



Unlocking Housing Relationships: Bridging Tenants, Community Based Organizations, and Property Managers Through Coalition

Dedicated to promoting equitable and sustainable communities to ensure all Utahns have a safe and affordable place to call home.



Explore More



Authors Note

Tara Rollins

Executive Director of Utah Housing Coalition



The **Utah Housing Coalition**, a statewide nonprofit founded in 1973, ensures all Utahns have access to safe, affordable housing. Through education, advocacy, and partnerships, we bridge housing gaps and foster community stability. We strengthen communities by educating residents, supporting housing professionals, and collaborating with key decision-makers across nonprofit, for-profit, and public sectors. Our vision is a Utah where everyone has a place to call home.

As rents soar and wages stagnate, Utah’s housing crisis deepens. Low vacancy rates intensify the strain, leaving many vulnerable. **The Utah GAP Report shows 87% of extremely low-income households are cost-burdened, with 73% paying over half their income on housing.** Without action, more families will face precarious living situations.

The **Landlord and Community Partner Coalition (LCPC)** is a proactive solution—connecting landlords, tenants, and community partners to prevent evictions and promote stability. A major Utah housing authority reports a **23% failure rate in its HUD Section 8 voucher program**, underscoring the urgency. The Coalition helps landlords house vulnerable populations while reducing financial risks and strengthening communities.

For small landlords, rental properties are retirement investments and family legacies. The (LCPC) would protect these assets while securing housing for those in need. Through education, resources, and collaboration, we help landlords sustain tenancies, reducing turnover costs, vacancy losses, and displacement.

By uniting landlords and communities, we safeguard housing stability, protect investments, and build a stronger Utah. When families have stable homes, everyone benefits. The time to act is now.



Introduction	4
Methodology	6
Findings	8
Property Manager (PM) Responses	8
Community Based Organizations Responses	12
Cross Analysis	16
Conclusion	17
Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC)	19
Educational Resources	20
Supportive Services	20
Mediation and Advocacy	20
Aligning Solutions with Findings	21
Operational Structure in Utah	21
Broader Implications	21
Conclusion	22
Resources	23
Survey Results	24



Introduction

The ongoing housing crisis highlights the urgent need for coordinated efforts among stakeholders to provide stable, safe, and affordable housing. Utah faces a significant housing crisis, with a severe shortage of rental homes affordable and accessible to extremely low-income (ELI) households—those earning at or below 30% of the area median income or living below the poverty line (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2024). This issue is exacerbated by escalating home prices and an insufficient supply of new housing units. **A data graph below highlights key statistics from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, illustrating the extent of the housing shortage and its disproportionate impact on ELI households (2024).** These trends highlight the critical need for enhanced communication and collaboration among stakeholders to mitigate evictions, educate the community about renter and landlord responsibilities and resources, while others work to implement targeted policies and investments to address the state's housing challenges.

National Low Income Housing Coalition Utah Key Facts

68,715 or 20%	-48,380	\$32,930	\$55,930	74%
Renter households that are extremely low income.	Shortage of rental homes affordable and available for extremely low income renters.	Average income limit for 4-person extremely low income households.	Annual household income needed to afford a 2-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent.	Of extremely low income renter households with severe cost burden.

However, while policies and investments can take years to establish and impact the affected communities, Property Managers (PMs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) play pivotal day-to-day roles in addressing housing challenges. PMs manage rental housing operations, enforce lease agreements, and interact with tenants, while CBOs work to dismantle systemic barriers through tenant advocacy, financial assistance programs, and tenant education. Together, these stakeholder groups hold

the potential to stabilize housing for vulnerable populations. However, when we surveyed both groups, collaboration is often hindered by communication breakdowns, misaligned expectations, resource gaps, and lack of education surrounding community programs, which exacerbate housing instability and inequities.

To shed light on these dynamics, the Utah Housing Coalition conducted comprehensive surveys, and analyzed data from PMs and CBOs operating in diverse housing roles. This report builds on those findings, examining the intersection of stakeholder experiences and identifying recurring challenges, including tenant stability, communication gaps, systemic biases, and operational barriers. It seeks to pinpoint where miscommunications and educational opportunities exist—not only between PMs and CBOs but also with tenants—and offers solutions informed by the perspectives of all voices involved.

The Utah Housing Coalition has previously collaborated on extensive research to develop valuable resources for both renters and homeowners. Tools such as the Tenant Toolkit and Foreclosure Prevention Workbook offer comprehensive guidance aimed at promoting housing stability. By prioritizing education, advocacy, and community partnerships, the Coalition is dedicated to fostering equitable, sustainable communities where all Utahns can access safe and affordable housing, and the resources necessary to maintain it. This commitment drives continued focus on creating resources that address the needs of all stakeholders in rental relationships, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations, the community organizations that support them, and their landlords.

As the demand for affordable housing continues to grow, this report emphasizes the importance of addressing the operational and systemic deficiencies in housing. Drawing on the Utah Housing Coalition’s analysis, it amplifies the voices of tenants, PMs, and CBOs to provide actionable recommendations that reflect community needs. The ultimate objective is to cultivate trust, strengthen collaboration, and build impactful partnerships that drive equitable housing solutions for all. To achieve this, we propose the formation of a **Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC)**—a unified platform dedicated to bridging gaps, fostering innovation, and delivering transformative housing outcomes through education and resources.





To understand the challenges and opportunities within Utah's housing system, two targeted surveys were developed and distributed to (PMs) and (CBOs).

Before developing survey questions, the Utah Housing Coalition conducted a comprehensive qualitative study on housing insecurity in Utah, interviewing 15 tenants, 50 landlords, and 17 CBO representatives. The study identified key issues, such as affordability, safety, and cultural competency, and proposed solutions, such as expanding affordable housing, offering flexible rent options, providing landlord training, and strengthening partnerships with CBOs. Innovative suggestions, including empathy workshops and cultural exchange programs, were also recommended to enhance stakeholder collaboration and understanding. These findings shaped strategic survey questions focused on the roles of PMs and CBOs, while prioritizing tenant needs and promoting successful rental experiences for diverse populations facing housing challenges. This research can be found on Page 27.

These surveys aimed to illuminate the interactions and dynamics between these key stakeholders, focusing on their relationships with tenants and each other in addressing housing instability in Utah communities. Designed to address the distinct roles and challenges of each group, the surveys explored critical issues such as tenant stability, communication breakdowns, systemic barriers, and operational inefficiencies. By emphasizing real-world applicability, the surveys sought to identify gaps in the housing system and generate actionable insights to improve outcomes for tenants and stakeholders alike.

