



LANDLORD INCENTIVES

Landlord incentives are resources – financial or otherwise – available to encourage rental-property owners or managers to participate in voucher or other housing programs. They are particularly useful in competitive rental markets where landlords have the freedom to be highly selective and may be reluctant to take perceived risks.

Types of Landlord Incentives

- **Landlord Bonuses:** One-time payments to landlords, usually at the point of lease-up or renewal. May also include referral bonuses for landlords who refer others who end up leasing to voucher program participants.
- **Landlord Support Funds:** Money set aside to repay landlords for losses incurred because of terminated leases or damage beyond wear and tear. Usually capped at a certain amount per unit or claim. May also be referred to as damage funds, risk mitigation funds, owner assurance funds, etc.
- **Funds to Overcome Rental Barriers:** Funds to cover costs such as bringing units up to HQS standards, holding fees, security deposits, application fees, and related costs such as credit or background checks.
- **Application processing:** Housing Authority or partner agencies handle screening and application process.
- **On-call support:** Case manager or other staff to quickly respond to concerns or assist with urgent situations.
- **Mediation services:** Support resolving landlord-tenant or tenant-tenant disagreements.
- **Property improvement services:** Crews available to do maintenance or repair work, in the event a unit or surrounding property is damaged during lease term or when tenant moves out, or landscaping, gardening and other property improvement work. Can provide job opportunities and training for current or former clients.
- **Good “PR”:** Awards, appreciations, and public recognition.

Creating Incentive Programs

Define the Need

1. Talk with landlords, providers, tenants, and clients to identify the primary reasons landlords are not working with you or your clients.
2. Understand the scope and nature of the landlords you need. Is it large property management companies or smaller landlords? Those with properties in certain areas? Owners of specific types of housing?
3. Examine previous or existing incentive programs to determine what has worked and what hasn't.
4. Look at the difference between private market rents and EHV payment standards.
5. Find out how often (in Housing Authority and CoC programs) units require repairs that exceed security deposit coverage to determine potential need and parameters for landlord support funds.



Identify Potential Solutions

If the barrier is...	Potential solutions might include...
Application fees are too high	Cover application fees, including credit and background checks
Rents above EHV payment standards	“Sign on” or bonus payments to justify lower rents
Private units go off the market too quickly	Holding fees
Concerns about potential unit damage	Landlord Support Fund or Complimentary repair crews
Expense of bringing units up to HQS code	Funds to cover needed repairs or Complimentary repair crews
General hesitancy or distrust	Bonus payments; On-call support; “Good landlord” PR

Key Considerations for Program Design

- **For financial incentives, consider:** How much you will need to offer and what your criteria will be (e.g., one per landlord/unit, “new” landlords only).
- **For non-financial incentives, consider:** What benefits the Housing Authority will offer and what will require partnerships, what infrastructure will be required, and how you will ensure consistency of implementation.
- **Additional initial considerations:** Who will administer the incentive program and how will you define success?
- **Starting small:** Consider testing a pilot program, which will allow you to begin with a relatively low investment, measure the program’s impact, and identify and make needed adjustments, all while building relationships.

Potential Funding Sources

Funding Source	Relevant Allowable Uses
EHV Program Admin and Service Fees	Tenant fees including security and utility deposits, rental application fees, holding fees, owner recruitment and outreach, incentive and retention payments.
HCV Admin Fee reserves	Supplementing EHV admin fees to cover EHV admin costs
ESG-CV funds	Incentives for landlords for up to 3x rent charged, including: signing bonuses, security deposits, damage repairs + costs of extra cleaning or maintenance
Local government funding	Flexible, according to local priorities/regulations
Donations/Philanthropy	Flexible, mission-based



Community Examples of Landlord Incentive Programs

Bonus Payment Programs

San Diego Landlord Engagement and Assistance Program (LEAP)

- For landlords within the City of San Diego who rent to households exiting homelessness
- Financial Incentives:
 - Payments: \$500 for first apartment rented, \$250 for each additional unit
 - Contingency Fund: Set aside funds to cover expenses upon move-out
 - Application and credit check assistance
 - Security deposits/utility assistance (average of \$1,500 security deposits and \$100 in utility assistance per household)
- Additional incentives include:
 - Pre-inspection certification good for 60 days
 - Free online rental listing & tenant placement assistance
 - Landlord liaison
- See [Program Website](#)

Chicago Housing Authority Mobility Program

- For units in Mobility Areas: defined as community areas with poverty levels below 20% and low violent crime rates
- One-time payment equal to Contract Rent of the unit (Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) plus participant portion), received within 30 days of first HAP
- No limit to the number of payments a property owner can receive
- No application required; payments are automatically made for units that qualify
- See [Program Flyer and FAQ](#)

Support Fund Programs

Washington State Landlord Damage Relief Program

- Up to \$1,000 and up to fourteen days' rent loss to the landlord in reimbursement for some potentially required move-in upgrades
- Up to \$5,000 in qualifying damages caused by a tenant during tenancy
- Eligibility: Any landlord that has screened, approved and offered rental housing to any applicant who will use any form of housing subsidy program (excluding housing authorities)
- Created by legislation in 2018. State Department of Commerce reviews, approves, and pays claims.
- See [Program FAQ](#)



Colorado Landlord Incentive Program

- Property damage claims up to \$300 available without a preliminary unit inspection, to cover small damages exceeding wear and tear that were caused by tenant's occupancy while under a rental agreement
- Claims exceeding \$300, up to \$1000 are reviewed on a case by case basis
- Post-repair inspection conducted prior to payment
- Eligibility: Landlords participating in Landlord Recruitment Campaign who have leased the unit to an approved tenant with a housing voucher, and continue to allow placement of the tenant in the same unit
- See [Program Flyer](#)

Additional Examples: EHV Program Incentive Packages and Landlord Bonuses

- **Eureka/Humboldt County Housing Authority:** Leasing bonus (\$500 for existing and \$1000 for new landlords) + landlord liaison and free unit advertising
- **New York Homes and Community Renewal:** Bonus of one month's rent + repairs up to \$1000 to ensure unit meets HQS + losses if tenant is evicted for non-payment of their portion of rent
- **Imperial Valley Housing Authority:** Incentive of \$500 + \$250 for lease renewal + holding fee of \$250 if client is at fault for not entering into a lease + pre-inspections to expedite leasing
- **Kern County Housing Authority:** \$1,000 signing bonus + mitigation insurance fund (up to \$2,500) + 3 years of supportive services for tenants
- **Philadelphia Housing Authority:** Signing bonus of \$300–500 for any landlord who enters into lease + bonus of \$1000 for units in qualifying opportunity areas + "Owner Assurance" up to \$2,500
- **Sacramento Housing Authority:** Landlord bonuses (\$3,000 for new landlords, \$2,500 for current landlords + \$1,000 for each additional unit leased by an EHV applicant) + damage claims (up to \$2,500)
- **Caribou Housing Authority:** \$1,000 per unit leased by EHV holder
- **Housing Authority of Travis County:** \$500 incentive for lease + \$500 for renewal at one year
- **Raleigh Housing Authority:** Landlord bonus up to \$500 + referral bonus of up to \$250 for referring new landlords who establish an EHV lease