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September 2006

# Florida Supportive Housing Coalition Newsletter

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## Partner Agencies



Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association



## 2005-2006 Sustaining Agency Members

- Boley Centers
- Camillus House
- Carrfour Supportive Housing Community Partnership Group
- Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Grove House of Jacksonville
- Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services
- Volunteers of America of Florida

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## Ensuring Energy Efficiency

**Department of Community Affairs Ensuring Energy Efficiency For Low-Income Households**  
*~Weatherization Program holds training for hot weather climate~*

The Florida Department of Community Affairs' Weatherization Assistance Program conducted a series of training sessions in St. Augustine, Florida, recently. The training focused on whole-house weatherization to improve energy efficiency.

"The Department is proud to

be providing hands-on training to improve weatherization practices," stated Department of Community Affairs Secretary Thaddeus Cohen.

The Weatherization Assistance Program emphasizes improved air sealing techniques and adequate insulation of floors, attic and walls. Energy efficient health and safety concerns are also key components of the program.

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## A Message From The President Affordable Housing for All!

That's the theme of this year's annual conference. Affordable and workforce housing have been hot topics throughout the state and the Coalition is determined that the housing needs of all Floridians are included in the conversations and solutions.

This year's conference will be in Orlando - an easy-access location for everyone in our state. We will have sessions on services, Medicaid, housing development, operating supportive housing and advocacy. In addition, we have CEU hours available for addiction treatment/prevention professionals, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, licensed clinical social workers and nurses.

We hope that everyone will come to this year's conference and make it the most successful conference we've ever held! Florida is going through many transitions and we all need to stay focused on ensuring the supportive housing needs of every Floridian is addressed.

There is more information on the upcoming conference in this newsletter. Please visit our website to register online - there are discounts available for group registrations. There are also scholarships available for consumers wishing to attend the conference.

Thank you - and see you in Orlando!

-Shannon Nazworth

## OPPAGA Progress Report

*Progress Report: While Some Steps Have Been Taken, Office of Homelessness Needs to Enhance Efforts to Assist the Homeless Population Within the State, Report No. 06-59, August 2006*

While Florida continues to do well on a statewide basis in obtaining dedicated federal funding for the homeless, many local providers of homeless services continues to receive less than their pro-rata share of federal grants. The State Office of Homelessness has taken steps to address this concern, but needs to continue its efforts.

The office also needs to continue to develop and disseminate guidelines for helping homeless persons access and enroll in mainstream programs, such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and food stamps. Progress has been made at the state and local level in developing discharge planning process to help prevent inmates, persons receiving mental health services, and children leaving foster care from becoming homeless.

The entire report is available at:  
<http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/0659rpt.pdf>



## RECAP: Recovery Home Loan Program

The Group Homes for Recovering Substance Abusers Program provides for the statewide establishment of self-help recovery housing services and cost effective methods for many recovering individuals to avoid relapse.

Under the law, recovering individuals will have the opportunity to develop a new alcohol and drug-free lifestyle by accepting responsibility for operation of alcohol and drug-free recovery housing. By having responsibility for operating a recovery house within a democratically run and self-supported system,

individuals gain confidence in exercising responsibility without the use of alcohol and drugs.

If you or individuals you know in Florida are interested in applying for the Recovery Home Loan Program, you will find step-by-step procedures for applying for this loan on the Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association's (FADAA) website ([www.fadaa.org](http://www.fadaa.org))

Guidelines are available on approval and disbursement of loans as well as establishing policies and rules for use of these funds to provide homes for recovering substance abusers.

## Developing a Message to Connect to a Broad Audience

One of the keys to successful communication, whether it is with the media, policymakers, advocates or the general public, is to have a clear and consistent message that taps into the target audience's core values. The Opportunity Agenda recently released *American Opportunity: A Communications Toolkit*.

The kit outlines how to create a message strategy by using opportunity as a messaging frame. The toolkit provides basic theories of messaging, and outlines examples of successful campaigns while providing a framework for creating media opportunities, op-eds, and press releases.

Even if opportunity is not the basis for your organizations messaging, the toolkit provides resources that would be helpful in creating an effective messaging campaign. The underlying research, theory and examples of the toolkit can be extended to other core values, such as equality, pragmatism, or fairness. More information is available at [http://www.opportunityagenda.org/site/c.mwL5Kkn0LvH/b.1616947/k.A4CE/Advocates\\_Toolkit.htm](http://www.opportunityagenda.org/site/c.mwL5Kkn0LvH/b.1616947/k.A4CE/Advocates_Toolkit.htm).

