New Re-Entry Housing Program in Chicago

In 2004, an estimated 1.5 percent of Illinois prisoners were known to be HIV-positive or living with a confirmed case of AIDS. By these estimates, nearly 400 HIV positive individuals were returning to Chicago from the prison system every year. Once discharged, they faced multiple challenges; including disruption of HIV/AIDS treatment, medication adherence, and transmission prevention behaviors. They also had co-occurring health factors such as substance abuse, mental illness, and other diseases. They face barriers to accessing stable housing and community-based supportive services; lack of employment readiness, job placement opportunities, and financial resources; and high risks of homelessness and recidivism.

Coordinated by AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), the AFC Reentry Housing for Health Partnership (RHHP) is a collaboration among John A. Graham Correctional Center, Menard Correctional Center, and East Moline Correctional Center (located in Hillsboro, Menard, and East Moline, Illinois, respectively) and 16 Chicago and Chicago-area providers of housing, health and other services, designed to model a continuum of reentry housing and supportive services for individuals with HIV/AIDS being discharged from Illinois state prisons.

The AFC Reentry Housing for Health Partnership aims to address the complex issues facing incarcerated persons with HIV/AIDS in the critical period following their release. Via outreach and collaborative discharge planning involving prison nurses and corrections case management, community-based case managers, and (Continued on page 4)

Senate FY10 HUD Appropriations Bill

The Senate Committee on Appropriations met July 30 and reported out the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) FY10 appropriations bill. The Senate T-HUD subcommittee reported the bill to the full committee July 29. The House completed its work on the T-HUD bill July 23.

At this time, complete details on the funding levels in the Senate committee bill are not available. However, from available information, it appears that generally the bill increases funding for HUD programs above both the FY09 levels and the President’s FY10 request. However, many funding levels are lower than the levels in the House-passed bill.

The Senate committee bill, which does not yet have a number, would provide more than $18.1 billion for tenant-based rental assistance, which is $1.16 billion above the FY09 level and $301 million above the President’s request. The House bill provided $18.2 billion for the program. Of the total provided by the

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A new report from the National Alliance to End Homelessness and Enterprise Community Partners shows that access to affordable housing is the key to preventing and ending homelessness for most families and that housing subsidies are generally all that is needed to ensure housing stability.

The two organizations conducted an extensive review of existing research on homeless families and found that those that were able to secure subsidized housing were far less likely to report an additional episode of homelessness than those families that did not secure housing subsidies. In New York City, only 7.6 percent of families that received subsidies after leaving the shelter system returned in the next two years, compared to 44.3 percent of families who went to “unknown arrangements.”

Another study reviewed for this report shows that families who received a subsidy are also very likely to attain housing stability (defined as being in one’s own apartment for one year without moving). Ninety-seven percent of families in New York City who received a subsidy were in their own apartment five years later and 80 percent had been there for at least one year without moving. This is in stark contrast to the families who did not receive any form of subsidy. Only 38 percent of these families were in their own apartments and only 18 percent had been there for one year without a move.

The report also looks at research on the ability of housing subsidies to prevent homelessness. The authors examined the recently completed Family Voucher Study, which randomly assigned poor families into groups that received housing subsidies and those that did not. Five years into this study, 12.5 percent of the families who did not receive vouchers had been homeless during the previous year, while only 3.3 percent of those using a voucher faced the same fate.

Some other findings of the report are that homeless families are much more similar to other poor families than to single homeless adults, including on characteristics relating to education levels, incarceration rates, and treatment for mental illness. For most homeless families, a housing subsidy, without intensive services or case management, is enough for them to achieve housing stability.

The full report, “Ending Homelessness for Families: The Evidence for Affordable Housing,” is available at: www.endhomelessness.org/content/general/detail/2436

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.
It was a year ago on July 30 that the National Housing Trust Fund was enacted as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. The statute required that the regulations governing the distribution of the funds to states be completed by July 30, 2009. HUD has not yet published the regulations, but is actively working to get them done as soon as possible.

