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UPCOMING EVENTS

- November 9, 2006, North Texas Association of Housing Authorities meeting in Mesquite, contact Raylene Cockrum, (972) 216-6424

GOT ASSETS?

One of the primary purposes of the new Operating Fund rule is to give greater attention to the financial, physical, and management performance of each public housing project. The move to asset management will include five major elements; i.e., project-based funding, project-based budgeting, project-based accounting, project-based management, and project-based performance assessment.

For now, the emphasis is on the basic building blocks of asset-based funding, accounting, and performance monitoring. The schedule for transitioning to asset management is as follows:

- The new funding formula

will be applied in Calendar Year (CY) 2007 at the agency level, using a weighted-average Project Expense Level (PEL).

- The new funding formula will be applied in CY 2008 at the project level.
- The new project-based accounting, budgeting, and management requirements will be effective for PHAs whose fiscal years begin July 1, 2007.
- A new project-based performance assessment system will be implemented no later than the second year of project-based accounting.

As PHAs convert to asset management, the Department will also be undergoing many changes. In

addition to modifying its data systems, HUD is also developing new monitoring and oversight procedures for field office staff. Projects will be grouped and these portfolios will be assigned to specific HUD staff who will serve as asset managers.



Mt. Pleasant, Texas PHA

The conversion process introduces new business rules:

(Continued on page 4)

IN TOUCH GOES HUB-WIDE

We are pleased to announce *In Touch* will include all the Program Centers and Housing Authorities belonging to the Fort Worth Hub. This not only increases the circulation of our quarterly newsletter, but expands the opportunities for diverse contributions and exciting reports of accomplishments.

Whether your Authority is under the Albuquerque, Houston, Oklahoma City, or Fort Worth field office, we want to hear from you. Tell us about the successes your Housing Authority has achieved. Send pictures. Share those best practices. Ask the Professor or Mr. PIC any perplexing questions you might have.

Send your contributions to Robin Barton. Her contact information is on the back page.

Stay in touch!

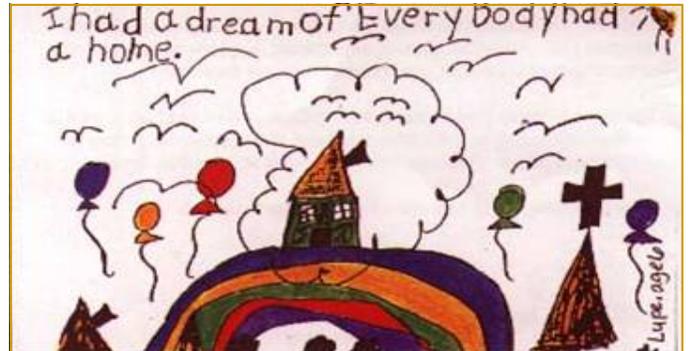
MAKING LUPE'S DREAM COME TRUE

Once upon a time, a little girl named Lupe lived in a homeless shelter. She was only six years old, but Lupe dreamed big. She dreamed that everybody had a home.

The Longview, Texas Housing Assistance program (HAP) has taken its first step in making Lupe's dream come true. Sondra Crawford, a Housing Choice Voucher program participant, has purchased

her first home. Not only is this Ms. Crawford's first home, it is Longview HAP's first Family Self-Sufficiency program graduate to move to homeownership. Ms. Crawford is currently employed with the City of Longview and as of October 31, 2006, is totally self-sufficient.

We congratulate Ms. Crawford for her success and Longview HAP for its part in her success!



At the time Lupe created her drawing and expressed her dream, she was six years old and lived in a homeless shelter. Today Lupe resides in her family's home.

