

Factors to Consider When Coordinating a Foreclosure Prevention Event

I. Logistical factors

A. Possible Venues

1. Community Centers
2. City/County meeting rooms
3. Colleges/Universities
4. Military Bases
5. Faith Based Facilities

B. Funding.

1. Local Association
2. Corporate Sponsors
3. City
4. Private Donors

(Note: Assistance and sponsorship do not always have to be in the form of a check. Many businesses or cities don't have budgets that allow them to give direct funding; however, they may have budgets that allow them to assist with logistic needs such as copying, mailing, or may have additional supplies such as folders, envelopes, or other needs.

C. Registration

1. You can set up phone number or Outlook email box that those interested in the event could contact. Someone can collect attendee's name, phone number, and number of people in party, and email / mailing address to send out flier and registration materials to.

Answering machines should request first and last names, number of attendees, and a contact number in case of last minute changes to the event. You may also wish to consider offering a bilingual option on the answering machine.

Make sure answering machines and emails are checked regularly. People may be calling with questions that need answers before they can register and phone machines can fill up quickly if the event becomes popular.

2. If you are doing registration at the event you will need to consider a few factors.
 - a. How many people are expected to attend?
 - b. How long will it take to process them?
 - c. How many staff will be needed to work the registration table?
 - d. What is the configuration of your registration area? Is there adequate room for your tables? Do you have space for your handouts? Is there room for attendees to queue up for?

registration? Consider weather conditions. Do not allow people to queue up in the sun, wind or rain.

e. If you will be handing out folders or packets it is recommended they are assembled prior to the day of the event.

In general, 300 attendees will require 15 registration desk staff to process them in 1 hour.

D. Advertising - Possible Mediums.

1. Using contacts to spread the word (e.g. PTAs, Neighborhood groups, non-profits, churches, etc.)
2. Fliers for mailing and to hand out to local businesses
3. Postcard mailings to areas known to be potentially affected
4. Distribution of fliers at neighborhood meetings
5. Advertising on local cable channel
6. Local newspaper articles and/or advertisements
7. Internet and E-mail lists
8. City phone system
9. Radio advertising

E. Signage

You will need signs at your event with info and arrows to direct traffic. If you do buy signage, be sure it is generic and can be reused at other events.

F. Printing for materials to hand out.

1. If you don't have money or want to leverage your money, you can use the printers in your office.
2. Color vs. black and white. Color is nice but not required. If you are using office printers black and white might not look as nice but it is cheaper.
3. If you are considering using an outside printing vendor, get several quotes and also inquire with a local business hub, such as Kinkos.
4. Spanish and other languages. If you don't have money you will need to rely on in-house staff or your coalition partners. Be sure they have multiple staff review the translated material for accuracy.
5. This may also be another way for sponsors to contribute beyond simply donating money.

G. Audio Visual:

1. Be sure to dry run the entire presentation on the actual equipment being used at the event. This way you can work out any "bugs" before the show starts. The venue may use a subcontractor for audio visual so be prepared to cut another contract in addition to the one used for securing your venue.

2. You may need the following items:

- Microphones. Wireless Microphones will allow the speakers to move around the room.
- LCD projector: Each HUD office usually has one of these.
- Screen: be sure you have a screen to project your presentation on to.
- Laptop computer:
- Media: Your presentation will usually be in MS-PowerPoint. You can burn a CD disk or load your presentation onto a USB “thumb” drive. It is a good idea to save your presentation in a couple of formats so that you are ready for any device. Also be sure your presentation is compatible with the laptop being used at the event.
- Bilingual Needs: You may wish to set up a separate room with AV capabilities and a translator. A microphone should be provided so everyone may still participate in any Q&A sessions.

You can also prepare a PowerPoint with the name(s) of Speaker(s) their logo and contact info. Change slides as speakers change.

Always have a backup plan ready in case the audio or visual equipment experiences a problem and you are unable to use it. This may include handouts or other visual aids to go with your description/presentation.

H. Ushers

1. You may want ushers to wear distinctive clothing so they are easily identified (e.g. red shirts, black pants) that way attendees will know who to ask for help.
2. Make sure the ushers have information to answer a variety of questions, including where restrooms or other services are.

I. Parking Expenses

1. Is there free parking nearby? If not, what options are there for foreclosure victims who do not have the money to pay?

J. Procedures/options for walk-ins if actual number of attendees exceeds event capacity

1. Information packets to leave with those that can not be accommodated
2. Contact information and/or websites where they can get some answers or ask questions.
3. Overflow room with audio of main session piped in and/or
4. Contingency parallel sessions or repeat sessions later in the day/evening.

