

Statewide Referral Network (SRN) for CoCs and Homeless Service Providers

SHPA 2022 Supportive Housing Summit
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What is the Statewide Referral Network (SRN)?

The Network is a partnership of State Agencies and Social Service Providers that allows for the pairing of households with available SRN and Section 811 housing units.



Illinois Department
on **Aging**





What are SRN and Section 811 Units?

SRN Units (2380 total)

- 5-10% of IHDA funded units (LIHTC) set aside for SRN
- All are affordable for households receiving 30% Area Median Income (AMI) – which is also the income limit
- ~ Half are subsidized with project-based vouchers (acquired by developer)

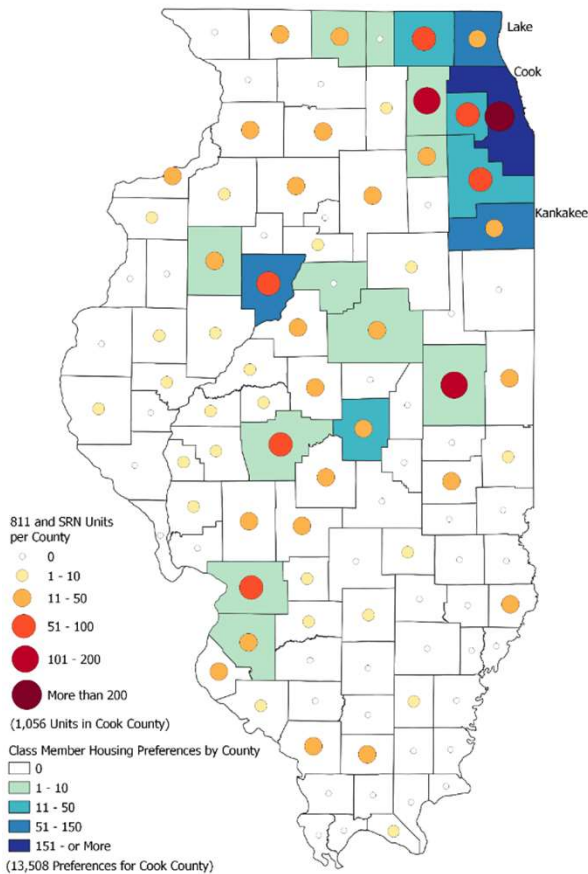
Section 811 Units (301 total)

- Ongoing HUD-funded subsidy in addition to development costs
- Household pays 30% of income toward rent (project-based vouchers)





Where are SRN and Section 811 Units?



SRN Units (2380 total)

- 60 out of 102 Counties (59%)
- Range from 3 in DeKalb to 981 in Cook

811 Units (301 total)

- 10 out of 102 Counties (10%)
- Range from 3 in McLean to 245 in Cook





Why are there SRN and Section 811 Units?

SRN Units

- To provide community-based housing opportunities to some of our hardest to house service populations through properties awarded tax credits by IHDA
- Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) in Illinois (~110 total) receive the largest pool of funding invested for the provision of affordable housing, but many waitlists remain closed for years at a time and households can additionally spend several years on the waitlist
- PHAs also do not necessarily prioritize the same populations as State Policy

Section 811 Units

- Allows persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community by subsidizing rental housing opportunities which provide access to appropriate supportive services
- Targeted to those enrolled in Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid Waiver Programs





Who Are the Prioritized Populations

Section 811

1. Institutionalized Olmstead Class Members (all 3 classes)
2. At-Risk of Institutionalization (Front Door Diversion/MFP)
3. Post transition Class Members (Bridge)

SRN

1. Institutionalized Olmstead Class Members (all 3 classes)
2. At-Risk of Institutionalization (Front Door Diversion/MFP)
3. Currently Homeless OR Post-Transition Class Members (Bridge)
4. At-Risk of Homelessness OR head of household with a disability





What is the PAIR Module?

PAIR = Pre-Screening, Assessment, Intake, and Referral

- Online portal (Emphasys) accessed by caseworker login
- Part of ILHousingSearch.org
- Includes SRN and Section 811 waiting lists
- Online application(s), three pages (takes about 5 minutes to fill out)
- Matches available units to individuals with matching requests for unit location and features.





