SAGE’s Housing Development Toolkit

Strategies for Housing Developers and Nonprofits/CBOs in Developing LGBTQ-Affirming Affordable Elder Housing
Purpose/Mission of Toolkit

Naming the Need
LGBTQ+ people face disproportionate rates of discrimination and poverty, including a shared history of community trauma involving both interpersonal and systemic discrimination. This has impacted LGBTQ+ elders in a myriad of ways around disparate health outcomes and unequal access. This might manifest in compounded isolation due to the absence of support from family of origin; increased vulnerability for elder abuse, caretaker abuse, intimate partner violence, and service provision exclusion; and decreased access to economic stability and wealth accumulation, which highlights the social disparities elders are living with based on their histories of discrimination.

Toolkit will Address this Need By
- Providing best practices based on SAGE's housing development process, as well as leading trailblazers across the country
- Helping to imagine your goals, identify necessary parts of the process, and provide a roadmap to get there with unique attention to your specific location and community need
- Identifying common challenges and temper expectations to inform planning and holistic preparedness
- Sharing worksheets and planning tools to break the process down into manageable steps
- Advocating nationally against housing discrimination
- Training eldercare providers to be LGBTQ+ culturally competent
- Educating you about your housing rights
- Helping builders across the U.S. replicate LGBTQ-affirming housing

Context of Affordable Housing
One housing intervention for LGBTQ+ older people is the creation of LGBTQ-affirming affordable elder housing. While available to anyone meeting the housing community's criteria, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, these affordable developments are designed specifically to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ older people. The goal of this housing model is to create inclusive communities where any sexual orientation and gender identity is embraced, and diversity is celebrated, focusing on creating LGBTQ-affirming and inclusive environments with LGBTQ+ culturally competent staff and LGBTQ-focused programming.

For more contextual information on LGBTQ-affirming affordable elder housing, please see SAGE's "Understanding the Affordable Housing Development Process Primer."

This toolkit was made possible with the generous support of The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

Background of SAGE and NHI
Mission: SAGE leads in addressing issues related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) aging. In partnership with its constituents and allies, SAGE works to achieve a high quality of life for LGBTQ+ older people, supports and advocates for their rights, fosters a greater understanding of aging in all communities, and promotes positive images of LGBTQ+ life in later years.

SAGE's National LGBTQ+ Elder Housing Initiative addresses the challenges of housing affordability, emotional and physical safety, and aging with dignity in community on several fronts by:
- Building LGBTQ-friendly housing in New York City
NHI HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

Section 1: Community Outreach, Engagement, and Involvement: Buy-in Strategy
Section 1: Community Outreach, Engagement, and Involvement: Buy-In Strategy

One key first step is developing buy-in from the community and political leaders. Buy-in simply means to support and believe in an idea or concept. To do this, think about the following:

Identify and speak to existing relationships:
- Elected officials
- Community boards
- Community residents
- Community organizations

Develop and nourish new relationships.
Assess the neighborhood and become and remain involved with the community.
Engage with established communities, with reverence to today’s economic and political context:
- Engage with and reach out to communities of color, LGBTQ+ residents, and long-term residents
- Center intersectionality, and take into account the historical context of space and displacement
- Identify who you can sign linkage agreements for your own capacity and to nurture partnerships
- Identify who is already doing work you can uplift without reproducing or co-opting

Outreach strategy: Where do people you want to reach congregate? Go to them! (Places of worship, community centers, political convenings, etc.)

Outreach strategy: Host public information sessions as well as feedback sessions to both inform and be informed by the community.

Outreach strategy: Engage with community leaders at the very beginning across various sectors/roles.

HELPFUL TIP

In conducting outreach, keep detailed outreach and presentation logs

Be methodical about documenting outreach attempts for transparency and solid outreach strategy, but also to report to city and elected officials who will need to know and ask who, how, and when people were reached. Elected officials will ask you for this information many times throughout the process.

Documenting allows you to see where you are NOT reaching people, so draw a map. Reflect the community you are building in, and then you can reach out to areas you haven’t yet reached.

Archive your work for outreach purposes, but also for evidence to community partners and elected officials.

Keep detailed records of WHO was reached and how, how many times, and how to contact folks.

Think about how to remain in contact for relationship-building and to strategically reach a larger base of people—keep folks informed along the way!

