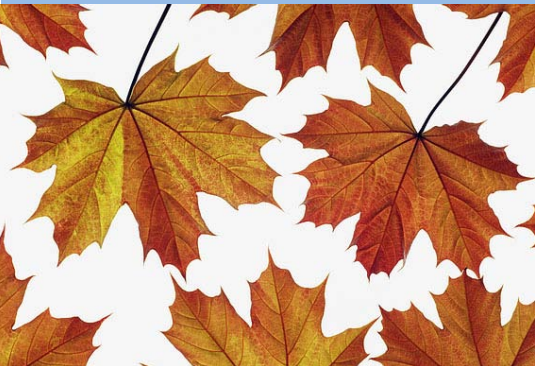




# THE RESIDENT

## E-NEWSLETTER

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### The New Future of HUD: Introducing the Strategic Plan



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In May of this year, HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan announced the Department's new 5-year strategic plan, laying out the Department's work for the next 5 years. Over 1,500 HUD employees and partners had a say in what went into the strategic plan. It is built around five core goals. They are:

1. Strengthen the nation's housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers.
2. Meet the need for quality affordable rental homes.
3. Utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life.
4. Build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination.
5. Transform the way HUD does business.

The following are the three goals which deal most with public housing residents. There are also descriptions of what HUD will do to reach the goals.

#### Goal Two: Meet the need for quality affordable rental homes.

Goal two has to do with the housing needs of low-income families. HUD will work both to end homelessness and to make sure more families have housing that is safe and decent. The Department also plans to increase the number of affordable rental homes in the places where they are needed most. HUD will make sure that public and other assisted housing stay affordable for low-income people and will also work to improve the quality of the housing.

#### Goal Three: Use housing as a platform for improving quality of life.

Goal three is about the needs residents have beyond housing. HUD will help low-income residents increase their incomes and their quality of life. The Department will support educational programs for children in public and other subsidized housing. HUD will work to improve public safety and help residents lead healthier lives. The Department will maintain secure housing for the elderly, people with disabilities, the homeless and people at risk of becoming homeless.

#### Goal Four: Build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination.

Goal four is about how HUD will help residents improve their neighborhoods by promoting economic development and other community resources such as parks, recreational activities as well as learning and education resources through grants like the Choice Neighborhood Program. The Department will promote energy smart buildings and neighborhoods that are healthy, affordable and diverse. The Department will work with local, State and private groups to help them become better at serving residents and will help local governments deal with natural disasters.

"The Resident" will bring you more on the strategic plan as programs are formed. If you want to read about HUD's 5-year Strategic Plan visit: <http://bit.ly/ar865i>

# PETRA: Residents' Rights

HUD has a plan to preserve public housing, give residents more choice about where to live, and simplify all of HUD's housing programs. This plan is called PETRA, which stands for the Preservation, Enhancement and Transformation of Rental Assistance Act. PETRA will increase tenant protections and keep public housing rents at levels which low-income people can afford.

## Here's what PETRA won't change:

1. Rents – Tenant rents will not go above 30% of income.
2. Targeting and Affordability – Under PETRA, HUD assistance will continue to go to the lowest income families. There will be no work requirements, community service requirements or time limits.
3. Tenants' Ability to Organize – Under PETRA, all tenants will have a right to organize, and an ability to be part of decisions made about their housing.



*Under PETRA, resident voices continue to be heard and represented.*

## Here's what PETRA will improve:

1. Housing conditions – PETRA means almost \$27 billion of new money to fix up public housing, ensuring children and families don't have to live in substandard housing.
2. Community Integration – By opening public housing properties to grocery stores, schools and other community anchors, residents will have better access to the community around them.
3. Resident Choice – PETRA will increase resident choice, allowing residents to choose where they live without fear of losing rental assistance. This isn't a new idea, though it's new for public housing.

## Here's how residents will benefit from PETRA:

1. PETRA will improve the quality of life of tenants – while keeping the policies and protections that work.
2. Tenants are the reason public housing exists and their voices will still be heard. PHAs will still include at least one tenant on their governing board, board of directors, or commissioners. Also, Resident Advisory Boards will remain.

You might have questions about how PETRA will affect residents. This column will answer questions about PETRA submitted by residents. You can submit questions to us at [pihirc@firstpic.org](mailto:pihirc@firstpic.org). Be sure to put "Resident E-Newsletter" in the subject heading.

