



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

As some of you may know, 2010 marks the 10th anniversary of the *Plan for Transformation* – the City’s ambitious endeavor to reshape public housing in Chicago. While most of the effort has focused on rebuilding the housing stock owned by CHA – replacing outmoded high rises with mixed income appropriate sized developments, we have also made substantial and important changes to

the HCV Program – changes that we are certain have improved things for Property Owners and Voucher Holders alike.

Many of the changes are likely to have been noticed by you. Improvements such as restructuring the Customer Call Center to reduce waiting time (90% of calls are now answered within two minutes); the creation of a comprehensive Program Participant Reference Guide for Voucher Holders; and our solicitation of customer service surveys so that we can continuously improve services. You may not have noticed other changes, but they are equally important. These include developing a stronger relationship with participating Property Owners through training and community meetings, a direct deposit payment program to ensure rents are received in a timely fashion, and a more intensive inspection program to help ensure the safety and well-being of Voucher Holders.

As we continue through 2010, the CHA team will proceed with several goals in mind. We will continue to simplify and streamline many of the HCVP processes to better serve both Voucher Holders and Property Owners. We will also continue to use this newsletter to convey the most up-to-date HCVP information to you. Based on feedback from our Participant Council, Owners Resource Council, customer service surveys (conducted on site at HCVP offices or via email), and the community as a whole, we will continue to host monthly community meetings with Aldermen, neighbors, and law enforcement officials to address community-specific concerns.

We appreciate your continued participation in the HCV Program and look forward to working with you in 2010. As always, contact the CHA Call Center – your front line resource – at (312) 935-2600 with any questions.

Kind regards,

Lewis Jordan

President and Chief Executive Officer

Satellite Office on the Move

HCVP’s West Office (formerly Satellite 33) moved on March 1st from 3333 West Arthington Street to its new home located at 2750 West Roosevelt Road, on the corner of California and Roosevelt Road.

Normal office hours remain the same: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Telephone, fax and TTY numbers will also remain the same as will individual staff members’ direct lines. Families served at the former location of the West Office will continue to be served at the new location.



The new office also serves Participants enrolled in *ANY* of the Special Programs listed below *AND* also reside in one of the zip codes listed below:

- Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)
- Housing Opportunity Program (HOP)
- Family Unification Program (FUP)
- *Zip Codes:* 60609 • 60621 • 60629
60632 • 60636 • 60638

This new office features modern office space, a large reception area, state of the art meeting rooms for Participant Briefings, an expanded Resource Area and ample on-street parking. The West Office is accessible via the Green Line’s California station and the #12 Roosevelt Road and #94 South California buses.

Contact the CHA Call Center with any questions at (312) 935-2600. We look forward to seeing you at our new location.

Spanish Coalition for Housing (SCH) – Serving Chicago Since 1966

For over forty years, the Spanish Coalition for Housing (SCH) has served the housing needs of Latino families in the Chicago metropolitan area. During this time SCH has worked closely with CHA to help achieve CHA's goal to create diverse, mixed income communities that include Latinos as affordable market residents and potential homeowners.

While their name implies that they assist the Latino community, did you know that the SCH also assists low-income individuals of *all* nationalities in the Chicago area? For over ten years they have been operating outreach offices to bring together families of many different nationalities from the community and the CHA. The SCH site offices make CHA's programs more accessible to those who need it while increasing low-income individuals' participation in both current and future CHA programs.

SCH has also identified self-sufficiency resources to help individuals who are either: on the CHA Family Waiting List, existing Housing Choice Voucher holders, or low-income residents in need of affordable housing.



Spanish Coalition for Housing Site Offices

Main Office

3934 W. North Avenue, Chicago, IL 60639
T: (773) 276-7633 / Fax: (773) 276-2105

Pilsen Area

1915 S. Blue Island, Chicago, IL 60608
T: (312) 850-2660 / Fax: (312) 850-2889

South East Side

9117 South Brandon, Chicago, IL 60617
T: (773) 933-7575 / Fax: (773) 933-7578

Spanish Coalition for Housing offices provide services such as:

Basic Office Functions: Assist those on the CHA Waiting List with status checks and change of address. Other services include assistance with CEDA and credit repair.

Senior Housing Applications: CHA is currently accepting applications for senior housing. Applications for these buildings are available to people age 60 and older, with priority given to those 62 or older. In an effort to promote CHA Senior Centers, SCH escorts seniors to open houses for available senior apartments.

Marketing & Outreach Efforts: Provide information to the community about CHA programs and services.

To learn more about these and other program services such as the *Homeless Prevention Program* and the *SCH Financial Literacy Program*, contact your local Spanish Coalition office listed above or visit their website at www.sc4housing.org.

Interim Requests: Reporting Loss of Household Income

A reminder to all Voucher Holders: If you experience a loss of income, it *may* result in a decrease in your portion of the rent. CHA must first have all of the necessary documentation before any potential decrease in rent can go into effect. This is why it is so important to *promptly* report any decrease or loss of income information along with the proper documentation to CHA.

Please provide the necessary verification documents (such as letter from your employer or proof of unemployment letter) as follows:

- in person at your designated HCVP Office

- via mail or fax (clearly mark each document with your voucher number so that it is easily identified by your Housing Specialist)

After CHA receives the proper documentation, we will verify and process the change in income. As always, we encourage you to request a receipt for your records when submitting documentation to CHA.

Effective Date for Reported Loss of Income

Any decrease in your portion of the rent due to a reported loss of income will be effective on the first day of the month *following* submittal of all documentation.

