

APPENDIX A:

Focus Group Materials: Selection and Recruitment Procedures, Guide, Recruitment Script, and Consent Form

Focus Group Selection and Recruitment

The intent of this project was to address service needs for Memphis residents receiving HUD-supported housing assistance. As described in the body of the brief, this project has focused on HOPE VI relocatees because they are a known high-needs population and because households relocated via HOPE VI may have been removed from their previous resource and service networks. Memphis HOPE has provided the research team with access to its Tracking-at-a-Glance (TAAG) case management data, which provides information on location, demographics, and Memphis HOPE case management status for individuals and households relocated during the most recent three HOPE VI relocations.

Selection criteria for participants. We analyzed the information in the TAAG database for households listed as current¹ (though only relocatees from Cleaborn Homes are currently in Memphis HOPE’s formal caseloads), and compiled tables of these households by zip code. Because the project’s research questions pertaining to service delivery were tied to questions of accessibility, we planned the focus groups according to where potential participants lived. The following zip codes contain more than 50 households from the pooled caseloads of former residents of Lamar Terrace, Dixie Homes, and Cleaborn Homes.

Zip code (and description)	Number of households (including Lamar, Dixie, and Cleaborn)
38106 (South Memphis)	57
38109 (South Memphis)	54
38126 (Foote area)	98
38127 (Frayser)	65

Based on these analyses, we identified three main groups for which we conducted focus groups. The first group resides in the central part of the city, in the same zip code (38126) as the only remaining family public housing development and the most recent HOPE VI demolition (Cleaborn Homes). For the second and third focus groups, we chose residents from one neighborhood in North Memphis (Frayser) and pooled two zip codes (38106 and 38109) for a combined group in South Memphis.

- Focus Group One:** This group consisted of former Cleaborn Homes residents who currently live in 38126. We choose to limit this group to Cleaborn Homes residents to concentrate on a group that has more recently been relocated and actively involved in initial case management activities. (Residents from the other two HOPE VI sites in the TAAG data we examined were initially relocated five or more years ago.) This focus group took place at the Vance/Crenshaw Library on October 31, 2012.

¹ “Current” means that the clients are considered in the active caseload. Those who are not current are original residents from one of the three HOPE VI caseloads included in this study, who are no longer in the active caseload. Clients are removed from the active caseload for a range of reasons, including by choice (for those who do not wish to return to a new HOPE VI development), because they are out of contact (discontinued phone numbers, moved, etc.), and from being evicted and removed from caseload because of violations.

- **Focus Groups Two and Three:** These groups consisted of a combination of residents from Lamar Terrace, Dixie Homes, and Cleaborn Homes, and were geographically based. We conducted one focus group with adults living in the 38127 zip code (Frayser area) and one with adults living in 38106/38109 (South Memphis area). These focus groups took place at the offices of the Works Community Development Corporation in South Memphis, on November 2 and 14, 2012.

Contacting Participants. Because the data source we were using did not include contact information, we worked with Memphis HOPE to recruit participants for the groups. We created a random sample of adults for each of the three focus groups and then transferred the resident ID numbers to Memphis HOPE via a secure file transfer site. Memphis HOPE contacted possible focus group participants and asked if they would be willing to participate (The participant recruitment script is available in this appendix).

For each focus group, we sought to include a maximum of nine participants, but knew that we should overbook the groups because no-shows would likely occur. In the end, Memphis HOPE needed a pool of approximately 50 people for each of the three groups in order to confirm the appropriate numbers. Approximately half of those in the sample had phone numbers that were no longer working, and another significant share did not answer or return messages. Only a few refused, and those refusals were due to timing. Ultimately, from the 150 former public housing residents selected for these three groups, we were able to confirm participation with 24 individuals. (Two additional Cleaborn relocates participated in the first group, having been invited by other participants.)

Focus Group Guide

UNDERSTAND RELOCATION TIMING AND FREQUENCY

Where do you live now?

Let's talk about when you moved away from Lamar Terrace, Dixie Homes, or Cleaborn

- When did you move from those developments?
- How long had/have you lived in public housing?
- How much time did you have between when you found out and when you actually had to move?

Were you told you could move to the new development (University Place, Legends Park)?

- How did you find out?

