



Selecting a Property Manager

Many organizations that engage in supportive housing development activities do not possess in-house expertise in property management activities or determine that performing such activities is not a good fit for their organization. The following are some suggested questions for reviewing the qualifications and selecting a property management company for a planned or existing supportive housing project.

1. Does the management agent have previous management experience with subsidized or assisted housing?
2. What experience has the management agent had in participating in designing and developing housing?
3. Does the management agent have experience in working with people who were formerly homeless?
4. What is the management agent's philosophy of property management with regard to:
 - Asset management issues
 - Tenant relations and tenant involvement
 - Community relations
5. What is the management agent's experience working with a social services team in conjunction with property management staff?
6. What is the management agent's experience working with tenant councils and leadership groups?
7. Does the management agent understand and have experience complying with the project's funders regulatory requirements associated with tenant leasing and occupancy?
8. What is the current size of the management agent's portfolio? Will this project receive sufficient attention?
9. Does the management agent have a local office?
10. What is the staff turnover history within the management organization?
11. Do recent audits and financial statements for properties they manage indicate management competence?

Note: This document is included within the *Development and Finance* section of CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, which is available at www.csh.org/toolkit2. This document has been adapted from CSH's publication *Family Matters: A Guide to Developing Family Supportive Housing*, which is available at www.csh.org/publications.

Checking References

It is an important screening step to ask the management agent for a complete list of clients, to call at least 3 to 5 of the references from comparable projects, and to ask each of them the following questions:

1. How long has the management agent been engaged?
2. Has the management agent's property financial statements been independently audited? If yes, do these audits document financial competence? Have there been findings that would suggest a weakness within the management agent's capacity?
3. Has the management agent consistently operated the property within the annual operating budget? Has this been at the expense of any housing, maintenance or programming philosophy or priorities?
4. Has the management agent supplied sufficient staff to assume the expectations of the management contract? Has there been significant staff turn-over?
5. Was the management agent involved in initial occupancy and lease up activities? Did they meet initial time projections for total lease-up?
6. Did the management agent develop occupancy policies and practices? If yes, were these policies developed within a development team? Have these policies been revised? If yes, explain.
7. Have you found the management agent responsive to the mission and vision of the housing development?
8. Does the management agent's staff coordinate on a regular basis with the projects' services staff?