What is “Olmstead”?
Olmstead refers to the Supreme Court’s 1999 Olmstead Decision, which established that people with disabilities have the right to live and receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. The Olmstead Housing Subsidy program seeks to support those nursing home residents who can safely live in the community by assisting with the cost of rent, and by providing assistance with locating and obtaining housing.

Olmstead Housing Subsidy Program
A program that works for both tenants and landlords!
What is the Olmstead Housing Subsidy?
The Olmstead Housing Subsidy (OHS) is a rental subsidy designed to mirror Housing Choice Vouchers, or Section 8, for a specialized population. This rental subsidy is intended to help seniors and people with disabilities leave nursing homes, or prevent nursing home placement, by stabilizing their housing. The OHS program ensures that seniors and people with disabilities can afford accessible, safe, sanitary, and sustainable housing in the community. In addition, participants in the program will also have access to supportive services to ensure that community-based services are in place, and participants know and understand their rights and responsibilities.

The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects, such as senior housing. Housing Specialists will work with participants to locate housing in the community of their choice and will complete an inspection of the rental unit to ensure health and safety standards are met. Rental units must also be at or below fair market rent, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in order to qualify for the program.

Who runs the program?
OHS is funded by New York State as a program of the Medicaid Redesign Team. The New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL), through a contract with the New York State Department of Health, is administering the Olmstead Housing Subsidy program. NYAIL has contracted with Independent Living Centers (ILCs) across the state to staff Housing Specialists who assist seniors and people with disabilities in obtaining accessible, safe, sanitary, and sustainable housing. These Housing Specialists can be a resource to landlords and management companies in working with tenants in the OHS program.

The Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) will act as the Fiscal Intermediary.

How do I get my rent?
The tenant pays approximately a third of their monthly income toward the rent and the OHS program subsidizes the rest. The Housing Specialist will determine the amount owed to the landlord by the tenant, and the amount covered by the OHS program. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly, and on-time, by the Fiscal Intermediary, on behalf of the participating individual. The OHS participant then pays the difference between the rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Participants in the OHS program must pay their portion of the rent on-time or risk losing their subsidy.

What if I am having trouble with a tenant in the OHS program?
Housing Specialists work with these individuals to ensure a smooth transition into their new home and to ensure participants comply with the program requirements. Landlords or building managers can reach out to these specialists if they are having problems or concerns with their tenant.

The OHS program can help to fill your vacant apartments.
Housing Specialists across the state are working on identifying available and accessible housing for OHS participants. These available apartments will be shared with OHS participants. This is a no-cost option to market your accessible apartment.

Learn more at www.ilny.org
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