The factors that must be included in design of the formula are the shortage of affordable and available rental units for extremely low income (ELI) households; the shortage of affordable and available rental units for very low income (VLI) households; the number of ELI households with “worst-case” housing needs, which includes paying more than half of income for housing, and/or living in substandard or overcrowded homes; and the number of VLI households that pay more than half of their incomes for housing. The shortage of ELI affordable units is to receive greater weight than the other factors. The final factor is the cost of housing building in the state. When the formula is made public, advocates will be able to at long last answer the most frequently asked question about the NHTF: How much money does this mean for my state?

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Over the past couple of columns I have talked about access to Social Security benefits especially Social Security Disability. This month I want to give you some helpful hints. Social Security has two disability application processes that can reduce the time from application to approval to just 20 days, if your client qualifies. One is the Compassionate Allowance and the other is the Quick Disability Determination.

**Compassionate Allowance:** Compassionate allowances apply to persons who have one of 50 specific illnesses. Once Social Security receives confirmation of the person’s diagnosis they are able to reach a finding the person is disabled. After the approval Social Security will continue work to collect the medical reports needed to support the decision, but at least your client is now considered disabled. Most illnesses approved under a Compassionate Allowance are terminal but even a spinal cord injury could qualify as a compassionate allowance – even if your client is expected to live for many years. For a list of the illnesses go to www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm If you know someone who has applied or is applying and he or she has one of the 50 diagnosis on the Compassionate Allowance list make sure you call Social Security so the application can be reviewed using the CAL guidelines.

**Quick Disability Determination:** Persons are determined eligible for this type of review based upon a review that is conducted by the computer system. When an application is completed the computer reviews the application and assigns scores to answers provided in the application. If the score fits the “predictive model” criteria the case is electronically flagged for Social Security as a QDD. A person can be found disabled in as little as 12 days under the QDD process.

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Homeless Headlines

NAEH Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Guides

The National Alliance To End Homelessness (NAEH) has published three new guides to help homeless assistance providers develop effective homelessness prevention programs and rapid re-housing programs. The guides are useful for organizations creating entirely new programs with Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) funding or those that are trying to improve existing programs. The guides include Program Planning Homework, which lists actions and decisions necessary for program planning. Information about the guides is listed below.

Rapid Re-Housing
www.endhomelessness.org/content/general/detail/2450

This guide walks through the steps of creating a rapid re-housing program, including selecting a program structure, selecting a target population, performing screening and assessment, creating a housing plan, providing financial assistance, and performing landlord recruitment, housing stabilization, evaluation, and staffing.

Homelessness Prevention
www.endhomelessness.org/content/general/detail/2451

This guide will help organizations create or improve homelessness prevention and shelter diversion programs. The guide describes the critical decisions that have to be made about targeting services, referrals, staffing, partnerships, and outcomes. It also includes some of the tools that prevention programs can use and describes the interventions that effectively prevent homelessness.

Homelessness Prevention Companion Guide
www.endhomelessness.org/content/general/detail/2451

This companion provides crucial background information about homelessness and describes the critical decisions and assessments that a community must make to create effective prevention programs.

More HPRP Resources
www.endhomelessness.org/section/prevention

For further information, contact the National Alliance To End Homelessness at the address in Headlines Directory.

Re-Entry
(Continued from page 1)

soon to be released inmates, the Partnership will transition former inmates from prison discharge to scattered-site permanent housing as quickly as possible, and provide a seamless system of post-release care and supportive services designed to improve health and life stability outcomes for this population. The project also includes a research component, providing the first-ever cost comparison of existing service usage by prison releases with HIV/AIDS (including costs of reincarceration), versus alternative approaches to discharge planning, reentry housing, and coordinated care.

