

# Guide to Creating a Housing Ambassador Program

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Dealing with housing-related issues can be overwhelming and time-consuming. Because much of our time is spent at our place of employment, and because housing and economic development are closely intertwined, one solution to address our housing challenges is for employers to take on a role in assisting employees with their housing challenges by providing direct support.

One solution is to establish a **Housing Ambassador Program**.

A Housing Ambassador Program designates a liaison (or liaisons) to assist employees with housing needs by providing information, resources, and support. In a company setting, the Ambassador assists employees in navigating policies, rental applications, community resources, and services to find and maintain suitable housing. In some cases, Ambassadors can also serve as advocates and community connectors, helping to shape local housing policy, and can serve on committees to inform local and regional decision-making.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to these programs. Ultimately, it must align with the needs and capacity of your company and the people benefiting from the program.

To help you get started, we've created a guide that summarizes the recommended steps for creating and managing a **Housing Ambassador Program**. It includes instructions on how to make a program, sample job tasks, and key resources that the Ambassador can use to support their role.

## Create a Job Description

Start by defining what you want your program to accomplish. Will it be a minor support role or a more significant, broader commitment to your employees? A job description will provide structure and give the position purpose or clarity. It will outline responsibilities and ensure time and expectations are managed appropriately.

### Possible Responsibilities

- Research and maintain up-to-date housing resources using the Housing Resources for Employers Toolkit ([www.nccouncil.org](http://www.nccouncil.org)) to create an Employee Housing Resources Packet.
- Conduct employee housing surveys to understand employee needs.
- Update the onboarding package for new employees to include housing resources.
- Educate employees on housing resources through company newsletters, staff meetings, and internal communications

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- Assist employees (upon request) with rental or home ownership applications.
- Host or coordinate housing-related workshops and training for employees.
- Attend external housing or economic development events when appropriate.
- Build relationships with local landlords or property owners to identify available rental units for employees.

## **Estimated Time Commitment**

Depending on the scope, the role may require an average of 2 hours per week, if focused on the first five bullet points above. Additional time may be required if the role involves hosting events or representing the company externally.

## **🏠 Decide Where This Program Lives in Your Organization**

Ambassador programs will vary in design for each company or organization, depending on the size and structure of your business. A single person will manage some programs, while a full Committee may manage others. The following are key components to consider when developing a program.

### **Employee Commitment and Pay**

- Will the Ambassador role be part-time, full-time, or a shared responsibility?
- Will Ambassadors receive a stipend or pay increase to reflect additional duties?

### **Program Size**

- Small employers: One designated Ambassador or a small team.
- Larger employers: A committee or department-based model.

### **Department Home**

- Human Resources
- Executive or Operations Office
- Office Management
- Health & Wellness Coordinator or Committee

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## Identify an Ambassador

- Select someone who:
  - Frequently interacts with all employees.
  - Has an interest in housing resources and community engagement.
  - Communicates well and can appropriately handle confidential information.

*Tip: Document the role and responsibilities in the employee's HR file or job description to clarify expectations and ensure a transparent work time allocation. Once established, announce the Ambassador role organization-wide so employees know where to go for support.*

## Create an Employee Housing Resources Packet

One of the first tasks of the Ambassador should be to create a **Housing Resources Packet**.

This packet provides information for new and existing employees to help with rent, down payments, financial literacy, foreclosure assistance, and much more.

### **Company-Specific Assistance or Resources**

- Does your company offer rental assistance, down payment help, or rent-to-own opportunities?
- Are employees offered flex time or time off for moving, showings, open houses, or homebuyer workshops?

### **Community and Regional Resources**

Remove the guesswork for employees by compiling a housing resource contact list that includes:

- Local banks and programs
- Grant and loan opportunities (e.g., AHEAD, NH Housing)
- Housing organizations (local, state, regional, county, community organizations)
- Housing Authorities and Organizations
- Veterans housing programs
- Adult foster care or supportive housing contacts
- Legal assistance or fair housing resources

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## Let's get started!

Partner with local organizations such as AHEAD or regional housing commissions to provide workshops on:

- Financial literacy and credit improvement
- Tenant rights and responsibilities
- Foreclosure prevention
- Homebuyer education
- Landlord training

*AHEAD typically requires at least five participants and can tailor sessions to fit your company's needs.*

## Track and Evaluate Program Efforts

As with any program, monitoring performance ensures continued value and improvement. Identifying areas for adjustment.

Ambassadors can track:

- Number of employees assisted or trained
- Types of inquiries or challenges encountered
- Updates made to resource materials
- Feedback received from employees

Include these updates in staff meetings or annual HR reviews to identify success stories and address challenges.

## Final Thoughts

*Housing stability benefits everyone—employees, employers, and communities. Establishing a Housing Ambassador Program, even on a small scale, can strengthen your workforce, enhance employee satisfaction, and contribute to the broader effort to address the region's housing challenges.*