
Open Doors to Public Housing

Margaret diZerega, Project Director

John Bae, Program Associate

The Vera Institute of Justice

Mission

To build and improve justice systems that ensure fairness, promote safety, and strengthen communities.

How We Work

Vera works in partnership with local, state, and national government officials to create change from within.

- § We study problems that impede human dignity and justice.**
- § We pilot solutions that are at once transformative and achievable.**
- § We engage diverse communities in informed debate.**
- § We harness the power of evidence to drive effective policy and practice.**

Goals of Open Doors

Increase the number of housing authorities serving people with criminal histories

Strengthen partnerships between housing authorities and reentry stakeholders

Assist housing authorities in planning and implementing programs or changing their policies to better serve people with criminal histories while maintaining community safety

Educate and build public support for public housing access for formerly incarcerated individuals and families

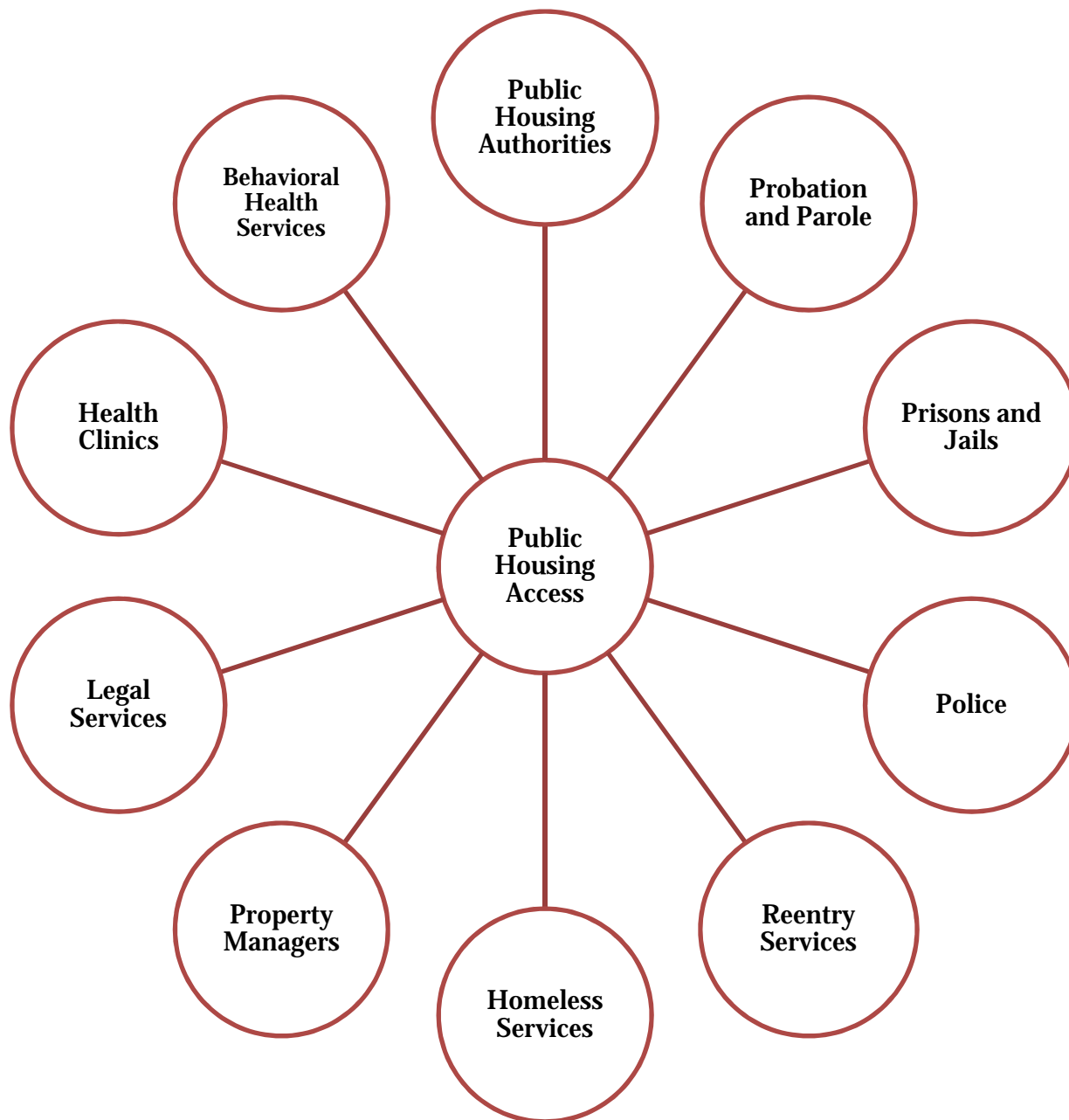
Selected sites

- § Colorado: Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing
- § Massachusetts: Springfield Housing Authority
- § Nebraska: Kearney Housing Agency
- § North Carolina: Asheville Housing Authority
- § Rhode Island: Providence Housing Authority
- § Washington: Tacoma Housing Authority