APPENDIX TOOL

Analytical Problem-Solving Worksheet

Think about your long and short-term goals, and strategies to get there. Is this feasible?
Under federal Fair Housing Law, government agencies, banks, and elected officials need to know this information of where you are doing outreach, how, and to whom, so chronicle it

- How many people in a city, borough, community board, or in an elected official’s district did you reach?
- Chronicle demographics by address, not by race or ethnicity—people may fear discrimination

**APPENDIX TOOL**

*Power Map*

A power map is a simple organizing tool to identify stakeholders with interest, stakeholders with decision-making power, and who to bring in accordingly.
# APPENDIX TOOL: Analytical Problem-Solving Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Remember</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Environment of the problem</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nature of the problem to solve, underlying issues</td>
<td>Why is this a problem?&lt;br&gt;Why do we care?&lt;br&gt;Name goals!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholders</strong>&lt;br&gt;Who is involved?</td>
<td>Identify relevant/current stakeholders, who is a player and what is their role? Be exhaustive.</td>
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<td><strong>Central Issue</strong>&lt;br&gt;Central Problem/Issue</td>
<td>How can you work to address or solve this issue, or a piece of this issue? Name goals and objectives through exploring the problem!</td>
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<td><strong>Identify Alternatives</strong>&lt;br&gt;Options, interventions, and choices—what are your range of options to solve the problem? Take organizational capacity into account.</td>
<td>Research what is relevant, hone in. Name constraints (legal, costs, etc.). Acknowledge underlying issues while sticking to the larger goal. If your plan is not feasible, that's ok and an important conclusion to recognize!</td>
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<td><strong>Identify Criteria</strong>&lt;br&gt;Develop 3-5 (typically) criteria to evaluate each alternative solution.</td>
<td>Develop measures to assess, i.e.: dollars, feasibility, time, efficiency, staff labor, # of stakeholders supporting, etc. Then measure your options quantifiably.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong>&lt;br&gt;Apply criteria to each alternative solution, project outcomes and probability</td>
<td><em>Alternative 1</em>: Measured by Criteria 1, 2, and 3&lt;br&gt;<em>Alternative 2</em>: Measured by Criteria 1, 2, and 3&lt;br&gt;Etc.….</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Decision &amp; Next Steps</strong></td>
<td>Base this on detailed, quantifiable analysis, what is the final plan?</td>
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APPENDIX TOOL: Power Map

Strongly Oppose Your Objective  

Least Decision-Making Power

Most Decision-Making Power

Strongly Support Your Objective
Section 2: Community Outreach, Engagement, and Involvement: Reaching Tenants in Need
Section 2: Community Outreach/Marketing, Engagement, and Involvement: Reaching Tenants in Need

Reaching LGBTQ+ elders in need of affordable housing requires intentionality, creativity, and planning.

Develop a plan of how you are going to reach the people who may be underserved and can benefit most from this housing and meet them where they are at.

Map out a detailed and structured outreach/marketing strategy from the beginning through the lease-up process and don’t forget to include a budget for designing assets, posting ads, and printing materials.

Use a variety of platforms to provide information accessible to LGBTQ+ elders:

- Use print materials – don’t just focus online. Make sure you budget for advertising in local newspapers, interest magazines, flyers, postcards and other mailers.
- Cater to the spectrum of how people connect across age groups to create successful reach (website, Facebook, emails, robo-calls, text messages, etc.).
- In-person community forums/workshops (see below).
- Create an email newsletter and have interested participants sign-up to receive updates and information on the application process.
- Create different outreach plans for each population you are trying to reach. For example, concentrated outreach to transgender and gender-nonconforming elders will look different than to Spanish-speaking elders.
- Create a dedicated webpage with information on the project and an email sign-up form for folks to sign-up for updated information.

In-person outreach: Go to the communities you will build in and the demographics you aim to serve

HELPFUL TIP

First-Come First-Serve Tenant Applications

When you go live on application day, be READY and have a multi-pronged outreach strategy (social media, emails, phone calls and texts). Think about hosting an in-person application day (via RSVPs) with volunteers assisting on computers and tablets. Make sure applicants know what information they need to provide well in advance of application day.

- Provide easy to understand presentations with lots of details, including photos of the project, financial requirements, and amenities included.
- Create brochures with information about the residences that showcase positive imagery of aging elders.
- Design postcards or flyers with a simple form for people to fill out during in-person outreach and make sure they opt-in to emails (if they have an email address). That way you can communicate with them regularly about the building’s progress and also important information about the application process.
- Design large posters with an easy-to-read typeface with information and a sign-up link for potential applicants.

