

Community Connections

A MASSHOUSING COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE

Winter/Spring 2012

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About TAP 2012

Hundreds of housing developments across the Commonwealth have joined TAP this year. Is yours one of them? If not, there is still time to enjoy the many benefits of TAP!

Who can join?

Membership is for housing developments, exclusive to sites financed or overseen by MassHousing.

Why join?

TAP is a sound investment and an excellent way to improve your development's overall performance. TAP offers you cost-effective tools to stabilize and enrich your affordable housing community, lower your operating costs and reduce staff and resident turnover.

Membership Benefits

With a unique blend of membership benefits, TAP supports management and residents by addressing challenges in rental housing, and helps to create sustainable communities. Benefits include:

- Free trainings and conferences
- On-site programs for residents
- Dispute resolution services
- Resources and networking

What does it cost?

Annual fees pay for membership on the calendar year for just \$10/unit/year/site.

How do I enroll and/or learn more?

Go to www.masshousing.com/TAP or contact Kay Thomas, 617.854.1078, kthomas@masshousing.com

Invest in TAP today!



TAP Management Training Courses

TAP courses are open to everyone. All staff of TAP member sites have unlimited free attendance for the entire calendar year. Anyone else may attend with registration and payment of a modest fee.

Upcoming trainings include:

- *Alcohol and Drugs Level 2 - Practicing Substance Abuse Interventions & Lease Enforcement*, March 7, 2012, Hyde Park
- *ADA Issues in Everyday Housing Management*, March 15, 2012, 196 Rogers Street, Lowell
- *Hoarding Basics – What You Need to Know about Hoarding: Level 1*, March 19, 2012, Lynn
- *Screening, Tenant Selection and Reasonable Accommodation: Level 2*, March 29, 2012, Holyoke

For course descriptions and registration go to www.masshousing.com/TAPtraining.

(continued on next page)

Dispute Resolution – A TAP Membership Benefit

4 Key Points *By Josh Hoch, MWI*

A benefit of TAP membership is having access to Dispute Resolution Services. MWI gives expertise to member sites in finding effective solutions to on-site conflict through TAP, MassHousing's Tenant Assistance Program. As a neutral provider of dispute resolution MWI offers services including: consultation, mediation, facilitation, and a workshop.

Here are key points for staff of TAP member sites to know:

1. "Building Peaceful Communities," is a workshop for your staff and/or residents. This two-hour workshop is aimed at providing participants with dispute resolution skills in a fun, interactive, and safe setting. Time is also spent explaining mediation so people are more aware of what it actually is and is not. The education received during the workshop comes in handy when conflict happens; people will be able to resolve the conflict with their new skill set or residents will be more comfortable participating in mediation now that they know more about the process and have met an MWI mediator.
2. If you are trying to deal with a difficult situation and feel you could use a few more tools to handle the situation better, contact us for a consultation. One of our staff members will talk you through the challenge and help you think through how to handle the difficult situation. This can be done over the phone, often the same day, or in person.
3. Mediation, the most utilized part of the benefit, is best used sooner than later. Last year, many people waited until police were called and/or there was court involvement before contacting MWI. When conflict isn't dealt with, it can fester and spread. When you first become aware of a conflict, contact us so we can start to help.
4. If you need assistance with making sure a meeting with a group of residents will be as productive as possible, MWI will provide a neutral facilitator to conduct the meeting to make sure information is conveyed and heard effectively.

We know that dealing with conflict can be challenging and time consuming; let the Dispute Resolution Benefit help you!

For more information contact Josh Hoch, Director of Mediation & Arbitration Services, MWI at 617.973.9739 x23 or jhoch@mwj.org.

MA Health Care Training Forum

Your Connection to State Health Program Information and Resources

Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum* (MTF) provides accurate and timely information relating to MassHealth and other public assistance programs, to staff of health care organizations and community agencies that serve MassHealth members, the uninsured, and underinsured.

- Receive convenient, high-quality training by experts to improve staff's ability to work in accordance with MassHealth and other public assistance programs, policies, and procedures.
- Discuss important issues face-to-face with MassHealth and other state agency representatives at one of five regional meetings.
- Have access to continuing education on emerging topics and other EOHHS programs.
- Receive regular MassHealth updates featuring time-sensitive information and resources.
- Access resources, such as MTF meeting handouts, and FAQs.
- Network with colleagues to problem-solve and identify resources to better serve your MassHealth population.

Visit <http://mahealthcaretrainingforum.ehs.state.ma.us>

MTF meetings are held quarterly in five regions across Massachusetts. (*Registration opens the first day of the month prior to MTF meetings in January, April, July and October*). For questions regarding the MTF meetings, please contact MTF by calling 508.856.4306.

* Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum is a program of the Office of Medicaid (MassHealth) & the Office of Community Programs, a division of Commonwealth Medicine, University of Massachusetts Medical School.