The surveys conducted for CBOs and PMs utilized mixed methods, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative elements to gather comprehensive insights. The CBO survey, which consisted of 28 questions, received a total of 103 responses with a completion rate of 64%, while the PM survey included 27 questions and showed a slightly lower completion rate of 61%. The surveys featured a mix of open-

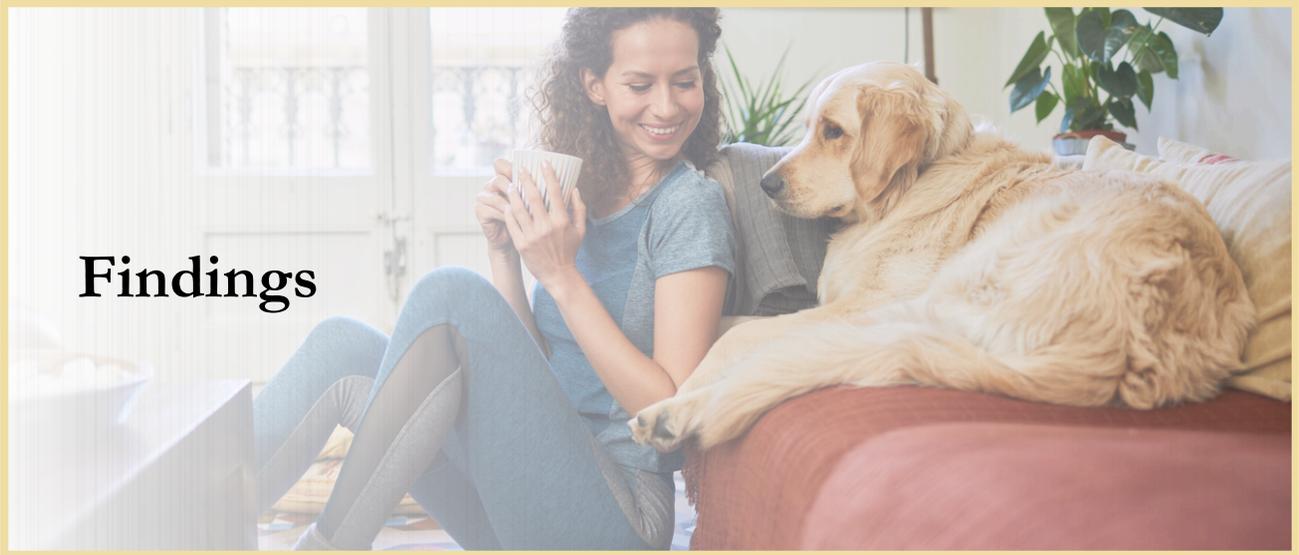
ended and checkbox questions to explore topics such as challenges, resource needs, and experiences in their roles. On average, participants spent approximately 8 minutes and 23 seconds completing the surveys, ensuring sufficient time to provide detailed input. The surveys were disseminated through a multi-channel outreach strategy to maximize participation. Distribution methods included email lists, community networks, newsletters, and housing-related events. They were distributed starting in June of 2024 to November 2024. Additionally, the surveys were promoted at conferences, workshops, and community gatherings, to engage a diverse range of respondents. Respondents represented a spectrum of operational scales, from small-scale PMs managing fewer than 10 units to large organizations overseeing thousands, as well as CBO representatives with roles such as case managers and program directors.

To analyze the quantitative data, we calculated percentages for each response category, enabling us to identify trends and behavior and thought patterns among survey participants. SurveyMonkey, the platform used to administer the surveys, facilitated the collection and initial processing of this data. For qualitative data, we conducted a thematic analysis by identifying commonalities and evaluating the frequency of recurring answers in the open-ended responses. Responses were grouped into key themes, allowing us to compare prevalent issues and priorities across participants. Outlier answers, or those that significantly deviated from the common themes, were noted. This dual approach ensured a balanced understanding, integrating statistical insights from the quantitative data with nuanced perspectives from the qualitative responses. The integration of these methods provided a comprehensive view of the challenges and preferences reported by survey respondents.

The survey questions were designed to address each group's unique experiences and challenges. PMs shared insights on tenant screening, conflict resolution, eviction processes, and collaboration with CBOs, highlighting frustrations and strategies to improve tenant relationships. CBOs focused on tenant barriers, landlord engagement, funding constraints, and wraparound services, emphasizing systemic challenges like stigma, funding gaps, and landlord resistance. Together, the surveys provided a dual perspective on the factors shaping Utah's housing landscape.

The data was analyzed to identify recurring themes and significant correlations between the experiences of PMs and CBOs. Quantitative metrics, such as the frequency of specific barriers (e.g., tenant documentation issues or eviction rates), were paired with qualitative insights from open-ended responses to better understand the housing system's challenges and opportunities.



A photograph of a woman with curly hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and leggings, sitting on a red couch. She is smiling and holding a white card. A large, fluffy golden retriever is lying on the couch next to her. The background shows a window with blinds and a potted plant.

Findings

Survey responses from PMs and CBOs provide complementary perspectives on housing operations in Utah. This analysis, categorized into PM and CBO viewpoints, underscores critical operational challenges, systemic barriers, and potential areas for alignment. The concluding section examines points of convergence and divergence, offering actionable insights to foster growth and collaboration.

