

HOW TO GET STARTED¹

Getting Started

If you are new to your job, the best way to start is to be visible.

- Plan meetings and “coffee hours” at different times of the day to accommodate different schedules.
- Be out of your office as much as possible when you start – in the hallways, community rooms, laundry rooms, and outdoors – wherever residents are.
- Hand out your card attached to a brochure or flyer explaining what you can do and when you are available. If you have the funds, have your name and number (including your TTY or Relay number) put on a refrigerator magnet to give each resident. In addition, send out a brief introductory letter with your card to everyone so that you reach those you don’t meet by walking around.
- Use this opportunity to schedule one-on-one appointments to update resident files with emergency contact information. Remember that giving such information is voluntary.
- Engage residents in planning activities and events.
- Get out in the neighborhood. Introduce yourself to local merchants. Hand out flyers; give them your business card.
- Find out who the local health care, home care, and various case management providers are and introduce yourself by phone or in person. Ask about joining interdisciplinary provider meetings. Tell them what services your housing provides. Ask what services they offer, and especially ones that your residents may not be aware of or using.
- Find out who provides recreation, arts, education, job training and other activities that your residents might use – and introduce yourself to those people. Again, ask what activities and services they provide that your residents are not using.
- Take a survey of residents’ interests, talents, skills, passions capacities and willingness to contribute to the community. Make it clear that this information is important for your planning and for getting to know them. See sample Resident Strengths Questionnaire for Senior Development or Resident Strengths Questionnaire for Family Development under sample forms and documents.

¹ Adapted from the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, Resident Service Coordinator’s Handbook