In contrast to reentry programs nationwide, the majority of which offer transitional housing in a program-based setting and are thus difficult to replicate due to community concerns, the Partnership aims to demonstrate a cost-effective, replicable model of scattered-site permanent supportive housing, and measure the benefits of reintegrating formerly incarcerated individuals into the community as soon as possible. In coordination with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Corrections Initiative, the project also seeks to build the capacity of Chicago’s existing reentry programs—many of which are grass-roots agencies with limited housing and service capacities—by increasing agency-based housing stock; extending agency programs to provide intensive case management and permanent supportive housing for the first time; and coordinating new service linkages designed to support the range of challenges facing former prisoners with HIV/AIDS.

In collaboration with Christian Community Health Center (CCHC); a Chicago-based housing/medical provider, AFC (AIDS Foundation of Chicago) established the Partnership’s 38 scattered-site units of permanent supportive housing on Chicago’s South and West sides, specifically dedicated to prison releases with HIV/AIDS. The project serves 38 adult males and provides intensive case management (20:1 ratio or less), with linkages to interim supportive housing (up to 120 days) and comprehensive community-based supportive services—including primary care, substance abuse and mental health treatment, employment readiness training, legal assistance, individual and family counseling; and transportation assistance.

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Christian Community Health Center
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Chicago, Illinois 60628
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Social Security

(Continued from page 3)

Many people believe you should wait until you are disabled for 12 months. That is not true. Social Security just needs to prove that you will be disabled at least 12 months so apply for benefits as soon as you can.

If applying for Social Security Disability benefits, and you have no income and few assets (under $2,000) tell Social Security you want to also apply for SSI. SSDI benefits take longer to actually receive, so the SSI check can fill the gap until the SSDI starts. Also if applying for SSI, and you need immediate income, remember to apply for General Assistance through the township or local government. GA is able to be provided while the SSI application is pending.

If you are working with someone who is homeless, obtain the SSA 1696 (Approved Representative form) so you can help with the application. This form permits Social Security to talk with you about the application. Though not a requirement, you should also consider using the address of your agency as a mailing address for individuals during the application process. This facilitates communication. Also contact the local Social Security field office’s homeless liaison. There is one in every office who can help you.

During the application process, have family, friends, Social Workers, teachers, employers write letters that describe the impact the disability has on your ability to conduct daily living tasks, learn or work. This is called a functional description. Make sure the statements are written as clearly as possible. If written by a professional try not to use clinical language or jargon. You want to be able to create a clear picture of your client, so someone who does not work in the field is able to understand the affect the person’s impairment has on his or her daily life and relationships. Also make sure the statements include information and examples about any special accommodations or supports needed due to the disability. An example would be “When Joe wakes up each day; he lacks energy because he is so depressed, and I need to remind him to take a shower and put on clean clothes.” Be honest and don’t try to describe Joe’s best behavior but rather the Joe you see the majority of the time. This is hard to do since we often try to present people in the best possible light.

Help your client gather all the medical evidence needed. Don’t assume the doctors will send in all the information. Look at the information, to make sure there are no “surprises” in the medical reports. For example the doctor may mention that your client abuses substances. Social Security denies applications for persons who abuse substances, so you want to make sure there is information gathered and provided that shows that the physical or mental impairment would still exist absent the substance abuse.

Include information about all health conditions, even conditions not usually considered disabling. Sometimes it is not just one health problem that results in your client being found disabled, but rather the sum total of all.

Provide names and addresses of all schools, vocational rehabilitation programs, and if the person was in special education classes. If you can obtain these reports, or they are in the possession of your client, give them to Social Security (but make a copy before you release any original documents.). This information may be able to establish how long your client has been disabled.

If your client has a long history of sporadic work attempts, make sure you try to find out the real reason the job ended and let Social Security know. Often the real reason the person quit or was fired was due to behavior that is symptomatic of the illness.

Hopefully this information helps you to navigate the disability application process, and obtain needed benefits for your clients. If you want more information and resources including sample letters, medical summaries and strategies to navigate the Social Security system check out the SSI/SSDI Outreach Advocacy and Recovery website www.prainc.com/soar/.

The DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on advocacy and planning in DuPage County, Illinois and designer and trainer of Making the Connection: A Guide to Accessing Public Benefits. The DuPage Federation is affiliated with Northern Illinois University, Regional Development Institute. Questions can be directed to knelson@dupagefederation.org or cking@dupagefederation.org.
Appropriations  
(Continued from page 3)

Senate committee, $16.339 billion is for renewal of current vouchers, $75 million for 10,000 new HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers for homeless veterans and $20 million for new family unification program (FUP) vouchers. The House provided $16.387 billion for renewals and also included the $75 million appropriation for VASH vouchers, but did not set aside any funds for FUP vouchers.

Advocates continue to seek $1.6 billion for 200,000 new vouchers in FY10 and will work to have these vouchers included in the final FY10 appropriations legislation.

The Senate committee bill would provide $8.1 billion for the project-based Section 8 program. In the summary provided by the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Committee states that this funding will allow for the renewal of all expiring project-based contracts for a full 12 months. The House bill would provide $8.7 billion for the program.

The Senate committee bill would provide $1.875 billion for homeless assistance grants, slightly more than the House level of $1.850 billion. Both bills provide funding at levels above the President’s request.

The Section 202 housing for the elderly program would receive $785 million under the Senate committee bill, which is an increase over the President’s request, but less than the $1 billion included in the House bill. The Section 811 housing for people with disabilities program would receive $265 million under the Senate bill, less than the $350 million provided by the House, but more than was requested by the President.

Housing opportunities for persons with AIDS (HOPWA) would receive $320 million under the Senate committee bill, less than the $350 million included by the House but more than the President’s request.

The Senate Appropriations Committee proposes to fund the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program at $3.99 billion, slightly more than the FY09 level, but less than the President’s request and the amount provided in the House bill, $4.599 billion. The HOME program would receive $1.825 billion, which is consistent with the FY09 funding level and the President’s request, but less than the $1.995 billion contained in the House bill.

The Senate committee bill would fund two of President Obama’s priorities, the Sustainable Communities Initiative and Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. As in the House, the Senate bill would provide $150 million from the CDBG program for the Sustainable Communities Initiative, to provide integrated housing and transportation planning efforts on both the regional and local level.

Unlike the House, the Senate bill would provide $250 million for HUD’s Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, and no funding for the HOPE VI program. While the Choice Neighborhood program has yet to be authorized and there are no details available regarding the program, the Administration describes it as an effort to expand the HOPE VI program to encompass the revitalizing of neighborhoods, not just individual properties. The House-passed bill would provide $250 million to the HOPE VI program instead of funding the Choice Neighborhoods program.

The Senate committee bill would provide $4.75 billion for the public housing operating fund, slightly less than the House’s $4.8 billion, and $2.5 billion for the public housing capital fund. The House also provided $2.5 billion for the capital fund.

Both the House and Senate would provide funds to continue the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling program that began in FY08. The House would provide $64 million and the Senate $65 million.

The full Senate is expected to take up the Committee-passed bill when it returns after the August recess. Then the Senate and the House will meet in conference to come up with a final bill.

With the end of the federal fiscal year looming soon after Congress returns in September, Congress may not have time to complete work on the T-HUD FY10 appropriation legislation and other pending appropriations bills before October 1, 2009, deadline. If it cannot meet the deadline, Congress will have to pass a Continuing Resolution to provide short-term funding for any programs that have not received their regular appropriation.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition budget chart will be updated at www.nlihc.org/template/page.cfm?id=28

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.

Trust Fund  
(Continued from page 3)

billion to capitalize the National Housing Trust Fund. And I want to reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that when Congress finalizes its budget, this funding will be included. As New York City’s Housing Commissioner, I oversaw the largest local affordable housing plan in American history, to create or preserve 165,000 affordable homes for half a million people - more than the entire City of Atlanta. That’s the scale of ambition we need nationally - and realizing it starts with the National Housing Trust Fund.”