Outreach strategy: Tenant Engagement Tactics

Where do you reach prospective tenants?

- Community Forums
- Religious and social groups
- Community organizing leaders—people with deep connections to local community
• Aging and medical institutions
• Community centers

**Outreach strategy: Tenant Engagement Framing Questions**

Keep these questions in mind as you conduct tenant outreach.

• Who are you reaching and how are you reaching them?
• Where can you reach folks you are not?
• How does your mission impact who you are housing?
• What draws people in or shuts them out?
• How do you maximize diversity and reach deeply vulnerable communities?

**Outreach strategy: Tenant Communications**

Here are some ways to communicate with prospective tenants along each step of the way, including once they are housed.

• Embody transparency to tenants from the start, through lease-up and once they are housed:
• Clarity on unit size, amenities, building regulations
• Clarity on guest protocols
• Define "LGBTQ-affirming," "LGBTQ-friendly," "LGBTQ-inclusive" and other terminology used in communications
• Create avenues for internal tenant communication and community building:
  - Online forums
  - Lobby community boards
  - Tenant associations

• Ensure economic and community expectations defined in tenant onboarding meetings:
  - Outline of financial obligations (rent, utilities, security deposit) explained
  - Signed community agreements around safety, behavior, and anti-oppression
  - Cultural competency infused throughout the building – library books available, art in the building, rainbow or transgender flags in offices, etc.)

**APPENDIX TOOL**

**Outreach Strategy Worksheets**

Documenting your work is a critical component of outreach, methodology, and community accountability. Use these simple frameworks to help map and archive your work.
APPENDIX TOOL: Outreach Strategy Worksheets

Where do people you want to reach congregate? Map it out.
*Identify who you may be missing, with equity in mind*

Where and how to reach them...

Community Members

Business Owners

Social, Religious, and Community Institutions
APPENDIX TOOL: Outreach Strategy Worksheets

Community Leader Outreach Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name &amp; Title</th>
<th>Email/Phone</th>
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APPENDIX TOOL: Outreach Strategy Worksheets

Public Information Session Log

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(Session Title, Date, Location)

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Section 3: Marketing and Press Plan
Your marketing and press engagement require research of the community landscape, data on where you need to reach folks, and framing based on your intended audience – which you should have done in Section 2. In essence: know and map out your audience before promoting any assets and include them in the process, when applicable. Publicizing your project with intentionality will align with your mission and demonstrate an accountability to the community and to future tenants.

Marketing
As mentioned in Section 2, mapping out a detailed and structured outreach strategy from the beginning through the lease-up process is key – and marketing plays a large role in that outreach. In addition to the strategies in Section 2, take note of:

**Broader outreach.** Keep in mind, advertising the residence might be required in a variety of publications due to other agencies involved. Be sure to take note if this is required and plan/budget accordingly.

**Fair Housing Regulations.** Take a look at our "Helpful Tips" for marketing ideas under Fair Housing Regulations. Most developments can't say it's LGBTQ-exclusive or it would violate fair housing laws.

Press Engagement
In addition to marketing your housing to the applicants, it is important to place your facility and its crucial story in the public eye. This will provide "earned media" or free marketing for the residence. Engaging with reporters who cover housing or LGBTQ+ issues, social issue media outlets (both online and print), as well as local papers, will provide increased awareness in your project. Think about conducting media events linked to the groundbreaking, topping-out and your grand opening.

**HELPFUL TIPS**

**Marketing Under Fair Housing Regulations**

How to create intentional community that is not exclusive:

- Explicitly communicate in marketing that this is an oppression-free space
- Use visual representation and indicators in marketing, forms, and physical infrastructure (flags, photos of LGBTQ+ community leaders, etc)
- If possible, include LGBTQ+ elder-affirming programming in marketing
- Marketing in LGBTQ-centered spaces and publications, as well as the broader community
- Appropriately train all staff involved in press or marketing work in order for them to understand the implications of the fair Housing Act

Make sure you have:

- **Talking points about the project.** Include basic information about the facility and its amenities, but also the larger need for LGBTQ-friendly housing, and any statistics on LGBTQ+ older people in your area. This will help you easily create media advisories and press releases, as well as educating potential spokespeople and stakeholders.
- **Visuals.** Having a variety of architectural renderings, photos of project milestones, and completed photos of the building and its spaces are helpful for both marketing materials and members of the press. Short videos highlighting the space and
Spokespeople. Utilizing key staff and experts who are familiar with both the project and LGBTQ+ issues are key when trying to obtain earned media. Additionally, utilizing LGBTQ+ elders who are seeking housing or those who have been admitted are your strongest storytellers. Their lived experience is invaluable when pitching stories to the media.

