

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY Newsline

Opportunity now, where owners make a difference

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 2 • FALL 2010

It pays to go green!

Did you know that you can access rebates and tax credits just by adding energy efficient upgrades? Many loans, rebates and credits are available through various utility companies, the state, local counties and cities.

First, have your property surveyed for energy efficiency. You can do this free online at www.sce.com, then go to Residential and look for their Home Energy Survey. This survey will tell you what you can do to increase the efficiency of your property and save money on utility bills.

Now that you know what changes you can make, you can look into the programs that are available to help you.

The State of California offers a CSI Multifamily Affordable Solar Housing Program, also known as MASH. There are also rebates for replacing appliances such as dishwashers, clothes washers and HVAC systems with energy-efficient models. Southern California Gas Company offers loans for water heaters, dual pane windows, weather stripping and more. Southern California Edison's Multifamily Energy Efficiency Rebate Program offers rebates for many items, including lighting, dual pane windows, ceiling fans and solar panels. SoCal Water Smart (www.socalwatersmart.com) offers rebates for energy-efficient clothes washers, turf removal and other great rebates. The IRS is offering tax credits for solar energy systems, wind energy systems and geothermal heat pumps. Visit www.energystar.gov for the latest information on these tax credits. For more information on other programs that are available in your area, visit www.dsirusa.org.

Changing the landscaping to xeriscaping saves water and also reduces pruning and maintenance. You can find xeriscaping tips and plants native to California online using a simple search.

Your tenants can also participate in going green by requesting weatherization assistance from San Bernardino County Community Action Partnership (www.sbcounty.gov/csd/). This assistance will help low-income individuals reduce their utility bills by providing low-cost upgrades and home surveys based on their energy usage.

Energy conservation is the right thing to do. It helps preserve our environment and ensures that future generations will be able to enjoy earth's nature. ●



BY AMANDA ALBRECHT
Portability Technician



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

In the initial plan, HACSB established its long term vision and goals, but limited activities related to these goals were identified and approved.

The following are our Vision and Mission Statements, with HACSB's values:

Vision: HACSB is committed to creating a world in which all people have a stable and enriched quality of life.

Mission: HACSB empowers all individuals and families in need to achieve an enriched quality of life by providing housing opportunities and resources throughout San Bernardino County.

Values: The HACSB strives to be a key participant in supporting and improving the community it serves. HACSB seeks to streamline its program and establish a higher standard of services to the community. To this end, the Agency has adopted the following values that will guide it towards achieving its Mission and Vision.

- Create a workplace environment that attracts and retains capable employees who feel they are making a difference.
- Develop an effective communication program that disseminates information to all employees.
- Maintain strong collaborative relationships with a wide variety of agencies and innovative community partners.
- Positively engage the community in building a safe and stable environment.



Landlord and Tenant Lease Guidelines



In the last issue of *Newsline*, we discussed the changes to the lease-up process in our HCV Program. So far we have had good feedback from landlords, but we wanted to follow up on this exciting change and provide a little more information.

In May of this year, HACSB stopped providing the lease for the HCV tenant and landlord contract. We did this for several reasons, but key factors were to *maintain compliance with HUD regulations* and to *increase benefits to our landlords* in the HCV program.

Benefits include:

- The lease is between the landlord and the tenant, and HACSB believes that it was misleading for all parties for HACSB to provide a lease. We feel this change will clearly communicate that the lease is a contract between the landlord and the tenant. This will

support the landlord (or the tenant) when they are trying to enforce the lease terms.

- HACSB felt that the lease we provided no longer met the needs of private sector landlords, and we wanted them to have the freedom to choose a lease that is suited to the needs of themselves and their tenants, as long as it complied with HUD regulations.
- Many landlords were utilizing both our lease *and* a lease of their own, which could cause confusion in enforcing the Housing Assistance Payment Contract and/or lease terms.
- Private sector landlords will now be able to use the same lease for their assisted tenants as their unassisted tenants, which will streamline their operating and document procedures.