Accessing the PAIR Module

The screenshot shows the ILHOUSINGSEARCH.ORG website. At the top right, there is a "Select Language" dropdown menu. Below the logo, there are three navigation buttons: "Find Rentals", "List Rentals", and "LOGIN". The "LOGIN" button is highlighted with a red arrow. Below the navigation buttons is a banner image of a house. Underneath the banner, there is a note: "This login page is for all property managers, caseworkers, and registered users."



Login through the www.ILHousingSearch.org website



Accessing the PAIR Module

- To obtain login credentials:
 1. Review or participate in an SRN training
 2. Email PAIR@emphasys-software.com requesting a new caseworker login
 3. Sign the “ILHousingSearch.org caseworker portal user agreement” and send back
 4. Receive login credentials via email
- Read, understand, and refer to the terms of the user agreement – they are non-negotiable conditions of your access to the system





System Administrators

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

- Todd Fuller, Statewide Housing Coordinator – Todd.Fuller@Illinois.gov
- Jeri Bond, Waitlist Manager – Jeri.Bond@Illinois.gov

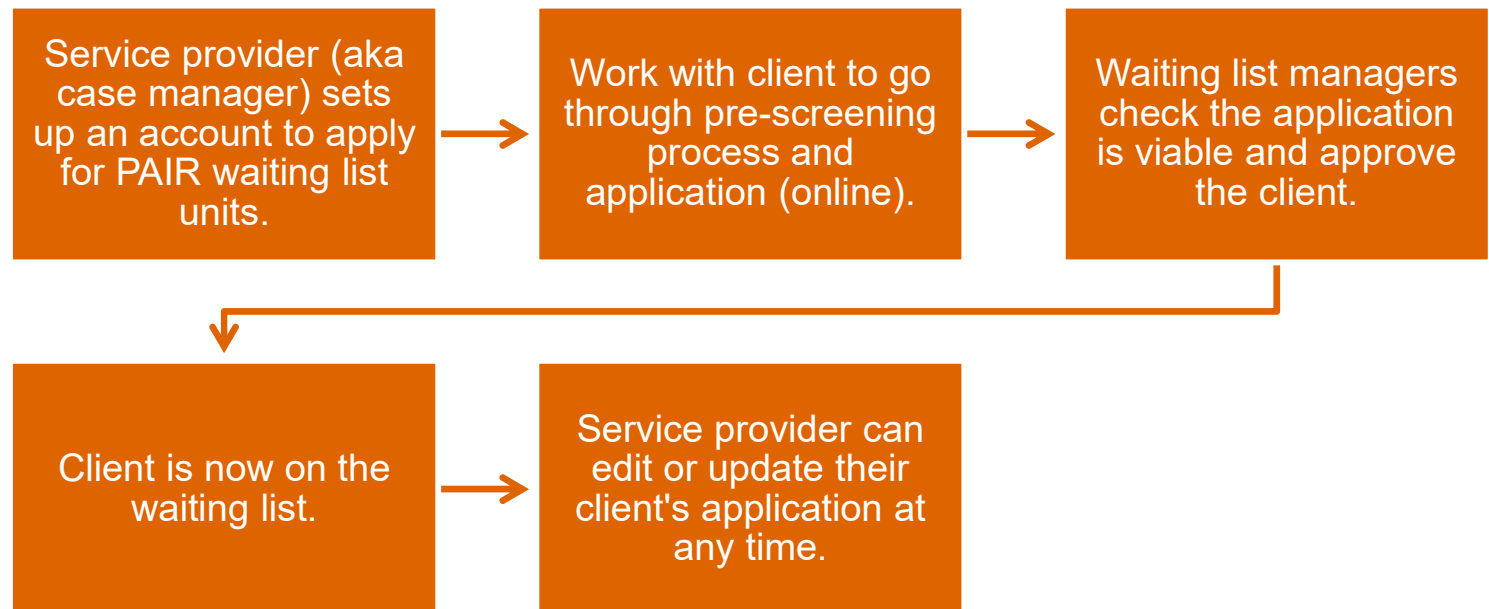
Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)

- Stephanie Sideman - stephanie.sideman@csh.org
- Jeremy Nichols – jeremy.nichols@csh.org