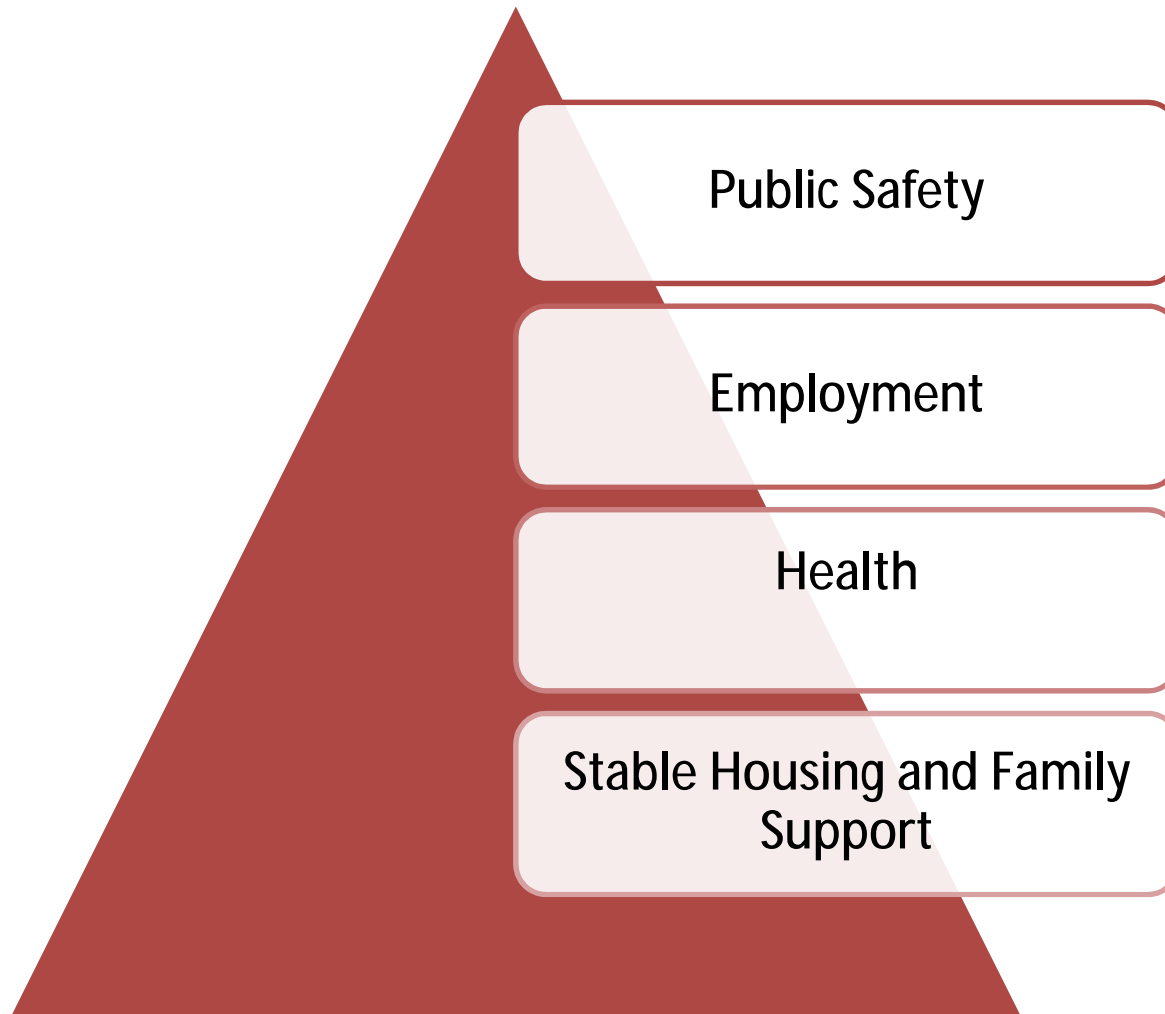


Vera's technical assistance

- § Advise on promising practices and strategies for program implementation
- § Review ACOP and admin plans and help develop new screening guidelines and policies
- § Connect housing authorities with peer consultants
- § Map resources
- § Provide support for public outreach efforts
- § Publish reports highlighting housing authority's work



