

April 10, 2012

Brenda Evans, Program Director
Louisiana Housing Finance Agency
2415 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

RE: Supportive Services Programs

Dear Ms. Evans;

We would like to request the **2013 Qualified Allocation Plan** be modified to include delivering *Supportive Services to Residents Online*. Through delivering services online in a clear, categorized format, a community can reach more residents, deliver more information and greatly supplement its on-site programs.

Our reasons for this modification are as follows:

1. With active lifestyles, families working multiple jobs and children's activity schedules; it is nearly impossible to achieve a good attendance record to any on-site program. Access to resources "On-Demand" is critical to the creation of a complete *Supportive Services Program*.
2. On-site programs are not always convenient to residents, have a history of poor attendance and are expensive to maintain. By not having an additional delivery method of educational content and linkage to local resources, the bulk of the resident population is not being served.
3. According to Nielsen Media Research, over 78% of the population in the United States is connected online. In fact, senior citizens (65+) are the fastest growing segment of Internet users in the market, estimated to reach 49% by 2012. These statistics prove that allowing educational content and linkage to local resources to be delivered online; will increase the reach of any community to its residents. Therefore additional points should be awarded for those that offer online delivery systems.

4. According to Global Research firm IDC, by 2015, access to the Internet by Mobile Devices, such as *Smartphones*, will exceed that of Personal Computer access. In fact, According to Nielsen Media Research, *Smartphones* now make up 40% of all mobile phones in United States. Therefore, additional points should be awarded for those that offer multiple delivery systems to their residents to access educational content and linkage to local resources, through desktop computers and mobile devices.
5. Delivery of educational content online by video is also proven to be critical. In short, today's resident is more likely to consume content by video than written publication. In fact, comScore, a Global Research firm has published a study proving the demand for online video is staggering. According to their study, 82.5% of the U.S. audience views video online. The average length of an online video is 5.1 minutes and the average consumer watches 4.3 hours of online videos per month. Therefore, additional points should be awarded for those that offer educational content to be delivered though online videos to their residents.
6. Linkage to local resources, services and venues is another important function to any resident services program. Through technology, residents can access information in a defined area to where they live, such as Child Care, Schools, Doctors, etc. This information can be delivered in a mapping system format so that residents can not only easily find resources close to them, but obtain directions and even send resource information to their mobile phones. Therefore, additional points should be awarded for those that offer linkage to local resources with a clear and concise mapping resource program.
7. Communication between residents and property managers is vital. Communities that offer a focused online communication system to allow residents to communicate with management, request services and report incidents should be awarded additional points for delivering this system to their residents.
8. An online emergency alert system enables residents to receive emergency alert notices from community management in a single outbound message to their email address or by text message. This valuable feature creates a strong sense of community connection in the event of a crisis. Therefore, additional points should be awarded for those that offer an online emergency alert system.

9. An online system should be put in place to allow residents to view their lease start and end dates, monthly rent rates and a listing of any other monthly charges they may have (water, parking, etc.). Further, payment terms should be displayed on this page so residents can clearly view all associated fees and when payments are due. This feature assists in creating a financially stable community by helping residents to understand their financial responsibly. Therefore, additional points should be awarded for those that offer an online system for residents to view their lease and payment terms.

In summary, providing services to residents is a key component not only for affordable housing compliance, but to building and maintaining a stabilized community. Delivering residents access to services online is being done now in various markets across the country and has a proven success rate. With many *Housing Agencies* now awarding additional points in the scoring process for tax credits to affordable housing developers that provide residents with Internet access, delivering *Resident Services* online is the next logical step. Through allowing residents access to resources such as educational videos, local resources and 24-7 communication tools, the community is able to extend its reach to serve residents on-demand. The statistics (272 million people in the United States have Internet access) clearly point to the majority of the population accessing the Internet, either from Personal Computers or Mobile Devices. Now is the time to advance the delivery of services to residents to include these formats.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal to modify the *2013 Qualified Allocation Plan*.

Sincerely,
365 Connect, LLC



Kerry W. Kirby, President