There are a few guidelines that an HCV participant landlord must follow when creating your lease with the tenants. You should ensure your lease includes these basic check points:

Your lease *must* contain/include the following:

- Effective date of the lease (must match the Housing Assistance Payment [HAP] Contract);
- The names of the owner, the tenant and all household members;
- The unit rented (address, apartment number, and any other information needed to identify the contract unit);
- The term of the lease (initial term and any provisions for renewal);
- The amount of the monthly rent to owner;
- A specification of what utilities and appliances are to be supplied by the owner, and what utilities and appliances are to be supplied by the family;

- Megan's Law Notice: Civil Code Section 2079.10a;
- Lead Warning Statement: Required by 24 Code of Federal Regulations Section 35.92;
- The *Tenancy Addendum* that is provided with the HAP Contract *must* be incorporated into your lease with the tenant (in accordance with HUD regulations). Attach *Tenancy Addendum C* and signed *Incorporation Document* to your lease.

For further information on the requirements please go to www.hacsb.com landlords section, HACSB's *Landlord and Tenant Lease Information Factsheet*, or visit our Housing Programs Office on Thursday afternoons at 2:00 PM for our weekly landlord briefings. To reserve a spot at the briefing, please e-mail Becky Murillo

at rmurillo@hacsb.com or Christine Herrarte at cherrarte@hacsb.com.

If you need help finding or formatting a standardized lease, please contact:

- Apartment Association Greater Inland Empire at www.aagie.com
- Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board at www.ifhmb.com
- California Department of Consumer Affairs Landlord and Tenant section at <http://www.dca.ca.gov/publications/landlordbook/catenant.pdf> (*A Guide to Residential Tenants' and Landlords' Rights and Responsibilities*).

I would like to offer further thanks to all of our participant landlords in helping HACSB provide greater housing choice opportunities for the residents of San Bernardino County! ●

—BY LISA JONES, OPERATIONS MANAGER

HCV Waiting List Update

Beginning in April of this year, the Housing Authority began the process of pulling applicant names from our Housing Choice Voucher 2007 waiting list. The first step is to determine the applicant's income eligibility for the program. Once the applicant is deemed eligible, they must pass a criminal history background screening in order to receive their voucher. The Housing Authority standards are to deny admission if the applicant or any household member has been involved in any drug-related or violent criminal activity within ten (10) years of the initial interview, and to permanently deny admission if an applicant or any household member is subject to a lifetime registration as a sex offender under a state registration program. *Please note: Applicants are not screened for tenant suitability.*

Applicants are given 60 days from the date the voucher is issued to locate a unit that will pass Housing Quality Standards with an approved rent. Additional information about Housing Quality Standards can be found on our website at www.hacsb.com under "For Landlords" or "Inspection Standards."

The Housing Authority encourages all landlords to utilize the free services of GoSection8.com. As a courtesy to our applicants, participants and landlords, copies of the GoSection8.com unit listings are available upon request. As a landlord, you can view the unit listing on the Gosection8.com website.

(GoSection8.com is an independent company. The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of the information provided by GoSection8.com or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.) ●

—BY REBECCA MURILLO, HCV SUPERVISOR AND
TINA SCOTT, HOUSING APPLICATION AND FRONT OFFICE SUPERVISOR

WHAT THOSE INITIALS MEAN

This newsletter uses initials and special terms to describe agencies and procedures that are important to landlords. Here's what some of them mean:

HUD: The Department of Housing and Urban Development, a federal agency that provides much of the money we use to subsidize housing in San Bernardino County.

HACSB: Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino

MTW: Moving to Work; the Housing Authority's new designation with HUD.

HCV: Housing Choice Voucher program (see Section 8 below).

SECTION 8: The rental subsidy program through which subsidy payments are made directly to landlords on the participant's behalf. The term refers to the section of the federal code that authorizes and controls such direct payments. Also called the Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV).

HAP: Housing Assistance Payment; the share of the tenant's rent which the Housing Authority pays directly to the landlord.

RFTA: Request for Tenancy Approval. A form the voucher holder completes with the landlord of the unit they want to rent, then submits to HACSB. As long as the current contract rent of the unit does not cause the tenant's portion to exceed 40% of their household income, the HACSB sends an appointment letter for the unit to be inspected.

Become More Informed... Come to a Landlord Briefing

HACSB holds landlord briefings every Thursday from 2-3 PM at the Housing Programs Office, 672 South Waterman Avenue, San Bernardino, CA 92408.

Please join us for an informative and fun time to learn more about our MTW designation program. To reserve your spot please e-mail Becky Murillo at rmurillo@hacsb.com or Christine Herrarte at cherrarte@hacsb.com.

How Do I List My Property?

You can list your property at no charge with GoSection8.com. GoSection8.com also offers other services, and a fee is charged for them. It is your choice if you want the other services. You can also advertise in local newspapers stating "HCV/ Section 8 Welcome."

