

Highlights of TAC's Homeless Technical Assistance Activities

Since 1995, TAC has worked in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Headquarters and 25 separate HUD Field Offices to provide a comprehensive, coordinated, and multi-disciplinary approach to McKinney-Vento Homeless Technical Assistance.

The following examples illustrate the depth and breadth of TAC's HUD Homeless Technical Assistance efforts.

Long-Range Strategic Plan Development

- *Baltimore CoC*: TAC assisted Baltimore's Continuum of Care (CoC) leaders to conceptualize, plan, and facilitate a comprehensive 10-Year Plan process in this city which had significant growth in homelessness and a dearth of best practice service and housing models. The planning process engaged multiple stakeholders including the homeless service provider community, homeless people themselves, local and state public officials, and private sector leaders. TAC provided consultation, guidance, technical support, best practice expertise, and assistance with preparing the final products of this project. As a result of TAC's assistance, the city published a [10-Year Plan to End Homelessness](#), calling for an expansion of their Housing First program by 500 new units.
- *Washington County (OR)*: TAC coordinated the planning effort among a variety of stakeholders in the County to conceptualize a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. TAC also authored the plan, as well as relevant marketing materials.

Effective Grant Administration

- *Section 8 Mod Rehab SRO Grantees*: TAC worked with multiple Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy Program grantees and sponsors to enhance program operations and assist with identified issues related to the administration and management of the grants. TAC developed documents on policies and procedures including: marketing and outreach/tenant selection plan; appeals process; MOUs; and eligibility verification forms. The materials developed through this project-specific TA were expanded into a one-day training that could be replicated in multiple areas across the nation.
- *Direct TA to Faith-Based Organizations*: TAC assisted a faith-based organization in rural Maine to improve its administration of permanent supportive housing and transitional housing programs. TAC provided direct technical assistance to the senior management staff as well as program directors regarding HUD draw downs, eligible activities and costs, eligible participants, financial management, and general program administration. TAC disseminated information about national evidence-based practices in case management in permanent supportive housing.

- TA to Troubled Agencies: At the request of the Pittsburgh HUD Field Office, TAC provided emergency technical assistance to a troubled SHP grantee at risk of losing its McKinney-Vento funds TAC worked with the Senior Management to restructure the SHP budgets to ensure financial and programmatic viability.
- Nam Vets: TAC worked with a local veterans provider in a rural area that suddenly took over the management of a 2006 McKinney Vento acquisition grant, just a few months before the funding was going to be recaptured by HUD. TAC worked closely with Nam Vets to develop budgets and to identify needed funding sources, as well as to develop a Technical Submission to submit to HUD and assist them in starting up a viable project.
- Slow Spenders TA: TAC has assisted HUD Headquarters to obligate awards made under McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance by providing TA to certain grantees with unobligated funds. This TA activity included working with HUD Headquarters to obtain a list of identified unobligated 'slow spenders,' and outreach and information gathering with HUD Field Office staff, grantees, and project sponsors. Support provided by TAC also included one-to-one TA specific to the project, researching relevant HUD regulations and guidance, and completing regular written progress reports. For example, one SHP project that was conditionally selected by HUD for Samaritan Bonus funding lost site control between the time when the original application was submitted and conditional awards were made. At HUD's request, TAC worked with the grantee to review CoC housing needs and existing resources and assisted the grantee to revise its original Exhibit 2 application and submit a Technical Submission to change SHP funding from rehabilitation to leasing. As a result, twice as many homeless persons can be assisted and the project became operational within 2 months.

