

News Update

Message from the Director

It is hard to believe that summer is already here. On behalf of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) we hope that everyone has had a chance to enjoy the warm weather.

In this issue of the quarterly newsletter we would like to take the time to remind both owners and participants about how our program works. The goal of the HCVP is to serve families who are in need of decent, safe, and affordable housing. This service takes the form of assistance payments towards rent and also utilities, when needed.

Unfortunately, the amount of assistance that CMHA provides will not always be a match for what a landlord would like to receive for a particular property. This means that after the final rent offer is made, owners will then have to make the best business decision for them about whether or not to accept the proposed rent.

What an owner cannot do is ask the tenant to make up the difference between the HCVP rent determination and the owner's requested rent amount. **This is considered a side payment, and is illegal under the Federal False Claims Act.** Violating this law can result in penalties ranging between \$5,500 and \$11,000 per occurrence. Owners who disagree with CMHA's rent determination are free to rent their property through other means, or if affordability is an issue, find a tenant with a higher income.

Here at the HCVP, we would like to cultivate a positive relationship with both owners and participants. However, we must always be sure to operate under the federal guidelines that govern our program.

Please enjoy this edition of the summer newsletter, and I hope you all are continuing to have a happy and prosperous year.

HCVP Enforcement of Lead Law

When a CMHA inspector cites a unit built prior to 1978 for defective paint and the unit has or will have a child under the age of six in the household composition, the HCVP must inspect and pass the unit based on HUD standards, which are more restrictive than EPA Law. Landlords interested in becoming familiar with the differences between HUD standards and the EPA law can find them on the internet at http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/enforcement/lshr_rrp_changes.cfm.

Owners seeking a certified contractor should call the Environmental Protection Agency hotline at (800) 242-LEAD (5323). Those who wish to locate a Licensed Lead Risk Assessor should call 216-263-5323 for properties located within the City of Cleveland, and 216-201-2001 ext. 3 for suburban area properties.

Landlords can send the required clearance test and certification documentation to hcvplead@cmha.net or deliver them to an inspection team leader at the HCVP office.



Initial Move-in Inspections

Prior to signing a Housing Assistance Payment contract, each property must pass an HCVP inspection. Owners should be aware that weather deferments or conditional approvals cannot be issued for new contracts. The HCVP is not permitted to make exceptions to this process. Please use the inspection checklist located at www.cmha.net to ensure the unit will pass.

Housing Quality Standards and the Law

As each landlord and tenant participating with the HCVP knows, the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection is one of the most important steps in the rental process. An HQS Inspection is required prior to going under contract with the HCVP, as well as annually for units that continue to be on the program.

However, what some homeowners may not realize is that CMHA's inspection standards are not the only ones that must be met. Every landlord is also responsible for meeting local and state housing codes that apply to rental properties. This means that passing CMHA's inspection is not sufficient to ensure that the rental unit is complying with all housing laws.

Owners are responsible for contacting the building department of their local city hall to ensure that they are not in violation of local housing codes. The building department may require a separate inspection and the issuance of a rental permit or Certificate of Occupancy. Each municipality has different requirements, so it is important that owners check with the city in which the unit is located to verify compliance.

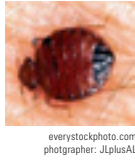
While CMHA must inspect to HUD's HQS guidelines, the HCVP will always defer to city compliance standards. This means that the owner's responsibility is two-fold; they must pass the HCVP Inspection and also meet local housing standards.

Bed Bugs

Unfortunately, bed bugs have become an increasingly more common occurrence in recent years. Although everyone's preference would be to avoid this issue in the first place, sometimes there may not be a choice.

BED BUG DON'TS

1. Do not use bug bombs; it will cause the bugs to scatter.
2. Do not throw away furniture; it can spread the problem to others.



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photographer: JLplusAL

BED BUG DO'S

1. Contact an exterminator with bed bug experience.
 2. Eliminate clutter in the home.
 3. Clean and sanitize home thoroughly.
- Please contact your local health department for more information on fighting bed bugs.

