

ADVOCACY & SAFETY STRATEGIES

HELP FOR HOUSING UNHOUSED SURVIVORS

Survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation face increased risk when accessing housing. Advocates must move quickly-without sacrificing safety, autonomy, or long-term stability.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION



CENTER SURVIVOR VOICE

Support choice, autonomy, and informed decision-making.



NAVIGATE & CHALLENGE SYSTEMS

Address barriers like evictions, criminal records, & discrimination.

COMMUNICATE STRATEGICALLY



Advocate clearly with landlords and partners - without burning bridges.



RECOGNIZE RISK IN HOUSING

Identify unsafe placements, predatory landlords, and exploitation red flags.

COMMON BARRIERS SURVIVORS FACE

- *Decision-Fatigue*
- *Fear for Safety - in all areas*
- *Safety Dissociation*
- *Hyper-Vigilance*
- *Non-Compliance*
- *Re-Traumatization*

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Staff Safety

- Assess risk before visits
- Avoid working alone in high-risk settings
- Use team check-in/out protocols
- Leave immediately if unsafe
- Protect confidentiality at all times
- Do not share personal staff info
- Maintain clear professional boundaries

CRISIS PLANNING

- Identify emergency supports
- Prepare backup housing options
- Know when to disengage/escalate

Survivor Safety

- Discuss location-based risks
- Screen for coercion/control
- Create a safety plan before move-in
- Prioritize stability over speed
- Verify landlord + lease legitimacy
- Check locks, lighting, exits
- Scan for trafficking/exploitation activity
- Avoid known harmful locations

SAFETY STRATEGIES CHECKLIST



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PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE

- **Time Limit:** None. Tenants sign standard, long-term leases.
- **Services:** Intensive, wrap-around support services are offered but not required.
- **Target Population:** Individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness or those with severe, long-term disabilities

TRANSITIONAL

- **Time Limit:** Temporary; generally 6 to 24 months, with strict caps.
- **Services:** Mandatory life skills, employment assistance, and counseling.
- **Target Population:** People experiencing a specific crisis or those moving out of homelessness, domestic violence shelters, or substance abuse treatment.

PROJECT-BASED SECTION 8/ SECTION 42

- **Time Limit:** Long-term compliance periods (usually 30+ years) ensuring the units remain affordable.
- **Services:** None are specifically provided; these are standard apartments with rent restrictions.
- **Target Population:** Low-to-moderate-income workers whose earnings fall beneath a certain percentage of the Area Median Income (AMI), typically 50% or 60%. Rent is capped rather than strictly income-based.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Ensuring the housing route chosen supports all unique needs of individual survivors instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.