



THE RESIDENT NEWSLETTER



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- » **Healthy Neighborhoods Webinar: Outreach: Bringing Health Information to Your Community**
August 16, 2011
2 pm to 3:30 Eastern Time
<http://1.usa.gov/gIH8vG>

HUD Letter Encourages Reuniting Ex-Offenders with Families without Compromising Safety



*HUD Assistant Secretary
Sandra Henriquez*

On June 17 of this year, Sandra Henriquez, HUD's Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing sent a letter to public housing agencies (PHAs) across the country. This letter encourages PHAs to find a balance between allowing ex-offenders to return to HUD subsidized housing and reunite with their families and maintaining the safety of all residents in its programs. Each year, more than half a million people are released from prisons in the United States and an additional seven million are released from jails. Research shows that ex-offenders who do not find stable housing in the community are more likely to reoffend than those who do. The majority of people released from prison intend to return to their families, many of whom live in public or other subsidized housing.

PHAs, after meeting the HUD regulations, have many options when housing people leaving the criminal justice system. HUD regulations only require PHAs to establish lifetime bans on admission to the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs for:

1. Individuals who have manufactured or produced methamphetamine while on the property of federally assisted housing; and
2. Sex offenders subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program.

PHAs must create rules which ban any household member that is currently using illegal drugs. They may also deny admission if there is reasonable cause to believe that a family member's illegal drug use, alcohol use or pattern of drug or alcohol abuse may prevent other residents from enjoying the development. Finally, if a household member has been evicted from assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity, PHAs must ban the individual for 3 years from the date of eviction. The relevant HUD regulations can be found at: 24 CFR 960.204, 24 CFR 966.4 and 24 CFR 982.553.

Except for these restrictions, PHAs have the freedom to accept or ban individuals through their admission and termination policies. PHAs may consider all information that could be a sign of positive future actions when reviewing family behavior and suitability for tenancy. When appropriate, HUD encourages PHAs to allow ex-offenders to rejoin their families in the Public Housing or Housing Choice Voucher programs. PHAs can be the foundation of reunifying families and providing ex-offenders a second chance.

Recently President Obama made clear that this Administration believes that people who have paid their debt to society deserve the opportunity to become productive citizens and caring parents. PHAs can play a critical role in helping ex-offenders, and their families, set aside the past and embrace the future.

PHAs Celebrate Family in HUD Father's Day Events



Photo: Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority

Public housing developments across the country participated in the national Fatherhood Initiative encouraged by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Created by the New York City Housing Authority, the celebration was adopted by HUD as a national model; the Father's Day events have housing authorities celebrating fatherhood and the importance of dads being connected with their children. The events have two purposes: Providing fun activities to strengthen the bonds between of fathers and their children and connecting fathers to economic development resources. Below are a few brief accounts of the Father's Day Celebrations across the country.

On Saturday, June 18, 2011, the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) hosted its first annual Father's Day Celebration, which was attended by more than 130 fathers and children. The day was filled with activities including face painting, arts and crafts, a game room, a photo booth, basketball, kickball, dancing, a barbecue lunch, and a live horseback riding demonstration. Numerous participants expressed their support and enthusiasm for the event. Father Jerry Clark exclaimed, "This is my first time ever coming to an event that was dedicated to fathers only. It's a very positive and inspirational experience. Keep up the great work, AHA!"

The Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority's Father's Day event included about 225 residents as well as speakers from numerous local agencies. The presenters talked about various issues, such as the importance of a non-violent approach to conflict resolution. The day was topped off with barbecue, raffle prizes and live entertainment.

The District of Columbia Housing Authority's (DCHA) Fatherhood Initiative kickoff included more than 100 fathers, children, and mothers. They were joined by thirty community partner organizations and guest speaker Deborah Hernandez, HUD General Deputy Assistant Secretary. Other special guests included Riddick Bowe, two-time World Heavyweight champion; Ken Harvey, former linebacker for the Washington Redskins; and former Denver Broncos player Orlando Gary. Discussions were held about parental rights, bonding with children, self-esteem, and workforce development. DCHA Executive Director Adrienne Todman told the attendees, "Today is just the beginning. This isn't a one-day initiative, this is a movement."

To learn more about HUD's Fatherhood Initiative, see: <http://www.npcl.org/program/HUDFather.htm>



Photo: District of Columbia Housing Authority



Photo: Atlanta Housing Authority



Photo: District of Columbia Housing Authority

Community Nursing Impacts Rockford, IL



Nursing student providing care

The Winnebago County Housing Authority in Rockford, Illinois and the local Saint Anthony College of Nursing are collaborating to promote healthy lifestyles among elderly and disabled residents. The reason behind the program is simple: preventing disease and

disability is much less expensive than its treatment. According to Susan Baylor, Assistant Professor at Saint Anthony College and coordinator of this collaboration, "You pride yourself on helping to keep many of these residents from having to go to the hospital."

The program focuses on three areas of prevention through education: monitoring and screening blood pressure, heart rates, and blood sugar. As a part of their studies, the nursing students are assigned to work at one of three housing sites in the county and remain at their assigned housing site throughout their class period. The students teach the residents how to deal with diabetes, hypertension and how to minimize the impacts of a fall. On top of these services, the students also offer individualized care. One of the most important aspects of this care is assisting residents in organizing their prescribed medications in their pillbox organizers and teaching them about their medications. If there are any negative interactions, the students contact the respective physicians and manage the issue.

One effective session taught by the student nurses stressed the link between smoking and hypertension. Before the nurses arrived, a number of residents were smokers and smoking was permitted. One of the student nurses presented, to the housing authority, information on the positive effects of providing smoke filters. Based on the information provided by the student nurses, the housing authority implemented a no-smoking policy at all of its housing sites.

To show their gratitude for the experience, the student nurses held a thank you breakfast for the residents with healthy food, various games and prizes. The nurses feel the work is fulfilling—some continue to work with the residents during their semester breaks and even during the summer after they graduate. While education and impact are the goals of the collaboration, the students leave lasting impacts on the health of the housing authority residents through compassion and education.

TIPS

Summer Cooling



Below are a few tips to help beat the heat.

If using window air conditioners, use a fan to help spread the cool air around your apartment. Take advantage of air conditioning in local community rooms, public libraries and other cool public spaces.

Even without air conditioning, there are many ways to keep yourself and your apartment cool. A few cooling tips are:

- Turn off or minimize use of heat producing appliances such as ovens, lamps, ceiling lights and computers.
- Go to the lowest level of your apartment or building. Hot air rises and cool air sinks.
- Close windows and blinds during the day to keep the heat out and open windows in the evening to allow cooler evening air and breezes in.
- Remain as still as possible. The less you move the cooler you will feel.

If you must spend time outside in the heat, a few tips will minimize the effects of the heat and sun:

- Just add water. Drink lots of cold drinks. Wet the sleeves of your shirt or legs of your pants. Tie a damp bandana around your neck. If possible, go swimming.
- Wear light color clothing as it will not absorb the heat of the sun.
- Spend as much of your time as possible in the shade.

Contact us:

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HELP CORNER

HUD News on the Internet

The HUDdle is HUD's official blog and provides a daily housing news update. It's also a great source to find HUD program information fast. The HUDdle can be found at blog.hud.gov.

The HUD News e-mailing list provides the very latest news alerts involving issues and programs important to HUD program residents. You can sign-up for the HUD News e-mailing list at <http://1.usa.gov/moWVPS>.