K. Food, water issues

1. Water should be provided for participants.
2. You should consider providing lunch for programs that run beyond 1:00 pm.

L. Security Issues

1. What does the facility offer?
2. Should local police be notified of event?
3. Is there Security around when event ends and people are going to cars/transportation?
4. Do you need to consider private security for the event?
5. What procedures to follow if individuals are soliciting?
 - a. Do you want to consider warning audience at the beginning of event that solicitors will not be tolerated?
 - b. Do you want to tell audience to notify monitors if they are being solicited?
 - c. Consider beforehand what to do if audience member becomes unruly or worse.

M. Child Care

1. What provisions does venue have for child care (if any)?
2. If there are provisions, is there insurance coverage?
3. Be sure to inform attendees whether child care will or will not be provided either way.

N. Health Issues

1. What to do if there are unforeseen medical events?
2. What if someone is standing in line and they are hot or cold or somehow unable to stand in line any longer?

O. Handicapped accessibility

Your event must be handicapped accessible. Please inquire with the venue management about what provisions they have for the handicapped. If the venue of choice is not handicapped accessible, choose another venue.

P. Translators

1. Are there any community groups that can provide translators?
2. Possibility of a translator and headsets for attendees with limited English proficiency.

Q. Extra Chairs

These might be provided by the venue or you might have to rent these. Find out in advance.

R. Janitorial Services

Who is going to clean up after your event is over? How will trash be handled? A community center will expect you to leave the room in the

clean condition you found it in. A convention center or hotel will have janitorial services included in your contract.

S. Thank You Letters

Be sure to send thank you letters to speakers, sponsors and others who helped ensure a successful event.

T. Union Fees

Some venues charge union cartage and setup fees. Typically this might be found in a convention center, arena or large hotel. These fees are usually not included in your bill and are typically a "surprise" on the day of the event. When you book a venue always inquire if there are union cartage and setup fees and try to obligate/pay these in advance. Otherwise, you may not be permitted to set up your booth.

U. Weather

How will your event be affected by weather? Would your attendance be affected by heat, rain or snow? Do you have plans ready for if the weather does turn bad? If possible, you might want to plan your event for the good weather months to insure you get a good turnout. If rain or snow is anticipated be sure your venue has a plan to prevent slip and fall injuries.

II. Groups that may be involved

A. Housing Counseling Agencies:

1. How to find an agency that might attend
 - a. Local HUD approved Housing Counseling Agencies from list at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm>
 - b. Local Housing Counseling Coalitions/Collaborative
 - c. Fair Housing Organizations

B. Lenders

1. It is important that the lender(s) attending event are reputable and are there to give general advice, and not to solicit business.
 - a. Do they have organizational ties?
 - (1) Member of Large Mortgage Associations?
 - (2) FHA Approved?
 - b. Are there written operating standards that they agree to abide by? You may want to consider a volunteer agreement for them to sign that delineates parameters of participation, including no solicitation.
2. When trying to procure lender participation it is advisable to contact BOTH the local branch and the corporate office.

C. Attorneys

1. It is important that the attorney(s) attending the event is reputable and is there to give general advice, and not to solicit business.

a. Do they have organizational ties?

- (1) District Attorneys Office
- (2) City Attorneys
- (3) Fair Housing Council Organizations
- (4) Legal Aid Societies
- (5) Local Bar Associations

b. Are there written operating standards that they agree to abide by? You may want to consider a volunteer agreement for them to sign that delineates parameters of participation, including no solicitation.

c. Due to the increase in mortgage fraud you may wish to bring in more than one attorney for the break out sessions.

2. Specialties

- a. Tax consequences
- b. Bankruptcy
- c. Landlord/Tenant

D. Other participants that may be involved (FHA, Municipalities, Government Representatives) depending on size and scope of event.

1. Elected Representatives (e.g. Local, City, County, State, Congressional Representative, or Senator)
2. Federal Government Officials (e.g. Federal Reserve)
3. FHA – FHASecure
4. City or County Redevelopment Agencies
5. Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae

III. Possible Event Formats

A. Start with a plenary session and have smaller group breakout sessions later in the program. The goal is to equip attendees with knowledge and resources to pursue options to avoid default or foreclosure.

1. Format

- a. Introductions
- b. Plenary Session
 - (1) Panel may include Lenders, Housing Counseling Agency Representatives, Attorneys, and Government Officials
 - (2) Each panelist may give short presentation
 - (3) Question and Answers
- c. Depending on length you may wish to provide a lunch.
- d. Breakout Sessions