



HOUSING ACTION MEMBER PACKET

2026





Housing Action Illinois
A stronger Illinois begins at home

Welcome!

As a member of Housing Action Illinois, you're part of a statewide network of 200+ organizations working together to advance quality, affordable homes for all. By uniting our voices, we help secure the resources, policies, and programs needed to ensure **everyone in Illinois has a stable, affordable place to call home.**

For nearly 40 years, our collective work has helped create tens of thousands of new homes, move hundreds of thousands of people into stable housing, and expand protections for millions of renters, reaching **every community in the state.**

We're here to support and connect you. Through our Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Public Education & Organizing programs, we aim to help your organization and our broader field grow and thrive. This packet includes information on:

- Our members & mission
- Your membership benefits
- Trainings, events, & our conference
- Our staff & board

Stay connected: we hope you'll [sign up for our bimonthly newsletter](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Bluesky](#) for updates, resources, and opportunities to get involved.

Questions? Reach us anytime at membership@housingactionil.org.

Thank you for being part of Housing Action Illinois.

MEMBERS

Housing Action Illinois is a statewide coalition of 200+ member organizations, including housing counseling agencies, homeless service providers, developers of affordable housing, Centers for Independent Living, Public Housing Authorities, financial institutions, Community Action Agencies, policymakers, and other organizations.

[Visit our website to see our current members.](#)



Our Mission

To increase and preserve the supply of quality, affordable, accessible homes in Illinois for low-and moderate-income individuals and families.

Our Values

Housing is a human right. We believe in a society that promotes basic human needs, such as decent and safe housing for all of its members. Public policy and government spending should ensure that the basic housing needs of all people are met. Housing Action Illinois is committed to work that focuses on advancing equitable community development and affirmatively furthering racial justice.

Our Vision

To create an environment where all Illinois residents, particularly people with the lowest incomes, have a voice in housing policy and community development. We seek to bring together community stakeholders such as residents, businesses, and government to work together to increase the supply and availability of affordable housing across the state.



“As a member organization, reaching 200+ members means you’re not in this alone—you have more partners, more resources, and a bigger voice fighting for affordable, equitable housing statewide.”

Laura Olvera Yarza, Board of Directors Co-Chair



“I’m grateful for the power of the partnerships Housing Action Illinois continues to provide as a champion for housing champions!”

Shalonda Bedenfield-Causey, FHLBank Chicago



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

We help our member organizations connect, learn, advocate, and grow through our Capacity Building, Policy Advocacy, and Public Education & Organizing programs. As a member of our coalition, all staff at your organization have access to member benefits.



Connect & Learn



Annual Conference

Members enjoy significantly discounted registration for our annual [Housing Matters Conference](#). Our 2026 conference will be in **Champaign, IL on September 29-30**. This is a chance for both newcomers and experts to gather, share best practices, and get the latest updates.

In 2025, we brought together 335 participants. During our opening keynote, we welcomed author and housing policy advocate, Leah Rothstein; for our closing plenary, we were joined by the CEO of the National Alliance to Prevent and End Homelessness, Ann Oliva. We also facilitated 18 breakout workshop sessions.



Trainings & Events

Throughout the year, we host a variety of trainings, webinars, and events, all of which are available to our member organizations. Some of these are free, and we offer our members occasional training discounts and scholarships throughout the year. Our 2026 trainings will be virtual and in-person. [View our trainings calendar »](#)



Networking & Peer Learning

Housing Action Illinois fosters collaboration and peer learning opportunities among our members. We facilitate monthly conversations among Continuum of Care leaders, connect organizations to learn from each other, and host occasional networking opportunities in addition to our conference, such as our [Toast to Housing Justice](#), our annual benefit, which will be on **April 30, 2026**, at **Catalyst Ranch** in **Chicago**.



