

RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STATISTICS

ACTIVITY	8/2008	9/2008	10/2008	11/2008
Applications	59	64	72	45
Walk-in/Appointments	264	212	246	130

WAIT LIST	7/2008	8/2008	9/2008	10/2008	11/2008
Section 8 Vouchers *	629/564	675/605	695/622	701/633	715/647
Parkview Knoll	83	82	83	78	75
Blue Mountain Estates	50	50	50	53	52
Scattered Sites	27	34	40	48	46
Schoolhouse Manor	37	39	42	44	45
Monterey House	9	8	8	10	10
Francis Murphy Apartments	63	61	67	67	65
Springfield Manor	82	78	83	77	76

* Where two numbers are shown, the first is total applications and the second is persons free of debts or criminal records that would bar them from participation.

Vouchers	7/2008	8/2008	9/2008	10/2008	11/2008	YTD Proj
Available	498	498	498	498	498	5,478
Utilized	489	496	496	498	501	5,358
Occupancy	98.19%	99.60%	99.60%	100.00%	100.60%	97.81%

PUBLIC HOUSING	9/2008	10/2008	11/2008	Vacancy	Occupancy	Move in	Move Out
PVK	28	28	28	0	100%	0	0
BME	28	28	28	0	100%	0	0
Scattered	23	23	23	1	96%	0	0

RENTAL PARTNERSHIP	9/2008	10/2008	11/2008	Vacancy	Occupancy	Move In	Move Out
SHM	31	31	32	0	100%	1	0
Monterey	23	24	24	0	100%	0	0
Francis Murphy	119	119	119	1	99%	1	1
Springfield Manor	35	35	36	0	100%	1	0

I. Reports

A. Press Release - The press release announcing the recent appointment of our two newest Board members was emailed to 26 media contacts on November 25, 2008.

B. Section 8 Facts and Figures - This past week Chairman Keesecker came under pressure from a friend at a State Delegate to do something about the plight of one of our waiting list applicants. As it turned out, the applicant had not kept our office abreast of several important changes in her household situation, not the least of which was her address!

So how do you answer the question: Since this person has been waiting over a year and has not home of her own, what can you do to help? Here is some information that may help.

With over 600 applicants for housing assistance to track, we ask applicants to give us their changes in writing. Changes in income, housing conditions and family composition affect placement on the waiting list. It would not be fair to other applicants to take changes over the phone from some and not from others, so when applicants call with changes they are told that it needs to be put in writing on our change form. The form can be mailed, can be downloaded from the tenant page of our web site or it can be picked up at our office in person. So the most important immediate answer is, "We can help you best if you keep your application up to date by giving the office a completed change form."

This applicant had not reported that she was now unemployed. Over a year's time we have about 100 people drop off of the program. This means that we will serve 100 new applicants each year or 8 per month. 75% of the new people we serve must be Extremely Low Income (ELI). Extremely low means they earn less than 30% of area median income. The other 25% may earn up to half of median income (50%). If an applicant makes between 30 and 50% of median income the length of time they will need to wait will be triple the waiting time of an ELI family.

On 12/3/08 we had 630 applicants. 331 were ELI, or 49%. So who should get the limited amount of rental assistance we have through turn over in the program? By policy HAWC places families on the waiting list for Section 8 assistance in the following order from the top: Victims of domestic violence; Working 20 hours or more per week or elderly; families in substandard housing or paying more than 50% of income for housing; to families where the head or spouse is a veteran; and finally to the date and time of application to break ties. Are these priority choices consistent with the Authority's values? Some agencies serve people on a first-come-first-served basis. Are you able to explain why applicants may have to wait a long time?

How motivated are you to lobbying Congress for more funding to meet the needs of the 630 families on our waiting list? Shouldn't this be part of our Strategic Plan? It looks like we will end calendar year 2008 98.01% utilized in the Section 8 program. We have identified 99% or better as our strategic goal for future years.

Twice a year we update our waiting list. We are completing the fall update in the next two weeks. This means that there will be a marked

drop in the size of the waiting list in the January Management Report as all of the persons who did not respond to the update letter are dropped. The young lady we used above as an example would have been dropped since she did not return the update letter which was mailed to (what we now understand is her) former address. "Undeliverable" mail is the most frequent reason for drops related to the bi-annual update process. Often clients call us several months after they were dropped to ask us when they will be served. We will restore an application to active status once we hear from them, though we could require them to fill out a new application. We are not trying to punish people for inattention to their mail.

- C. Neighborhood Conservation Initiative - We have until Friday, December 12th to complete the next round of forms for the Maryland competition for federal foreclosure prevention funding. A public hearing on the County's combined application will be held on Tuesday, January 6, 2009 at 9:45 a.m. Since Mr. Willson will be in Gulfport, MS, the first week in January, it would be helpful if a Commissioner could be present.

In conjunction with this application, the Board Chair is asked to sign the following statement of assurances:

The applicant partner for the application submitted by Washington County Board of County Commissioners hereby assures and certifies that it will comply with the regulations, policies, guidelines and requirements with respect to the acceptance and use of funds for this program. Also, the applicant partner gives assurances and certifies with respect to the grant that:

- A. *It possesses legal authority that it qualifies as a partner for the submission of the application and to execute the proposed project(s).*
- B. *It has assisted in the development of the application so as to meet the allowable National Objectives as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD).*
- C. *It meets the application requirements as outlined in the State of Maryland's Action Plan submitted to HUD for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.*
- D. *It's projects and activities for which the NCI funds are requested are identified in the jurisdiction's NCI Strategy.*
- E. *It will conduct and administer in conformity with title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) and the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601-3619) and implementing regulations and agrees to take action to affirmatively further fair housing.*
- F. *It will certify, to the best of the certifying official's knowledge and belief, that:*
 1. *no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of it, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an*

- officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.*
2. *If any funds other than Federal funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress with this Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement, it will complete and submit Standard Form- LLL, Disclosure Form to Report lobbying in accordance with its instructions; and*
 3. *it will require that the language of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this certification be included in the award documents for all contracts and that it shall certify and disclose accordingly.*

In our HUD funded programs the Executive Director's signature is used on similar certifications - sorry, Mr. Chair.

- II. Strategic Planning - If the young lady we used as an example in the Section 8 discussion got us confused with the Hagerstown Housing Authority, our degree of name recognition in the community might be a strategic issue. If the community does not know of our existence, our name will not come up in conversation - good or bad. Maybe the fact that we use one logo on our stationary and another on our web site is not a good thing. And if this confusion causes us to lose public support, then name recognition is a strategic issue.

Under separate cover the draft Strategic Plan is being circulated to staff and to Board members. Keep in mind that the purpose of this draft is to stimulate discussion. The wording is rough and the measures of success are often not specific. There are elements that several staff have worked on and there are parts that are the work product of only one person, but they are combined here so that we can begin to get a feel for what the whole program might look like.

This mailing also contains the staff's work on Public Relations as a starting point for the Board's discussion, as well as our recently completed brochure for the Family Self Sufficiency program.

- III. Upcoming events
- A. The list of "Next Meetings" is on the Agenda this month.