Property Manager (PM) Responses

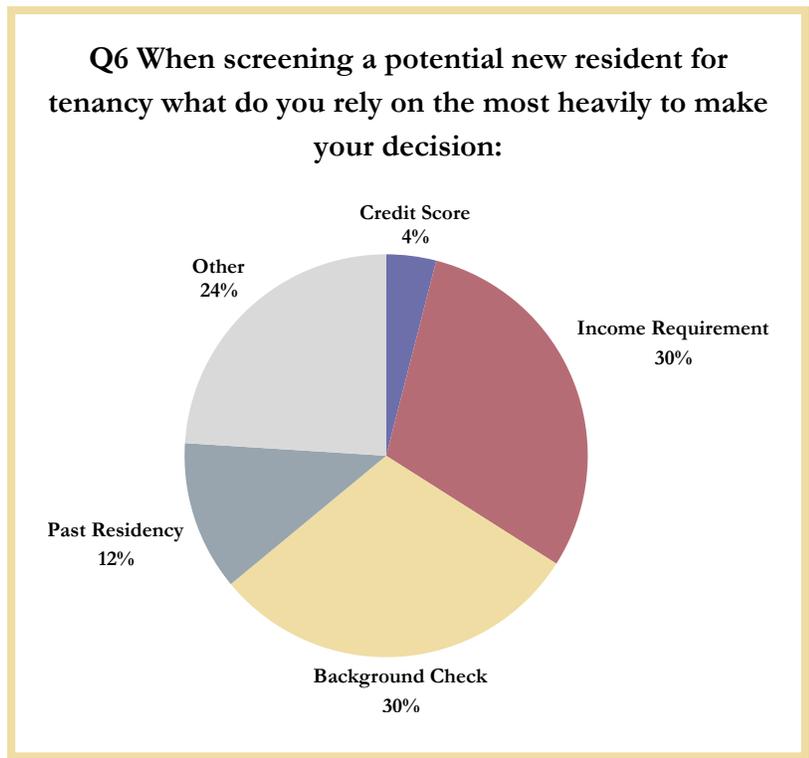
The data identifies Salt Lake County as the primary operation hub for participating PMs, accounting for 33.6% of responses. This is followed by Grand County (9.3%), with Washington County at (6.5%). The remaining counties collectively contribute 48.6%, encompassing regions such as Utah, Weber, Iron, and Carbon, which span urban, rural, and mixed demographics. Geographically, 38.3% of responses highlight urban areas, particularly Salt Lake City and Ogden. Rural counties, including Grand and Duchesne, accounted for 33.6%, while 28% represented property managers operating across both urban and rural settings. This diverse distribution emphasizes the need for tailored strategies to address the unique challenges and dynamics between CBOs and PMs Utah's varied regions.

The surveyed PMs also exhibit a broad range of experience, from as little as five weeks to as much as 48 years in the field. The median experience appears to be around 10 to 12 years, indicating a tendency for long-term engagement in the industry. However, shorter tenures highlight potential turnover or challenges by newcomers. Notably, 8.93% of respondents had less than one year of experience, while 17.86% reported three years or less in the field.

Results revealed significant diversity in the operational scope of property managers, with portfolio sizes ranging from 1 to 3,000 units and a median of 300 units. Most (68.85%) managed large apartment complexes, while 31.15% focused on single-family homes. This variation underscores the complexity of the property management landscape and the necessity for adaptable strategies to address the unique demands of various property types and regions.

Correlations were observed between portfolio size and communication preferences. **Managers of smaller portfolios prioritize personalized tenant interactions.** In contrast, those overseeing larger and more extensive portfolios relied on automation tools, such as online portals and e-messaging, to streamline operations. Open-ended responses, frequently highlighted challenges in tenant communication, including issues with responsiveness and clarity. Property managers reported using email (32.65%), in-person meetings (30.61%), and text messaging (8.61%) as their primary communication methods. However, they faced barriers such as unresponsive tenants and gaps in digital literacy.

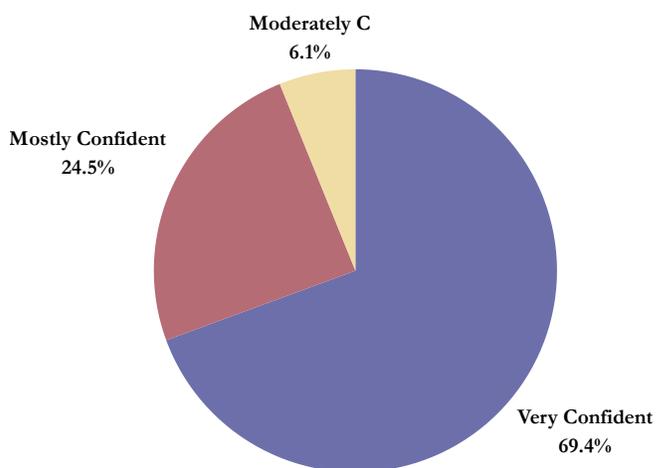
Collaboration with CBOs also yielded mixed feedback. **While over 60% of managers reported positive outcomes in tenant placement and subsidy coordination, 40% expressed concerns about insufficient follow-up and a lack of robust post-placement support.** Suggested improvements included implementing extended tenant monitoring and case management, enhancing tenant education on available support resources, and improving the integration of CBO services into property management workflows.



The rent per unit ranged from less than \$500 to over \$2,000, with more than half charging \$1,000 or more. Despite this variation, there were notable similarities in how property managers selected tenants. The tenant screening process heavily prioritized background checks and income verification, while only 4% considered credit scores a key factor. While these practices help mitigate risk, they often exclude tenants with non-traditional financial backgrounds, creating systemic barriers to housing access.

When asked about unlisted barriers that impact tenant applications, property managers identified issues such as criminal history, prior evictions, and inconsistent communication. Behavioral red flags, including challenges in following application instructions and financial issues, such as unpaid utility bills or deposit difficulties, were also reported. Some managers cited subjective factors like tenant demeanor, raising concerns about explicit biased decision-making. These insights emphasize the importance of adopting transparent and equitable screening practices to ensure fairness in tenant screenings.

Q9 If a potential tenant has a question about their lease agreement, do you feel confident and knowledgeable enough to answer their inquiries in a manner that they can understand?