Get the Word Out

We encourage you to send us your organization's upcoming events and job postings for inclusion in our bimonthly newsletter, which goes to **7,900+ subscribers**. You are also welcome to send resources, and opportunities for us to share with our networks. In addition, we publish Member Spotlights on our website to highlight our members' achievements and ongoing work. Let us know if you would like to be considered for a future spotlight by emailing communications@housingactionil.org.

In addition, when doing media outreach on our issues, we reach out to member organizations for press release quotes and refer reporters for interviews.

Grow



Host an AmeriCorps Member



As a member of Housing Action, your organization is eligible to apply to host full-year AmeriCorps position(s) through **Housing Action Corps**.

AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects people and organizations to help end poverty and strengthen communities. VISTAs serve at organizations full time for 12 months. Positions can assist with an array of indirect services, including grant writing, organizing volunteer programs, developing new trainings, and growing existing programs and services.

“Our partnership with Housing Action has been phenomenal. Our Housing Action Corps VISTA helped launch our volunteer program, put key processes in place, and boost recruitment — leading to more furniture, more funding, and more support for our clients.”

Elle Ullum, Chicago Furniture Bank



Trainings & One-on-One Guidance



Our Capacity Building Team supports member organizations, especially housing counseling agencies, through one-on-one guidance. We can help you prepare for a HUD review, give advice on expanding programs, or assist in navigating other challenges. **Housing Action Illinois is now one of six organizations in the nation to receive a HUD Training Award.** This enables us to provide a robust lineup of national trainings through our **Housing Action Training Center** to help housing counseling agencies become more effective, expand programs, and develop skills to meet changing needs.

We also support housing developers, land banks, and other organizations with advice and support on a case-by-case basis. We have also helped assess the potential of local initiatives, and given advice on pitching op-eds, social media campaigns, framing your message, and storytelling.



Housing Action Counseling Network



As a HUD Housing Counseling Intermediary, we secure funding from HUD and pass it on to an **affiliate network of 35 HUD-approved housing counseling agencies**. We help these agencies with administrative functions and assist each agency to ensure it meets program standards and client needs. We aid them in expanding funds, leveraging resources, compiling reports, training staff, and staying abreast of new opportunities.

Advocate



Stay Informed & Amplify Your Voice

We keep track of what is happening in Springfield and Washington D.C. for you. We advocate and mobilize around key issues for housing and homelessness, including:

- Ending homelessness
- Making rent affordable
- Sustainable homeownership

[View our 2026 Policy Agenda »](#)

Housing Action Illinois is in continuous contact with legislators, advocates, and allies throughout Illinois. We want to ensure that the members of our coalition have a platform to share their work and speak up for change. We **keep you updated** about the latest developments in housing policy, **organize issue-specific working groups**, **coordinate meetings with legislators**, and **mobilize organizations and individuals** in support of campaigns.

As a member, we may include you in collaborative advocacy opportunities with key decision makers, share local data to equip you in making the case to invest in expanding affordable housing and ending homelessness, connect you with media to speak about how an issue is affecting your community, or ask for your input.

By talking with our members—who experience these issues firsthand through their work and everyday life—we identify trends and opportunities, shed light on the real-life impacts of legislation, and better understand the ways in which we can shape future initiatives to address housing issues.

[Get advocacy alerts »](#)



Strengthen the Movement

Together, we are stronger. For over 35 years, Housing Action Illinois has worked in pursuit of an Illinois where everyone has a place to call home.

Without your help, none of our work would be possible. **Thank you.**

STAFF & BOARD

Board of Directors

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Darsonya Switzer, Dove Inc., Decatur

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Housing Action's Board of Directors at our 2025 Housing Matters Conference

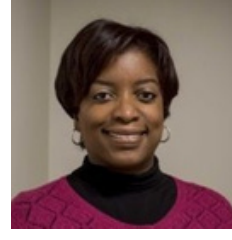
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*Housing Action's staff at our
2025 Housing Matters Conference*

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