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory.
The Owens Foundation
(formerly Thomas M. & Mary M. Owens Foundation)
7804 College Dr., Ste. 3SW
Palos Heights, IL 60463-1473
Telephone: (708) 361-8845
Contact: Mary M. Owens, President

Type of Grantmaker: Independent foundation

Financial Data (year ended 12/31/07):
Total giving: $1,284,771
Giving activities: $1,284,771 for grants; $61,203 for foundation-administered programs

Geographic Focus: Illinois
Limitations: Giving primarily in Chicago; No grants to individuals directly, or for capital campaigns, building funds, or raffles.

Fields of Interest: Housing/shelter, development
Population Groups: Economically disadvantaged; Homeless
Types of Support: General/operating support
Application Information: Application form not required.

The Dunham Fund
8 E. Galena Blvd., Suite 202
Aurora, IL 60506
Telephone: (630) 844-2774
Fax: (630) 844-4405
Email: info@dunhamfund.org
URL: www.dunhamfund.org/index.html

Type of Grantmaker: Independent foundation

Financial Data (year ended 12/31/07):
Total giving: $1,306,583
Giving activities: $1,306,583 for 9 grants (high: $495,750; low: $5,000)

Geographic Focus: Illinois
Limitations: Giving primarily in Illinois

Fields of Interest: Education; Housing/shelter; Vocational education

Ploughshares Foundation
108 W. Grand Ave.
Chicago, IL 60610-4206
Telephone: (312) 321-9700
Contact: Donald M. Ephraim, President

Type of Grantmaker: Independent foundation

Financial Data (year ended 12/31/07):
Total giving: $1,696,000
Giving activities: $1,696,000 for 135 grants (high: $80,000; low: $1,000)

Geographic Focus: National
Limitations: Giving on a national basis. No grants to individuals.

Fields of Interest: AIDS; Human services; Population Groups: Homeless
Types of Support: General/operating support
Application Information: Application form not required.

Patrick and Anna M. Cudahy Fund
P.O. Box 11978
Milwaukee, WI 53211-0978
Telephone: (414) 271-6020
E-mail: secretary@cudahyfund.org
URL: www.cudahyfund.org

Type of Grantmaker: Independent foundation

Financial Data (year ended 12/31/07):
Total giving: $1,408,758
Giving activities: $1,408,758 for 179 grants (high: $50,000; low: $750)

Number of Staff: One part-time professional, One part-time support

Geographic Focus: Wisconsin
Limitations: Giving limited to Chicago, Illinois, and Wisconsin for local programs and for international (U.S.-based) programs. No grants to individuals, or for endowments; no loans.

Fields of Interest: Adult/continuing education; Adult education—literacy, basic skills & GED; Education; Education, reading; Family services; Food services; Homeless, human services; Housing/shelter, development; Human services; Public affairs; Rural development; Youth, services
Population Groups: Aging; Children/youth; Disabilities, people with; Economically disadvantaged; Homeless; Immigrants/refugees; Women
Types of Support: Annual campaigns; Building/renovation; Continuing support; Equipment; General/operating support; Matching/challenge support; Program development; Seed money; Technical assistance
Application Information: The fund does not accept proposals via fax. Application guidelines, procedures and form are available on the fund’s Web site. Wisconsin Common Application Form required. Application form required.
Board meeting date(s): Usually in March, June, September, and December.
Deadline(s): January 5, April 5, July 5 and October 5. Final notification: Two weeks after meetings.
Headlines Directory

Center for Community Change
1536 U Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
Telephone: (202) 339-9300
http://www.communitychange.org

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
820 First Street, NE, Suite 530
Washington, DC 20002
Ph: (202) 408-1080
Fax: (202) 408-1056
http://www.cbpp.org