## Ensuring Energy Efficiency cont...

The training sessions consisted of a week-long seminar, including three days of classroom training followed by on-sight weatherization of a selected home to demonstrate proper techniques learned during the classroom time.

"Proper weatherization can translate into hundreds of dollars in savings each month for low income households," stated Norm Gempel, State Manager of the Weatherization Assistance Program. "To families who must make tough decisions between food, health-care and energy costs, these savings can be life changing," added Gempel.

### About the Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is federally funded annually by the U.S. Department of Energy and receives supplemental funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The mission of the WAP is to reduce the monthly energy burden of a household by improving the energy efficiency of their home.

### About the Department of Community Affairs

DCA was established to assist Florida's communities in meeting the challenges of growth, reducing effects of disasters and investing in community revitalization.

Visit <http://www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/> for more information.

## SAVE THE DATE! Florida Supportive Housing Coalition Annual Conference

### Affordable Housing for All!

November 6 & 7 in Orlando

Embassy Suites Hotel

Lake Buena Vista

8100 Lake Avenue

Orlando, FL 32836

(407) 239-1144

(407) 239-1718

Online Registration Available at:

[www.flshc.net](http://www.flshc.net)

### Why Attend:

- Learn about current state of supportive housing in Florida and future opportunities
- Quality speakers on timely topics
- Network with peers from across the state
- Information on programs that work
- Exhibits

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## Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities: Testing Guidance for Practitioners

This report from the Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), draws upon both the exploratory and pilot phase experience of the Disability Discrimination Study (DDS) and offers practical information to advocates, enforcement and regulatory agencies, and other interested parties about the possible uses of disability discrimination testing as an investigative tool to aid in the enforcement of the fair housing laws.

This guide is not intended to be a definitive "how to" manual that describes a singular approach to conducting tests for discrimination against persons with disabilities. When testing is performed as part of an investigation, it is necessary to tailor the approach to the facts that are presented in a complaint or to focus on specific prohibited practices that are being investigated. As with all testing, a variety of testing strategies, test structures, and testing approaches can be appropriate depending upon the circumstances that prompt a test to be conducted.

The purpose of this guide is to offer general guidance, insights, and resources for organizations interested in conducting disability discrimination testing. It is important for fair housing practitioners to understand the protections that the Fair Housing Act offers persons with disabilities in order to

develop testing strategies that will capture evidence about whether the law has been violated.

Chapter 1 discusses the DDS overview, purpose and organization of the report.

Chapter 2 offers an examination of the law itself and the provisions that prohibit different types of discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of the basic testing processes, with special focus on using persons with disabilities as testers.

Chapter 4 provides a more detailed examination of lessons learned from both the exploratory and pilot phases of the project with regard to types of discrimination, site identification, and testing protocols, and results.

Chapter 5 concludes by addressing test documentation and analysis and summarizing some of the enforcement options that are available when testing results indicate that discrimination may have occurred.

Visit [http://www.huduser.org/Publications/pdf/DDS\\_Testing\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/Publications/pdf/DDS_Testing_Guidance.pdf) to download the entire guide.

## Volunteer Florida Foundation and Florida Hurricane Relief Fund to Help Low-Income Residents Strengthen Their Homes

With the 2006 Hurricane Season well underway, Florida's attention now turns to strengthening homes and communities to better prepare for future natural disaster. Volunteer Florida Foundation and the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund have been designated by the Florida Department of Financial Services to assist in a \$20-million outreach to help low-income residents strengthen their homes against such disasters. The Volunteer Florida Foundation is a partner of the My Safe Florida Home program, where qualifying low-income Floridians may be eligible for up to \$5,000 to better ensure the survival of their home after a hurricane.

Visit [http://www.volunteerfloridafoundation.org/newsletter\\_sep06.php](http://www.volunteerfloridafoundation.org/newsletter_sep06.php) for more information.

### **Annual Conference cont...**

#### **Registration Fees:**

- \$200 FLSHC Members
  - \$300 Non-FLSHC Members
- Discounts available for group registration

#### **Special Hotel Conference Rate**

- \$119 single/double (Mention FLSHC Conference)
- Cut of date: October 6, 2006

#### **Conference Sponsors:**

**Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta**  
**Florida Housing Finance Corporation**  
**Miami Coalition for the Homeless**

**MMA Financial**  
**Neighborworks America Southern District**  
**Reznick Group**

**Join these companies as a sponsor!**