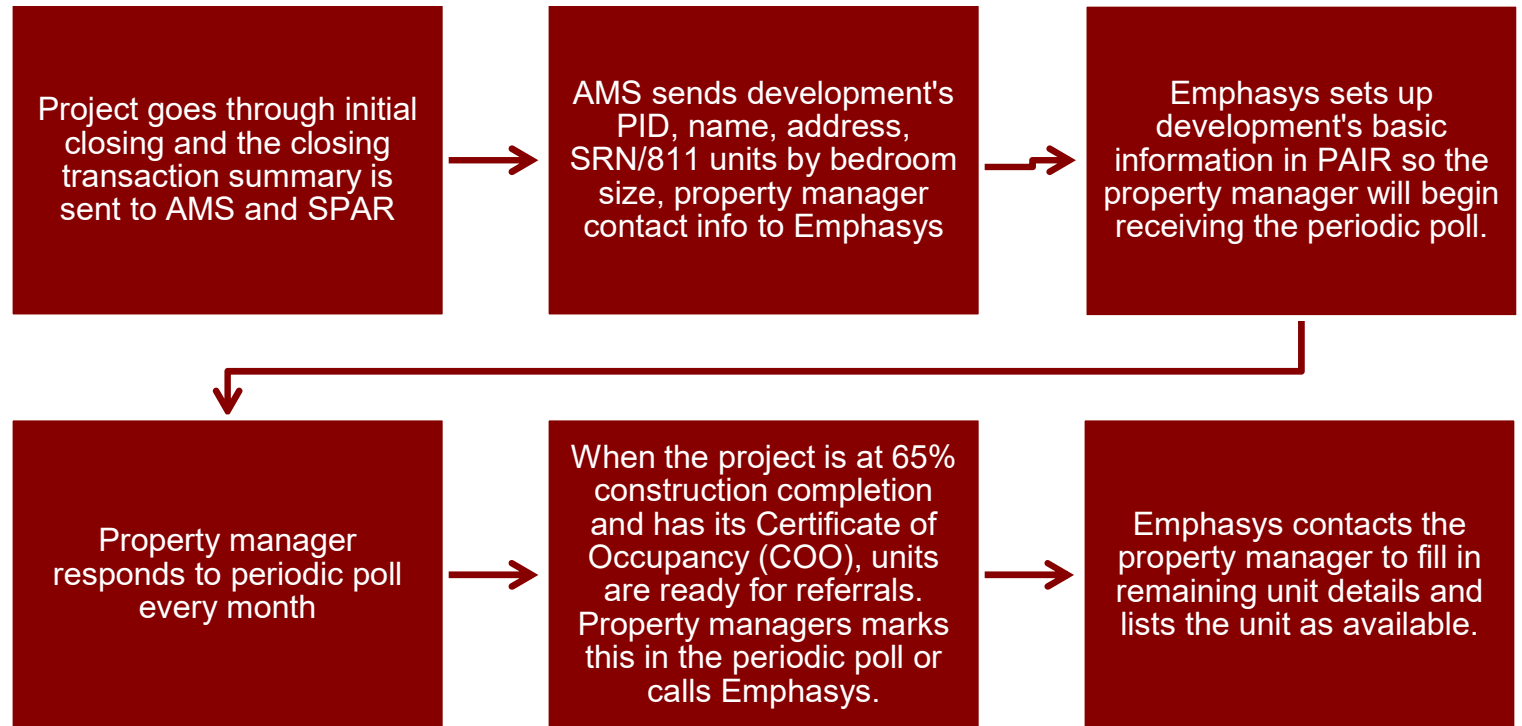


Application Process





New Unit Listing Process (60-90 days for Referrals)





Turnover Unit Listing Process (30 days for Referrals)

Property manager submits periodic poll or calls Emphasys to report an upcoming unit vacancy.



Emphasys lists the unit as available so it shows up in the waiting list manager queue.