Where do you want to live? (*PROBE: neighborhood, type of housing*)

CAE SMANAGEMENT AND OTHER SOCIAL SERVICE RECEIPT

We want to understand more about the types of help you have gotten from different case managers in recent years. In particular, we are interested in learning more about case management services you have received from the housing authority or Memphis HOPE.

- Have you worked with a case manager from MHA or Memphis HOPE?
- Are you currently working with a case manager?
 - (*PROBE: contact in the last month? Six months?*)

Let's talk about the types of help you are currently receiving or have received from the case manager? (*PROBE: for information about who delivered the services and details about programs*)

- What kinds of help are you receiving now?
- What kinds of help have you received in the past?

- Which type of help has been most important or useful to you?
- Which types of help have been least helpful?

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about health care in particular.

- Do you have health insurance?
 - IF YES: What kind of insurance do you have? (*PROBE: TennCare, private, through employer, etc.*)
 - IF NOT: Why don't you have any health insurance?

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF SERVICES

We also want to know about where you have to travel to participate in services.

- Where do you receive case management assistance and other services (such as child care, health care, employment/education assistance)?
 - *PROBE: the physical location, distance travelled, number of places resident goes overall*

Are there other types of assistance you need that you have not received?

- *PROBE: education, employment, child care, transportation, health care*
- Why have you not been able to get this type of assistance?
 - *PROBE: not offered, inaccessible time/place, no childcare*
- What is the most important thing in your life that you need assistance with?

Was it easier to get any services you needed in public housing? (*IF CURRENTLY IN PUBLIC HOUSING, CLARIFY BY COMPARING NOW TO WHEN IN PRIOR HOPE-VI DEVELOPMENT.*)

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, how would you describe your experiences relocating to a new place because of the HOPE VI program?

Do you think it is easier or harder for you to get services now where you are, or when you lived at Cleborn Homes before it was torn down?

In your opinion, what could programs and case managers do to make it easier to help you?

Script for Recruiting Focus Group Participants

The following is the script used by Memphis HOPE staff as a basis for recruiting focus group participants.

Researchers from The Urban Institute and the University of Memphis would like to speak with a few small groups of families receiving housing assistance (vouchers or in public housing). They will ask questions about different kinds of experiences in your life, including looking for work, getting health care, and providing for your children. All of the information is only for research, and your name will never be shared. The information will not be shared with the housing authority or any other agencies.

These focus groups will take place in the next few weeks, somewhere in your neighborhood. They will offer you \$25 to compensate you for your time and participation. The focus group discussions will last about an hour and a half. If you are interested, I can send them your name and phone number so that they can contact you with the details about the time and location. Would you be willing to participate?

Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group for the Housing Assistance and Supportive Services research project. As part of this project, it is really important for to us to understand your family’s experiences—what works for you and what doesn’t-- so that programs such as Memphis HOPE can continue to improve programs that are available to families like yours. The information you share might even be used to help design programs for families in other communities across the country.

The focus group will last about **1 ½ hours**. We’ll be taking notes today to make sure we capture everything you say accurately. We’d also like to record the session today to back up the notes. This recording will be stored in a confidential place and will be destroyed at the end of the project. If no one objects, we’ll go ahead and record; but if there are concerns, we can proceed without the recording.

When all focus groups have been held, the University of Memphis will summarize the information without revealing any identities of focus group participants. The University of Memphis staff will keep everything that you say during the focus group confidential – no one will identify what you said – and choosing to participate or not will not change any services you or your family may be receiving.

You can contact L [REDACTED] F [REDACTED], directly if you have any questions: [REDACTED].

I understand:

- Everyone who works on this study has signed a Pledge of Confidentiality requiring them not to tell anyone outside the research staff anything I tell them during the focus group. The only exception is if I tell the facilitator about my intention to harm myself or someone else. The facilitator may be required by law to report this kind of information.
- The focus group will be audio recorded if all participants agree to this, but the audio will only be used to back up the notes that are taken during the discussion and will subsequently be destroyed at the end of the project.
- While Urban Institute and the University of Memphis promise to respect my confidentiality; my fellow participants may not. Therefore, I need to use discretion about what I reveal, particularly things that might jeopardize my housing status or relationships with staff.
- My participation is voluntary. I only have to answer questions I want to, and I can choose to stop participating at any time.

I consent to participate in this focus group. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I understand that I can stop participating at any time or refuse to answer questions at any time.

Participant name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Participant Signature _____ Date _____