Chicago Coalition for the Homeless
1325 S. Wabash, Suite 205
Chicago, IL 60605
Telephone: (202) 408-1080
Fax: (202) 435-0198
http://www.cbpp.org

Coalition of Citizens With Disabilities
300 E. Monroe, Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62701
Telephone: (217) 522-7016
Fax: (217) 522-7024
http://www.enteract.com/ccc/
index.htm

Corporation for Supportive Housing
205 W. Randolph, 23rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: (312) 332-6690
Fax: (312) 332-7040
Email: il@csh.org
www.csh.org

Food Research and Action Center
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, # 540
Washington, D.C. 20009
Telephone: (202) 986-2200
Fax: (202) 986-2525
foodresearch@fas.org

Housing Action Illinois
11 E. Adams, Suite 1601
Chicago, IL 60603
Telephone: (312) 939-6074
Fax: (312) 939-6822
http://housingactionil.org

Housing Assistance Council
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 606
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 842-8600
Fax: (202) 347-3441
http://www.ruralhome.org

Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies
3435 Liberty Drive
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 789-0125
Fax: (217) 789-0139
http://www.iaaca.net

Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
601 S. 11th
Springfield, IL 62703
Telephone: (217) 789-2830
Fax: (217) 789-1939
http://www.ilcadv.org

Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness
Matthew Hanafee, Executive Director
P.O. Box 3956
Oak Park, IL 60303-3956
Telephone: (708) 263-3590
Email: ILHomeless@aol.com

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
620 E. Adams, CTPS-3
Springfield, IL 62701
Telephone (217) 785-6142
Fax: (217) 782-1206
http://www.commerce.state.il.us/

Illinois Department of Human Services
Homeless Services and Supportive Housing
400 W. Lawrence, 2C
Springfield, IL 62762
Telephone: (217) 782-1217
Fax: (217) 524-6029
http://www.state.il.us/agency/dhs/

Illinois Food Bank Association
P.O. Box 8293
Springfield, IL 62791
Telephone: (217) 522-4022
E-Mail: cifbank@aol.com

Illinois Housing Development Authority
401 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60611
Telephone: (312) 836-5200
Fax: (312) 836-5286
TDD: (312) 836-5222
http://www.ihda.org/

National Alliance to End Homelessness
1518 K Street, NW, Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 638-1526
Fax: (202) 638-4646
E-mail: naeh@naeh.org
http://www.endhomelessness.org/

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
333 ½ Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20003-1148
Telephone: (202) 546-1969
Fax: (202) 546-2063
E-mail: ncvh@ncvh.org
http://www.ncvh.org/home.html

National Coalition to End Homelessness
2201 “P” St., NW
Washington, DC 20037-1033
Telephone: (202) 462-4822 x234
Fax: (202) 462-4823
Email: info@nationalhomeless.org

National Community Reinvestment Coalition
727 15th St., NW, #900
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 462-4822 x234
Fax: (202) 628-9800
Telephone: (202) 462-4823
Email: info@nationalhomeless.org

National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
1518 K Street, NW, #900
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Fax: (202) 628-9800

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E-mail: info@nlihc.org
http://www.nlihc.org

National Rural Housing Coalition
601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20004
Telephone: (202) 393-5229
Fax: (202) 393-3034
http://www.nrhcweb.org

Rural Development
2111 W. Park Cr, Suite A
Champaign, IL 61821
Telephone: (217) 403-6222
Fax: (217) 403-6231

Southern Illinois Coalition for the Homeless
P.O. Box 955
801 N. Market
Marion, IL 62959
Telephone: (618) 993-0094
Fax: (618) 993-4013

Supportive Housing Providers Association
212 E. Ohio Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60611
Telephone: 773-935-4663, ext.123
supportiveha@aol.com

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Community Planning and Development
77 W. Jackson 24th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3507
Telephone: (312) 353-1696
Fax: (312) 353-6231
http://www.hud.gov/local/ch/chihome.html

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http://www.hud.gov/local/ch/chihome.html