To read more about residents' rights under PETRA:

[http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/fy2011budget/signature\\_initiatives/transforming\\_rental\\_assistance](http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/fy2011budget/signature_initiatives/transforming_rental_assistance)

The Urban Institute held a forum on public housing. Here's a link to the Urban Institute's free audio file with a discussion of tenant rights: <http://www.urban.org/events/public-housing-residents-rights.cfm>

# ROSS Grant Connects Residents to Community Resources

HUD's Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program empowers public housing residents to attain economic independence. The program encourages local projects, helping public housing residents to obtain the necessary training, counseling, or education to reduce the need for Federal assistance. Four types of applicants may apply for ROSS: resident associations (RAs), PHAs, nonprofit organizations supported by the residents and/or PHAs, and tribes/tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs). By statute, qualified RA applicants are awarded 25 percent of the funds. Please note that active RAs are eligible and encouraged to apply for the ROSS grant to serve your community.

In the past, the ROSS grant included programs such as ROSS-Family and Homeownership and ROSS-Elderly/Persons with Disabilities. These programs have now been combined into the ROSS-Service Coordinators program.

This program allows PHAs to hire a service coordinator. This person works with PHA staff to assist residents in becoming economically self-sufficient. The service coordinator can also assist elderly residents or residents with disabilities to maintain independent living and/or age in place. They may provide informal counseling, information and referral; develop educational programs; and work with local service providers based on individual and family needs. Service coordinators connect residents with local organizations that provide services such as:

- Parenting classes
- Family and youth counseling
- Child care programs
- Supportive services to promote independent lifestyles
- Mental health
- After school programs
- Legal aid
- Job training
- Volunteer programs
- Financial programs

The service coordinator not only links the residents to such services but monitors delivery of benefits to ensure needs are being met and individual goals are achieved.

Specific ROSS program information may be obtained by going to:  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/ross/about.cfm>

We encourage you to check [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) to see if the Notice of Funding Availability for ROSS has been published.

**Note: In order to apply for a grant, you and/or your organization must complete the grants.gov registration process. This can take between 5 business days and 5 business weeks, so register now!**



# TIPS

## Bed Bug Prevention and Control

Bed bugs have become an increasing problem for residents around the country. It is important to be able to identify if you have a bed bug problem, and what steps to take to eliminate them and to prevent them from returning.

Bed bugs are reddish brown in color, flat, and oval-shaped. They are about ¼ inch long, which is about the size of an apple seed. They often leave behind tiny, rust-colored stains that have a syrup-like smell, similar to soda pop, or black specks. Look for signs of bugs here:

- On mattress tags and seams
- On ceilings
- Under seat cushions
- Behind headboards
- In tiny cracks and crevices
- Around light switches

Bed bugs like to settle close to their food source...which is you! During the day, they do not live in the bed, but often hide within 5 feet of the bed. Make sure to check under your mattress and bed frame, near baseboards, behind picture frames, in night stands, under buckling wallpaper or carpet, and in areas with excessive heat or moisture.

Although bed bugs do not transmit disease, they do bite, draw blood, and can cause welts and itching. Just the fact that you are sharing a bed with these bugs can cause much anxiety and anguish.

There are a number of ways to prevent them:

- Clear any clutter such as paper or trash.
- Be sure to inspect any second-hand furniture you receive.
- Do not bring discarded furniture into your apartment.
- Inspect your luggage after traveling.
- Dry your clothes on high heat.
- Inspect your apartment regularly, especially after moving in or after trips.

**IF YOU HAVE AN INFESTATION, NOTIFY YOUR PROPERTY MANAGER IMMEDIATELY.**

A video on bed bug prevention and control can be found here:  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/pestmang.cfm>

## Contact us:

**Public and Indian Housing  
Information Resource Center (PIH IRC)**  
2614 Chapel Lake Drive  
Gambrills, MD 21054  
**Toll free number:** 1-800-955-2232  
**Fax number:** 1-443-302-2084  
**E-mail:** [pihirc@firstpic.org](mailto:pihirc@firstpic.org)  
(Put "Resident E-Newsletter" in subject line)

## HELP CORNER

Your one-stop site for information on youth issues! At [www.FindYouthInfo.gov](http://www.FindYouthInfo.gov) find research, community maps, evidence-based programs, resources to answer questions and solve problems, and collaboration and funding opportunities for youth organizations. Young people, parents, and youth advocates can subscribe to the free newsletter. FindYouthInfo.gov was created by 12 Federal agencies as part of the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP).