



2026 Minnesota NAHRO Annual Conference Session Descriptions

Wednesday, October 7

10:30am Executive Director & Upper Management Roundtable

The always popular discussion for those leading Housing Authorities. Network with your peers and hear about what is happening across our state.

11:15am First Time Attendee Meet & Greet

New to a Minnesota NAHRO Conference? Meet your peers and get a sense of what to expect.

12:00pm Conference Kick Off Luncheon & 2026 MN NAHRO Awards

1:30pm Concurrent Sessions

Communication & Collaboration: Best Practices for Managing DEED's Small Cities Development (SCDP) Grants with Speaker Natasha Kukowski

Session will discuss strategies to strengthen grant management through effective communication and collaboration.

Connecting Programs & Properties: Strategies for Engagement and Outreach with speakers Emajeane Hanson-Ford and Katie Kline

Learn innovative strategies and practical approaches to connecting with rental property owners and managers in your community. This session will explore how different agencies effectively engage landlords to strengthen existing partnerships, provide education, and encourage participation in housing programs.

Voucher Updates and VMS with Angie Campbell, Hawkins Ash CPAs

This session will cover how to read your Voucher financials including the difference between Restricted (HAP) and Unrestricted (Admin) accounts. We will discuss the VMS and how to tie that into the general ledger in the financials.

LAHA and SAHA Demonstration Panel

The MN Legislature appropriates funds directly to local governments to help them develop and preserve affordable and workforce housing within their jurisdictions. This panel will highlight affordable housing projects across the state funded with Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) and Statewide Affordable Housing Aid (SAHA). Panelists will discuss their community's success in utilizing these funds, in addition to challenges or barriers, and future ideas.



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NATIONAL TRAINING - Fair Housing for Maintenance: Essential Guidance for Staff Who Interact with Residents on a Daily Basis (Part 1 of 2)

Maintenance staff are often on the front lines of Fair Housing compliance. This interactive session provides practical guidance on accessibility, reasonable accommodations, resident interactions, and documentation using real-world maintenance scenarios. Attendees will gain the knowledge and confidence to recognize potential Fair Housing issues, support compliance, and reduce risk while providing equitable service to all residents.

3:15pm Concurrent Sessions

How to Reduce Findings on RLP Audits with Speakers Benjamin Landwehr & Tal Anderson, MHFA

Findings happen but they also provide an opportunity to learn from others so it does not happen to you. This session will help you learn from recent experience so you can have clean audits in your future.

Are You or Will You Be in Shortfall? This Roundtable is for You!

Housing authorities across the country continue to navigate funding uncertainties and HAP shortfalls. Join colleagues from around Minnesota for a roundtable discussion focused on current funding challenges, shortfall management strategies, administrative considerations, and lessons learned. This participant-driven session provides an opportunity to share experiences, ask questions, exchange ideas, and discuss practical approaches to maintaining program stability in a changing funding environment.

Financial Management 101 with Angie Campbell, Hawkins Ash CPAs

This session will cover how to read a basic financial statement including a balance sheet and income statement. We will also go over fixed assets and capitalization policies.

Make Building More Homes a Priority - It Takes All of Us with Speaker Cathy Capone Bennett, Executive Director, Twin Cities Housing Alliance

No single organization, agency, or sector can solve the housing crisis alone. Yet, the pressure put on multifamily housing developments to not only provide quality, affordable housing, but to solve broader community, state, and social program impedes the ability to build much needed homes. Housing providers are also being asked to be responsible for the hardest to house without the necessary financial or regulatory support. Policymakers have big goals for their communities, and it takes big ideas to



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achieve them. Funders have requirements to access their funding, too. Learn about the Twin Cities Housing Compact, an important initiative that outlines the importance of why we all need to come together to make multifamily housing a part of the solution in all communities across the state through private and public partnerships, innovative and flexible investments, cost cutting measures, collaborative tenant solutions, and education on removing policy barriers.

NATIONAL TRAINING - Fair Housing for Maintenance: Essential Guidance for Staff Who Interact with Residents on a Daily Basis (Part 2 of 2)

Maintenance staff are often on the front lines of Fair Housing compliance. This interactive session provides practical guidance on accessibility, reasonable accommodations, resident interactions, and documentation using real-world maintenance scenarios. Attendees will gain the knowledge and confidence to recognize potential Fair Housing issues, support compliance, and reduce risk while providing equitable service to all residents.

5:00pm Vendor Showcase & Networking Reception

7pm Bowling to Benefit Minnesota NAHRO Scholarship Fund



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8:30am Concurrent Sessions

Manufactured Homes Overview with Speaker Steve Witzel

Session will cover the differences between manufactured homes and conventional homes.

Update from National NAHRO - Hot Topics from Washington, D.C.

Tushar Gurjal, Senior Policy Manager with the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) will share updates on the current issues impacting many HUD programs including Public Housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, and what to expect for fiscal year 2027 appropriations.

Cash Management for Housing Authorities with Speaker Angie Campbell, Hawkins Ash CPAs

This session will cover the new guidelines for Cash Management for Operating Subsidy within Public Housing programs. This session will go over what we know from the little guidance HUD has given us. We will also go through the logistics of keeping track of the income and expenses per 2026 implementation.

CR&D Tour Begins - Offsite with transportation provided, back in time for lunch

NATIONAL TRAINING - The Day in the Life of a Maintenance Worker - Session 1: Starting Strong - Kicking Off a Productive Day

Launch the day with intention. This session will model a quick, high-signal morning huddle that aligns assignments, safety notes, and priorities, then walk through reading the work queue to separate true urgencies from routine tasks. Techs will build a repeatable truck setup (tools, parts, PPE) and practice fast, clear check-ins with supervisors/office staff so the field and front desk stay in sync. Outcome: A 15-minute opening routine reduces backtracking and gets the first ticket closed faster.

10:15am Concurrent Sessions

Supporting Low Income Homeowners through the Bidding and Rehab Process with Speaker Karly Meixel

The rehab process can be complicated for some and this session will ensure you know how to help these households get their projects done.



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HOTMA is Here - Be Sure Your Implementation is on Target with Tushar Gurjal, National NAHRO

We know you have started to put your HOTMA implementation plans into action, but this likely means you have questions, HUD guidance is unclear, or you have multiple options to consider. Join us for this implementation focused session with a national expert that will be highly interactive. Bring your questions!

Financial Hot Topics with Angie Campbell, Hawkins Ash CPAs

This session will touch on the implementation of GASB 103 – Financial Reporting Model Improvements. We will also go through the implementation of interest due back to HUD from Federal programs.

Employment Law Update: What Minnesota Housing Authorities Need to Know

While the 2026 legislative session did not bring the volume of employment law changes seen in recent years, there are still important updates and reminders that Minnesota HRA staff should understand. This session will highlight key 2026 employment law developments affecting public employers and provide a practical refresher on significant changes from prior years, including Minnesota Paid Leave, Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST), pay transparency requirements, and other recent workplace law updates.

CR&D Tour Continues - Offsite with transportation provided, back in time for lunch

NATIONAL TRAINING - The Day in the Life of a Maintenance Worker - Session 2: Getting It Done - Unit Turns, Work Orders, & Inspections

This session focuses on vacant unit turn tactics, from scoping and sequencing to realistic turn timelines. We'll cover work order best practices – diagnosis, fixes that last, and documentation that passes audits – and how to conduct required inspections while scheduling follow-ups efficiently. Attendees will also learn simple inventory-tracking habits that prevent parts delays from stalling resident service. Outcome: Faster turns, cleaner files, and fewer repeat calls.

12:00pm Lunch, Minnesota NAHRO Annual Meeting, & Plenary



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1:30pm Concurrent Sessions

Radon Basics and Policies with Speaker Deborah Madsen, Senior Radon Specialist with the Minnesota Department of Health - Indoor Air Unit

Session will provide information on radon, radon policies in Minnesota, as well as the radon data portal and how to use it.

Bring It Home Program: Monitoring and Disbursement with Speakers Shannon Fortune and Terese Fritchman

Compliance Quest: Join staff from Minnesota Housing for an interactive session on financial reconciliation and monitoring basics for the Bring It Home Rental Assistance Program. Attendees can expect to learn more about compliance requirements, important timelines, and documentation essentials, while sharing best practices and lessons learned from the field.