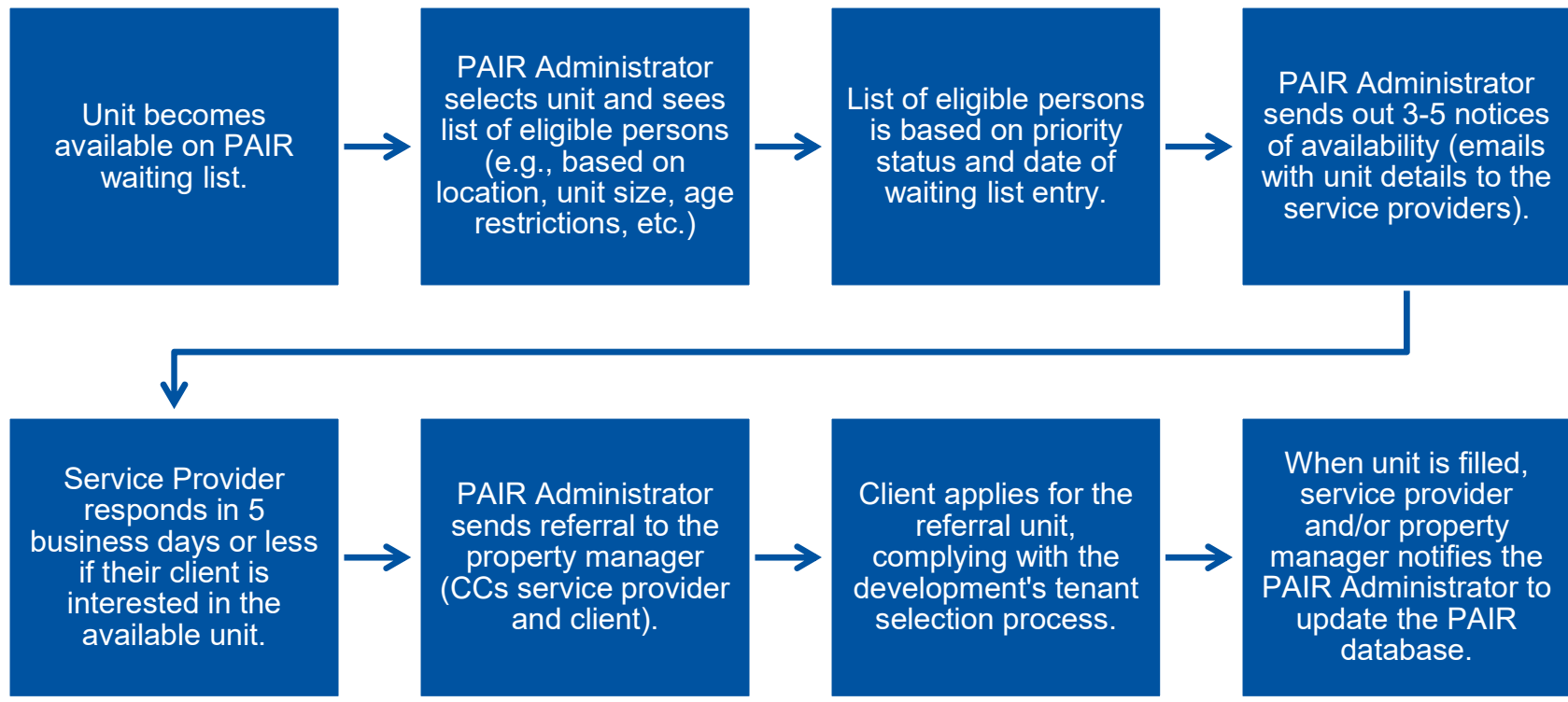


Waiting list manager proceeds with the notice of availability, referral, and database update process.





