

## Housing Arrangements

*“I DON’T want to be surrounded by neighbors with mental disabilities...I DON’T want to be surrounded by physically disabled people...I DON’T want to be living near drug and alcohol abusers and dealers. Apart from my need for a safe ramp access to my apartment, I should be fully integrated into a normal community.” –Survey Comment*

### What is the vision of the future for Housing Arrangements?

#### Quality of Housing

- Housing is affordable, stable, and in safe neighborhoods.
- Housing for people with disabilities is integrated into all aspects of neighborhood and community life.
- Housing is in a community of choice, appropriate and accessible for every stage of life.
- Housing options truly honor and facilitate choice, independence, freedom, and culture.
- Housing services are conducted by well-trained staff; services are consistent without over-regulation, addressing complex medical and behavioral needs.

#### Inclusion in the Community

- Relationships in inclusive communities are interdependent, characterized by respect, appreciation, support, choice, and belonging for all people at every stage of life.
- Communities are intentional environments, designed with spaces accessible to all people of any age to learn, play, recreate, and socialize.
- Communities are consistently concerned with the safety and wellbeing of all residents, including responding to emergencies.

#### Personal Choice & Access to Needed Supports

- Flexibility in funding and supports accommodates cultural preferences and personal choices at different stages of life, including home ownership, marriage, and aging in place.
- Individuals have a right to have a meaningful say in who will share their homes with them and in their own activities and routines, including management of household chores.
- Choice in housing assumes that a number of viable options are available in both urban and rural areas, including options for families that need appropriate resources and supports for school, childcare, and respite.

## What are priorities for Housing Arrangements?

The top priority in Housing Arrangements chosen by 78% of survey respondents is for **affordable, stable housing in safe neighborhoods**. The second highest priority is for well-trained staff and consistent services (58%). Three items tied for third priority, each chosen by 46% of respondents. Table 3 shows the total response.

*Table 3: Priorities in Housing Arrangements*

Rank	Priority Statement	%Response
1	Affordable, stable, and in safe neighborhoods	78%
2	Well-trained staff, consistent services	58%
3	Community of choice that respects independence, freedom, and culture	46%
3	Flexibility in funding and supports	46%
3	Individuals have a meaningful say in activities, routines, and who lives with them	46%
4	Urban and rural options, including family resources and supports	29%
5	Integrated with accessible spaces to learn, play, recreate, and socialize	26%
<b>Total Respondents: 285</b>		<b>100%</b>

**Note:** The number of respondents varies in the tables reporting prioritization results because participants were given the option to skip questions they chose not to answer.

## What strategies were suggested for Housing Arrangements?

### Strategies for Quality of Housing

- **Make safety and stability in housing primary concerns. Ideas:**
  - Provide accommodations that facilitate remaining in or moving to communities and neighborhoods of choice
  - Make sure emergency plans are in place
  - Provide more training for end of life and hospice care, particularly for rural areas
  - Increase access to training about nutrition, healthy choices, budgeting, and independent living
- **Expand affordable housing options that include persons with disabilities, of all ages and backgrounds, within the community (as opposed to segregated housing).**

- Fully utilize universal design and technology resources (e.g., smart homes) to increase independence and accessibility in homes, in both urban and rural areas.
- Incorporate more flexibility in regulations and licensing in order to facilitate choice, personal preferences, and inclusion in the community.
- Utilize creative tools to conduct intentional life planning beginning at a young age and evolving over time to address housing issues in the context of major life transitions.
- Facilitate respectful improvements to language in regulations and services over time, responding to evolutions in language and attitudes.
- Train support staff in housing services to maximize community inclusion for individuals and families, to foster independence in navigating the community, and transition planning.
- Ensure that support staff are paid a decent wage and have the benefits necessary for their own healthy lives.

### Strategies for Inclusion in the Community

- Create intentional communities to maximize integration and accessibility.
- Based on individual choice, explore and participate in and/or create spaces for natural community gatherings and other interactions that foster respectful and reciprocal relationships. Ideas:
  - Welcome wagon
  - Community meetings
  - Community improvement projects
  - Block parties
  - Volunteer and service opportunities
- Facilitate community-level exploration of ways to make activities accessible to all community members. Examples:
  - Spaces for children to play
  - Spaces for adolescents to socialize
  - Spaces for community gathering
  - Spaces for sports and recreation
  - Transportation
- Facilitate community-level exploration of ways to make neighborhoods into safe places for all community members. Examples:
  - Neighborhood watch
  - Safety and emergency plans
  - Peer supports
  - Awareness for landlords

## Strategies for Personal Choice & Access to Needed Supports

- Reform regulations and policies that inhibit personal choices and preferences in housing services, such as disincentives for home ownership, marriage, aging in place, and multi-generational homes.
- Implement mechanisms to respect the personal preferences of individuals, couples, or families in everything that impacts their homes.  
Ideas:
  - Expand ideas of individual-centered and family-centered support
  - Increase flexibility in rules for family members to provide services
  - Survey hobbies, interests, and/or values for potential roommates
  - Give first resident(s) a say in future resident(s) and live-in staff
  - Respect that integration might not be desired in all cases
- Increase diversity of options that respect personal preferences in housing and community of residence, including rural options. Examples:
  - Housing co-ops
  - Single occupancy homes
  - Housing specific for young adults ages 18-21
  - Work program that includes housing as part of compensation
- Increase housing resources to avoid long waitlists and financial supports.
- Raise public awareness of where people go to get access to resources for housing.
- Provide more specialized housing to address acute and specific complex needs, including transitional housing and more long-term assisted living facilities.