A note on tokenization in the media:
Develop ways to ethically engage with vulnerable communities in marketing and publicity strategies

- While having spokespeople available to talk about their excitement in applying for housing is key, a person's housing cannot be, or appear to be, contingent on speaking to press or being featured in marketing materials
- Housing security should be established and confirmed before asking tenants to speak to the press for your agency

Visibility of diverse communities is always important when matched with accountability and empowerment each step of the way

Make sure to Understand the Fair Housing Act in Marketing Materials

- Gender identity and sexual orientation are not explicitly protected classes under fair housing regulations
- Federally protected classes include race, color, national origin, sex, religion, familial status, and disability
- Work has been done to establish LGBTQ-based discrimination as illegal under "sex" classification
- Use language such as "affirming" or "friendly" to denote LGBTQ+ competency without breaching fair housing regulations
- Market to LGBTQ-centered spaces and publications, with attention paid to geographic, racial, and cultural diversity

APPENDIX TOOL

Personal Identity Wheel Exercise
Engage in personal reflection around the privileged or oppressed identities you bring to this work, helping to inform your own equity lens.

APPENDIX TOOLS

SAGE's marketing communications for LGBTQ-welcoming elder housing in NYC
APPENDIX TOOL: Personal Identity Pie

1. Write down all of the identities you hold, trying to be as exhaustive as possible (i.e. your race, ethnicity, abilities, gender, place of origin, sexual orientation, etc.)

2. Categorize each identity as:
   Oppressed (O): An identity that is the target of oppression/discrimination
   Privileged (P): An identity that is privileged

3. Using the circle below, create a pie chart that shows your identities, with the size of each pie piece relating to how aware you are of each identity on a daily basis.

Writing and Discussion Prompts:

1. Which identities were you more aware of? Why do you think this is?
2. Which identities are missing from the pie, or may be taken for granted? Why do you think this is?
3. From this exercise, can you identify one or two identities in which you need to work on being more aware of?
4. Think about how this informs your own community engagement and how it can benefit or hinder your outreach strategies and content.
APPENDIX TOOL:
SAGE's Housing Marketing: LGBTQ-friendly communities

SAGE conducted focus groups with its members before creating the final ad series for both of its LGBTQ-welcoming elder housing. The ads featured different language choices, color schemes, building imagery, and real-life SAGE members. The ads below were the two chosen by the SAGE team after focus group testing. These ads were used in print outlets, digital media, and printed as postcards and in large poster size for placement at SAGE Centers across New York City. A dedicated webpage existed for people to sign-up to learn more about both housing opportunities and receive time-sensitive information about the housing process.
APPENDIX TOOL: SAGE's Housing Marketing: General audience

In addition to SAGE’s outreach to LGBTQ-welcoming communities and SAGE members, SAGE was required to place full-page ads in a variety of community newspapers for a specific amount of time, so be sure to set aside a budget and create a proper timeline for ad creation, approval and placement. When working with different partners, especially city or town agencies, keep in mind requirements for recruiting interested tenants. This could include unit information, income eligibility, household size, application information, and more. Below is a sample of a full-page ad SAGE placed for its Crotona Pride House.
Section 4: Data as Evidence: When Met with Resistance, Be Prepared
Data compels people with power to listen and invest, and it is necessary to support your case. Here are a few facts to do so.

- While the lack of a national probability study makes it impossible to know the size of the LGBTQ+ older adult population with precision, it is estimated that by 2030 there will be approximately 7 million LGBTQ+ people in the U.S. who are 50 and older.
- LGBTQ+ older people are more likely to live in poverty than their non-LGBTQ+ peers are and experience higher rates of physical and mental health disparities.
- 44% of LGBTQ+ older people are very or extremely concerned that they will have to work well beyond retirement age just to have enough money to live, as compared to 26% of non-LGBTQ+ older people. \(^1\)
- 40% of LGBTQ+ older adults say their healthcare providers do not know their sexual orientation. \(^2\)
- 48% of same-sex older adults say they have experienced housing discrimination. \(^3\)
- 1 in 4 transgender older adults reports discrimination when seeking housing. \(^4\)

**TALKING POINTS: AFFINITY SPACES**

- We aim to integrate LGBTQ+ people into every realm of society, and separation is not ideal—but building LGBTQ-affirming housing is still needed in our current social environment to protect people against harm.
- Affinity space and LGBTQ-affirming housing is not "special treatment," but an act of developing housing with equity at the forefront.