PLANNING YOUR PHA PLAN SUBMISSION BY TONY KRUSE

The Department published in the August 22, 2006, Federal Register a Notice of Proposed Information Collection for Public Comment on the Public Housing Agency Plans. Though the comments period ended October 23, 2006, it is important to point out the Notice *proposes* to significantly streamline the Five-Year and Annual Plan process by limiting annual plan submissions to only four elements and

further streamlines the process by allowing PHAs to certify when no changes occurred to these documents since its last submission. These changes are proposed to take effect for all PHAs with fiscal years beginning April 1, 2007. The newly revised template, as proposed, eliminates unnecessary submission requirements, helping to reduce the administrative burden on PHAs, as well as associated costs.

Until a final Notice is published, we would like to offer suggestions for your PHA Plan submission.

- **PHA Plan Template**— HUD only requires PHAs to submit the completed template and required attachments electronically through the HUD Internet. Do not mail hard copies of your PHA Plans; HUD can

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Dates to Remember

FYE 9/30/06 - SEMAP due 11/29/06

FYB 4/1/07 PHA Plan due 1/17/07

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

In Touch will now be distributed across the Ft. Worth Public Housing Hub office to include the geographical jurisdictions of our Public Housing Offices in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Houston. We expect that the representation of and contributions from these additional HUD offices and their Housing Authorities will further enhance the value of

this periodic newsletter. We encourage your input; particularly successes and experiences that will be of benefit for your PHA partners. Several Housing Authorities are already moving forward with the implementation of Asset Management. We invite your input of how it is working, the lessons learned, best practices in place, and suggestions on how to handle the challenges or

reap the benefits. Still others are moving forward with expanding housing opportunities via mixed-financing arrangements that include, tax credits funds, conventional loans, and the HUD CFFP program funds. The successes of these endeavors can be seen in the vast improvement of the public housing developments, their surrounding neighborhoods,

and the thousands of new affordable housing complexes. We suspect there are more PHAs wanting and planning to engage in similar activities. We invite those PHAs that have successes, positive experiences, and best practices to share them with your peer PHAs. We encourage you to use this newsletter to tell your stories. It is your newsletter.

—Dan Rodriguez, Director Houston Office

PIC'S PICKS

Dear Mr. PIC:

Please help me! I failed to reach the required 95% PIC reporting rate by September 30. My Board will be furious if sanctions are imposed.

—Facing the Firing Squad

Dear Firing Squad:

You can avoid sanctions if you can demonstrate a reporting rate of 95% or above after adjusting for at least one of the following:

- Leased HCV units are less than what is reported in

VMS.

- Receiving PHAs haven't submitted required data on ported HCV families.
- Initial PHAs haven't submitted required data on HCV families you absorbed.
- You submitted an EOP on a PH family with a September 30th effective date.

Whether one of these applies or not, get to work and get your reporting rate to at least 95% as soon as possible! For each month you are delinquent after

September 30, you may be sanctioned an additional month.

—Mr. PIC

Dear Mr. PIC:

Are you available to answer program questions?

—Need Program Assistance

Dear Program Assistance:

Please send program questions to "Ask the Professor" and PIC questions to me via our alter ego's email address:

Robin_L._Barton@HUD.gov



Mr. PIC

COMMUNITY BITS & PIECES

The Texoma Council of Governments Housing Assistance Program (TCOGHAP) has a mission. What's more, the Agency is succeeding at it. Since 1997, the Agency helped 40 low income families obtain independence from welfare through its Family Self-Sufficiency Program. Currently 115 families, including approximately 400 children, are enrolled in the program.

Insurance agents in the Texoma area hope to encourage these children to get their educations. They created a competition called, "Insuring a Child's Education" and collected donations for school supplies for TCOGHAP's 6th Annual School Supply Distribution. The agents collected \$2132.12 and provided supplies for 383 children.

Sally Hodges, the Program

Manager for the FSS program, believes, "With this program, we are helping the children of these families start the school year excited about getting an education."

We know great things are happening at your Housing Authority! Let us spread the word. Send an email to Robin Barton at Robin_L._Barton@hud.gov. Be sure to include digital photographs.

