



Coalition on Homelessness
and Housing in Ohio

COHHIO

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2011 Continuum of Care Grant Application Training Announcement

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) and the Ohio Department of Development's (ODOD) Office of Housing and Community Partnerships (OHCP) will host two Continuum of Care (CoC) Application Training Webinars. Key changes to the 2011 application, updated timelines, and e-snaps process information will be shared at the training.

The first CoC Application Training will be held on Monday, September 12th, 1pm – 4pm. The target audience will include renewal CoC grant applicants. The second CoC Application Training will occur on Tuesday, September 13th, 9am – 12pm. The target audience will include new CoC grant applicants and first-time renewal applicants. Webinar details and registration information are below.

All webinar attendees are strongly encouraged to review the 2011 CoC NOFA (available at: <http://hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewWhatsNew&whatsnewid=153>) and their new or renewal applications beforehand, and to have all materials available for review during the webinar.

2011 CoC Application Training I

Date & Time: Monday, September 12, 2011, 1pm – 4pm

Target Audience: CoC renewal grant applicants

To Register, go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/288600618>

Call-in Information: 1-805-309-0022, Access Code: 230-746-447

Agenda

- Overview of Key 2011 CoC Application Changes
- Ohio BOSCO Process and Timeline
- Exhibit 2 Application and e-snaps
- Questions and Discussion

2011 CoC Application Training II

Date & Time: Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 9am – 12pm

Target Audience: CoC new project applicants and first-time renewal applicants

To Register, go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/869516786>

Call-in Information: 1-773-945-1011, Access Code: 113-380-997

Agenda

- Overview of Key 2011 CoC Application Changes
- Ohio BOSCO Process and Timeline
- Setting Up an Applicant Profile and Creating Projects in e-snaps
- Exhibit 2 Application and e-snaps
- Questions and Discussion

If you have questions about anything, please email COHHIO at coc@cohhio.org.



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**Sen. Grendell's Proposed Drug Test Legislation Based on
Bias Against Poor People – Bill Faith, COHHIO**

Sen. Tim Grendell (R-Dist. 18) recently circulated a co-sponsorship request for a bill that would make public assistance for elderly, unemployed, disabled and other vulnerable Ohio populations dependent on the results of drug testing. While details of the proposed legislation are not yet known, the following may be attributed to Bill Faith, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, on the broad points of Grendell's proposed bill:

“The proposed legislation is based on a bias against poor people. It assumes guilt before innocence and imposes expensive and cumbersome testing on our state's most vulnerable.

“People would be required to front the cost of the test that could run as much as \$65 at a time when they're applying for state aid because they're poor. It would place unnecessary hardships on people who already face huge challenges in this tough economy.

“A similar program was introduced in Florida in July. Preliminary data show a very high percentage (98 percent) of applicants passing the test. Based on what we know, Florida is likely to save little, if any, money.

“In a time of record unemployment and record food stamp use, why are we putting up barriers to the benefits that people are eligible for? If we want to increase homelessness, this sure seems like a good plan.”



U.S. Labor Department announces more than \$5.4 million in job training grants to benefit housing veterans. Congratulations to the **Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio** who was one of 23 grants awarded through the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. The grants were awarded on a competitive basis to state and local workforce investments boards, local public agencies and nonprofit organizations. The grantees are serving 15 states and will offer occupational, classroom, and on-the-job training, as well as job search and placement assistance, including follow-up services for homeless veterans.

HUD awards \$13.3 million to bring jobs, revitalize

'Brownfields' in six cities. Cleveland and Toledo will receive funds that will enable both cities to secure additional grant funds that should be a catalyst for economic recovery, stimulate job growth, and improve public facilities. In Toledo, funds will be used to revitalize the former Owens Corning building to create office space, hotel, apartments, retail and restaurants. Cleveland will receive funds to cleanup and redevelop the former Warner and Swasey Facility to create office, lab, warehouse, and light manufacturing and post incubator space in support of the health-tech corridor.



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The House HUD Appropriations Committee released its draft FY2012 funding bill on Wednesday evening, which included \$1.901 billion for HUD's McKinney-Vento programs – flat funding compared to FY2011. A summary of the legislation is available at http://appropriations.house.gov/UploadedFiles/9.7.11_THUD_Subcommittee_Draft_Summary_Table.pdf The funding is divided into \$225 million for the Emergency Solutions Grant and \$1.670 billion for CoC grants. This funding is insufficient to fully implement the HEARTH Act.

COHHIO's RHINO program was highlighted in this week's Memo to Members from the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

*****Ohio Advocates Launch Tenant Support Network**

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), an NLIHC state coalition partner, recently launched the Rental Housing Information Network in Ohio (RHINO). Through RHINO, COHHIO aims to empower tenants to organize by supporting the work of local organizations serving tenants, and through direct work with tenants on specific issues. COHHIO hopes RHINO will increase the efficiency of their work and reduce the cost and time spent travelling across the state, while expanding their reach to tenant groups.

