

Ready to Roommate: The McCarthy Shared Housing Model

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The Design

- A three bedroom apartment | with shared common spaces
 - Must have a living room for common space
 - “No one moves anyone into an apt that I would not live in”
- All utilities included
 - Reduces roommate conflict and makes bill pay simple
- Leases are six months long
 - Reduces anxiety, clients feel less ‘locked in’
 - Gives the landlord an opportunity to time someone out rather than evict
 - Tenants can renew for a year after the first six months if they want to
 - Each lease is written to a specific bedroom with its own lock
- Groups
 - A six week curriculum on tenancy skills and responsibilities
 - Reduces client’s fear of the unknowns: who are my roommates, how does all this work, what are the rules, etc.
 - Groups change ‘me’ talk in to ‘we’ talk, the household is established in a safe space
- Expectations are set:
 - Roommate to roommate: noise, guests, food, cleaning, allergies, etc.
 - Tennant to landlord and client to agency representative

Managing the apartments

- For the most part the units are designed for independence
 - Check-ins can be used for higher needs clients
 - Independence is always instilled; clients are redirected to finding solutions themselves.
 - Clients start helping one another reducing the need for case management
- The roommates are the eyes and ears of the apartment
 - Roommates notify the agency if a roommate is exhibiting reckless behavior, overly intoxicated, risking their housing, etc.
 - Providers can catch a relapse before the client spirals out of control
 - Triage can begin and exits can be planned, replacement roommates can be contacted
- Agency becomes liaison between landlord and tenants, reducing tenant & landlord discrepancies

CHOICE!

- Clients have choice as to who they live with and who comes in in the event of turnover
- Clients meet and get to know each other before they move in
- Clients create and define their own house expectations before leases are signed

Spending Tactically | Three birds with one stone

- House three clients at the cost of one
- One furniture voucher for three clients
- Welcome kits are shared
- One case manager instead of three