

NEWS FOR OWNERS AND MANAGERS IN THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Property Manager Says Assisted Families Are Model Tenants

Rental property manager Maggie Aviluz knows that leasing to responsible tenants makes good business sense. She also feels that well-screened voucher households tend to be some of the best residents.

"All of my Section 8 tenants are great and on time with their rent," she says, offering the Basir family as an example.

Khadija Basir and her eight-year-old son Kaleel live at a 105-unit South San Diego complex that Maggie manages. Khadija—who works as a human resources specialist—is a model tenant, reports Maggie.

"In addition to being prompt with her rent, Khadija is very pleasant and takes excellent care of her unit. She's been here for a long time. I would be very sad if she ever left!" Maggie says.

Maggie notes that property inspections are an added benefit of the San Diego Housing Commission's Rental



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Maggie Aviluz
Rental Property Manager

Assistance Program.

"It's great that the inspectors can go inside the unit—since I can't—to see what needs to be done," she says.

Maggie encourages rental owner/manager colleagues to consider leasing to voucher holders as a smart and effective way to fill vacancies. She recommends conducting thorough tenant screenings, just as one would with non-assisted families.



Khadija Basir and her son, Kaleel. In addition to participating in Section 8, Khadija is in SDHC's Family Self-Sufficiency Program and serves as a commissioner on the agency's board.

Legislation Update: Landlord-Tenant Law

Following are two recent legislative changes.

Modifications to 60-day notice law. California recently revised an existing law regarding tenant notification. For month-to-month tenants who have lived in their units for more than a year, owners must provide 60-days written notice for lease terminations, unless: 1) A new roommate moves in, in which case the one-year time

period would start again, and 2) The tenant has lived in the unit for less than a year (in which case only 30-days notice is required). The change took effect January 1, 2007.

Domestic violence tenant protection rights. In accordance with the federal Violence Against Women Act, Rental Assistance tenants cannot be denied assistance because of domestic violence, dating

violence or stalking (as long as the participant is otherwise compliant with all program obligations). If you have tenants who have been victims of such situations, help protect their rights by having them fill out and submit a HUD Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating or Stalking form. To access the form, go to www.sdhc.org and click on Rental Assistance Program.

Property Inspections Can Save You Money

The San Diego Housing Commission's property inspections can help you keep up with repairs and avoid costly problems. Because owners typically don't have legal access to the unit, the voucher program requires agency staff to inspect properties once a year. The inspectors check for a number of things that could become serious fire/safety, repair and/or liability issues, including the items shown below.

By learning of such problems ahead of time, you not only potentially save money but also help keep your tenants safe. Important safety issues include checking for the presence of lead paint. The Housing Commission conducts these tests at the agency's expense. Additionally,



assistance with lead paint removal is available through the Housing Commission's housing rehabilitation program. For more information, go to www.sdhc.org and click on "Help fixing up your home." A complete inspections checklist is also available on the website (go to "Have housing to rent").

Money-Saving, Safety-Promoting Inspection Checklist

- Water heater properly connected.
- Carpets free of tripping hazards.
- Mold and mildew.
- Loose wiring that could cause electrical shock.
- Lead paint issues.
- Overall maintenance of unit.
- Smoke alarms connected and working.
- Leaks that could cause flooding/plumbing problems.
- All appliances in good working condition.
- Signs of insect or rodent infestation.

The Business Advantages of Rental Assistance

How can renting to households with Rental Assistance vouchers help you get the most out of your rental investment? Let us count the ways!

1. Timely rents. You can count on the Housing Commission's portion of the rent on the first of each month. Plus, assisted tenants usually pay their rent on time, since their rent is more affordable.

2. Direct deposit. Getting your rent check through direct deposit is safer than mail—and it saves you time and gasoline!

3. Comparable rents. Rent rates and increases are based on market rate practices, so you know you'll get the best possible rent.

4. Free rental vacancy listing on www.sdhc.org to help you find new voucher tenants.

5. Well-maintained units. Property inspections keep you apprised of potentially costly repairs. (See article on the left for more about this topic.) Also, voucher families tend to be diligent about keeping the home in good repair to ensure they keep their rental assistance.

6. VIEWpoint newsletter provides you with timely program tips and tenant-landlord law updates. (See front page story for the latest legislative news.)

VIEWpoint is published by the Rental Assistance Department as a way to keep rental owners/managers updated on issues and policies regarding our programs. If you have any ideas for future stories—or if you would like extra issues sent to your staff—please contact Communications Specialist Janine Rojas at janiner@sdhc.org.



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