



BUILDING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FAQ

WHAT IS SUPPORTIVE OR SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING?

Special Needs Housing is affordable housing that is designed for people with disabilities or barriers. Often those who live in supportive housing receive services that allow them to live independently.

WHY INCLUDE SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING IN OUR TOWNS DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

Depending on the source, it has been reported that as many as 21% of adults in NJ^{1,1} in 5 people, have a disability. They live in towns throughout the state but not always in homes that are designed for their needs, affordability or in locations near work, family or friends. Chances are there are already people living in your town that can benefit and desire special needs housing. Rutgers has created a [useful tool](#) to help you find out information about the people with disabilities who live in your municipality

There is also a **practical reason** to include special needs housing in your municipal planning. As towns look to include developments to meet their fair share obligation of affordable housing, adding special needs housing to the mix can be a smart decision. By creating supportive housing, towns **often** can take advantage of a two for one **credit bonus per bedroom**, earning additional COAH credits. Including special needs housing is a win-win for municipalities.

WHAT DOES SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING LOOK LIKE?

Special Needs Housing comes in all shapes and sizes. Housing can be as small as a ranch house (group home), independent apartments in a two family home, small properties that are 100% special needs or those that are mixed with disabled and non-disabled at varying levels of affordability. Special Needs Housing can also be part of a large project with a specific number of apartments set aside for people with disabilities. Large projects can be a mix of affordable, supportive and market rate apartments.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

New Jersey has a wealth of qualified, reputable affordable and special needs housing developers. Finding a developer with experience can be easy.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/new-jersey.html>



The Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey is a non-profit trade association whose members include both non-profit and for profit developers. These developers have long standing partnerships with many service providers and can help you plan what makes sense for your community. SHA's website includes an easy tool to help you find members in your county by type (developer, service provider, etc.):

<https://www.shanj.org/member-directory-search/> Or contact SHA directly diane.riley@shanj.org, 908-931-1131. Referrals for developers can also be made by:

The NJ Housing Mortgage Finance Agency

<https://nj.gov/dca/hmfa/developers/multifamily/generalinfo/>

New Jersey Department of Human Services <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/>

Division of Developmental Disabilities <https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/>

Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

<https://www.nj.gov/health/integratedhealth/services-treatment/>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Local Programs, NJ Office

https://www.hud.gov/states/new_jersey

WHAT DEVELOPERS BRING TO THE TABLE?

Developers bring long-term housing creation experience to the table. They have a track record of securing the financial resources needed to plan and build housing and know how to avoid costly pitfalls. They have an understanding of the municipal approval process and experience working with state agencies. Development teams can include design, construction, and property management professionals. Developers of supportive housing “invest” in their projects and are committed long-term partners.

HOW CAN THE MUNICIPALITY SUPPORT THE PROJECT?

Municipalities can help increase a project's feasibility in many ways. First, identifying land that the municipality owns and may be considered in the plan greatly reduces the cost of the project. Municipal trust funds specifically set aside for the development of affordable housing can also reduce a project's overall cost. Other financial incentives include payment in lieu of taxes or building, planning, or zoning fee reductions.

Developers welcome municipal assistance with zoning changes or planning approvals. Projects with municipalities and developers working together bring the greatest success and ultimately, new opportunities for people with special needs to become neighbors.