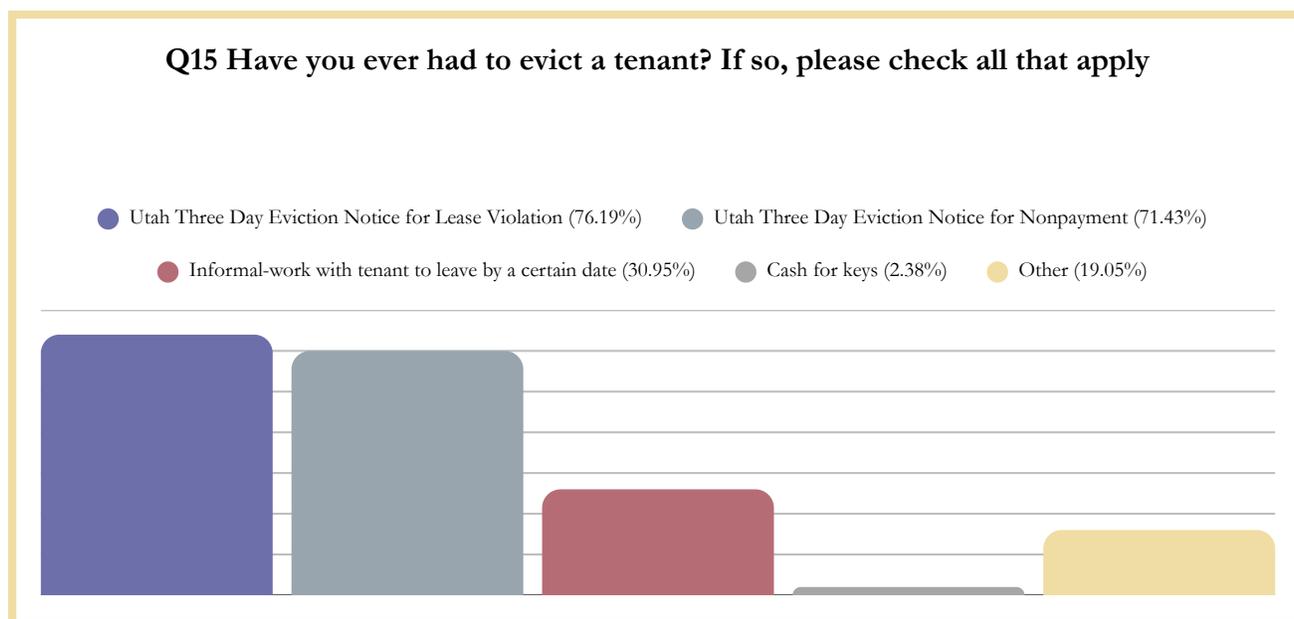
The data reveals that most property managers feel confident answering tenant questions about lease agreements, with the majority indicating they are "very confident," and smaller portions consider themselves "mostly" or "moderately" confident. However, responses to a follow-up question regarding potential improvements revealed a consensus on the need for further development in several areas. Specifically, property managers would feel more confident with additional training in landlord-tenant laws, access to

mentorship or legal expertise, and regular reviews of lease terms to enhance their confidence. Many respondents also emphasized the need for clear, stable lease agreements, while others highlighted the value of practical resources such as guidebooks, FAQ sheets, and language support (e.g., Spanish translation). Furthermore, improvements in communication skills, such as active listening and patience when addressing tenant concerns, were identified as key factors in fostering more effective interactions. These insights underscore the importance of continuous education, structured resources, and strong communication to ensure that property managers are well-equipped to handle tenant inquiries with clarity and confidence.

Q10 What would help you feel more confident to answer any questions that may come up about the lease agreement?

"Having a mentor that we could reach out to who could help with any questions that arise. We rely too heavily on our hired property management company." - PM

Evictions remain a significant barrier for tenants, and understanding the reasons behind eviction decisions provided valuable insights. As illustrated in the Q15 graph below, **the primary reasons for eviction were lease violations and nonpayment of rent.** Property managers also emphasized the importance of conflict resolution and eviction prevention practices for tenants. While informal strategies, such as direct meetings with tenants (30.95%) and leaving notices (12.5%), were commonly employed, many PMs expressed a need for trauma-informed property management training. This training could better equip PMs to handle tenant interactions, resolve disputes effectively, and reduce the need for eviction.



The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the property management landscape in Utah, highlighting the diversity in geographic operations, experience levels, portfolio sizes, and management practices. While urban areas, particularly Salt Lake County, dominate in terms of activity, the involvement of rural and mixed-region managers underscores the need for region-specific strategies to address the unique challenges posed by different tenant populations and interactions with community-based organizations CBOs.

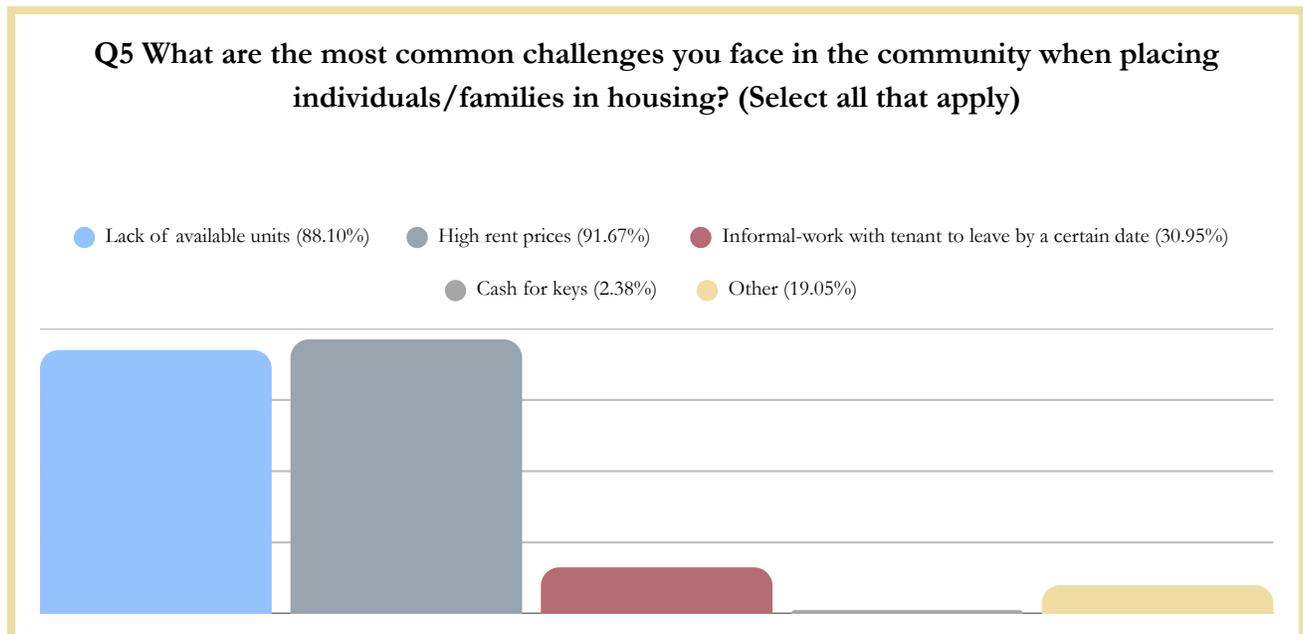
The data reveals the complexity of property management, from communication challenges to tenant screening procedures, eviction practices, and collaboration with CBOs. Emerging trends, such as the growing need for trauma-informed training and the potential impact of implicit biases in tenant selection, point to critical areas for improvement in fostering equity and enhancing operational effectiveness. Property managers could improve their operations by addressing these challenges and strengthening partnerships with CBOs while better supporting tenants across Utah's diverse communities.

