

Hurricane Response  
Case Manager and TIDR Meeting  
Minutes: May 21, 2008

<u>Time:</u>	9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
<u>Location:</u>	Bethany Christian Church
<u>Conveners:</u>	Amy Elder
<u>Minutes by:</u>	Holly Bell
	Center for SW Research, UT
<u>Number in Attendance:</u>	15

1. **Report from Heather Godwin, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA)**
  - a. TRLA has expanded their public benefits section and added paralegals to assist clients in dealing with problems with programs such as Food Stamps, TANF and Medicaid.
  - b. They are now taking direct referrals from clients, so clients don't have to go through TRLA's hotline number.
  - c. The best way for case managers to access this service for clients is to email Heather at [hgodwin@trla.org](mailto:hgodwin@trla.org) or call her at 374-2747 (she prefers email).
  - d. TRLA is now scheduling 10 intake interviews per day with clients.
  - e. They are also seeking plaintiffs for class action suits.
  - f. Clients with housing problems should contact Fred Fuchs of TRLA's housing department.
  - g. TRLA continues to provide free legal clinics to answer client questions on Mondays and Wednesday evenings.
  - h. Heather will post the information about the legal clinics and the number for the housing line on the Centex list serve.
2. **Case manager asked if anyone knew about a lawsuit filed by Tulane University regarding Section 8.**
  - a. No one had any information.
3. **Question about a DHAP client with pending SSI – will their rent be frozen?**
  - a. Clients with pending SSI applications need to provide documentation of this in order to apply for a hardship, which would freeze their rental payments.
  - b. Case management for clients with hardships is more intensive.
4. **Is there money available to help clients with moving expenses?**
  - a. Amy Elder says that this has been a problem since the beginning of the recovery effort.

- b. There are no firm resources for this. At times church groups, Goodwill, Blue Whale moving company, St. Vincent de Paul and others have assisted with moves on a one-time basis.
- c. There was some brainstorming about other groups, such as fraternities, that might be a resource.
- d. The HACA Disaster Housing Program (DHAP) is hosting a workshop on public housing this coming Thursday for DHAP clients. Abel Watkinson will forward the flyer. He requested a legal aid speaker for the next workshop.

**5. AISD is still struggling with children displaced by Katrina**

**6. Confidentiality and sharing client information regarding housing**

- a. DHAP clients are still coming to other local agencies for rental assistance. Sometimes they tell a different story to their DHAP case manager.
- b. Case managers need to be sure to have a release of information (ROI) from every client before they share information about that client with other agencies. HACA is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the four Katrina case management agencies to allow them to share client information. CAN agencies cannot share information under this agreement.
- c. Even though their DAHP assistance will expire next March, there are some Katrina clients who are still not on the waiting list for public housing. The waiting list for Section 8 is currently closed.
- d. Travis County does not pay for temporary rent or utility assistance unless the client can demonstrate a long-term plan for self-sufficiency
- e. Question about available shelters for clients who may become homeless:
  - i. The Salvation Army has a men's dorm, a women's dorm and a family dorm. The women's shelter has a waiting list of 100 families.
  - ii. Foundation for the Homeless has a shelter for parents and children.

**7. Hurricane Season starts in ten days – what's the plan in a local disaster?**

- a. Hurricane recovery would start with the Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD).
- b. TIDR will be active in all phases of the disaster.

**8. Amy Elder attended a meeting at the White House about the treatment of undocumented people in a disaster.**

- a. TIDR will participate in advocacy efforts to protect the rights of undocumented people.

**9. DHAP client requested assistance from another agency with his portion of the rent**

- a. Problem: the lease is not in his name; it's in his brother's name, but the brother lives elsewhere
- b. This situation constitutes fraud and the client can be terminated from DHAP because of this.
- c. Case managers should try to help clients use their creative energy to get on the "right road" and straighten out these kind of situations.

**10. Holly Bell of UT distributed copies of article recently published about Austin case management in the Journal of Social Service Research**

**11. Next meeting: June 18, 2008**