Know Your Tenant Rights: Avoiding Lease Terminations and Evictions

Like all entities that administer voucher subsidies, CHA's HCV Program is guided by Federal laws and regulations – made by Congress or by HUD (the Department of Housing and Urban Development). Some important rules and regulations relate to lease terminations and evictions. It is very important that you know these particular rules and also your rights (and responsibilities).

Lease Terminations

HUD rules and regulations prevent Property Owners from terminating a Voucher Holder's lease without good cause or proper notice. The Property Owner is also required to provide the tenant written notice stating the reason for terminating the lease. To avoid having your lease terminated, please familiarize yourself with some of the reasons outlined below.

Acceptable Reasons to Terminate A Participant's Lease "For Cause"

- Failure to pay rent
- Serious or repeated violation of the terms and conditions of the lease
- Violation of any Federal, State or local law relating to your use of the unit and/or premises such as operating a child care service that has not been authorized by the City and State
- Documented history of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property
- Living or housekeeping habits that result in damage to the unit or premises

Evictions

Tenants may be evicted because of a foreclosure or the Property Owner's decision to convert the property to another use. In these situations Voucher Holders will continue to be eligible for a rental subsidy and can move into another unit.

Be advised that when a voucher family is evicted "for cause," they are at risk for losing their voucher and being terminated from the program. If a landlord does choose to evict an HCVP tenant, the Property Owner must first obtain the Court's approval and an order for the eviction. The Property Owner must first provide the tenant a written notice stating the reason for lease termination and then a court order.

Throughout the course of a voucher family's tenancy, they must comply with the HCVP Family Obligations and also the HUD Tenancy Addendum. Violation of either may be grounds for lease termination or termination from the HCV Program. All lease terminations for both voucher families and market rate tenants must comply with the City of Chicago's Landlord & Tenant Ordinance.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

CHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program is committed to providing you excellent customer service. Throughout the year, we will be conducting Customer Satisfaction Surveys to measure your most recent service experience with our staff. Some surveys will be emailed so please make sure you have your email address on file with our office. Other surveys will be conducted on site in our Satellite Offices. We encourage you to complete the survey, as your feedback will be used to improve our service to you.

Satellite Office Name Changes

To better communicate the area served by each HCVP Office, CHA has changed the names of its Satellite Offices.

CENTRAL OFFICE

Formerly Central 60
60 E. Van Buren Street
Chicago, IL 60605

SOUTH OFFICE

Formerly Satellite 75
1471 E. 75th Street
Chicago, IL 60649

SOUTHWEST OFFICE

Formerly Satellite 88
1550 W. 88th Street
Chicago, IL 60620

WEST OFFICE

Formerly Satellite 33
2750 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608

United States Census 2010 Be Sure You Are Counted

2010 is the year of the Census – a time when the Federal Government counts households across the country. The Census is important because Federal funds and Congressional seats are apportioned on the results. Simply put, the areas with the most people get more Federal funds for resources like schools, roads, health care, job training and services. Higher population areas are also assigned more seats in Congress where decisions that affect your life are made.

In March or early April you will receive a Census Form in the mail. It is short and takes only 10 minutes to complete. Please note that all census data provided is private and will *not* be shared with any other government agencies. So take the time to complete the form and mail it back (return postage is provided). 'Census takers' will visit the homes of those who do not return a completed questionnaire and will ask the very same questions on the form.

For more information about the 2010 Census, click on the red Census link on the CHA website (www.thecha.org). Take the opportunity to be counted and make Chicago count.

Participant Council News

Council Member Purchases New Home through CHA's Choose to Own (CTO) Program



Ms. Charlene Jones, pictured left, shares her personal story during the January 2010 Participant Council Meeting.

is a current member of the HCVP Participant Council, recently purchased her first home on the South Side of the

city. She explained at a recent Participant Council meeting that she received almost \$40,000 in financial assistance for a down payment and closing costs.

Ms. Jones credits the Chicago Housing Authority, the Spanish Coalition for Housing, and Neighborhood Housing Services for her accomplishment. They provided her guidance throughout her housing search, assistance in locating a lender, and her move. Ms. Jones is currently working on her Master's degree in Non-Profit Management at Spertus College in Chicago. Congratulations to Ms. Jones for this life-changing achievement. For more information about the *Choose to Own* program, please contact Roseanne Jones at (312) 786-3196.

city. She explained at a recent Participant Council meeting that she received almost \$40,000 in financial assistance for a down payment and closing costs.

Ms. Jones credits the Chicago Housing Authority, the Spanish Coalition for Housing, and Neighborhood Housing Services for her accomplishment. They provided her guidance throughout her housing search, assistance in locating a lender, and her move. Ms. Jones is currently working on her Master's degree in Non-Profit Management at Spertus College in Chicago. Congratulations to Ms. Jones for this life-changing achievement. For more information about the *Choose to Own* program, please contact Roseanne Jones at (312) 786-3196.

Ms. Jones, who is a current member of the HCVP Participant Council, recently purchased her first home on the South Side of the

Participant Council Membership Recruitment Currently Underway

As the HCVP Participant Council enters its second year of service, our members look forward to their continued contributions for the program throughout 2010. At this time, the Council is recruiting additional members and is asking interested HCVP Participants throughout the city to consider this opportunity to serve their community. Members will provide CHA with valuable input and feedback about how they feel the HCVP can work better for all Participants.

If you are an HCVP Participant in good standing and are interested in becoming a member, submit a letter of interest outlining why you would like to become a member of the Participant Council. Letters should not be longer than two paragraphs and written neatly or typed.

Submit letter of interest in Council membership by May 1, 2010 to:

Vania Hudson
Chicago Housing Authority
Communications Manager
60 E. Van Buren Street
8th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605