Continuum of Care Planning and Strategy Development

- Balance of State CoC: In recent years, TAC has worked closely with Balance of State CoCs in various states including Kansas, Massachusetts, and Nebraska to address the unique issues that statewide CoCs face. As a result of this TA, these CoCs have clarity regarding their roles and responsibilities in administering McKinney-Vento funds, have strong relationships with local CoC, and have systems in place to collect data and ensure participation across the state.
- Merging CoCs: At HUD's request, this past year, TAC worked with city officials in Arlington, MA, to assess the opportunities for participating in a CoC, including identifying all available options, and determining the capacity for these officials to be involved in homeless planning on an ongoing basis: As a result of this TA, Arlington chose to merge with a local CoC in a neighboring town.
- Rural CoC: TAC recently worked with stakeholders in 4 rural communities in North Carolina to assess their CoC and made recommendations to improve the planning structure,

including merging with the Balance of State CoC. As a result of this TA, in order to have more meaningful participation and to reflect the community's needs and resources the 4 rural communities in North Carolina decided to merge with the Balance of State CoC.

Accessing Mainstream Resources

- Assessment of CoCs Progress in Assisting Homeless Persons to Access Mainstream Resources: TAC successfully managed this complex and multifaceted TA activity to identify and replicate innovative CoC strategies designed to improve access by homeless persons to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) resources. TAC's extensive knowledge of these mainstream resource programs, as well as CoC operations, assisted HUD Headquarters to initially identify and conduct onsite assessments of three states (Maryland, Michigan, and Tennessee) with potentially innovative and replicable best practices. With HUD guidance and approval, TAC subsequently extended this assessment to CoCs in other states with best practice models of accessing mainstream resources. TA products developed by TAC included 2 written reports, as well as a new [PowerPoint tool – available on the Homelessness Resource Exchange](#) – that TAC piloted with 5 CoCs across the country. TAC also conducted 10 additional customized CoC training workshops and/or direct TA interventions on this topic for the Boston Local HUD Field Office using Local Homeless TA funds.
- Access to Medicaid: TAC analyzed supportive services utilization data for the federally-funded CHI grantee including recommendations to improve access by homeless people to Medicaid and other mainstream support services funding. As a result of this TA, the grantee implemented a successful services sustainability strategy to replace federal HHS funding. TAC supplemented this work with a [comprehensive guidebook](#) on facilitating the use of Medicaid as a source of funding for services in permanent supportive housing.

Materials Development

- Desk Guide Development: During the past 18 months, in partnership with HUD Headquarters staff, TAC developed a 100+ page Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Desk Guide that is now in legal review at HUD Headquarters. Comparable in format and content to the new SHP Desk Guide, this comprehensive TA product includes: 15 separate sections on the full scope of the S+C program with hyperlinks to relevant regulatory citations, HUD S+C NOFAs, and current HUD guidance; new information regarding e-snaps for S+C grantees; Frequently Asked Questions sections; and new fair housing guidance. TAC also developed an accompanying PowerPoint presentation as an additional TA tool. TAC completed this draft TA product in collaboration with multiple HUD Headquarters staff, and solicited input on important S+C issues from grantees, sponsors, as well as HUD Field Office staff.
- Eligibility for Permanent Housing: TAC developed a *Permanent Housing Fact Sheet* and companion posters displaying the different homeless eligibility criteria for SHP, S+C, and

Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc.

February 2010

Section 8 Mod Rehab – incorporating the changes in the eligibility criteria for permanent housing that began in Fiscal Year 2005.

- *Restrictive Covenants Materials*: TAC authored and disseminated written guidance on restrictive covenants and use restrictions for McKinney-Vento grantees and sponsors operating permanent housing.

Enhancing Local Homelessness Prevention Activities

- *Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP)*: Using private and philanthropic funds, TAC worked with HPRP grantees in several cities in Massachusetts to assist them in development of their HPRP programs. For the City of Boston, TAC educated the Mayor's Office and city officials on HPRP goals and eligible activities and facilitated a process of gathering community stakeholders' input using an online survey instrument. TAC prepared a written summary of the survey results and translated them into recommendations for Boston's uses of HPRP resources. In addition, TAC wrote the City of Boston's Request for Proposal that was issued to community-based organizations seeking to administer as HPRP funding for the City. TAC continues to help facilitate policy and planning decisions as Boston's program evolves.
- *HPRP Materials*: TAC authored Boston's HPRP Guidance document that has been used by the local HUD Field Office as an example for several other HPRP communities.