The Foundational Role of Housing



National efforts

The NYCHA **JOURNAL**

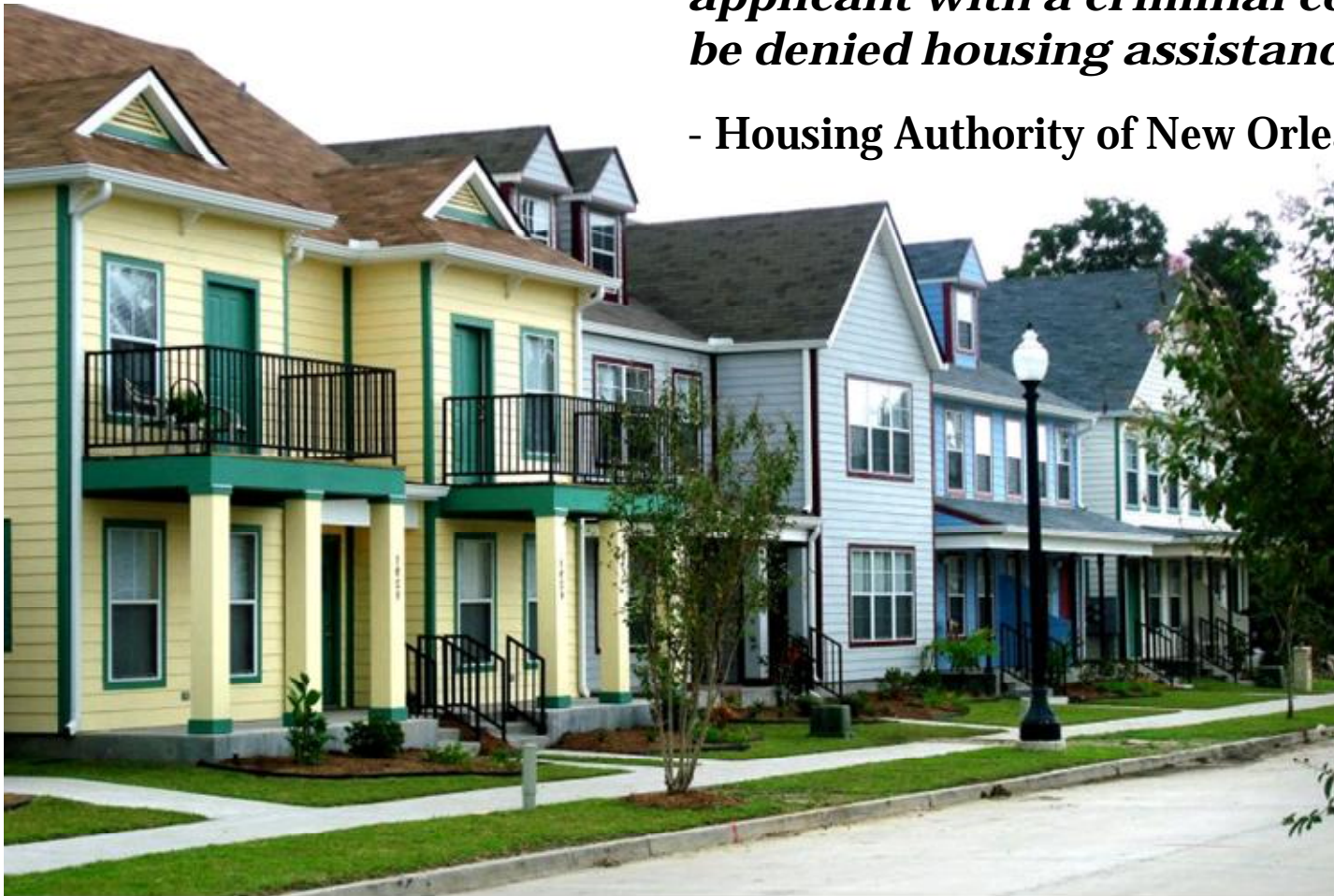


The New York Times

Expanding Housing Eligibility

“There is absolutely no presumption that an applicant with a criminal conviction should be denied housing assistance...”

- Housing Authority of New Orleans



Resources

Opening Doors: How to develop reentry programs using examples from public housing authorities (Vera 2017)

It Starts With Housing: Public Housing Agencies are Making Second Chances Real (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, June 2016)

Rebecca J. Walter, Jill Viglione, and Marie Skubak Tillyer, "One Strike to Second Chance: Using Criminal Backgrounds in Admission Decisions for Assisted Housing," *Housing Policy Debate* 2017, 13.



Resources

Coming Home: An Evaluation of the New York City Housing Authority's Family Reentry Pilot Program (Vera 2016)

Report to the New York City Housing Authority: Applying and Lifting Permanent Exclusions for Criminal Conduct (Vera 2017)

