

*Turning best  
practice into  
normal practice.*

# Accreditation Matters

WWW.HOUSINGACCREDITATION.ORG

JANUARY 2021

## EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS:

**100% of accredited organization staff believe other organizations would benefit from becoming accredited.**

**100% of staff found the site visit valuable.**

**100% believe the standards are inclusive of all aspects of running a quality housing organization.**

### Top 3 benefits:

- 1) Improved Employee Morale**
- 2) Improved Transparency in Policy Making**
- 3) Improved Organizational Culture**

## AHAB Accredits 3 MTW's in 2020

The Affordable Housing Accreditation Board accredited 3 organizations in 2020, despite the COVID pandemic. All three are Moving to Work agencies: Keene Housing, Cambridge Housing Authority, and Housing Authority of Columbus Georgia. At this time 10% of the current MTW's have become accredited. Virtual site visits were conducted and reviewers were able to talk with board members, staff, residents and community members via webinars and phone calls.



AHAB Accreditation Badge

*I was very impressed by what the panel knew about us. They took their time to delve deep into the agency and that was evidenced by their questions.*

Brenda Snowden-Downing,  
Deputy ED, Cambridge  
Housing Authority

## ACCREDITATION and the US CONGRESS

In the December 2020 appropriations bill, the US Congress instructed HUD to "explore the feasibility of a partnership" with an organization providing affordable housing accreditation. The accrediting body shall "have developed standards for and are experienced with accrediting affordable housing organizations...and promoting best practices to implement a national accreditation process for affordable housing organizations." HUD is directed to report back in the August 2021 timeframe.

*We learned the areas that we do well on and areas that need improvement. I would encourage all Housing Authorities to go through the accreditation process.*

Lisa Walters, CEO, HA of  
Columbus GA

## AHAB ACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS

- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, OH
- Chester Housing Authority, PA
- Cambridge Housing Authority, MA
- Seattle Housing Authority, WA
- Housing Authority of Snohomish County, WA
- Housing Authority of Columbus GA
- Hightstown Housing Authority, NJ
- Keene Housing, NH



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACCREDITATION BOARD

6024 Ridge Avenue, Suite 116-303  
Philadelphia, PA 19128  
Phone: 215-253-4700  
Email: [info@housingaccreditation.org](mailto:info@housingaccreditation.org)

**Contact us to find out how to get accredited  
or visit our website:  
[www.housingaccreditation.org](http://www.housingaccreditation.org)**

Our mission is to continuously improve affordable housing for the public, by evaluating affordable housing organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe, well managed, high quality affordable housing in their communities.

**Board Members:**  
Edwin Lowndes, HA of Kansas City MO  
Josh Meehan, Keene Housing, NH  
Renee Rooker, Walla Walla HA  
Len Williams, HA of Columbus GA  
Dr. Ulric Chung, Board for Global EHS  
Credentialing

**Staff:**  
Diana McWilliams, CEO  
Coy Maienza, Director of Accreditation

## REVIEWER TRAINING in 2021 through NAHRO

The first peer reviewers outside of AHAB staff and board participated in the organization reviews in 2020. Jenisa Story with the HA of Snohomish County Washington stated, "Becoming an AHAB reviewer is a great opportunity to learn from the experiences of our peers in the housing industry." A reviewer manual is provided, along with two 2-hour training modules, offered in conjunction with NAHRO's certification and continuing education programs.

Email [info@housingaccreditation.org](mailto:info@housingaccreditation.org) if you are interested in becoming a reviewer.

## Best Practices

**AHAB STANDARD 1—GOVERNANCE:** The newly accredited Housing Authority of Columbus Georgia plans for their annual board retreat by compiling trends and affordable housing news for their board members. This is accomplished throughout the year to ensure board members have current and relevant information to make decisions for the future of the organization.



**Columbus Commons  
HA of Columbus GA**



**Brookbend East  
Keene Housing NH**

**AHAB STANDARD 6—COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Keene board members and leaders are active on national, state and local boards and collaborative agencies to advocate for affordable housing along with amenities for quality communities such as health care, infrastructure investment, transportation and education. The Mayor of Keene and other community stakeholders indicate the Keene leaders are innovators in problem solving community solutions.