Be a Chicago-Style Advocate!
AIDS Housing Campaign 2007

AIDS Foundation of Chicago
Everyday Advocacy

- A baby crying for food when it is hungry
- Convincing a friend to see a movie you want to see
- Haggling with car mechanic on getting a price you can afford
- Negotiating a job offer to receive the salary you need
If you can advocate for yourself, you can advocate for the HIV/AIDS community – the same skills apply.
There’s power in numbers

ORGANIZE

- Join AFC’s Statewide Advocacy Network: www.aidschicago.org
- You TAKE ACTION!
- Sign up when you sign the petition!
2. Know Your Elected Officials

And get them INVOLVED

- Identify who represents you:
  www.vote-smart.org
- CALL THEM on important issues
- WRITE THEM
- MEET THEM

In short, establish a relationship with your elected officials!
Who Represents You?

CITY:
Mayor Daley
Aldermen

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY:
1 State Senator
1 State Representative

CONGRESS:
2 U.S. Senators
1 U.S. Representative
3. Share What You Know:

You Know HIV/AIDS:
- Voice your opinions to the press, elected and appointed officials.
- Tell how HIV/AIDS affects you and your community.

You are connected to HIV/AIDS Agencies:
- Encourage groups to support client advocacy
- Help others to identify their elected officials
- Provide regular advocacy updates
- Ask groups to make a commitment to advocacy
4. Get the Word Out

- Forward emails.
- Copy and distribute materials.
- Use existing networks — personal, professional, social.
- Talk to your church, mosque, or synagogue about getting involved in the housing campaign.
5. Be part of the process!

- Start preparing for the next election TODAY!
  - Are you registered to vote?
  - Moved recently?
    You need to re-register.

- Register peers, co-workers, friends—your networks!
Da Mayor
About the Chicago City Council

- 50 aldermen
- One per ward
- 11 newly elected
- Meet monthly in City Hall
- Serve four-year terms
Who’s my alderman?

- Ask a volunteer with a laptop
- Call 311
- Even if you think you know, it’s good to double-check!
The Chicago Budget Process

- Budget preview in July
- Neighborhood budget hearings in August
- Mayor’s budget released in October
- City Council Budget hearings in October
- Full budget committee meeting November
- Budget approved mid-November
- New fiscal year starts Jan. 1
Let’s get to work!

The Chicago AIDS Housing Crisis
What are...

- **Community residences** are group living settings that provide intensive supportive services (substance abuse, mental health, etc.) to help people stabilize their lives and prepare to live on their own.

- **Housing locator/advocates** help people living with HIV/AIDS find housing, negotiate with landlords, and link consumers with services.

- **Rental Assistance** (Housing Assistance/HAP or Long Term Rental Subsidy) is payments to landlords for consumers who can live on their own, but need financial help to do so.
# The need for AIDS housing funding in Chicago

- 10,000-15,000 people living with HIV need housing assistance, based on national estimates.
- Just 1,460 units of AIDS housing available in the Chicago Metro area.
- 211 low-income people disabled by HIV could lose housing assistance in January.
- People with HIV shouldn’t have to wait for weeks or months for housing after leaving the hospital, substance abuse treatment, or prison/jail.
Stable Housing: More than Just a Roof Over Your Head

Housing means...

- Clean Water
- Refrigeration
- Food
- Bathrooms
- Safety

... things many of us take for granted.
Housing = Healthcare: Housing for Those Living with HIV/AIDS

- Access to clean water and refrigeration means medications can be taken on a schedule. Some must be taken with food and many necessitate access to a bathroom.

- Data show that when housed, people/families living with HIV/AIDS require fewer hospitalizations and less emergency room care.

- Housing provides the best opportunity to access drug therapy and treatment and social services.

Source: www.nationalaidshousing.org
What’s the Link Between Homelessness and HIV/AIDS?
Homelessness Increases Risk of Contracting HIV/AIDS

- Up to **60% of all people living with HIV/AIDS have a lifetime experience with homelessness** or inadequate housing.

- Lack of stable housing is associated with drug and sex risk behaviors.

- Those who lack stable housing are less likely to be aware of their HIV status and are often **unable to access medical care**.

Source: nationalaidshousing.org
Many Living with HIV/AIDS Lack Stable Housing

- 1/3-1/2 of those living with HIV/AIDS are homeless, can’t afford their current housing, or at risk of homelessness.

- Homelessness among people living with HIV/AIDS is pervasive in communities of color.

- People living with HIV/AIDS can face rental discrimination because of ongoing stigma.

Source: nationalaidshousing.org
HIV/AIDS on SSI: Who can live on $623/month?

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is often the sole source of income for people with HIV/AIDS.
- $623/month
- What’s left over after paying rent?
“Affordable” Rent in Chicago
As Determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Source: www.hud.gov

* Projected for 2008
**Federal Funding for AIDS Housing:** Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)

| What is HOPWA? | The only federal housing program that prevents homelessness and creates access to medical care for people/families with HIV/AIDS through community-based housing programs. |
HOPWA Funds in Chicago: How Federal Funds Become Housing

Department of Housing & Urban Development

Chicago Dept. of Public Health

Housing, Rehab, Purchasing, Construction

Community Residences

Housing locator & advocacy

Rental Assistance
In 2007, the Chicago area was awarded $5.5 million in HOPWA funding.