**HELPFUL TIP**

*Know Your Audience*

Remember the power map (Module #2 Appendix) and be strategic with your energy. Some people can be brought in, and some people will not.

- Affordable LGBTQ-affirming elder housing is an important way to create safety and affirming community for elders who experience intensive isolation and the threat of discrimination in spaces that are not LGBTQ-affirming.
- Affinity spaces help people connect to one another with shared lived experiences, breaking isolation and improving long-term health outcomes and cognition.

**TALKING POINTS: DISCRIMINATION’S IMPACT**

- Financial and health disparities make it doubly important that LGBTQ+ older people have access to safe and affordable housing.
- LGBTQ+ older people need space to build relationships in ways they tend not to in mainstream society, rooted in fears of coming out and the risk that has posed to them throughout most of their lives.
- SAGE trains the aging and housing sectors on these specific needs and barriers, but there is still an unmet need for safe, affordable housing that protects people against discrimination.

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1 “Out and Visible: The Experiences and Attitudes of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Older Adults, Ages 45-75.” Robert Espinoza.
2 “Health Disparities Among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Older Adults: Results From a Population-Based Study.” Karen I. Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD, Hyun-Jun Kim, PhD, Susan E. Barkan, PhD, Anna Muraco, PhD, and Charles P. Hoy-Ellis, MSW
3 Espinoza, 2014.
4 Espinoza, 2014.
• LGBTQ+ elders face disproportionate rates of poverty, housing and economic instability, loss of support due to HIV and loss of family of origin, less access to competent caretakers, and even disproportionate rates of cognitive decline, demonstrating trauma’s impact on cognitive functioning.  

• LGBTQ+ elders have a different reference point towards identity and risk, based in historical discrimination and oppression.

• Vigilance around privacy and "coming out" is specific to generational experiences, presenting different cultural norms than may exist for some LGBTQ+ youth.

**TALKING POINTS: COMPOUNDED VULNERABILITY**

• Transgender elders still face deep levels of poverty and have been historically barred from "legal" employment avenues, social services, and shelter settings. Transgender elders also face economic marginalization at majorly disproportionate rates.

• Amongst our LGBTQ+ aging communities, specific vulnerability exists for transgender elders and elders of color, again showing the present-day impact of oppression and intersectionality that mandates this type of housing as not just ideal, but a critical necessity for many people aging in our communities.

**TALKING POINTS: FRAMING THE NEEDS**

• Data helps dispel the myth that LGBTQ+ elders are predominantly white, cisgender, and middle-upper class.

• LGBTQ+ elder invisibility in aging and housing demonstrates an overlooked need and a fast-growing market.

• LGBTQ+ elders came of age at a time when there was great prejudice and violence against LGBTQ+ people, and the medical label of "mental disorder" validated these prejudices.

• Community trauma may make people less willing to be open about their LGBTQ+ identity.

• Politics, laws, policies, and social norms were different 20 years ago, and even more so 50+ years ago—we must remember this when we address specific elder needs.

• The perception of risk in medical settings, social services, employment, and other public arenas may be escalated for elders who choose not to come out even in spaces that aim to be affirming, reiterating the impact of discrimination on current protective factors for LGBTQ+ older people.

**APPENDIX TOOL**

*Supplemental Data Works Cited and Research*

Historical invisibility and discrimination mean that data collection on LGBTQ+ elders is still lacking. Here is some supplemental data to help build your case from research leaders in the field.

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APPENDIX TOOL: Supplemental Data Literature Review


The Equal Rights Center. "Opening Doors: An Investigation of Barriers to Senior Housing for Same-Sex Couples." 2014.


Justice in Aging et al. “LGBT Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities: Stories From the Field.” June 2015.


Movement Advancement for Progress and SAGE. “Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults.” March 2010.


Orel, Nancy A. “Investigating the Needs and Concerns of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults: The Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Methodology.” May 2014.


