Homelessness Prevention

Homelessness Prevention is a tenant based rental assistance program that is used as a rental subsidy to help very low income individuals and families afford security and utility deposits. It will be limited to a one-time supportive service during the grant period.

The purpose of this activity is to provide assistance to the very low income to help them afford a decent, safe and sanitary home without the burden of establishing a security deposit and /or utility deposits through the local Section 8 office.

The target population of this activity will benefit LMI households with incomes at or below 50% of the median income and in need of permanent housing. Priority will be given to families that fall within 35% of the median income. Participants will be selected from the Zanesville Metropolitan Housing Authority's (ZMHA) Section 8 waiting list.

Units selected must meet Section 8 Housing Quality Standards (HQS). Inspections to verity compliance with HQS and occupancy standards are made both at initial move-in and annually to meet the requirements of the ZMHA's subsidy. This inspection will also ensure that the occupancy requirements are being met and the income recertification will be performed at this time.

The assistance will never exceed the equivalent of two months rent for the unit. If the client is receiving utility deposit assistance, the funds will only be used for utilities permitted under the Section 8 utility allowance (electric, gas, water and trash). The ZMHA follows the HUD Fair Market Rent schedule to determine the rent affordability requirements. The assisted units rent cannot exceed these amounts. This program design will be utilized for deposits only and will not create cost burdened families or homelessness.

ZMHA's definition of a security deposit states that it is an amount that will not exceed one months rent to cover the costs of damages beyond normal wear and tear. ZMHA determines the payment standard; maximum amount that ZMHA will pay is an amount equal to the Payment Standard minus the family's total tenant payment. Payment Standard is established by ZMHA, based on the cost of housing and utilities for the area and the bedroom size of the unit.