- **30% Rental Assistance** (Housing Assistance Pgm., Long Term Rental Subsidy)
- **58% Community Residence** (Canticle Ministries, Interfaith House, etc.)
- **12% Advocacy** (Legal Assistance, CCH, etc.)

Source: AFC Factors Database
The AIDS Housing Continuum

- Homelessness
- Hospitalization
- Community Residence
- Supportive Housing
- Own Apartment with Rental Assistance
- Own Apartment No Rental Assistance

Substance Abuse Treatment
The BROKEN Continuum

- Homelessness
- Hospitalization
- Community Residence
- Supportive Housing
- Own Apartment with Rental Assistance
- Own Apartment
- No Rental Assistance

Substance Abuse Treatment
Community residences are facing challenges

- Waiting lists – “months”
- Can’t “graduate” people into less intensive forms of housing to open up beds for new residents.
- Tremendous unmet need for services for people with HIV leaving hospitals, prison/jail, substance abuse treatment, etc.
Community residence funding has been flat

HOPWA Community Residences - Flat Funding After One-Time Bonus

FY2004: $5,000,000
FY2005: $3,000,000
FY2006: $2,000,000
FY2007: $1,000,000
Community residences are helping fewer people

HOPWA Community Residences - Number of Clients

FY2004  FY2005  FY2006
What’s going on with the Rental Assistance Program (AKA HAP)?

- A short-term rental assistance program that prevents homelessness. Participants receive payment for **21 weeks or 5 months** per year. Support is made available through payments to landlords and homeowners to cover rent, mortgages, and utility costs.

- Rental assistance allows participants to stay in their own homes, and if they move, the money goes with them.

- **In 2007, the average annual per person subsidy was $2,250 and this amount is projected to be the same in 2008.**
Rental assistance funding is declining

Source: AFC

* Projected for 2008
The # of households receiving rental assistance is dropping

Source: AFC

* Projected for 2008
WHY is rental assistance funding dropping?

- Program is surviving on one-time funding
- CDPH keeps the program alive – thank you!!!!!
- But it’s time to get multi-year, sustainable rental assistance funding
What Will Happen to Rental Assistance Consumers on Jan. 1, 2008?

27% of Rental Assistance Funds

211 Low-Income Disabled People With HIV/AIDS will Lose Assistance & Face Severe Housing Insecurity
What Will Happen to Those Cut Off?

- Substance Abuse
- Resistant to HIV Meds
- Lack of security
- Declining health
- Homeless
- Lack of Medical Services
- Unstable Housing
- Forced to Move in with family
What are we going to do about it?
Advocate for $1.5 Million in Additional Funding from City of Chicago for AIDS Housing Assistance

- **$400,000** would prevent 211 rental assistance consumers from losing assistance

- **$1.1 million** would
  - Open up new Rental Assistance slots
  - Expand services or beds in community residences
  - Increase housing locator/advocacy
Big Thanks to Alderman Tom Tunney!

- Led 2006 campaign that got $500K in HIV prevention funding
- The goal: get the request in the Mayor’s introduced budget!
Campaign Timeline

- **July 2007** – Letter to the Budget Dir. signed by 35 Aldermen
- **Aug. 2007** – Budget hearings
- **Oct. 2007** – Mayor’s budget introduced; budget hearings and public testimony
- **Nov. 2007** – Final budget passed
- **Jan. 1, 2008** – New fiscal year begins
Good news – but we still need to fight!

- Our voices were heard!
- Mayor Daley spoke: “WE WILL MEET WITH THE ADVOCATES TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE.”
Sign and circulate the petition!

- To Mayor Daley and Aldermen
- Sign online at www.aidschicago.org
- Sign the petition while you are here
- Take some with you and fax or mail them back
Get petitions signed at AIDS Run and Walk

- Need 50 volunteers
- THIS Saturday, 9/15
- 9 AM SHARP!
- Balbo & Columbus
- Rally for AIDS housing funding
- Help collect 1000 or more petitions
- Sign up before you leave
Write a letter to Mayor Daley and your Alderman – Tonight!

- How AIDS housing helped YOU or someone you care about
- If you are living with HIV, say so!
- Volunteers at computers can help you identify alderman
- Check out the sample letter
- Leave your letter with us
Hello my name is Emil Jones. I am H.I.V. Positive. I and is not good I've applied for medical aid for a year and my health was not good I've applied for medical aid for a year and some thing if it was not for Adap I would be in a hospital and have no income to pay for my meds which cost more than 2,000 a month and I've been on them for a year and I'm one person imagine the 40,000 a year how become infected each year please help this program by 3,000.000.00 million dollars we need the help I need your support.
Other ways to get involved

- Sign up for AFC’s Statewide Action Network
- Meet with your alderman – AFC will help!
- Stay tuned for an action/protest
- Write a letter to your local paper
- Tell others!
Let’s hear from providers and consumers

- Jennifer Nelson, Interfaith House
- Arturo Valdivia-Bendixen
- Melanie Paul
- Franklin Gray
Questions?

Learn more online at:

www.aidschicago.org
Before you go...

- Write a letter to Mayor Daley and your alderman – hand it in
- Sign the petition and hand it in
- Sign up to volunteer at the AIDS Run/Walk to collect petitions (See John C)
- Register to vote/change your address (See Jessica)
Contact:
John Peller
(312) 334-0921
jpeller@aidschicago.org
OR
Jim Merrell
(312) 334-0963
jmerrell@aidschicago.org