NMHC NATIONAL MULTIFAMILY HOUSING COUNCIL

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Decision-making for Housing Equity

This tool is intended to promote reflection as an organization works to integrate a housing equity lens within its work. It can be used as an individual self-reflection or as prompts for a group conversation.

For more information on these topics see:

https://housingequitytoolkit.nmhc.org/decision-making-housing-equity

Community & Resident Engagement

- Do we understand the group or groups who will be most affected by our decision or activity (e.g., investment decision, planned project, change to operations)?

- How will we involve those affected most by our decision or activity in our decision-making process?

- How will what we learn from our engagement efforts influence our final decision or shape our activity?

- Have we done our due diligence about the group or groups we want to engage? Consider whether there may be sensitive topics, planning fatigue, barriers to participation, and/or important political and social context.

- Have we assessed the risks to the group or groups we want to engage? Are the benefits to those engaged small, indirect, or unlikely?

- Have we identified barriers to participate to the groups or groups we want to engage? Consider communications, accessibility of engagement activity site, and overall comfort of participants. Have we identified strategies to address these barriers?

- Have we identified the costs associated with our community engagement efforts? Have we identified resources to cover those costs (including adjustments to operating expenses for ongoing services or supports)?

- Consider the organization's experience conducting community engagement with similar groups or for similar decisions. What was learned from those efforts to carry forward into future activities? To avoid in future activities?

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Decision-making for Housing Equity

Data

- Has the organization been open about our decisions on what questions we sought to analyze, what data we used, and any limitations on our analysis (including any limits on being able to share proprietary data)?

- Have we assessed opportunities to increase transparency in our organizational data use? Consider internal guidelines on data-sharing and disposition, reporting to residents, and data-sharing with community organizations.

- Have we leveraged internal sources of data to understand disparities in racial and housing equity? What does this analysis tell us about those most affected by our decision?

- Have sought out supplemental sources of data to understand disparities in racial and housing equity? What does this analysis tell us about those most affected by our decision?

- How have we involved those affected by our decision in our data analysis (e.g., design, collection, interpretation)? What steps have we taken to make our data analysis meaningful to our organizational goals? To residents' interests?

- Have we assessed opportunities to mitigate undue burden and harm on those affected by our analysis?

Internal Processes

- Do we see our commitment to reducing disparities in and improving resident outcomes as something that is relevant for our entire organization or only a specific part of it?

- Do we have a good understanding of the systemic barriers to improving resident outcomes? What currently informs our understanding?

- Do staff at all levels feel that they can engage in open dialogue and share their perspectives related to equity and outcomes at work?

- Where in our work are there opportunities to better align our practice with our values?

- Where are there opportunities to integrate residents (existing/future) into decision-making processes in meaningful ways?

- How committed are we to being a learning organization? What key components are we already strong on? Where do we need to improve?

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