Connect & Comply: The New Digital Front Door for HRAs with Speakers Allison Streich and Taggart Medgaarden

Join Allison & Taggart for an interactive session exploring how HRAs can strengthen community engagement through effective social media and website marketing while preparing for upcoming government website accessibility and compliance requirements.

Strengthen Your Supervisory Skills Building Healthy, High-Performing Teams with Speaker Joyce Hottinger

Supervisors play a critical role in creating a workplace where employees feel supported, engaged, and motivated to do their best work. This session provides practical tools and strategies to help supervisors foster a positive work environment, strengthen communication, navigate performance challenges, and build trust within their teams.

NATIONAL TRAINING - The Day in the Life of a Maintenance Worker - Session 3: Staying Ahead of the Curve - Emergencies, Grounds, and the Unexpected

When the day swerves, your system shouldn't. We'll drill emergency response (from no heat to active leaks), tighten grounds/curb-appearance routines that residents notice, and show how preventive maintenance shrinks tomorrow's emergencies. Expect scenario reps on blown breakers, broken pipes, and after hours call protocols that protect response time without burning out your team. Outcome: Fewer fire drills, safer properties, and a steadier workload.



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3:15pm Concurrent Sessions

Bring It Home Program: Lessons Learned During the First Year of Implementation with Speakers Peter Elwell, Cassi Reissman-Doring, and Dani Salus

This session will be an open discussion with Bring It Home Program Administrators about the first year of program implementation, sharing challenges and opportunities about waitlist management, income and eligibility determinations, voucher issuance and placement, and more!

AI is Here! What It Can and Can't Do for Your HRA with Panelists Sue Speakman-Gomez, Shanika Bumphurs, and Alyssa Soderlund

AI touches many parts of our lives but it is hard to know how it can be an asset to our work environment rather than a detriment. Our panelists will discuss how they utilize AI, how it can be useful in the HRA context and how they ensure appropriate use of the technology. More importantly, this session will address the risks, policies and precautions an HRA should put in place to protect staff, clients and the agency in this rapidly evolving AI environment.

Advocacy 101 with Panelists Dave Dunn, Melissa Taphorn, and Allison Streich

Join our statewide legislative experts to learn the basics of advocacy. This session will explain how a bill becomes a law, how the legislative process works here in MN, and the gains MN has experienced via the legislative process. Finally, a discussion about how to build relationships with policy makers and the collaboration needed to move projects forward. There will be examples of affordable housing projects that have been the result of advocacy on the statewide and local levels shared throughout the session.

NATIONAL TRAINING - The Day in the Life of a Maintenance Worker - Session 4: Wrapping It Up Right - End of Day Tasks that Set You Up for Tomorrow

Finish strong so tomorrow starts easy! We'll finalize completed work orders with clean notes and photos, restock trucks with a quick checklist, and script a 5 minute end of day touch base with leads/supervisors. You'll leave with a simple dashboard of what to track, report, and prep so priority tickets and parts are queued before you clock out. Outcome: Less overnight stress, better continuity, and higher first call completion rates the next morning.

5:00pm Vendor Showcase & Reception



2026 Minnesota NAHRO Annual Conference Session Descriptions

Friday, October 9

9:00am Concurrent Sessions

Ask the Attorney with Mary Dobbins

This session is always informative and ensures you know the recent judicial decisions and administrative action that will impact your housing authority. Join us for this session with insight from our legal expert on shifts in administration as it relates to landlord tenant issues, program management and agency requirements.

Rehab Focus Roundtable

Join Rehab colleagues for a pre-determined topic of interest and a chance to share, collaborate, and learn from one another.

10:30 Concurrent Sessions

HOTMA Implementation Roundtable

Gather with your peers to discuss your implementation of HOTMA. This session will provide an opportunity to discuss concerns or answer questions you have regarding your HOTMA policies and allows for the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Rehab Roundtable

Join others in the Rehab industry and bring your questions for an exchange of knowledge and ideas.