Van Wagenen, Aimee, Jeff Driskell, and Judith Bradford. “‘I’m Still Raring to Go’: Successful Aging Amongst Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults.” November 2021.
Section 5: Vetting Partners: Mission Alignment in Choosing Your Developer, Property Management, and Service Provision Teams
Section 5: Vetting Partners: Mission Alignment in Choosing Teams

Know your mission and know the mission of every partner involved.

Trust the experts:

- Experienced nonprofit developers serve as a resource
- Talk to people who have worked with potential partners for feedback on the partnership
- Consult with experts who can lead on new initiatives if this is new terrain—Should you hire a Project Lead?
- Make sure the mission of the project is in line with what the needs of the community and the local government expectations
- **Example:** Pride House developer HELP USA
  - Know what problems can present in these types of buildings, such as work quality, architect portfolios, and subcontractor relationships

Choose partners based on the mission, skills, and portfolios

- Look at the track record of developer and of property manager
  - Have they worked with low-income people and/or are they committed to the mission?
  - Have they worked with people of color? LGBTQ+ people? Older adults?
- Work with a developer and property manager who understand and are in line with the mission, understand the community you are working with, and are committed to stabilizing low-income tenants in their housing
- Who are your partners’ contractors and subcontractors? What are their track records?
- Talk with people who have worked with each entity involved, especially if they have worked with low-income people and are committed to working with low-income people

**HELPFUL TIP**

**Building a Senior Center from the Ground Up**

Most senior centers are in church basements or established nonprofits. Building from the ground up is a process in itself! Don’t be afraid to consult experts in aging on what LGBTQ+ elders need in both home and shared community spaces.

- Choose an architect who is familiar with aging in place and the needs of senior centers; remember the importance of intentional design!

**REMEMBER:** The work of your partners will directly impact your agency’s reputation and the lives of tenants—your partnerships result in the faith people will have in you.

**Know every community and business partner’s mission**

- Mission and values in both theory and practice must guide the developer and property management vetting
- As linkage agreements and other service provision are established, ensure service providers are in line with mission, demonstrated in their work
- For-profit vs nonprofit housing developers
  - What is the difference?
  - Develop pros/cons of each model

**REMEMBER:** Center cultural competency in each partnership, and train every partner on the specific needs of LGBTQ+ aging communities in housing and service provision.
Role definition: What is expected from each party?

- Clearly articulate the social service provider role in the development, lease-up, and ongoing work once the building is running
- Ensure all partnerships maintain communication throughout the entirety of the development process, as well as the lease-up, residence upkeep, and ongoing residential functioning
- Establish weekly or biweekly team meetings between social service team, property management, and security team to ensure clear and transparent communications and ongoing role definition
- Map out roles of service provision team, property management team, developer, and any other ongoing partners who will work with tenants
  - Rent collection and other logistical duties require clear protocols and cultural competency
  - Tenants will often go to the super or security guard for something more relevant to clinical staff—it is ok to redirect with a human-centered approach
  - Role expectations and support for service provision staff are essential in guiding the nonprofit’s role in general functioning and community wellness of the building
  - Ensure your direct service staff have capacity and support infrastructure set in place before the lease-up process begins—including equitable salaries and reasonable workloads

- Establish residential policies and procedures before the lease-up process begins, through the lens of the shared mission
  - Incident reports
  - Eviction protocols
  - Contingency and disaster planning
  - Visitor policies
  - Social service safety planning (Cognitive decline, DV, interpersonal conflict, police presence, etc.)
- Ensure your social service team has appropriate support, guidance, and role definition
  - Clinical staff? Tenant advocates?
  - Caseload size and parameters of work?
  - Will service provision staff serve the entire Senior Center, or only building residents?

Partners’ impact on residents and nonprofit staff—think about the following:

- The huge impact on the community both in the residence and externally
- Transparent financial processes (such as responsibility for security deposits)
- Sustainability of the work, directly impacted by partnership culture
- Staff sustainability, support, burnout; Vicarious trauma in this setting requires established support and care

HELPFUL TIP

To build trust and connection in the neighborhood, identify your community allies and who CAN be allies based on respective missions.

Build relationships with these groups.

APPENDIX TOOL

Trauma Response Chart One-Pager
Working in housing can present challenges. Understanding trauma and the impact on staff and tenants will help center mission alignment in policies, procedures, and partnerships. It will help develop a trauma-informed environment across partnerships and cultivate a supportive work environment for direct service and property management staff.