Community Based Organizations Responses

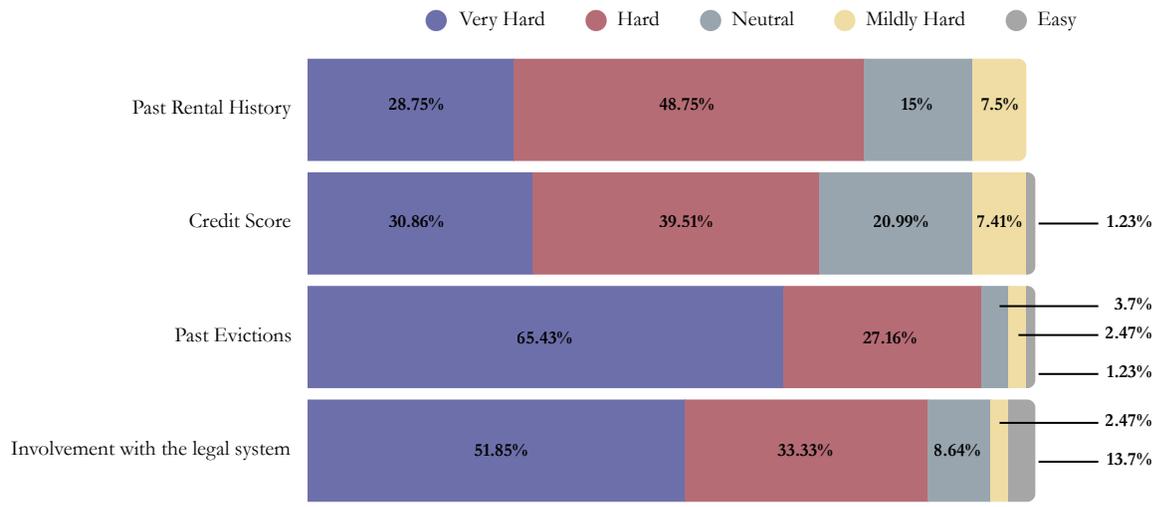
A diverse group of CBOs were surveyed regarding housing challenges. Most respondents held positions such as case managers (67%), housing navigators (11%), and outreach workers (10%). Experience levels varied, with 45% having 1-3 years of experience, 30% reporting over five years of experience. This indicates a mix of seasoned professionals and newer entrants to the field. With a median experience range of 2-5 years, the findings underscore the importance of balancing expertise with innovation in effectively addressing housing crises.

Respondents indicated operations across 28 areas, with Salt Lake County as the most frequently cited location (42%), followed by Utah County (14%), and Weber County (9%). Rural areas, including Dagget, Duchesne, and Uintah Counties, were mentioned by 6% of respondents, while 4% reported statewide coverage. These findings highlight disparities in housing needs and resource distribution.

Responses revealed a consistent and significant demand for housing assistance, with 75% of CBOs providing support daily, 20% weekly, and 5% monthly. This variation reflects the diverse roles of these organizations, from short-term interventions to long-term case management. Daily engagement highlights the overwhelming workload faced by frontline staff, who are confronted with a steady influx of clients experiencing critical barriers such as limited housing availability, high rent costs, and poor living conditions.

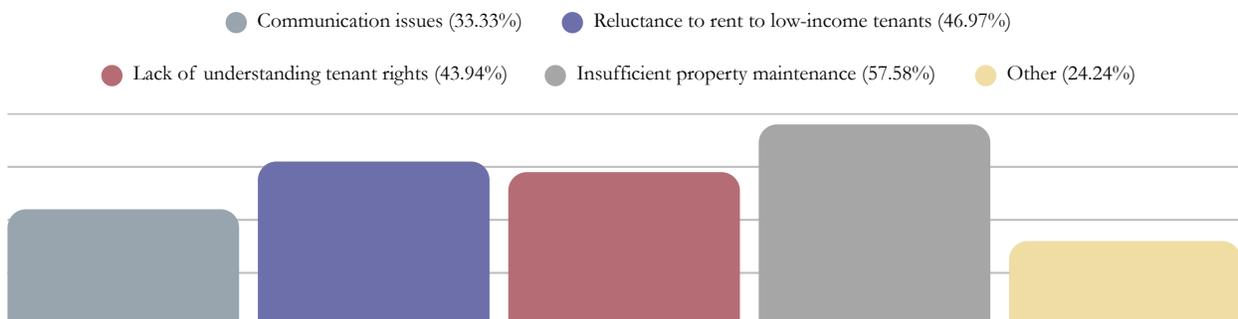


Q8 Please rate the following rental criteria as the hardest barrier to overcome:

