

Newsletter

The newsletter is an important component of resident and staff communication and of community-building. Customarily, it is the responsibility of the Service Coordinator to make sure periodic newsletters are published for the property. In some cases the Service Coordinator takes full charge of the newsletter. In other cases, residents have input or greater responsibility for the newsletter. And in some cases, staff and residents each take a role in the content.

Here are some components of a successful newsletter:

- It should include a calendar of events.
- It should be used to celebrate accomplishments. For example, the June newsletter could congratulate new high school graduates. If the property receives an award or a high score on an inspection, that should also go in the newsletter. Some properties list birthdays, however not all residents wish to have their birthdays publicized. If you do this, it is good practice to seek resident consent.
- It should welcome new residents to the community, with their permission.
- It should list upcoming projects or report progress on existing projects – like a capital improvement program.
- It can be a useful way of issuing “reminders” as long as they are phrased positively – as in, “Please remember to rinse and separate bottles and cans before putting them in the recycle containers”. However, residents may stop reading the newsletter if the tone sounds scolding or lecturing – as in, “If residents don’t rinse and separate bottles and cans before putting them in the recycle containers, we will be forced to discontinue our recycling program.”
- The newsletter should be attractive, neat and accurate. This doesn’t mean it has to be produced professionally, but carefully. It can be done in Word, Publisher, or other template form. The font size should be large and easy to read. Avoid using italics. Someone who can check spelling and grammar should proofread it.
- Finally, the newsletter needs to be accessible to residents whose primary language isn’t English and have limited or no English proficiency, or who are visually impaired – either through written translation or tape recording

Adapted from, Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, Resident Service Coordinator’s Handbook