"With this program, we are helping the children of these families start the school year excited about getting an education."

MT. PLEASANT HA & VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

PIH Notice 2006-23, Implementation of the Violence Against Women and Justice Department Reauthorization Act 2005

PIH Notice 2006-23 prohibits the eviction of and removal of assistance from certain persons living in public or Section 8-assisted housing if the asserted grounds for such action is an instance of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or

stalking.

Candy Martin, the Executive Director of the **Housing Authority in Mt. Pleasant**, Texas, and her community are doing a lot to implement the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005. Back in 1995, Candy realized the need for a woman's shelter as the waiting list for abused women and children looking for housing continued

to increase. She called her friend, Carol Gresham, and shortly after, Shelter Agencies for Families in East Texas, Inc. (SAFE-T Victim Service and Resource Center) began with a group of concerned citizens from the neighboring counties of Titus, Camp, Morris, and Franklin. The new Board of Directors worked to secure the first federal monies from a VAWA grant of \$19,200, which was awarded

to SAFE-T in June 1996. This seed money, along with the use of a two-bedroom house owned by the First Presbyterian Church of Mt. Pleasant, allowed the first shelter to open in Titus County on August 1, 1996.

Since its inception, SAFE-T has come a long way. The program is now housed in a 7,214 square foot Victim Services and Resource

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CLOSE UP ON REGULATIONS



Notice PIH 2006-34 (HA) Public Housing Agency (PHA) Cost-Savings Initiatives in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

This Notice reinstates applicable sections of PIH Notice 2005-9 in regard to cost-savings measures and provides guidance on prudent financial management in the HCV program.

Portability—a PHA may deny a move to a higher cost area when the receiving PHA will not absorb only if the PHA can demonstrate the move will cause the PHA to terminate

HCV assistance to remain within its budgetary allocation.

Cost-savings Regulatory Waivers—To request a waiver to implement lower payment standards before the second annual reexamination and/or not increase utility allowances during its calendar year, a PHA must provide sufficient documentation to Headquarters. This must include average monthly HAP costs from VMS and average monthly turnover in PIC.

Underutilization—If a PHA underutilizes its funds, in

addition to decreased score for the SEMAP, it may be penalized through administrative fee sanctions. The Voucher Issuance Program is a software program designed to provide agencies with an estimate of the number of vouchers to issue each month to optimize voucher utilization. Using the website at <http://www.huduser.org/vip>, PHAs can set either a target unit or budget utilization rate and project the impact of a specified number of voucher issuances on subsequent monthly and annual utilization rates.

Websites of the Quarter

Voucher Issuance Program

<http://www.huduser.org/vip>

GOT ASSETS? (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

- **Management and Bookkeeping Fees**—PHAs must charge each project a reasonable management fee to fund operations of the central office. PHAs will also be allowed to charge a bookkeeping fee for the project accounting function.
- **Asset Management Fees**—HUD will fund each project \$4 per unit per month (PUM) for asset

management. The PHA can charge a higher amount subject to availability.

- **Front-line Costs vs. Management Fee Costs**—PHAs must distinguish between cost charged as direct expenses and those related to corporate support.
- **Charge-backs and Other Fee-for-Service**—All instances of centrally

performed front-line administrative services must be reasonable, necessary, and not cost more than if the activities were performed on-site. For specialized maintenance, the PHA has the option of charging either actual costs or a fee-for-service.

- **The Central Office Cost Center**—This term is used to describe the business unit within the PHA that

earns income for fees or revenue from other services.

- **Fungibility**—This allows PHAs flexibility to move funds between projects, where resources are available.

In the next In Touch—Financial Reporting Requirements.

HANDLING PREPAY/OPT-OUT, ABATEMENT/FORECLOSURE?