—BY STANNA GARNER, ADMIN CLERK II

Avoid Scams and Fraud

HELP US FIGHT INTERNET FRAUD!

We have learned that landlords working with Housing Authorities in other areas have been contacted over the phone by persons claiming to represent the local Housing Authority. The landlord contacted is requested to provide sensitive information over the phone (bank account number, social security number, PayPal info, etc.) These criminals may be finding local landlord names by visiting GoSection8.com and viewing property listings.

Our Housing Authority will not request this type of information over the phone. Please report any contact of this kind to the police and the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino.

These same persons may also be representing themselves as associates of GoSection8.com. The following advice is from GoSection8.com and can be applied in either circumstance.

FROM GOSECTION8.COM:

If this happens to you, we can help. Please note that we log the Internet Provider (IP) address of every user who contacts a landlord on GoSection8.com. With an IP address, the police may be able to contact the Internet Service Provider (ISP) that the criminal connected through and track them down. Also, Gosection8.com displays this prominent fraud alert to all users when they first log in to the website: <http://www.gosection8.com/Main/Scams.aspx>

- *Never give out financial information to anyone who*

calls you by phone (example: bank account number, social security number, PayPal info, etc.)

- *GoSection8.com does not store credit card or social security numbers, and you will never receive a phone call from GoSection8.com asking you for payment for any reason or to verify personal or financial information over the phone.*
- *Deal locally with landlords and property managers that you can meet in person. You should never wire funds to an unknown individual.*
- *It is important that you establish that the person you are dealing with is the landlord or a licensed agent of the landlord. Accordingly, deal only with landlords/agents who will allow you access to the property in which you are interested before exchanging any money.*
- *If in doubt as to ownership or representation of an agent, we recommend you check with the local housing authority before exchanging any funds.*

Call toll-free 866.466.7328 or e-mail GoSection8.com if you suspect fraud.

Also, report fraud to the FTC's toll free hotline: 877-FTC-HELP (877.382.4357).

(GoSection8.com is an independent company. The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of the information provided by GoSection8.com or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.) ●

—BY MATT POTTER, HCV SUPERVISOR



Moving to Work Update for Landlords



In March 2008, the Housing Authority became one of only one percent of housing authorities nationwide to be designated a Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration site by HUD. MTW is a demonstration program that allows housing authorities to design and test ways to:

- 1) promote self-sufficiency among assisted families;
- 2) achieve programmatic efficiency and reduce costs, and;
- 3) increase housing choices for low-income households.

Below is a list of activities that affect you as an HCV landlord.

- **Controlled Program Moves:** HACSB will limit voluntary program moves for HCV participants to once every two years, only at the time of recertification and upon verification from their landlord that they are a tenant in good standing. This activity, mentioned in last September's *Newsline* was implemented on February 1, 2010. There are certain exceptions: if a unit is in foreclosure, if a participant has a better job or attends school more than 10 miles from their current unit, or if the unit becomes unaffordable. The family will not be permitted to move for reasons which do not meet our requirements even if they provide documentation of a mutual rescission between the participant and the landlord.
- **Local Inspection Standards:** HACSB is finalizing the details on our local inspection standards activity. As mentioned in last September's issue of *Newsline*, HACSB will develop a property rating system in alignment with HQS and local enhanced standards. Based on their ratings, properties will be inspected biennially (every two years) or annually. Properties that do not meet the minimal rating criteria will not be accepted on the program.
- **Local Policies for Portability:** All program participants who are moving into or out of the County of San Bernardino will have to comply with HACSB's Local Policies for Portability. Some of these policies include Minimum Rent of \$125, Controlled Program Moves and Biennial Recertification. As of August 2, 2010, all eligible adult household members (non-elderly and non-disabled) of any new incoming portability family must be employed at least 15 hours per week in our county (or within 30 miles) prior to the execution of a Housing Assistance Payment Contract and throughout the participation in our voucher program. Families who are not in compliance with the work requirement will not have their rent adjusted due to loss of wages. They will be allowed to port back to their initial Housing Authority only if they provide documentation of a mutual rescission between the participant and the landlord.

