

Housing Authority of Maricopa County

LANDLORD LINE

August 2008

Housing Authority of Maricopa County, 2024 North 7th Street, Suite 101, Phoenix, AZ 85006
www.maricopahousing.org Phone number: (602) 744-4500

Direct Deposit – Coming Soon

Many property owners/managers over the years have requested Direct Deposit of their Housing Assistance Payments (HAP). Thanks to the diligent efforts of the Finance Director the HAMC will be able to offer this service effective **October 1, 2008**.

It will be mandatory as of October 1, 2008 for all property owners/managers to provide necessary information for Direct Deposit of their HAP. The necessary forms and information will be provided to all affected parties as soon as we are able to make them available.

If you have questions about this process you may contact Karen Mofford, Finance Director at (602) 744-4517 or k.mofford@maricopahousing.org.

Section 8 Staff

The HAMC has been experiencing catastrophic phone problems over the past two months. Our phone system has not been reliable, to say the least. There are whole days when no phone calls or faxes come into our offices, and by the same token none can go out. Our staff is trying to resolve these issues, but we, the housing specialists, cannot know when another outage will occur. We ask for your patience and understanding when this happens.

So far, our e-mail has not been affected. If you wish you may contact any of our staff through e-mail.

BETH RICE, Director HCV Program602-744-4530
b.rice@maricopahousing.org

MARY ELLEN WILLIAMS, Senior Housing Specialist
(A - Gon) m.williams@maricopahousing.org 744-4522

GEORGIA CISNEROS, Housing Specialist 744-4525
(Oj - Z) g.cisneros@maricopahousing.org

LORI HATFIELD, Housing Specialist 744-4531
(Goo -Oi) l.hatfield@maricopahousing.org

DEBBIE COOKE, Housing Specialist 744-4529
(Portability) d.cooke@maricopahousing.org

VERONICA INIGO, Housing Specialist 744-4528
(Wait List) v.inigo@maricopahousing.org

NICOLE LONGONE, Program Assistant 744-4502
n.longone@maricopahousing.org

Property Tax Assessments

Beginning **October 1, 2008** all owners of rental properties in Maricopa County will be required to provide documentation that their rental units are registered properly with the Maricopa County Assessor's Office as rental property.

Rental units may not carry the assessment designation of "3 - Owner Occupied." The rental units subsidized with federally funds must be assessed as Rental Property (category 4), in order to continue receiving rental subsidy.

Landlord Reminders

Lease Violations - It is the landlord's responsibility to enforce the lease with the tenant. Voucher holders are to be treated no differently than any other tenant. This includes, but is not limited to: 1) verifying that only those persons approved by HAMC and listed on the HAP Contract (or Addendums) are residing in the unit; 2) that all utilities not paid by the owner are connected; and 3) the participant is paying their portion of the rent.

Evictions/Move Outs - If you serve the tenant with eviction papers, a copy must be sent to HAMC at the same time. If a tenant vacates a unit please notify HAMC immediately.

Rent Increases

The landlord is required to notify both HAMC and the voucher holder in writing, at least 60 days before any increase in the rent amount. Rent increases will only be allowed at the time of the voucher holder's annual recertification.

Change of Ownership - If a property is sold, HAMC must be notified and the new owner must complete a "Change of Ownership" packet. Contact HAMC to receive the packet.

Tenant Rent - It is **illegal** for a family to pay more for rent than the amount specified by HAMC, or for the landlord to request or accept such "under-the-table" payments. When HAMC learns of such payments, action will be taken against both the tenant and landlord. Tenants may lose their rental assistance and landlords may be barred from participating in the program. Both may be prosecuted. Read your HAP Contract for penalties. Anyone aware of any such arrangement is encouraged to report it to HAMC immediately.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

In January of 2006 President Bush signed into law the Violence Against Women and Justice Department Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA). This law prohibits the eviction of, and removal of housing assistance of certain persons living in public or Section 8-assisted housing if the asserted grounds for such action is an instance of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as those terms are defined in the law.

The law protects certain victims, as well as members of the victims' immediate family, from losing their HUD-assisted housing as a consequence of the abuse of which they were the victim. The law requires that all public housing agencies administering these programs, as well as owners in the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and project-based programs, comply with this new law.

Any Assisted Housing Program participant who believes their proposed termination from the program is related to these types of incidents must include this information, in writing, to the Housing Authority of Maricopa County office. The person seeking this protection must complete required forms and provide certification that the alleged incidents of abuse are bona fide. For more information you may contact a Housing Specialist or the Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Landlords will be given the opportunity to rescind current lease agreements with participants who claim protection under this law. However, such rescission is not required and the rental assistance contract will be terminated as necessary by HAMC to protect the victim and the victim's family.

INSPECTION AND MOVE-IN DELAYS

Moving is stressful no matter the situation. But tenants and property owners/managers working with the Housing Authority of Maricopa County (HAMC) may experience difficult delays if all parties do not act in accordance with HAMC policies. It is our desire to make the process as seamless and efficient as possible. However, delays occur for various reasons. The top reasons for delays are:

- Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) Forms not completed correctly – Be careful not to omit any information requested on the RTA forms, such as Full Address of Unit, Proposed Rent (Including Tax), three comparable unassisted rental units, and all signatures.
- RTA Not Returned in a timely manner – Voucher holders have a specified time in which to use their voucher. It is the applicant/participant's responsibility to return the **original** RTA to the HAMC office.
- Waiting for Property Owner/Agent Information – We cannot process an RTA without proof of ownership and management agreements for all new units. These documents **MUST** be attached to the RTA when it is submitted to HAMC.
- Payee Not Consistent with W-9 Information – The person or company to whom the 1099 will be sent to at the end of the year **MUST** be the person or company who provides the W-9 information, including SS or TIN. This becomes *critical* when we begin Direct Deposit.
- Unit is Not in HAMC Jurisdiction – If your unit receives its water service from Phoenix, Glendale, Peoria, Tempe, Scottsdale, Chandler or Mesa, it may NOT be in our jurisdiction. The client must request their paperwork be forwarded to the PHA that services your area (portability).

- Unit not ready for inspection – Property must be empty. Property owners/managers may obtain a checklist to insure that units are ready at initial inspection.
- Property is Over the Eligible Amount – Voucher holders are informed of the amount of rent they are eligible for when they are given their voucher and RTA forms. It is important to adhere to those guidelines to avoid a delay in processing the unit for inspection.
- Property Rent is not Reasonable – HAMC must compare the proposed unit to three (3) other unassisted rental units to establish the rent reasonableness. If the property owner/manager provides that information on page two of the RTA, the process is sped along.

Landlord Outreach

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is designed to give low-income households access to affordable, decent and safe rental housing. We appreciate all of our property owners and management companies for their willing participation in this program.

If you know of someone who may be interested in renting to a Section 8 client, please put them in touch with us. We will send them information and answer any questions concerning landlord responsibilities, program rules and family obligations under the program.

They may go to our website (www.maricopahousing.org) to get initial information, or call 602-744-4500 to speak to someone to possibly list their unit on our Courtesy Landlord Listing.