BY ETHEL MONTAGUE

Is your Agency administering the voucher program for a prepay/opt-out, and/or abatement/foreclosure property? If so, you are required to submit a quarterly utilization report to your field office until all units are leased. The quarterly reports are due the last day of each quarter. The next

report is due by no later than December 31, 2006. Please fax the report to your assigned field office staff:

Fort Worth—Ethel Montague, Fax: (817) 978-5754, Telephone: (817) 978-5717

Oklahoma City—J.R. Robinson, Fax: (405) 609-

8530, Telephone: (405) 609-8567.

Albuquerque—Dolly Clark, Fax: (505) 346-6604, Telephone: (505) 346-7355

Houston—Contact Dan Rodriguez at (713) 718-3115 for information.



- Prepay Lady -

SAVE A PENNY, EARN A PENNY BY STEVE MCGREW

It has been said that a penny saved is a penny earned. Actually, a penny saved is better than a penny earned. A penny earned is taxed. A penny saved is not. Anyway, last weekend one of our staff went shopping, hoping to find some way to lower his unacceptably high electric bill. He came upon some compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). He purchased four of them and over the course of their lives they will save over \$300 in electricity costs. Did we mention that the cost of all four CFLs was a mere \$10? We note

that every CFL our Facilities Management staff have encountered carry the Energy Star rating, which is not surprising given the efficiency of these lights.

We realize that not every energy investment will return 30 times your investment, but CFLs are a winner. They will return the 30 times investment quicker if they are used where lights are on several hours of the day. We encourage you to use these and other Energy Star designated products when appropriate.

In selecting any fluorescent light, pay particular attention to the color. They are typically available in three colors- soft white, bright white and daylight. If you need help in selecting, contact your Facilities Management representative.



PLANNING YOUR PHA PLAN SUBMISSION

(Continued from page 2)

only review electronic versions.

- **Certifications**—PHAs must complete, sign, and mail certification forms with original signatures to its local HUD office as a part of the PHA Plan submission process. The official date of submission is the date HUD receives the correct electronic

version of the PHA Plan template and the originals of the signed certification(s) mailed to the field office. HUD review cannot commence until both the template and required certification(s) are received.

- **Supporting Documents**—Although all required supporting documents are subject to normal HUD review and audit, PHAs are

not required to submit supporting documents to HUD as part of the PHA Plan, and these documents are not part of the Plan itself. However, all supporting documents (along with the PHA Plan and attachments) must be available for inspection and review by the public.

MT. PLEASANT HA & VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

(Continued from page 3)

Center. Aside from the shelter, SAFE-T provides a 24-hour hotline, legal advocacy, emergency transportation, counseling, and referrals to social service agencies. Additionally, the program focuses on education in local schools. SAFE-T also operates a resale store and food pantry, bi-lingual outreach program,

and batterer's program.

The newest program at SAFE-T is the "Supervised Visitation and Exchange Program." Supervised visitation preserves the well-being of children in the middle of adult conflict and provides children and adults with a safe, clean, and emotionally healthy location for family visitation, exchange, and mediation.

According to program staff, "There is no typical day at SAFE-T. Stories that unfold are brave and brutal, horrendous and heartwarming. They bear witness to human tragedy on an enormous scale and to caring on an even greater scale."

For more information, call Candy at (903) 572-2829.

"There is no typical day at SAFE-T. Stories that unfold are brave and brutal, horrendous and heartwarming. They bear witness to human tragedy on an enormous scale and to caring on an even greater scale."

We are on the Web!

**OFFICE OF PUBLIC HOUSING
FORT WORTH HUB**

Department of HUD

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**Department of Housing
& Urban Development**

In Touch is a quarterly publication from the Office of Public Housing, Fort Worth Hub. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and news.

Send contributions to :

Robin Barton at the address, fax number or email address to the left.

***We reserve the right to edit
all materials***

In Touch Staff

Editor Robin Barton

Photographer Nathan Haywood

**THE NEWS, PEOPLE, AND EVENTS SHAPING
PARTNERSHIPS IN PUBLIC HOUSING**