We look forward to your continued support in these endeavors, and will keep you posted on any MTW changes that directly affect you. In the meantime, feel free to visit www.hacsb.com for updated MTW Plans and Reports. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Jones, Operations Manager, at 909.890.9533 x3239, via e-mail at ljones@hacsb.com or Terry Quiroz, HCV Program Integrity Manager, at 909.890.9533 x3305, via e-mail at tquiroz@hacsb.com. ●

—BY ANA GAMIZ, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS,
AND SUKET DAYAL, PLANNING AND POLICY ANALYST

Have you heard?

The Inspections Unit is now located in the Ontario office. Matt Potter, HCV Supervisor—Inspections, and two of his staff are now located in Ontario. The rest of the Inspection staff are located in the Victorville and San Bernardino offices. If you need any assistance from the Inspection Dept. you can call:

Ontario Office
909.983.1318
Matt Potter 3262
John Davis 3562
James Lien 3255

San Bernardino Office
909.890.9533
Dominique Dumas 3256
Jim Kuykendall 3254

Victorville Office
760.243.1043
Mike Beam 3253
Marisol Razo 3258

—BY TAMMY AVILA,
HCV SUPERVISOR



Dear Homer...

Q: Can I move my tenant from one of my units to another unit? What is the process?

Depending on the type of the current lease, the tenant may be eligible to transfer from one unit to another (tenant cannot move if on a two-year lease). Before moving, the participant will be required to:

- Attend a pre-move briefing/orientation, which will inform the participant of program changes and procedures for moving.
- Family will be informed of the time the moving process takes and, if he/she is still interested in moving, to serve the owner notice and provide a copy to Housing Authority.
- Paperwork to update family information will be provided.
- Participant will be required to attend a voucher issuance briefing/orientation.

Q: Am I in violation if I transfer a tenant from one of my units to another without going through the Housing Authority first?

The Contract for the unit terminates when a tenant moves out. The owner may have to reimburse the Housing Authority for the period of time the tenant did not reside in the unit. The tenant will be responsible for all the rent until he/she attends a moving briefing/ orientation,

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY ORDINANCE 4044

Rental Dwelling Unit License

On February 5, 2008, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors adopted County Ordinance 4044, which requires that a property owner must obtain a business license to rent property in the unincorporated areas of the county. This ordinance is similar to the one which the City of Victorville adopted a year earlier.

This requirement applies to all single-family residences as well as multi-family apartment units. The Board of Supervisors, along with the Clerk of the Boards office and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, looked into ways to make property owners more responsible for the properties they rent. It was determined that an owner of one or more rental properties in the County must complete a Rental Dwelling Unit License application and submit it to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors office.

Unlike the City of Victorville's ordinance, the Board of Supervisors said they would allow a waiver of the \$52 annual license fee if the owner participated in the International Crime Free Multi-Housing Program. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department encourages all rental property owners and managers in San Bernardino County to participate in this cooperative program. The program provides rental property owners with training on current property management rules and regulations and helps them deal with problem tenants.

The main goal of this program is to determine who might be renting property in San Bernardino County and to ensure the owners are following all applicable landlord tenant laws. It will also help landlords learn how to rent their property to responsible tenants who will care for the property and not be a nuisance to the community.

For questions about the Rental Dwelling Ordinance or to obtain a license application, contact the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors office at 909.387.3841 or visit their website at www.sbcounty.gov/cob.

If you have questions about the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Crime Free-Multi Housing program contact the Sheriff's Public Affairs division at 909.387.3700. ●

—BY DEPUTY RON HALL, SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS



www.hacsb.com

Coming Soon: Redesigned HACSB Website

In October 2010, HACSB will be launching a redesigned website. You will find a wealth of information on HACSB's programs, services and resources for landlords.

Welcome Aboard, Lisa Jones!

Lisa Jones joined the HACSB team as Operations Manager of Housing Programs on March 1, 2010. In her current role, Lisa will manage and oversee activities and operations of housing programs, focus on innovation of delivery methods and policy development in day-to-day operations and the department's MTW activities. This will be carried out with a focus on efficiency, streamlining activities and, above all, creating an effective, supportive and valuable experience for our customers.

Originally from San Diego, Lisa lived and worked for the past eight years in England. While overseas, Lisa worked as a Services Manager within the Citizens Advice Bureau, a national nonprofit organization offering free independent information, advice and representation on a wide array of legal and welfare issues. While certified in all areas of their advice services, Lisa's specialty and passion was housing law and the access to safe, affordable housing. As a strategic partner, she served on a steering group, worked with the District Housing Authority on developing their Housing and Homelessness Strategic Plan, reviewed housing needs assessments and looked at innovative ways of developing and delivering both their public housing



and their rental subsidy programs. Lisa received her Bachelor's degree in Non-Profit Management and her Master's degree in Business Administration from the College of West Anglia, England.