RHINO developed out of COHHIO's perception of the need for tenant groups within their network to build meaningful working relationships with one another and share best practices. COHHIO also saw the need to create a venue to help organizations in their network begin thinking of the services they provide as social change activities that help to build the capacity of households and communities to advocate on their own behalf and get involved in decision making processes.

The foundation of RHINO is COHHIO's existing partnerships with organizations serving tenants across the state. RHINO supports these organizations by sharing up-to-date information about tenant-related regulations, advocacy efforts, organizing strategies, and information on resources and local services that benefit their work with tenants. The program also provides technical assistance and coordination.

Partners are encouraged to use RHINO to connect with one another to seek help on a particular issue or share valuable information or experiences using four interlinked listservs for partners, providers, tenants and the Ohio Preservation Network. This month RHINO members began planning RHINO's first statewide meeting. Housing Opportunities Made Equal (Cincinnati), Cleveland Tenants Organization, Fair Housing Center (Toledo), Project House Call (Lancaster), Fair Housing Contact Service (Akron), and Zanesville Fair Housing are current RHINO partners. Tenants, health and social service providers, and housing advocates are also encouraged to become involved in RHINO activities.

The first of RHINO's five program goals is to stabilize rental households in the state. Advocates believe that rental is the new standard for low and middle income households in the wake of the foreclosure crisis. The challenge for RHINO is to make rental housing stable and secure. RHINO seeks to help renters establish working relationships with landlords, reduce utility expenses that are controlled by the renter, create a healthy home environment by removing health hazards, and develop strategies to establish a safer community.

The second goal is to organize tenant communities. RHINO helps tenants understand that a united voice around common concerns has more power and a greater chance of creating change than one person working alone. An emerging issue among tenant communities is inability of tenants to choose their own telecommunications provider. Often, landlords develop a partnership with a particular telecommunications company, leaving tenants with no ability to choose a provider with lower rates or better services. RHINO staff is currently working with tenants to develop policies that will allow tenants living in multifamily properties to choose their telecommunications provider.

Preservation of affordable housing, the third goal of RHINO, is an issue COHHIO has worked on for the past few years. COHHIO is a part of a consortium, including the Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency, which is dedicated to the preservation of approximately 14,000 units of federally subsidized affordable housing. COHHIO has been successful with incorporating tenant involvement on this issue and will continue their work with tenants through RHINO.

The fourth goal, advocating for tenant rights, is a citizen-based effort to help tenants and organizations serving tenants to get involved in local, state, and federal advocacy. RHINO's fifth goal is to ensure that tenants can choose the housing that they can afford. That means expanding housing choices through rental housing search engines like the Ohio Housing Locator and the Housing Cleveland websites; helping tenants understand the total cost of occupancy and challenging exclusionary policies at the property, city, county and state levels.

RHINO partners are urged to create new approaches to addressing the five goals and RHINO will continue to develop partnerships with organizations serving tenants and expand their work with tenant communities.

"RHINO is a laboratory for social innovation in working with tenants," said Spencer Wells, Tenant Outreach Director for COHHIO. "We're researching, testing, and sharing innovations across the state."

To learn more about the RHINO project visit <http://home.rhinohio.com>.

For more information contact Spencer Wells, Tenant Outreach Director, COHHIO, spencerwells@cohhio.org



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***COHHIO's
Mission Statement***

COHHIO is a statewide advocacy group and service providers network dedicated to ending homelessness and ensuring that all Ohioans have decent, safe, fair, affordable housing, especially those with low-income and special needs.

The SSI Ohio Project is expanding and we wanted you to know about it! As of July 2011 new sites and SSI Ohio Specialist have been added to help serve those that are most vulnerable in Ohio. SSI Ohio Specialists are trained professionals that use the SSI/SSDI Professional Module within the Ohio Benefit Bank to help those that are disabled and homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or exiting institutions with applying for SSI/SSDI, Medicaid and other benefits within the Ohio Benefit Bank. SSI Ohio Specialists help clients from start to finish with applying for SSI/SSDI, connect clients to housing resources, and provide clients with additional information for resources in the community. They also collect all of the needed documentation for the Social Security process and strive to complete the applications the Right Way the First Time!! Please visit the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) website for updates on the SSI Ohio Project and new opportunities by going to: <http://www.cohhio.org/SSI-2010.php>

***SSI Ohio Specialists work with clients by referrals and by appointments. They will meet with the client wherever is most convenient for the client (within reason).*