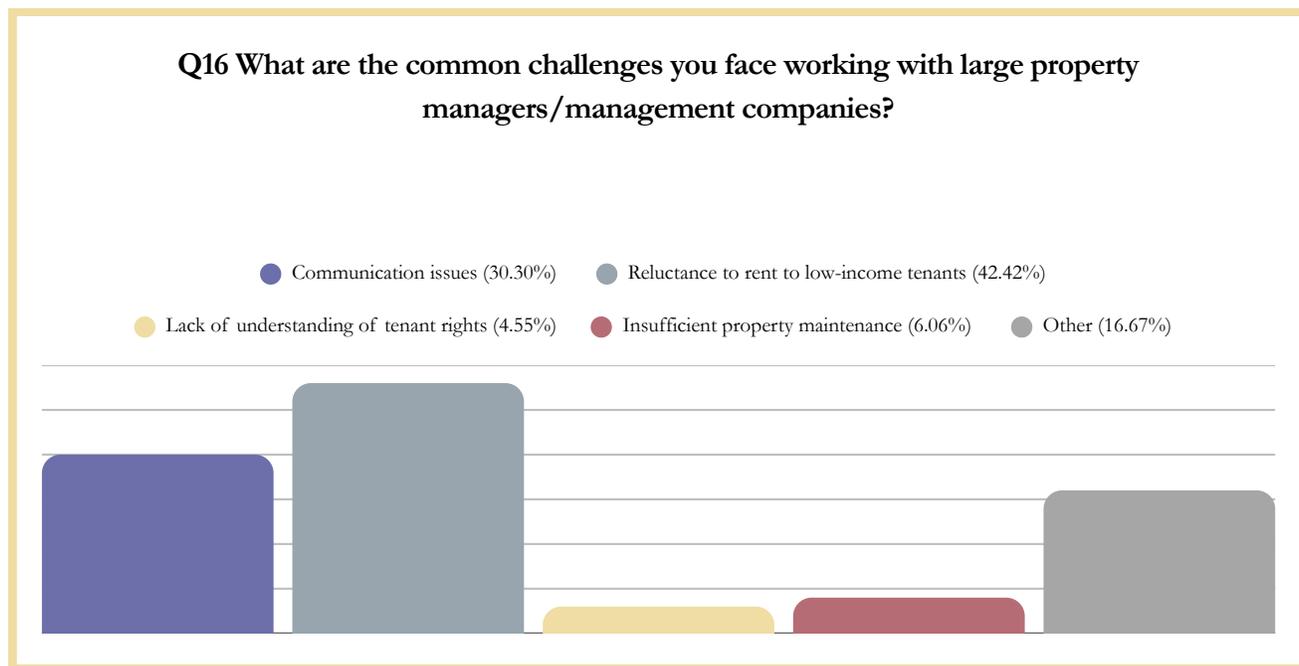


Tenant communication and follow-through represent significant obstacles, with 68% of respondents identifying these issues, particularly among tenants lacking proper documentation (80%) or having poor rental histories (75%). Newer case managers with less than three years of experience, often face direct tenant-related challenges, such as missing paperwork. In contrast, seasoned professionals tend to focus on systemic barriers like legal histories or evictions. When asked what improvements could be made to foster better tenant/landlord communication, open-ended responses suggest that addressing these challenges will require targeted tenant education programs, covering budgeting, lease agreements, and landlord-tenant responsibilities, alongside capacity-building initiatives to improve communication and readiness. Effective solutions will also require holistic interventions, including financial literacy, legal advocacy, and landlord incentives to accept high-barrier tenants, alongside robust case management, which are essential to overcoming these barriers effectively.

Q13 What are the common challenges you face when working with small property managers?



CBOs overwhelmingly identified a shortage of available housing units and high rental costs as critical challenges in placing families and individuals in stable homes. Nearly 100% of respondents cited these issues as persistent barriers, particularly in urban areas where competition for limited units is intense. **In rural regions, the shortage of landlords participating in assistance programs exacerbates the problem, with 65% of rural respondents reporting a lack of available units as their primary challenge.** In the "Other" category, when CBOs were asked about barriers to working with small and large landlords, high rent prices emerged as a significant challenge, cited by 85% of respondents. This highlights the substantial affordability gaps faced by low-income tenants. Additional challenges include regulatory barriers, such as zoning laws that restrict affordable housing development, and funding limitations for transitional costs, such as deposits and application fees, which 88% of respondents identified as critical obstacles. Respondents advocated for systemic solutions to address these issues, including flexible funding pools, increased affordable housing development, and policy reforms such as tenant protection laws and rent stabilization measures.



Engagement with landlords emerged as a critical factor in successful housing placements, though significant challenges remain. Respondents reported that 88% of landlords maintained stringent rental criteria, such as high income-to-rent ratios and credit score requirements, which posed difficulties for vulnerable populations seeking housing. Additionally, 72% of CBO participants highlighted landlords' reluctance to participate in assistance programs, often driven by misconceptions or stigma about low-income tenants, as well as those with past evictions or involvement with the legal system. Discrimination was also cited by nearly 35% of respondents as a recurring barrier, particularly in urban areas where competition for housing units exasperates these biases.

Despite these challenges, the data also revealed promising strategies to mitigate these challenges. **Financial incentives, such as deposit guarantees and risk-sharing agreements, were identified as effective tools for reducing landlord hesitations, with 70% of respondents reporting success with these approaches.** Education and advocacy efforts were also critical; 60% of respondents emphasized the importance of educating landlords about the benefits of assistance programs and sharing tenant success stories to combat stigma. Leveraging community goodwill and building personal relationships with landlords were cited as especially effective, highlighting the need for tailored engagement strategies based on geographic context.

“We have a local landlord who was working with a client, and reached out to our agency to learn more about what we do. Since that time, this landlord has been willing to engage with more of our survivors and has worked through some common barriers with several of them. He maintains his properties in excellent condition, and even accompanied a client to a HOA hearing and advocated for her on an issue. He has shown himself to be an excellent advocate.” - CBO

“I had a single mom fleeing domestic violence. One of the landlords that we work with regularly let us know that they had a unit becoming available soon. I worked with the client's DV service provider caseworker to let the client know, help her apply, pay her deposit and rent and conduct the inspection. Our good relationships with the landlord and with the local DV service provider were the biggest contributing factors to this successful placement.” - CBO

The survey findings highlight the multifaceted nature of housing challenges in both urban and rural areas, revealing significant disparities in resources, affordability, and landlord participation. CBOs continue to face persistent barriers, including high rental costs, limited housing stock, systemic regulatory issues, and tenant-related obstacles. However, innovative strategies such as financial incentives for landlords, targeted tenant education programs, and comprehensive policy reforms emerge as promising solutions to these challenges. A comprehensive, geographically tailored approach that fosters stakeholder collaboration and sustained advocacy will be essential to advancing equitable housing solutions for all communities.



Cross Analysis

Survey findings from property managers (PMs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) reveal significant disparities in housing access, affordability, and resource distribution across Utah, particularly between urban and rural areas. Rural regions face unique challenges, including limited housing stock, fewer landlords in assistance programs, and inadequate infrastructure like public transportation. Both PMs and CBOs emphasize the need for region-specific strategies to address these issues.

High rental costs and a severe shortage of affordable housing units are major barriers statewide, with rural areas disproportionately affected by a lack of participating landlords. Tenant screening practices, such as income verification and background checks, further exacerbate access issues, disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations. Addressing these inequities requires systemic solutions like expanded housing initiatives, tenant protections, and incentives for landlord participation.

