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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Former CHA Residents to receive Final Opportunity to Exercise Right to Housing**

CHICAGO – Approximately 3,200 former Chicago Housing Authority residents who have not yet satisfied their right of return under the Relocation Rights Contract (RRC) – and who have not responded to CHA's attempts to locate them – will be provided a final opportunity to respond starting today, when 90-day legal notices appear in the Chicago Sun-Times, El Dia and the Defender newspapers.

The effort is the culmination of an intensive year-long effort to locate former CHA leaseholders. CHA's ambitious Plan for Transformation dictates that all lease-compliant residents who lived in CHA units on October 1, 1999 have the Right to Return to a new mixed-income unit, a rehabilitated public housing unit, or to the private market via a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV). The RRC was negotiated in 2000 as part of the Plan for Transformation.

With nearly 70 percent of the planned redevelopment complete, CHA is committed to ensuring that all former residents who wish to return are provided the opportunity to do so.

Previously, CHA has employed various means to contact the 3,200 former residents. The initial notices were sent to residents via certified mail requesting updated information. Residents were also informed of their status and offered services and resources to help resolve outstanding issues. In addition to the newspapers, the names will also be posted on CHA's website and the websites for the Illinois and Cook County Treasurer. Residents wishing to return are asked to immediately notify CHA to ensure that their rights as a 10/1/99 leaseholder are maintained.

After 90 days, names of those who do not respond will be removed from the list and the former residents will no longer have a right to return to a CHA or HCV unit. However, if an applicant proves his or her inability to respond, they may be eligible for reinstatement.

Of the original 10/1/99 residents living in CHA family housing developments, 54% have satisfied their right of return. The remaining 46% have not. Of those awaiting relocation to permanent housing, more than 2,000 are temporarily living in the private market with Housing Choice Vouchers and approximately 1,600 are living in public housing. Over 3,200 residents have not responded to any CHA notice of available housing over the past 10 years.

Myra King, President of the Central Advisory Council of CHA residents, encouraged former residents to contact the CHA.

"The Relocation Rights Contract guarantees each of the 10/1/99 residents the right to return," said King. "Therefore, it is very important that all of these residents are found, so that they can exercise their hard-fought rights. Otherwise, these hard-fought rights will be relinquished - all because a person moved and could not be found. Therefore, former residents, or friends and relatives of a former residents, should contact CHA or CAC as soon as possible."

CHA Chief Executive Officer Lewis A. Jordan said closure would not only benefit 10/1/99 residents, but the city as a whole.

"In these difficult economic times - when people need housing assistance more than ever - it is imperative that we complete this process," Jordan said. "Only then can we reopen the Public Housing Wait List and provide new families the opportunity for the affordable housing that they need."

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