Landlord Portal

For anyone who has not had a chance to register for the HCVP Landlord Portal, there is still time. This free online service offers owners the opportunity to manage their property information anytime and anywhere. Just visit www.cmha.net/llportal to get started.

Congratulations to those who have already begun using this new addition to the HCVP's website. Remember to sign up for e-mail notifications regarding inspection dates and tenant portion changes. To turn this feature on, log into your portal account, click the "update portal info" link, and check off the notifications you wish to receive.

Owners who would like assistance with signing up for the portal should call 216-426-2808 to get an overview.

Calendar of Events

(Please arrive on time; latecomers will not be admitted.)

Mover's Session Schedule

(Bring current photo ID)
Tuesdays and Thursdays
10:00 to Noon and 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday Mover's Sessions:

10:00 to noon
July 10th, August 7th, September 11th

Landlord Briefings

(Required for new landlords before signing an HCVP contract; attendance is limited to 35 persons per Briefing)

Date	Time
Friday, July 2nd	1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Monday, July 12th	Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Saturday, July 24th	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.*
Wednesday, July 28th	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, Aug. 7th	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.*
Friday, Aug. 13th	1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 25th	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Monday, Aug. 30th	Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 10th	1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Sept. 15th	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, Sept. 25th	10:00 – 11:30 a.m.*
Wednesday, Sept. 29th	Noon – 1:30 p.m.

*Reservations are required for Saturday sessions: call (216) 426-2808 or e-mail daughert@cmha.net.

Inspections Training

Landlords, do not forget to register for the HCVP's Brown Bag Lunch Workshop on the inspections process. Hear information directly from the HCVP Inspections Department, and learn about available resources in the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

This workshop will be held on Friday, July 16, 2010 from 12pm-2pm, at the Cleveland Foodbank, located at 15550 S. Waterloo Road, Cleveland, OH 44110. Call 216 426-2808 or e-mail daughert@cmha.net to register.



Moving Process

It is inevitable that most landlord-tenant relationships will eventually come to end. At times, ending the tenancy agreement can seem stressful. However, when done properly the moving process can be conducted with ease.

It is important for the voucher holder to keep in mind both HCVP rules as well as the terms of their existing lease agreement. Participants are eligible to move after their initial lease term by following the terms of the lease. The voucher holder must also have a current annual recertification in place, and all adult members of the household must pass a criminal background check.

Participants desiring to move should attend a Mover's Session to learn up-to-date program information and receive moving papers. In addition, participants must refer to their lease and follow the terms to legally end their relationship with their current landlord. Upcoming Mover's Session dates are located in the Calendar of Events column at the side of the page.

Landlord Briefings on the Road at Cuyahoga County Libraries:

Date	Location	Address
July 14th	Solon	34125 Portz Parkway
Aug. 12th	Parma-South	7335 Ridge Road
Sept. 14th	Fairview Park	21255 Lorain Road

All sessions are from noon to 1:30 p.m.
No reservations are required.

Contract Signing Sessions

(Bring current photo ID)
HCVP Learning Center
(3400 Hamilton Avenue, Entrance B)
on the following dates:

July 7th and 21st	} and	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Aug. 4th and 18th		1:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 8th and 20th		



Board Of Commissioners: Ronald V. Johnson Jr., Chairman; Doris V. Jones, Vice-Chairperson; Robert E. Davis, Ronnie A. Dunn, Ph.D., Natoya Walker Minor
Chief Executive Officer: George Phillips-Olivier; **HCVP Director:** Priscilla Pointer-Hicks
Housing Choice Voucher Program: 3400 Hamilton Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114, (216) 431-1471, TTY (216) 426-2903 or (216) 426-2904, www.cmha.net

CMHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program provides reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities so they may participate in our programs, services and activities. If you need an accommodation, including auxiliary aids and/or services, please contact Customer Service at (216) 431-1471 (voice) or 1-800-750-0750 (Ohio Relay Service).