Conference Planning and Delivery

- *Webinar for Rapid Re-Housing Demonstration Grantees*: On September 15, 2009, TAC produced and facilitated a highly successful live interactive webinar for all 23 SHP-funded Rapid-Re-Housing grantees as well as over 30 HUD Headquarters and Field Office staff. TAC's scope of work for this TA activity included working with webinar technology systems to ensure successful access by HUD and invited participants; conducting all marketing and registration activities; hosting the webinar, including facilitating speaker presentations, as well as online/phone question and answer sessions; providing on and offsite technical support during the webinar; and distributing follow-up answers to questions raised during the webinar. The RRH webinar had participation from over 75 different agencies, including representatives from all 23 RRH grantees and staff from their respective HUD Field Offices.
- *North Carolina Homeless Institute*: TAC coordinated and sponsored a 2-day statewide HUD Training Institute for over 120 homeless providers, housing agencies, government officials, and other key stakeholders in North Carolina. Working with local consultants, TAC located the site, designed and distributed all marketing materials, and managed the registration process for the conference and for over 20 individual workshops. TAC also presented at 5 workshops at the Institute.

- Georgia Homeless Conference: Building upon the successful of the North Carolina Homeless Conference mentioned above, TAC worked with the Atlanta Regional HUD Field Office to coordinate and sponsor a similar conference for homeless providers throughout the State of Georgia. This conference is planned for May 2010.

Chronic Homeless Assistance

- HUD Chronic Homeless Guide: TAC authored [HUD's Defining Chronic Homelessness: A Technical Guide for HUD Programs](#). As part of the development of this guide, TAC researched best practices regarding documenting chronic homelessness and worked with HUD staff, peer TA providers, and grantees/sponsors to develop tools that can assist projects across the country.
- Serving Chronically Homeless Persons: Based on the success of the guide, TAC developed a companion step-in training, *Serving the Chronically Homeless: Eligibility, Documentation, and Promising Practices* that staff conducted in multiple HUD Field Offices.
- Assessment of Chronic Homeless Initiative Grants: In addition to the creation of the HUD guide and companion training, TAC was also the lead TA provider on HUD's assessment of McKinney-Vento Chronic Homeless Initiative (CHI) Demonstration projects. As part of this assessment, TAC developed research tools and methodologies, and conducted onsite and telephone interviews with key staff from 6 CHI grantee and sponsor agencies.

Comprehensive Customized Trainings

TAC has developed and conducted over 300 trainings for homeless providers and CoCs across the nation. On average, TAC facilitates 15 trainings each year. The topics vary and the content is customized to reflect the unique needs of the grantees and sponsors within each Field office jurisdiction. A complete description of available trainings can be found in TAC's [McKinney-Vento Training and Technical Assistance Catalogue](#). Some examples of recent and popular trainings include:

- Start Up Training for New McKinney-Vento Grantees and Sponsors
- Grant Administration Training for Existing SHP and S+C Grantees and Sponsors
- Financial Management and Fiscal Accountability in McKinney-Vento Programs
- Income and Rent Calculations for HUD McKinney-Vento and Other HUD Programs
- Serving the Chronically Homeless: Eligibility, Documentation, and Promising Practices
- Grant Administration Training for Existing Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy Program Grantees and Sponsors
- Advanced Issues in Grant Administration for S+C and SHP Grantees
- Expanding Permanent Supportive Housing Opportunities for Homeless Persons
- Ethics and Professionalism in Case Management Practices in Permanent Supportive Housing

For More Information:

For more information on TAC's HUD Homeless TA, visit www.tacinc.org/hudprojects.html or contact Gina Schaak at gschaak@tacinc.org.