PAIR Referral Process



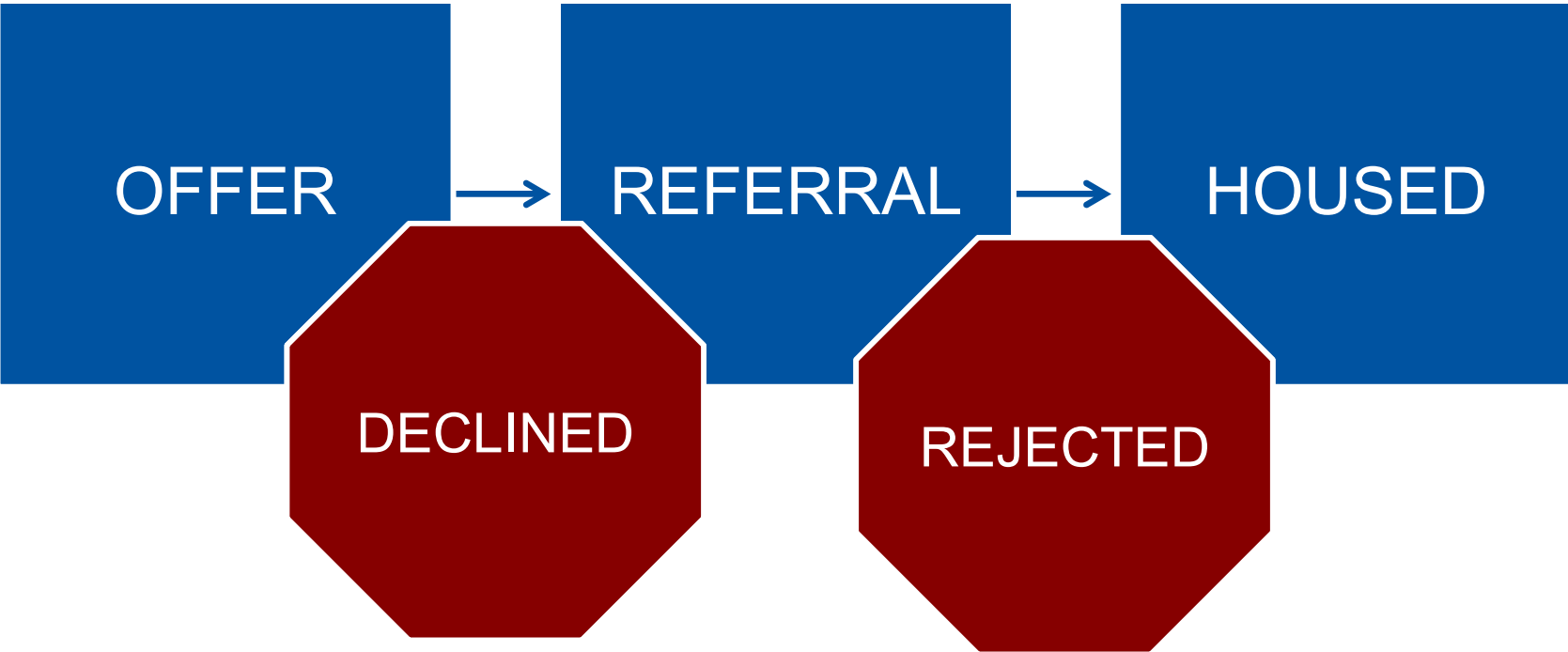


Desired Process/Outcome



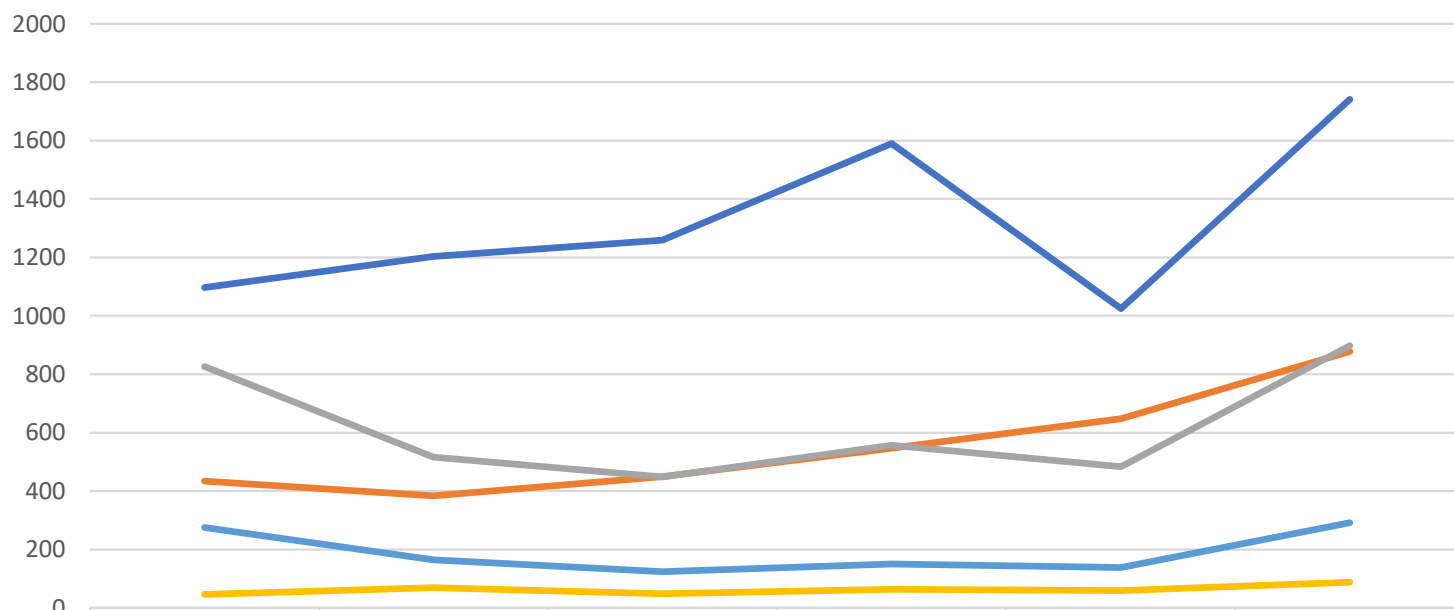


Desired Process/Outcome





SRN/811 Referral Process Outcomes



	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Offered	1097	1203	1259	1590	1024	1741
Declined	434	383	449	547	648	878
Referred	826	516	448	557	483	897
Rejected	46	70	49	64	60	88
Housed	275	165	124	151	138	291



COVID Impact

Increased Barriers

- Offices closed; unavailable staff
- Institutionalized populations not allowed to leave facility and return
- Service Providers denied access
- Electronic vs. paper applications
- Inability to obtain required documentation (IDs, income, etc.)
- Property listings and applications not being kept up-to-date
- More competitive rental market
- Increased rent amounts





Group Breakout: Discussion/Feedback

CoCs/Service Providers

1. How does your CoC or Organization currently utilize the SRN as a supportive housing resource? Or not?
2. What challenges or barriers have you experienced in utilizing the SRN?
3. Have you had any success in housing your customers in SRN or Section 811 units? What do you attribute that success to?
4. Are there any specific reasons why your customers have declined available units in the past?

Developers/Property Managers

1. Do you think the requirement for LIHTC properties to set aside units for the SRN is a good idea? Why or why not?
2. What challenges or barriers have you experienced in receiving referrals through the SRN?
3. Have you had any success in housing referrals for SRN or Section 811 units? What do you attribute that success to?
4. Are there any specific reasons why you have rejected SRN applicants for your units in the past?





SRN/811 Referral Strategies

- **Increase/maintain number of Offers**
 - More offers lead to more referrals and more applicants housed
 - Declined offers and rejected referrals also increase
- **Decrease number of Declined Offers**
 - Elements of Housing Choice complicate opportunities to limit or restrict applicants' freedom to decline referrals for units
 - Not all Declined Offers are about Housing Choice, but about avoided barriers
 - Rejections, restrictive tenant selection criteria, and poor customer service produce Declined Offers