Collaboration among landlords, PMs, and tenants shows potential but faces obstacles such as stigma toward low-income tenants, stringent rental criteria, and insufficient follow-up support. Financial incentives and education initiatives are identified as effective strategies to foster trust and improve housing outcomes. Operational challenges, including communication gaps and staffing shortages, underscore the need for capacity-building and trauma-informed training for both sectors. Improving communication, education, and resource access is critical. PMs cite tenant responsiveness and digital literacy as challenges, while CBOs emphasize the need for tenant education in budgeting and lease compliance. A shared digital platform for streamlined communication among stakeholders could enhance collaboration and drive sustainable housing solutions across Utah.





Addressing Utah’s housing challenges requires a comprehensive, inclusive, and well-coordinated approach. According to the *A Comparison of State-Funded Affordable Housing Programs* journal published by the University of Utah Ken C. Gardner Policy Institute, housing instability and homelessness affect at least 40,000 extremely low-income renter households in the state. These households, earning less than \$24,000 annually, spend over half of their income on housing and utilities (Wood & Becker, 2023). Meanwhile, rental vacancy rates in Salt Lake and Utah counties have fallen to historic lows of 2-3%, leading to nearly a decade of persistent rental shortages (Wood & Becker, 2023). In response, many states facing similar issues have implemented programs to increase affordable housing availability and reduce instability. This highlights the critical need for effective communication between CBOs and PMs. Strengthening these partnerships ensures that assistance programs and resources are utilized efficiently, supporting tenants and PMs and fostering safe, stable housing throughout Utah.

This report reveals significant systemic barriers, communication breakdowns, and operational inefficiencies that undermine housing stability statewide. These challenges are further compounded by stark disparities between urban and rural housing needs, inequitable tenant screening practices, and communication breakdowns among key stakeholders. Adding to these barriers, Utah’s legal framework remains notably renter-unfriendly. For example, under Utah Code Section 78B-6-802, renters served with an eviction notice are required to vacate the property within just three business days—one of the shortest timelines in the nation.

Ultimately tenants suffer the most from these breakdowns in the system. Bridging these gaps requires innovative solutions that prioritize education, stakeholder alignment, equitable practices, and resource accessibility. According to the U.S. Department of Treasury, "effective landlord engagement is essential for connecting tenants to vital services that help prevent eviction and maintain housing stability.

By partnering with landlord associations and incorporating landlord outreach into targeted community efforts, grantees have significantly increased participation in Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs. These partnerships, along with tailored processes like separate applications for landlords and tenants, have led to operational efficiencies and greater support for tenants in need" ("Intentional Landlord Engagement," 2023). The insights gathered in this report and by the U.S. Department of Treasury, display the pivotal roles of PMs and CBOs in fostering housing stability. PMs often face hurdles in tenant communication, eviction prevention, and balancing portfolio sizes with personalized engagement. Similarly, CBOs struggle with resource limitations, high caseloads, and systemic challenges in advocating for tenants with complex needs. Together, these stakeholders hold the potential to create transformative changes in Utah's housing ecosystem when supported by a unified framework that addresses these gaps directly. See some suggestions they both had below.

"Future housing employee training should cover both essential knowledge and interpersonal skills. Start with housing laws, tenant rights, and specifics of programs like Rapid Rehousing, ensuring new employees can confidently advocate for clients. Trauma-informed care and cultural competency training will help employees work empathetically with diverse clients, while communication and conflict resolution skills prepare them to manage relationships with clients and property managers effectively. Key skills like case management, documentation, and crisis intervention ensure employees can track progress and support clients through challenges. Landlord engagement training builds trust and improves housing placement success. Finally, resource navigation helps connect clients with essential community support, providing a strong foundation for stability. Together, these skills equip future employees to thrive in housing support roles." - CBO

"The relationship starts with the application. That is where you get to know each other. Applications filled out online or just filled out and dropped off, do not give you a chance to explore the application and/or background, thus building a relationship" - PM

Communication gaps between PMs, CBOs, and tenants frequently lead to misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and mistrust. Improved communication tools and practices are essential for fostering transparency and collaboration. Tenant stability is another pressing issue, with evictions—often stemming from nonpayment or lease violations—significantly impacting housing security. While PMs frequently employ conflict resolution strategies, such as direct meetings or informal notices, these methods lack the positive outcomes needed to address systemic issues. Trauma-informed training, access to educational and financial support services, and better support systems for the entire housing ecosystem could greatly reduce eviction rates and promote long-term housing security.

CBOs, known for large caseloads, are overwhelmed, leading to regulatory challenges and stigma surrounding affordable housing further exacerbate these issues, especially in urban areas where high rents relative to wages deepen the crisis. These findings underscore the urgent need for enhanced staffing support, streamlined placement systems, and increased funding for affordable housing. Open-ended responses also suggested that addressing landlord resistance and tenant stigma through education, outreach, and storytelling could be instrumental in humanizing housing challenges. Collectively, these insights suggest that a comprehensive housing strategy that incorporates tenant protections, incentives for affordable housing development, and collaborative community efforts, may be key to alleviating the effects of this multifaceted crisis.

Open-ended responses revealed that urban regions face high rent costs and housing shortages, while rural areas grapple with limited housing units, fewer services, and significant transportation challenges. These disparities point to uneven access to resources, with urban regions benefiting from more substantial infrastructure. At the same time, rural CBOs often experience limited support, funding gaps, and fewer assistance programs. Recognizing the geographic diversity of service areas is crucial for designing programs that effectively address the unique needs of all stakeholders.

Urban and rural regions of Utah face distinct housing challenges. Tailored strategies are necessary to address these disparities and ensure equitable resource distribution and access. Systemic inequities in tenant screening practices further exacerbate housing challenges, as rigid criteria disproportionately exclude vulnerable populations. Implicit biases and reliance on background checks and income verification limit access for those most in need. Transparent, inclusive approaches are required to expand housing opportunities and reduce discrimination. Meanwhile, resource constraints hinder the effectiveness of PMs and CBOs, who report gaps in education, funding, and tools necessary for addressing tenant needs. Strengthening capacity-building initiatives and enhancing funding mechanisms are crucial for overcoming these limitations. A transformative response to these challenges is the establishment of a Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC).

Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC)

Utah's housing system faces critical challenges, including systemic inequities, communication barriers, and a lack of cohesive collaboration among stakeholders. These issues, identified in this report, emphasize the pressing need for transformative solutions. **A proposed response to these challenges, developed by the Utah Housing Coalition, is the creation of a Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC).** This coalition would aim to foster an inclusive, equitable, and efficient housing system by addressing systemic weaknesses, enhancing stakeholder communication, and prioritizing education and mediation to support all involved.

