



Housing Access and Support Alliance Workgroup Minutes
March 20, 2025, 1:30PM – 3:00PM
Love Columbia (1209 E Walnut St., Columbia, MO 65201) and virtually via Zoom

Meeting Objectives:

- Develop next steps for pursuing a streamlined application and/or universal background check
- Information sheet planning

Attendees: Alice Leeper (Columbia Board of Realtors (CBOR)), Evan Lawrence (4-AChange), Shawna Neuner (CBOR/Columbia Apartment Association), Sarah Melchert (Frontier Property Management), William Lautenschlager (Love Columbia), Lori Acton (Love Columbia), Tionna Lawson (Voluntary Action Center), James Bayless (Fresh Start Sober Living Programs), Carmelita Wright (Salvation Army), Brandon Shults (Burrell Behavioral Health), Sidney Everhart (University of Missouri – Columbia), Verna Laboy (Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD)), Kerby Webb (BCCSD), Gina Jenkins (BCCSD)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Verna began by welcoming the workgroup and everyone in attendance provided introductions. During her introduction, Kerby shared she would not be as involved in future workgroup meetings due to shifting job responsibilities and left the meeting.

2. Follow up from last meeting

Individuals present at the February meeting shared there was no specific follow up but expressed interest in having additional information about the ARCH presentation by Tower Grover Community Development Corporation and requested to have the video recording of the presentation shared with the full workgroup.

3. 2025 workgroup planning

a. Streamlined application and/or universal background check

Discussion of the ARCH program continued, noting some questions that would be useful to have answered before moving forward. The RentSpree platform being newly utilized by Columbia Board of Realtors was mentioned as another alternative to understand more about. Workgroup participants were interested in learning more about both systems while also expanding research efforts to explore other options. In learning more about options, integration with different software systems already being used was identified as an important consideration.

b. Information sheets

Upon further review of the “Ready to Rent?” information sheet draft, which was also discussed at the February workgroup meeting, additional edits were planned so a new and potentially final draft can be reviewed by the workgroup at the April meeting. Suggestions for additional information sheets were compiled, with plans made for additional information sheets to be created and reviewed by the workgroup. Features to include across all handouts were discussed to ease future sharing, such as hyperlinks and document release dates. The workgroup intends to further develop distribution plans for handouts and seeks to provide information in a concise way while directing individuals to the various existing resources for more robust assistance.

Additional workgroup planning discussion included consideration for how to coordinate efforts with other groups that may have similar and sometimes overlapping areas of focus. The workgroup intends to have those which work between groups maintain communication and help identify when further coordination across groups which would help avoid duplication of efforts. Specific groups/efforts mentioned included the Upward Mobility Affordable Housing



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Coalition (if a shared website related to housing is discussed further and if any Housing Study recommendations seem applicable to this workgroup) and the working group related to housing formed during the [Boone County Sequential Intercept Mapping](#) (SIM) workshop (which might also be interested in a streamlined application and/or universal background check as they are looking into master leases).

4. Next Steps

- The ARCH presentation recording will be shared with the full workgroup for review.
- Additional information will be sought out for any unanswered questions asked during the ARCH presentation and any questions brought up at the next workgroup meeting.
- Alice and Shawna will continue to learn more about the RentSpree platform and share any updates they can provide during the April workgroup meeting.
- Lori will have a starting look into other existing systems for streamlined applications and/or background checks for the workgroup to discuss further research plans at the April meeting.
- James will continue to share any relevant updates from the SIM housing group.
- Gina will update the “Ready to Rent?” flyer for workgroup review in April.
- Shawna and Sarah will collaborate to come up with draft information for a move in ready/as you prepare to sign your lease information sheet and share this with Gina.
- Gina will convert the information Shawna and Sarah compile for another draft information sheet to be reviewed by the workgroup in April.
- Future efforts identified by the workgroup to revisit include developing plan for sharing information sheets more widely and creating additional information sheets on different topics, incorporating ideas brought up during this workgroup meeting and those discussed in February (such as understanding how to accurately report your income, how to connect to further assistance, knowing the answer to common questions on a rental application process, what to do if you have challenges paying rent before eviction becomes a possibility).

5. Closing

a. Partner Updates

- Lori shared that Love Columbia had eight [RentWell](#) graduates on Saturday and that classes continue each Thursday from 3:00 – 4:00 PM on a rotating schedule so you can start anytime. Love Columbia covers additional topics by offering options such as a growth mindset class, pre-homeownership class, and financial classes.

b. Comments and Questions

The workgroup concluded announcing the next workgroup meeting date and location with no additional comments and questions.

Next Workgroup Meeting: April 24, 2025, 1:30 – 3:00 PM at Boone Electric Community Building (Amp Room) or virtually [via Zoom](#).