 - Finding ways to incentivize service providers/applicants
- **Increase conversion of Offers to Referrals**
 - Ongoing training, communication, & open office hours for provider staff
 - Online instructions and resource materials, including videos
 - Ensuring that applications are accurate, current, and are for applicants ready to accept housing offers (documentation, ability to move, etc.)





SRN/811 Referral Strategies continued

- **Increase conversion of Referrals to Housed Applicants**
 - Decrease Rejections (see below)
 - Good Customer Service and Communication (waitlist admin, property management, and service provider staff)
 - Good faith effort by all parties to actively participate in this process and reduce the unnecessary barriers to housing applicants
- **Decrease the number of applicants Rejected by properties**
 - Make sure Tenant Selection Plans (TSPs) have language updated at least to the level used in HUD/federal TSPs
 - Consider any way possible to limit credit and justice involvement background checks – an overrepresented percentage of our priority populations have poor credit and justice involvement but the very nature of their disabilities and living situations
 - Yes – appeals and reasonable accommodation requests help but can be time consuming during a time critical process to house people in the units
 - Some would rather walk away than experience the trauma of a likely Rejection if they feel like applying/appealing is a futile gesture





Group Breakout: Strategies for Improvement

1. What populations or subpopulations should the SRN target and/or prioritize? [i.e., prevention/diversion, “moving on,” etc.]
2. What would you change about the SRN/PAIR system and/or the referral process? What would you not change?
3. How can we decrease the number of declined offers by applicants?
4. Are there ways to increase the responsiveness of our service providers and/or our property managers?
5. What can service providers do to work better with property managers and vice versa?
6. What can our SRN/PAIR staff do to improve communication with and between service providers and property managers?





**Additional
Questions/Discussion?**