The LCPC will serve as a collaborative platform, structured around four core components: education, supportive services, mediation, and advocacy. By combining these elements, the coalition intends to build trust, reduce barriers, and create sustainable relationships among PMs, CBOs, and tenants. Each of these components is essential for addressing the specific challenges identified in the housing ecosystem.

Educational Resources

The proposed coalition will provide targeted educational programs for stakeholders. Landlord Training will focus on landlord-tenant laws, providing a tool that consolidates community and government resources for all stakeholders, trauma-informed property management, and equitable practices, empowering landlords to engage fairly and empathetically. Training will also cover implicit bias and the benefits of participating in assistance programs that positively impact our communities. Tenant Empowerment Workshops will equip tenants with knowledge about budgeting, lease compliance, cleanliness and renting best practices, and conflict resolution, helping them navigate their relationships with landlords effectively and understanding their responsibilities as tenant. For CBOs, Capacity Building Training will enhance their ability to advocate for tenants, address systemic barriers, and collaborate with landlords and property managers more effectively to meet their program goals.

Supportive Services

To streamline operations and improve outcomes, the LCPC will implement several supportive services. A Centralized Digital Platform will facilitate real-time communication, streamline documentation, and provide access to essential resources for all stakeholders. Multilingual Resource Libraries will ensure inclusivity by tailoring comprehensive guides and toolkits to Utah's diverse population. Additionally, Integrated Wraparound Services will address tenants' multifaceted needs, including help facilitating and connecting to financial assistance, legal advocacy, and mental health support, helping to maintain stable housing and utilizing the current support services and infrastructure.

Mediation and Advocacy

The LCPC will also provide crucial mediation and policy advocacy services to foster equitable practices and long-term solutions. Conflict Resolution Services will use neutral mediators and industry professionals to resolve disputes between tenants, community based organizations, and landlords amicably, reducing reliance on evictions. Policy Advocacy will champion reforms such as affordable housing policies, and incentives and support for landlords to accept high-barrier tenants. Furthermore, Incentive Programs like risk-sharing agreements, deposit guarantees, and financial subsidies will encourage landlord participation in assistance initiatives.

Aligning Solutions with Findings

The LCPC directly addresses critical challenges identified in the report. Communication gaps among stakeholders often lead to misunderstandings and inefficiencies. The coalition's centralized platform will streamline interactions, improving transparency and fostering trust. Educational workshops will further enhance cooperation among PMs, tenants, and CBOs.

Tenant stability is a priority, and eviction prevention is a key goal. By offering educational resources and supportive services, the coalition will empower tenants to meet their responsibilities while equipping landlords with tools to address issues proactively. For geographic disparities, the LCPC in theory, will establish regional hubs tailored to the unique needs of urban and rural communities. Urban hubs will focus on affordability and resource accessibility, while rural hubs will prioritize landlord engagement and housing availability.

Systemic inequities in tenant screening practices and limited landlord participation in assistance programs will be addressed through transparent criteria and financial incentives, reducing barriers and improving housing access for vulnerable populations.

Operational Structure in Utah

The program would operate through a robust framework. Governance will include a diverse steering committee with representatives from PMs, CBOs, tenants, and policymakers. Regional task forces will address localized challenges, ensuring solutions are responsive to specific community needs.

Implementation would occur in phases. A Pilot Program could be launched in high-need areas like Salt Lake County, refining processes and demonstrating impact. This will be followed by a Statewide Expansion, incorporating feedback to improve effectiveness. Finally, Sustainability Measures will ensure long-term success through funding strategies and integration with state housing initiatives. Funding will come from federal and state housing grants, philanthropic organizations, and local businesses, with additional revenue from membership fees for all stakeholders accessing premium services.

Broader Implications

The LCPC represents a groundbreaking approach to resolving Utah's housing challenges. By fostering collaboration, prioritizing equity, and promoting sustainability, the coalition will set a national precedent for effective housing partnerships. It will also strengthen trust and accountability among stakeholders, creating a housing ecosystem where tenants, landlords, and CBOs can thrive together.

Conclusion

Ensuring access to housing for society's most vulnerable populations is not only an ethical imperative but also a practical necessity for fostering a stable, inclusive community. Groups such as the elderly, youth transitioning out of foster care, low-income individuals, single parents, previously incarcerated individuals, violent offenders, marginalized communities, minorities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity. These populations consistently face systemic barriers, including discrimination, lack of affordable options, and insufficient support systems, including discrimination, limited affordable housing options, and insufficient support systems, which place them at heightened risk of homelessness and social exclusion. **Addressing these disparities is crucial, as stable housing is fundamental to economic security, mental and physical well-being, and full participation in society.**

To address these challenges, a comprehensive and targeted program is needed to bridge the gaps between landlords, case managers, tenants, and other stakeholders. The initiative must prioritize collaboration and the development of resources that support vulnerable populations while ensuring equitable access to housing. Housing must be recognized as a fundamental need, and effective, comprehensive strategies are essential to make this need a reality. By championing initiatives that provide education, funding, and assurance to all involved parties, **we can dismantle systemic barriers and create a community where stable housing is a standard, not a privilege.**

Advocacy for these initiatives is vital in establishing a sustainable, inclusive housing ecosystem that leaves no one behind. The formation of the Landlord and Community Partners Coalition (LCPC) is a crucial step toward addressing systemic challenges in Utah's housing landscape. Through collaboration, education, and promoting equitable practices, the LCPC will transform housing relationships into a model of mutual support and shared success. This initiative presents a unique opportunity to build a more inclusive, sustainable future for all Utahns.



Resources



“Intentional Landlord Engagement.” U.S. Department of the Treasury, 28 June 2023, home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/emergency-rental-assistance-program/promising-practices/landlord-engagement.

National Low Income Housing Coalition. Housing needs by state Utah. (2024). <https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/utah>

Wood, James, and Max Becker. “A Comparison of State-Funded Affordable Housing Programs.” The University of Utah Ken C. Gardner Policy Institute, Apr. 2023, pp. 2–3.



Survey Results



utahhousing.org



230 S 500 W #216
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101



801-364-0077



@UtahHousingCoalition

Connect with us!

Community Based
Organizations (CBO)
Survey



Property
Management Survey
(PM) Survey



PM, Tenant, and
CBO Partner Study
(Interviews)

