



## VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

<b>Title:</b> <u>Housing Rights VISTA</u>
<b>Sponsoring Organization:</b> Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky <b>Project Name:</b> Homes for All VISTA <b>Project Number:</b> 16VSSKY001
<b>Site Name:</b> The Coalition for the Homeless
<b>Focus Area</b> Housing Assistance and Stability <b>Primary:</b> Housing Assistance

### Goal of the Project:

The Housing Rights VISTA will expand our efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Jefferson County, Kentucky through housing stabilization and eviction prevention. Housing is essential to achieve better health, education, wealth and safety but most homerenters are not aware of their rights or resources that can help stabilize their housing. The Housing Rights Coordinator will create a better understanding of the major issues causing the eviction rate in our county to be double the national average and work with homerenters to strengthen their rights through education and collaboration. This project will build our community's growing capacity to change the root causes of eviction and housing insecurity. The VISTA will work closely with Coalition for the Homeless partners, including newly hired eviction-prevention staff who work for Louisville Metro Government, to shift procedures for filing evictions. The VISTA will also engage in community organizing efforts to elevate the voice of directly-impacted homerenters. Thanks to new rental assistance resources in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, those who show up for their eviction court hearing are drastically less likely to have a judgment filed against them. The VISTA will engage volunteers in reaching out to neighbors to remind them of their court date, tell them how important it is to attend, and help them prepare for it. Combined with a social media campaign and other educational resources, the VISTA will raise awareness about homerenter rights, connect homerenters with new financial assistance resources, and help shift the balance of power from landlords to tenants. To ensure the sustainability of this project, the VISTA will also focus on data collection, story gathering, continuous quality improvement, and intentional leadership development and partner with others who will continue these efforts long-term.

**Objective of the Assignment (July 2021 to December 2021):** Objectives should describe the result of a set of related activities to be accomplished THIS YEAR that will lead toward the overall GOAL in a sentence or two.



**The Housing Rights VISTA will organize homerenters and volunteers to increase community engagement and ensure work is centered on the voices of those who are directly impacted.**

**Member Activities:**

- **The Housing Rights VISTA will create a homerenter advisor group. This group will be composed of directly-impacted members of the community as well as front-line direct service providers that are experts in eviction.**
  - The VISTA will hold regular meetings with directly-impacted people and direct service providers.
  - The VISTA will use the lived experiences and expertise of the advisory group to make our systems more effective and equitable.
  
- **The Housing Rights VISTA will create a program to monitor eviction court**
  - The VISTA will recruit volunteers to be court watchers to connect with people that are being evicted. Homerenters will be connected to appropriate resources to aid in relocation and prevent homelessness.
  - The VISTA will create an effective story collection strategy to document what people experience in eviction court and their housing journey.
  
- **The Housing Rights VISTA will organize volunteers to do outreach to homerenters to advise them of their rights, how to attend eviction hearings, how to be prepared, and resources that are available.**
  - The VISTA will recruit, train, and manage volunteers to go door to door or make phone calls to homerenters facing evictions
  - The VISTA will collect, manage, and report on data related to outreach efforts.

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**Objective of the Assignment (October 2021 to March 2022):** Objectives should describe the result of a set of related activities to be accomplished THIS YEAR that will lead toward the overall GOAL in a sentence or two.

**The Housing Rights VISTA will create and disseminate educational resources to decrease eviction filings and judgements against homerenters.**

- **The Housing Rights VISTA will create or work with skilled volunteers to create brochures, social media graphics, flyers, and community education materials.**
  - Develop and create “know your rights” information to equip homerenters with the tools and information to navigate community issues while renting.



- Develop a community presentation about Homereater rights, eviction, and its connection to affordable housing to give to schools, community groups, and churches in the community.
  - Develop educational and awareness-raising graphics to share on social media
  - **The Housing Rights VISTA will utilize feedback from homerenters to design outreach efforts that are more effective and meet homerenters where they are.**
    - Analyze past efforts to determine what procedures can be improved.
    - Implement changes and track outcomes.
    - Re-analyze to ensure that changes in procedures are having the desired effect.
  - **The Housing Rights VISTA will disseminate housing rights information on key websites and social media.**
    - Create pages on the Coalition for the Homeless website for homerenter rights information.
    - Design a social media campaign that broadens awareness of homerenter rights.
    - Share information with partner organizations and encourage them to share on their websites and social media.
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**Objective of the Assignment (July 2021 to October 2021)** Objectives should describe the result of a set of related activities to be accomplished THIS YEAR that will lead toward the overall GOAL in a sentence or two.

**The Housing Rights VISTA will increase the number of homerenters who appear for and are prepared for their eviction court hearing to reduce eviction judgments against homerenters.**

- Provide outreach to homerenters on the eviction court docket to stress the importance of attendance.
    - Organize volunteers to perform phone and door knocking outreach
    - Develop and distribute effective materials that will inform homerenters of their options and how to attend Eviction Court.
  - Develop a training to inform homerenters what documents to bring and what to expect in eviction court.
    - Develop the content by working with experts in the field and translate that information in an approachable format.
    - Create short videos that will inform homerenters about the eviction process and how to protect themselves.
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**Objective of the Assignment (*February 2022 to June 2022*)** Objectives should describe the result of a set of related activities to be accomplished THIS YEAR that will lead toward the overall GOAL in a sentence or two.

**Develop key leaders to ensure that the Coalition for the Homeless, community partners, and/or homerenter groups are prepared to continue the efforts achieved in the first three goals.**

- *Establish working groups to maintain collaboration on housing stability*
  - Perform outreach to community groups to inform them about evictions and the programs and initiatives that are taking place in Jefferson County.
  - Create opportunities for a broad coalition to engage in this work.
- *Work to solidify the leadership and on-going needs of homerenter groups established*
  - Maintain relationships with partners
  - Hold quarterly meetings with partners to check in on their commitment, capacity, and any emerging needs.