

Housing Authority of Maricopa County

Section 8 Newsletter – March 2007

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There have been changes to federal regulations and to the Housing Authority of Maricopa County (HAMC) Administration Plan that you should be aware of. HAMC would like to encourage you to take the time to review this newsletter.

Tenant Rent

It is illegal for a family to pay more for rent than the amount specified by the Housing Authority, or for the landlord to request or accept such “under-the-table” payments.

It has come to our attention that this practice is becoming more and more common. When the Housing Authority finds out about this, 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.

Anyone aware of any such arrangement should report it to the Housing Authority immediately.

Moves

If a voucher holder moves into a unit before it passes inspection, they are responsible for all rent due for the days before the passed inspection.

Families must notify HAMC before moving; even if it is within the same apartment building.

Moves will only be allowed at your annual recertification date. Ask for a “Notice of Intent to Vacate” form at your annual recertification appointment. The form must be completed by both the tenant and landlord prior to receiving a voucher to move.

Annual Reviews

Voucher holders must attend your scheduled annual recertification appointment. If you are unable to attend, you must contact your case manager at least 24 hours in advance to reschedule.

If you do not attend your appointment or reschedule at least 24 hours in advance the current Housing Assistance Contract with your landlord will be terminated.

If you wish to stay in your current unit, you and the landlord will need to complete a Request for Tenancy Approval packet and the unit will be evaluated to ensure it qualifies under the current payment standards and utility allowance guidelines.

If you choose to move to a different unit, we will verify that you are current with your rent and that you do not have any outstanding lease violations. We will then issue you a voucher and a Request for Tenancy Approval packet.

Reporting Changes

All changes must be reported in writing within ten days.

Changes that must be reported include: Who lives in the unit, any change of income and any change to the full time student status of anyone 18 or older.

Include your name, current phone number and the date on all change reports.

Visitors

A visitor may not stay longer than 14 consecutive days or a total of 30 days per year.

Absences

If the entire family is absent from the rental unit for more than 30 days, the voucher can be terminated.

Contributions or Gifts

If anyone contributes to your household on a regular basis it must be reported. Examples include: cash, paying any of your bills, providing clothing, food, diapers, cleaning supplies or personal hygiene products.

Appointments

Unfortunately our schedules are tight and frequently it is not possible to see clients without an appointment. Please call to schedule an appointment if you need to see your case manager.

Messages

When leaving voice mails, do not leave more than one message without giving us adequate time to return your call. This slows down our response time.

Landlord Information

Tenant Screening

Voucher holders are to be treated the same as any other applicant. You are responsible to perform the same background, credit or reference checks that you would on any applicant.

Contract Execution

When you receive a HAP contract from HAMC, sign and return it along with a copy of your lease within ten days. The HAP payment will be put on hold until the contract and copy of the lease is received.

Annual Inspections

If an inspection fails, the landlord and tenant will receive notice. It is the responsibility of the landlord and tenant to ensure the inspection department is notified when repairs have been completed. Repairs must be completed within 30 days of the initial inspection. If the unit fails a second time or the unit is not reinspected within the 30 days, payment for the unit will be stopped.

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.

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.

Evictions – Move Outs

If you serve the tenant with eviction papers, a copy must be sent to HAMC.

If a tenant vacates a unit please notify HAMC immediately.

HAP Payments

The subsidy that we receive from HUD is deposited in our account the 1st of the month. The HAP checks are mailed the first business day of the month after we confirm the deposit from HUD has been received.

Contact HAMC if you do not receive the HAP payment by the 10th of the month. We will stop payment on the check and will issue a new check on the mid-month check run.

HAP Payment not received

Tenants may not be evicted if the HAP check is not received. The tenant is only

responsible for their portion of the rent.

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.

1099's / W-9's

New forms will be mailed in the next month to update our payee files. Please read and follow the instructions carefully. By doing so, it will keep you from receiving a "B Notice".

Direct Deposit

We are meeting with our bank for guidance on format and notices. The next step is a meeting with our software company on compatibility. We are projecting a May implementation date.

Violence Against Women Act

The law states that a landlord may not use the fact that a tenant is or has been the victim of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault or stalking as a basis to terminate their tenancy or occupancy.