

### We Can Help Your Renters “Get Ahead”

Did you know that the Housing Commission offers free services to assisted families to help them get ahead in the work world? The program that does this is called the **Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)**, and it has helped thousands of clients.

Ethel Gray—a Section 8 client who lives with her 11-year daughter, Jessimena, in North Park—is one of the FSS participants. She now has a great job with benefits as a membership/scholarship coordinator for the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center. But getting to this point in her life has been a long journey—one that included running away from a foster care home and ending up in homeless shelters. After getting a Section 8 voucher, Ethel joined the FSS program and got career counseling, job training, childcare and transportation assistance, and other resources. Not only did that result in the benefit of a job

she loves, but because her job is at a recreation center that offers after-school care and day camps, her daughter often joins her at work.

Help your tenants access important resources by telling them about the FSS program! More information, including a schedule of free orientations, is available at [sdhc.net](http://sdhc.net) (click on “Getting help getting ahead”) or by calling Teresa Guzman at 619.578.7469.



*Ethel found her “doorway to opportunity”—and your tenants can, too!*



### New Call Center Will Help You Get Answers Faster Than Ever

The Housing Commission listens to concerns and suggestions of its “customers,” and rental property owners and managers are an important customer group.

One issue both you and your renters have is difficulty getting through to someone when you phone us. (Our owner liaison, Lynda Brophy, just cannot keep up to date with all the calls she gets!) We hope our new Rental Assistance Call Center—debuting October 1—will make it easier

for you to more frequently get a **live** person on the phone when you call. Staffed by several people instead of one, the goal of the center is that you will be able to get questions and concerns answered immediately—instead of having to leave a message. We’ll be sure to remind you when the center “goes live.”



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# Rent / Voucher Update

## Improved Voucher and Payment Standard Formulas

You may recall that last year we made a number of changes to the Section 8 program to help us reduce costs so we would not have to cut some of the families and individuals currently in the program. As a result of these efforts—although we are not fully funded at previous years' levels—we are now able to increase our “voucher size” (number of bedrooms subsidized) and payment standard formulas.

### Vouchers

Here is how the new voucher size formula will work: Vouchers will be issued based on one bedroom for the head of household and spouse and one bedroom for every two remaining household members. For example, in a household of two people, a mother with one child would be issued a two-bedroom voucher. A dad with three children would be issued a three-bedroom voucher.

### Payment Standard

The maximum amount the Housing Commission can approve for rent and utilities (our “Payment Standard”) has been increased to 110 percent of HUD-determined local fair market rents. Please keep in mind that rent maximums will vary by neighborhood and each situation (since rents need to be comparable to market rates and not exceed your rents in non-assisted units).

#### Payment Standards:

Unit Size/# of Bedrooms	Studio	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
Payment Standard	\$939	\$1,072	\$1,301	\$1,897	\$2,288	\$2,631	\$2,974

## How Section 8 Helps Families

Jennifer Rhea (photo, right) found that despite having an associate's degree in accounting and a full-time job as a hospital accounting technician—things just weren't adding up in her life. The cost of rent, car insurance, health insurance, childcare, food and other essentials made her life a struggle. She would often have to ask family members for help buying groceries, paying for doctor bills and watching the children (two boys—Kyle, age 7 and William, 10) when needed.

Today, the family lives in a two-bedroom apartment in Rancho Peñasquitos. Life is manageable, notes Jennifer, thanks to the fact that her rent is affordable. “Section 8 helps me be a better mom,” she says.



Jennifer Rhea and her two sons received a two-bedroom voucher.

*VIEWpoint is published by the Rental Assistance Department as a way to keep rental owners/managers updated on issues and policies regarding housing assistance programs. If you have any ideas for future stories, or if you have any suggestions about our programs, please contact Owner Liaison Lynda Brophy at 619.578.7680 or [lyndat@sdhc.org](mailto:lyndat@sdhc.org).*

## Additional Change

Speaking of improvements... another recent program change has to do with rent calculations. If you have a renter who lives alone in one of your units, and that renter dies, the Housing Commission (recognizing that this may cause hardship to owners) will now pay the rent for that individual renter until the last day of the month that the person passed away.



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