federal housing program run by state housing agencies for the first time beginning in 2016. Congress authorized the NHTF primarily to address the critical shortage of rental housing units affordable to extremely low income (ELI) households – those with incomes below 30 percent of the Area Median Income.

#### **What does the NHTF do?**

Primarily, states will use NHTF dollars to buy, build, rehabilitate, preserve, or operate rental housing for ELI households.

#### **Why is the NHTF important for people with disabilities?**

Across the U.S., many people with disabilities live in ELI households and face a housing crisis. The overwhelming majority of people with disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) live in ELI households, as well as many people with disabilities who work or who receive Social Security disability benefits.

#### **How will states prioritize their NHTF funds?**

Each year, states must develop and submit a NHTF Allocation Plan to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for approval before they can receive their funds. The plan must describe how the state will use NHTF resources during the coming year.

#### **How can I advocate that my state prioritize affordable, accessible, integrated rental housing for people with disabilities?**

States must provide the public a chance to review and comment on a draft NHTF Allocation Plan and must consider public comments in developing the final Plan. This provides an opportunity for you to advocate for these funds to serve people with disabilities.

#### **For example?**

The 30 states that have received Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) funding could pair NHTF with the PRA to create new integrated permanent supportive housing. Visit <http://811resourcecenter.tacinc.org/> to learn more about the Section 811 PRA program.

### **How do I learn more?**

Visit <http://nlihc.org/issues/nhtf> and <http://nlihc.org/issues/nhtf/state-allocation-plans>. The second link provides the state housing agency contacts for the NHTF as well as the state affordable housing advocate who is leading advocacy efforts.

## **AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING (AFFH)**

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions on the basis of a number of protected characteristics – ***including disability.***

New rules set out by HUD over the last year require states, certain cities, and public housing authorities to meet their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH) by developing new Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) plans. AFFH means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics such as disability.

### **Why is the AFH planning process important for people with disabilities?**

In the AFH, states, cities and housing authorities must identify goals, strategies, and actions to affirmatively further fair housing, including for people with disabilities. Those goals, strategies, and actions must be included in the Consolidated Plan and the Public Housing Authority Plan. These plans impact how dollars are spent in the federal-funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships program (HOME), Section 8 and Public Housing programs.

### **For example?**

The AFH could prioritize:

- Providing a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program preference for people with disabilities who are moving from institutions to the community;
- Using CDBG funds for home accessibility modifications;
- Using HOME funds for a bridge rental assistance program for people with disabilities who are moving from institutions to the community; and/or
- Using HOME funds with project rental assistance or project-based vouchers to create integrated, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities.

### **How can I advocate that my state prioritize affordable, accessible, integrated rental housing for people with disabilities?**

State and local governments and housing authorities must have at least two public hearings and must provide the public an opportunity to comment on the draft AFH plan. HUD is providing state and local entities with some U.S. Census data to complete their AFH. However, the Census does not currently collect very good information about people with disabilities – especially those who live in group homes, shelters, or institutions. Disability advocates need to make sure that the entities drafting the AFH receive information about the housing needs of people with disabilities in their communities.

### **How do I learn more?**

Visit [http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/2016AG\\_Chapter\\_7-2.pdf](http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/2016AG_Chapter_7-2.pdf) or <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/affh/>.

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