SSI Ohio Specialists and Sites

- § Catholic Charities of Ashtabula County- Ashtabula- (Serving Ashtabula, Geauga, and Lake Counties)
- § Pickaway County Community Action Organization- Circleville- (Serving Pickaway, Ross, Fairfield and Pike Counties)
- § Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission- Defiance- (Serving Defiance, Henry, Paulding, and Williams Counties)
- § Coleman Professional Services- Kent- (Serving Portage and Trumbull Counties)
- § Harmony House Homeless Services, Inc.- Mansfield- (Serving Richland, Crawford, and Morrow Counties)
- § Behavioral Healthcare Partners of Central Ohio- Newark- (Serving Licking and Knox Counties)
- § Interfaith Hospitality Network of Springfield- Springfield- (Serving Clark, Champaign and Greene Counties)
- § Jefferson Behavioral Health Systems- Steubenville- (Serving Jefferson and Carroll Counties)
- § Community Action Commission of Fayette- Washington Court House- (Serving Fayette, Clinton and Highland Counties)
- § Integrated Services of Appalachian Ohio- Athens- (Serving Athens, Perry, Hocking, and Vinton Counties)
- § Hope House- Findlay- (Serving Hancock and Allen Counties)
- § Neighborhood Properties Inc. - Toledo- (Serving Lucas County)
- § Homefull- Dayton- (Serving Montgomery County)
- § Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health- Cincinnati- (Serving Hamilton County)
- § MHS Inc- Cleveland- (Serving Cuyahoga County)
- § Community Support Services - Akron- (Serving Summit County)
- § Catholic Charities - Youngstown- (Serving Mahoning County)
- § Community Shelter Board YWCA - Columbus- (Serving Franklin County)
- § ICAN Housing Solutions - Canton- (Serving Stark County)
- § Community Services of Stark County - Canton- (Serving Stark County)
- § Samaritan Clinic - Dayton- (Serving Montgomery County)

You can also find detailed information for SSI Ohio sites by going to the OBB Locator which allows anyone to search for an SSI OBB site in their area. The link for the site is <https://secure.thebenefitbank.com/ums?task=locator> Once the City, State and Zip code are completed click the little box to the right that says SSI/SSDI (Ohio Only) and you will receive information on the nearest SSI Ohio Specialist.



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Upcoming USICH Webinars

HUD CoC Competition: Why Communities Should Be

Thinking About Reallocation on September 22nd from 2-3:15 p.m. In order to make progress towards the goal of ending homelessness, it is imperative that we invest in interventions that are both effective and cost-effective. Because HUD McKinney-Vento funds are largely tied up in renewals of existing projects, CoCs must be reviewing their portfolio of existing projects on an annual basis to determine if those projects are effectively meeting needs within the community. During the annual CoC competition, HUD allows continuums in Hold Harmless Need status to reallocate funds from existing Supportive Housing Program renewal projects to create new permanent housing projects. To register go to: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/875538590>

Opening Doors Across America: State and Community

Roles in the Federal Strategic Plan on September 27th from 4-5 p.m. USICH will introduce a new initiative called Opening Doors Across America. USICH Executive Director Barbara Poppe will be joined by a panel of leaders in ending homelessness from cities and states around the country. This call to action offers clear direction to counties, cities, and states on the steps we must take to achieve the goals laid out in *Opening Doors*. To register, please go to: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/792317998>

Ending Youth Homelessness by 2020: What Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Grantees Can Do

on September 29th from 1-2 p.m. Executive Director Barbara Poppe will provide an overview of *Opening Doors*, the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. The webinar will cover work that needs to be done nationally in order to achieve the goal of preventing and ending homelessness among youth by 2020. Poppe will discuss the specific roles that Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program grantees play. To register, please go to: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/221062046>



The **National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty** will host a webinar on **Beds Not Buses: Housing v. Transportation for Homeless Students** on September 27th from 2-3. The webinar will explore topics addressed in a recent white paper with the same title. To register, please go to: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/252612162>



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www.cohhio.org

<http://twitter.com/COHHIO>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Coalition-On-Homelessness-and-Housing-in-Ohio/111253932244739>

HUD releases **Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)** Legislative Proposal. The RAD is similar to the Transforming Rental Assistance (TRA) program proposed in the FY2011 budget. The FY2012 budget requested \$200 million for RAD to pay for incremental costs of converting properties to long-term project-based Section 8 contracts. The purpose of RAD is to “demonstrate the potential for preserving and improving low-income housing through conversion of assistance for public housing and moderate rehabilitation properties to long-term rental assistance.”



The **Ohio Poverty Law Center, the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation**, and web developer **Steve Simon** have created a free, publicly available, interactive interview tool that will allow people to determine if they are eligible to have their criminal record sealed (commonly referred to as expungement) in Ohio. You can find this tool at http://www.ohiolegalservices.org/public/legal_problem/reentry/expungement/qandact_view This tool will not complete the process of filing for a criminal record sealing, but will only help determine if an individual is eligible. Once an individual completes the interview portion, a document will be produced explain whether the individual is eligible (based on his or her input answers) and potential next steps.



In The News

- Southeastern Ohio Legal Services weighs in on big anti-foreclosure lawsuit - <http://www.athensnews.com/ohio/article-34739-seo-legal-services-weighs-in-on-big-anti-foreclosure-lawsuit.html>
- Ohio communities receive nearly \$3 million for neighborhood revitalization - <http://www.development.ohio.gov/newsroom/2011PR/September/1.htm>