

Monthly update

A service of the Cuyahoga
Metropolitan Housing
Authority for landlords
and program participants
in Cuyahoga County.
September 2008

Inspection Reminders:

UNITS FAIL HQS WHEN NO ONE IS AT HOME

The goal of the HCVP is to provide decent, safe housing at an affordable cost to low-income families. To accomplish this, program regulations set forth basic housing quality standards (HQS) which all units must meet before assistance can be paid on behalf of a family. The same standards must be met annually throughout the term of the assisted tenancy. HQS defines "standard housing" and establishes the minimum criteria necessary for the health and safety of program participants.

At least annually, it is the responsibility of the HCVP to conduct inspections of units to determine compliance with HQS. Both owners and participants are notified in advance of the scheduled inspection, and they are both responsible for allowing access to the unit. When the HCVP Inspector arrives at a rental unit and is unable to gain access, the unit automatically fails the inspection, and the HCVP schedules a re-inspection approximately two weeks from the initial failed inspection date.

The HCVP only allows a total of three (3) inspections for a unit to be found in compliance with HQS. It is, therefore, imperative that owners and their tenants ensure that a responsible adult, age 18 or older, is available to allow access into the unit. At the second failed inspection, the Housing Assistance Payment will be abated.

Contracts are cancelled at the third failed inspection. If the fail is due to violations for which the owner is responsible, the participant will be eligible to receive movers papers. However, if the fail is due to violations caused by the participant or because a member of the household failed to be at home to allow access for the inspection, the participant may be proposed for termination for failure to comply with a Family Obligation.

PRE-INSPECTING UNITS CAN PROTECT THE HAP

Owners are urged to take advantage of the advanced notice of the annual HQS inspection to conduct their own pre-inspection. HQS guidelines are readily available at www.cmha.net under the HCVP tab. By pre-inspecting the unit before the HCVP Inspectors arrive, owners can correct any apparent violations and prevent a failing score.

By achieving a passing score at the first inspection, owners avoid the risk of subsidy abatement that will occur with a second failed inspection. In addition, an initial pass score frees up the owners' time since subsequent inspections become unnecessary. Time is money, and pre-inspecting the unit before the annual inspection takes place will help protect yours'.