Lisa is very involved in her daughter's community drama group and encourages her to give back to the community. Her daughter,

age 12, is a member of her school's Associated Student Body, and works to contribute to area schools and other community projects. Lisa has also participated in several other voluntary community groups and looks forward to being actively involved in HACSB's volunteer drives in the future.

In August 2009, Lisa returned to the States, settling in Temecula. In talking about her new position Lisa says:

"What a phenomenal opportunity it is to become part of such a professional, dedicated, and impassioned team, so focused on the improvement of housing options and the support of our county's communities. I have long felt the need and drive to be part of something bigger than myself, to in some way bring value and give back to my community. It is a joy to be part of such a progressive organization." ●

—BY LIZERI GUERRERO, HCV SUPERVISOR

voucher is issued, unit passes inspection, the rent is negotiated, and the Contract and Lease effective date policy is followed.

Q: Does the HA pay for any damages to the unit?

No, the Housing Authority does not have grants to cover damage claims. The owner should seek legal counsel. If the owner seeks reimbursement for damages directly from the tenant and/or via small claims court, the owner should submit copies of the documentation and court judgment to the Housing Authority.

Q: Why does it take so long to get an inspection for a unit in which a person from another county is transferring to San Bernardino County?

Participants may approach a landlord with the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) from another county. The owner should ask the prospective tenant if he/she has a voucher issued by HACSB. If the participant is not an HACSB voucher holder, he/she will have to go through the following process:

- Participant will need to meet the work requirement.
- Participant and adult family members must pass Criminal History background.
- Participant must attend a briefing/orientation that informs participant of the rules, regulations, policies of San Bernardino County.
- Participant and owner must submit an RFTA and ownership documents for the new unit.
- Unit must be scheduled and pass inspection.
- Requested rent will be negotiated between inspector and owner.
- Contract must be executed with the effective date policy.

—BY INES WORK, HCV SUPERVISOR



A Tradition of Service
CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK
OCTOBER 4-8, 2010

A Special 'Thank You' to Our Landlords

In celebration of National Customer Service Week, the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino extends its appreciation for your partnership in providing our families with housing opportunities throughout San Bernardino County.

www.hacsb.com

Housing Program Offices

672 S. Waterman Ave.
San Bernardino, CA 92408
Phone: 909.890.9533
Fax: 909.890.5333

424 North Lemon Avenue
Ontario, CA 91764
Phone: 909.983.1318
Fax: 909.983.5002

15465 Seneca Road
Victorville, CA 92392
Phone: 760.243.1043
Fax: 760.243.2123

Office Hours:

9 AM to 4 PM — All offices are closed every other Friday.

HA Newsline is distributed to landlords in the County of San Bernardino. To learn more about the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino's rent subsidy program, or to add your name to our mailing list, contact the Housing Programs Office at 672 S. Waterman, San Bernardino, CA 92408 (phone 909.890.9533 ext 3202) or email sgarner@hacsb.com.

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Welcome Aboard, Lisa Jones

HACSB Receives Four National Awards

In July 2010, the Housing Authority received four Merit Awards from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). The awards recognize outstanding achievement in housing and community development programs throughout the nation. The following programs were recognized for administrative innovation:

- **Group Inspections Program:** Developing an annual inspection procedure that benefits landlords, owners, participants and HACSB by utilizing available resources more efficiently. This program was also entered for consideration in the National Awards of Excellence Competition.
- **Emergency Mortgage Impact Program:** In response to the home mortgage crisis affecting San Bernardino County, the Housing

Housing Authority Receives Four National Awards!



Authority established a program that provides security deposit assistance to Housing Choice Voucher participants displaced due to foreclosures.

- **HACSB Strategic Plan:** Moving the agency to greater efficiency and productivity by developing a 30-year Strategic Plan with a new Vision, Mission, and Core Values.
- **Customer Service Campaign:** Making a concerted effort to address the quality of service within the agency.

The Housing Authority is proud to be recognized for its efforts, and will continue to implement programs and practices that build its reputation as a leader in the community and housing industry. ●

— BY ALISON CRAWFORD, DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES