

NEWS FOR OWNERS AND MANAGERS IN THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### When It's Time to Raise the Rent...

Did you know that you are allowed, under the Section 8 program, to raise the rent? We understand that, just like in the private market, rent increases are needed to keep up property maintenance and to continue to make a profit. Here are some

guidelines and conditions to keep in mind when you are ready to request an increase:

- Rents must be reasonable for the area. If your apartment complex has four or more units, you may be asked to supply addresses of your comparable units or a rent roll to verify your comparability.
- There are no dollar caps to proposed rent increases as long as the above standards are met.
- Rental Assistance participants can't be the first to receive increases. (Rather, your market rate tenants should be.)
- Assisted tenants may not be charged higher rents than unassisted tenants.
- The Housing Commission needs 60-days notice in writing.
- Increases are only permitted after the initial term of the lease has expired.

If you would like more information about how to increase your rent, please consider attending our March 19 workshop on this topic. (See page 2 for details.)



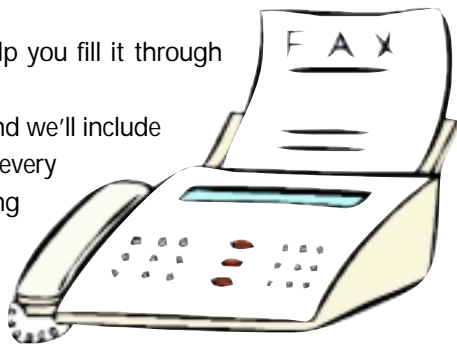
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### Got Vacancies?

Reminder: if you have a vacancy, we'll help you fill it through our free vacancy listings!

Please fax the info at (619) 235-0369, and we'll include it in our vacancy listing that comes out every Tuesday. Please get it to us by the preceding Friday by 5 p.m. To request a vacancy listing form, or if you have any questions, please call Lynda Taylor at (619) 525-3760.



# Free Monthly Workshops Coming Up

## “How-to” Workshops to Address Common Questions

Our quarterly workshops have been such a hit with current and prospective Section 8 landlords that we’re going to do a lot more. Beginning this month, we’re launching a pilot series of monthly workshops to address the individual needs of our owners. Each workshop will be about specific topics, such as inspections, leases, Housing Assistance Payment Contracts, and how to get a rent increase. We will also be offering orientations for newcomers. Please join us for any of the workshops that interest you. All sessions will take place at the Housing Commission main offices (1625 Newton Avenue, San Diego, CA, 92113), are free of charge, and are on a first come, first served basis. Space will be limited; if you have a larger staff and would like all of them to attend, we can make special arrangements for our staff to conduct a workshop at your office.

If you are interested in going to any of these workshops, please call 619-525-3626.

This is a message center, so please leave us your name, phone number, and the session you would like to attend, and we will call you back with more information.

**February 22**

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Housing Quality Standards and Lead-Based Paint

**March 19**

2-4 p.m.

How to Get a Rent Increase

**April 26**

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Owner Orientation to Section 8

## Lead-based Paint Safety Requirements

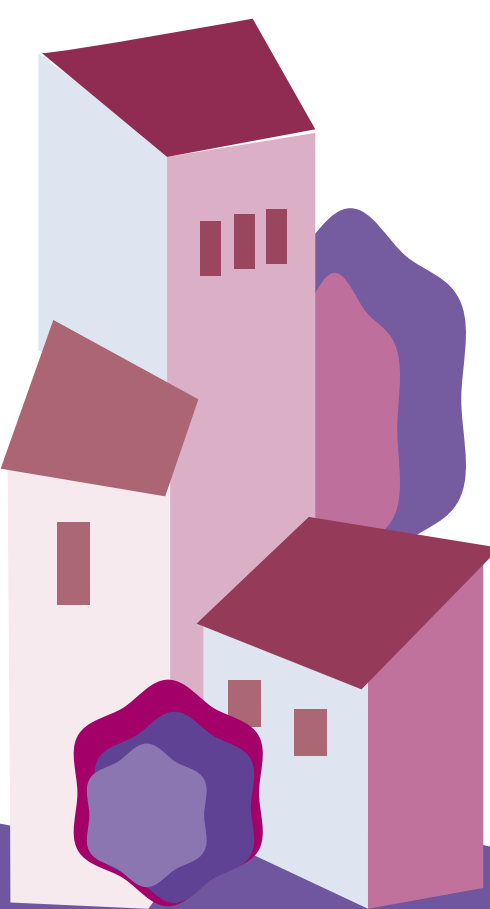


The new lead-based paint safety requirements, which must be met before signing a new lease and/or upon annual inspection of the rental property, are as follows: when chipping, peeling, and/or cracking is visible on surfaces greater than two square feet inside the unit or greater than 20 square feet in common areas, then testing and repairs must be done. A qualified expert must use “paint stabilization” to repair the surface and then conduct a “clearance test” to ensure that no lead dust remains. Additionally, if the Commission is notified that a child with an environmental intervention blood lead level (EIBLL) is living in or plans to live in the unit(s), a certified risk assessor must do a risk assessment test, which is an on-site investigation to determine the existence, nature, severity, and location of all lead-based hazards. Landlords will continue to receive rent payments from the Housing Commission during the testing/repair process.

