



# HAC Rural Service Coordination Technical Assistance

## Program Overview

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The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is pleased to consider your application for Cohort II of HAC's *Rural Service Coordination Technical Assistance Program*.

Through this project, our goal is to implement and expand service coordination within elderly designated properties or properties with a naturally high population of occupants over the age of 50 within the USDA 515 portfolio. In 2025, using a cohort model approach, HAC supported an initial group of 8, 515 rental property owners (50+ properties, over 2000 units) to build a Resident Service Coordination peer learning environment. Cohort II will begin another cycle of evaluation and analysis to expand services within the participants' portfolio. Participants will contribute towards the creation of rural resident service coordination models and best practices that can help connect rural affordable housing residents with resources to meet a wide range of needs.

### Program Overview

Successful applicants will participate in Cohort II of USDA 515 owners seeking to add or expand Resident Service Coordination in their portfolio. In FY2023, USDA began allowing expenses related to Resident Service Coordination in the agency's multi-family program. Participants will receive Technical Assistance to utilize this new opportunity to expand services that include the following:

- Assessment and identification of individual property and portfolio needs, including the physical locations at each property to determine if it's appropriate for service coordination or if off-site space will need to be secured
- Development of a Resident Services Plan or expansion and re-targeting of existing service plan, including assessment of organizational capacity to add this service
- Creations of a resident service coordinator budget and staffing plan or engagement with 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider partner, including making recommendations for hiring, training, and supervision of the service coordinator
- Evaluation of available social services in the property's geographic footprint
- Integration of services into USDA budget, with mid-year budget approval engagement if needed.
- Implementation of ongoing tracking and outcomes measurements, including mandated compliance with USDA
- Creation of a shared Community of Practice and network for Rural Service Coordinators.
- Participating organization long-term capacity building and Resident Service Coordination funding plan.

### Term of Participation

The duration of the program is 24 months. We expect a more time and energy intensive 12-month capacity building, with the final 12 months focused on measurement, adaptation, and implementation.

## Participant Requirements

Active participation in the program will ensure your organization, and the cohort maximizes the opportunity to model effective Rural Service Coordination.

- **Actively Engage Programming:** Attend scheduled sessions and actively participate in discussions and activities. Be responsive to outreach from the program providers and support staff.
- **Agree to hire, expand upon existing or contract for expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> party Resident Service Coordination:** Owners and managers should enter the programming with a commitment to creating new or materially expanding their existing resident service coordination within their portfolio.
- **Responsive to programming guidance:** Owners and managers will be supported in submission of updated budgets to USDA, and other potential steps to support the establishment of expansion of resident service coordination.
- **Build Community:** Share insights and feedback to help improve the assistance provided.

## Applicants Must:

- Be an elderly-designated property in the USDA 515 portfolio or a naturally high population of occupants over the age of 50
- Be willing to provide anonymous residential demographic information to the AARP Foundation such as birth year, gender, ethnicity, race, income level and household size. This data will be used to calculate the number of individuals served by the project age 50 and older with low income.
- Commit to participating in a survey to gauge your satisfaction with the *Service Coordination Technical Assistance Program*

## Population & Geographies Served

The program will focus on serving 515 properties that have higher concentrations of older adults, elderly, and non-elderly disabled households. HAC will seek geographic diversity in selecting participants and will prioritize portfolios that are in underserved rural and Persistent Poverty areas.

## What is a Service Coordinator?

According to the American Association of Service Coordinators, service coordinators are valuable members of the property management team in affordable housing communities. Alternatively, service coordinators can be employees of a third party and work in conjunction with the property management team. They typically have education and experience in social work or human services. The role of the service coordinator is to link older adults, people with disabilities and low-income families to supportive services and other community resources. The Rural Service Coordination Technical Assistance Program will assist properties in utilizing the social service line item on the RD 3560-7 form. This social service allocation will enable a service coordinator to work with residents at your property.

## Service Coordinators:

- Assess service needs of residents and link them to the appropriate providers and community resources
- Facilitate programs and services such as health and wellness, job training or transportation
- Develop a resource directory of local social service agencies and providers
- Assist residents with applications for benefits and entitlement programs
- Save taxpayer dollars by helping residents age in place and remain living independently in their own homes
- Advocate for adequate, timely and cost-effective provision of services

## What are the benefits of service coordinators?

For **seniors and disabled adults**, service coordinators assist in accessing needed supportive services to allow them to maintain their independence and remain in their homes and avoid premature admission to more costly institutionalized care. For **owners and operators** of apartment communities, service coordinators can reduce apartment turnover and damage by intervening and assisting with resolution of lease violations and facilitate a stronger sense of community at affordable apartment complexes thereby decreasing crime and increasing the safety at and marketability of these properties (AASC Website).

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