Note: certain kinds of housing units are exempt. These are:

- Units built after January 1, 1978
- Units exclusively for the elderly or disabled
- Zero bedroom units (studios)
- Units already found to be free of lead-based paint by a certified inspector

Several issues back, we gave you a “heads up” about new Section 8 federal regulations concerning lead-based paint. It is great to see that nearly all of you already comply with these pending health and safety standards. The regulations are now in place, and the following should help you understand them and check that you are in compliance. If you are still not sure whether your unit meets the standards, we will send out a certified technician to do a free inspection. Please call Steve Callow, (619) 525-3702, to schedule an inspection or to answer any questions you may have. Also, see the story above about a free, February 22 workshop on this subject.



# Family Self-Sufficiency Spotlight

*To show you how your involvement in the Section 8 program is helping to improve the lives of persons in need, we have been profiling some of our Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program participants in VIEWPoint. (The FSS program is open to all Section 8 households.)*

Kim L. had it tough after leaving her abusive husband. With two kids to support, her wages from her part-time beauty salon job weren't enough to make ends meet. But she had the hope and determination to make a better life for herself and children—with a little help from the Section 8 Rental Assistance program.

Stable, affordable housing through Section 8 plus support from the Commission's Family Self-Sufficiency

program enabled Kim to realize her dreams. She finished college and landed a good job working as a lab technician. The job paid well enough for her to become financially independent and even purchase her own home—a fixer-upper in a Mira Mesa neighborhood. Kim humbly shrugs off suggestions that she has done anything extraordinary by working so hard to change her life around. "I just wanted to make things better for my children," she says. And she has.

"My mom makes me so proud," says her son John, now in his first year at UCSD. "She's more than a role model. She's my hero."



## Thanks to HUD, We Have More Vouchers...Do You Have More Units?

If you've liked what you've "sampled" so far as a Section 8 owner/manager participant, feel free to help yourself to seconds, thirds, or more! That is to say, please consider "expanding" your participation if you have additional rental units that could be made available to our clients. Because of 854 new vouchers that we're getting from HUD this year, along with an additional 200 special vouchers



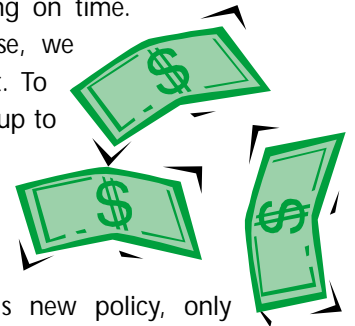
for non-elderly/disabled persons, we'll be able to assist more families than ever. This is good news for households in need of affordable housing, but it comes with a downside—persons who are new to the program typically have a tough time finding housing because of how tight the market has become. So, please help us help them if you can!

## If We're Late, We'll Pay Up!

A popular benefit to the Section 8 program for property owners is the fact that you can nearly always count on the Housing Commission's portion of the rent being on time.

But, of course, we aren't perfect. To help make it up to you if we're ever late, we can now pay owners a \$25

late fee. This new policy, only recently allowable under new federal guidelines, comes into effect whenever you receive our rental payment after the 10th of the month. So, please call Lynda Taylor, (619) 525-3760 (because the payments aren't issued automatically) if that's the case, and we will send you a check. Note: the late fee policy only applies once Housing Assistance Payment Contracts are in place and the first rent payment from the Housing Commission has already been processed.



## Team Highlight



Front row (left to right): Edna Guerrero, Mariza Madrigal, Nancy Tooson, Roberta Housing and Cery Lucas. Back row (left to right): Joanne Gutierrez, Maria Christopher and Mary Blue

## We'd Like You to Meet Our Super Star Occupancy Team "C"

When you have questions about a specific tenant (such as what their responsibilities are or how to process an income adjustment), or you wish to raise the rent, recertify your unit, or are considering selling your property, our Occupancy Department staff members (housing assistants) are the folks to call. In this issue, we would like to introduce you to "Occupancy Team C." By the way, they said to let you know that "C" stands for competent, caring, conscientious, and committed!

In the Fall VIEWPoint, we included a directory of which Occupancy Teams handle which caseloads. If you need a copy of that directory or would like to know who your caseworker is, please call Lynda Taylor (619) 525-3760.



*VIEWpoint is published by the Rental Assistance department as a way to keep 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 Taylor at (619) 525-3760; lyndat@sdhc.org.*

## Inspection Notes

### Identify and Eliminate Hazards

To ensure the safety of your tenants as well as your property, the Housing Commission has policies designed to identify and immediately eliminate emergency hazards. The following are considered emergency situations:

- Units that cannot be secured (i.e., doors do not lock properly)
- Waterlogged ceiling in imminent danger of falling
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding
- Natural gas leaks or fumes
- Electrical problem that could result in shock or fire
- Utilities not in service
- No running water
- Lack of one functioning toilet

Since you may not be aware of the presence of any such hazards yourself (as you are not permitted to enter the family's home), the way you would most likely find out about potential safety violations would be if the tenant brought it to your attention. If you merely suspect a problem, please contact the housing assistant assigned to your tenant to set up a special inspection. In any case, if a hazard is reported to, or noted by, the Housing Commission, you or your tenant have 24 hours to make the repair. Please make sure the repairs are made within that time frame to avoid suspension of rental payments from the Commission.



Good Neighbors  
**San Diego  
Housing Commission**

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