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CHA residents: A Relocation Update

CHA releases comprehensive report on Plan for Transformation’s impact on residents’ lives

CHICAGO (April 14, 2011) – After an exhaustive tracking process and data analysis, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) today released “The Plan for Transformation: An Update on Relocation” - the first comprehensive analysis of the movement patterns, whereabouts and income of the approximately 25,000 families who were leaseholders in public housing at the launch of the groundbreaking Plan for Transformation in October 1999.

Many reports over the years, whether written by CHA, media or independent researchers, have focused on the progress of the Plan for Transformation from a structural perspective. However, this is the first report that comprehensively examines the actual movement patterns of those families who relocated - reporting on both their current whereabouts, the changes in their income and their employment status.

“Understanding the trends in actual housing choices people have made helps us plan for the future,” CHA CEO Lewis A. Jordan said. “That’s the primary motivation behind this report. At the same time, though, we are hopeful that the data here will correct many false rumors and answer many lingering questions. For example, there seems to be a commonly held belief that most residents were forced out of the city or state. This report fully refutes those claims.”

The first part of the report examines the housing choices made by the 25,000 households (or “10/1/99 families”) and shows that the majority of families and one-third of the senior citizens who resided in CHA housing in 1999 still rely on CHA for housing support.

Additional findings include:

- Of the original 25,000 households in good standing that lived in CHA housing in October 1999, 8,300 were residents of senior housing and approximately 16,500 resided in family or scattered-site developments.

- Today, 28 percent of the seniors still live in CHA housing or rent with a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) in the private market, with the vast majority residing in the same properties where they lived in 1999. The balance of the original seniors have either died or moved away without CHA subsidy.
- Of the original 10/1/99 residents who lived in family housing, nearly 60 percent (9,388) remain in CHA's system. The balance of families that are outside of the system fall into the following categories:
 - 1,240 of the families (7 percent) currently rent in the private market without a CHA subsidy, but remain in contact with CHA, having expressed a desire to return to CHA housing at some time in the future.
 - Another 1,307 (8 percent) are now living in the private market without a CHA subsidy after returning to a permanent housing choice and subsequently moving on from CHA housing.
 - 1,221 residents (7 percent) have died.
 - 1,488 (9 percent) have been evicted.
 - 2,202 (13 percent) have not responded to outreach. (CHA and a private contractor exhausted every means to identify the whereabouts of former residents. And while these former residents have been non-responsive, they retain the option for reinstatement should they make contact with CHA).

The second part of the report focuses on the movement patterns of families, both in terms of their housing choice and the communities where they reside.

The report documents:

- Of the more than 9,300 households who remain in the system, either by renting in a CHA development or renting through CHA's voucher program, 3,395 (36 percent) of these residents currently live in traditional family properties, 1,896 (20 percent) live in the newly created mixed-income communities, and 4,097 (44 percent) are renting in the private market using a CHA voucher.
- Of the 4,097 households currently using a CHA voucher, only 60 families are renting in the suburbs and only 11 reside outside of Illinois.
- During the first years of the Plan, residents who left developments tended to cluster nearby; today, this trend is different. Now, these 10/1/99 families reside in 75 of the city's 77 neighborhoods.
- CHA family developments constituted 11 out of 15 of the nation's poorest census tracts in 1999. Most 10/1/99 families have moved to better neighborhoods. For example, 35 percent of 10/1/99 families currently using CHA vouchers moved to areas where poverty rates were below 23 percent (the city's average poverty rate is 20 percent).

The third part of the report focuses on the life improvements made by residents, showing that their incomes from work have increased from an average of \$10,000 to \$19,000 per year and the percentage of those working is almost 42 percent – up from 15 percent in 1999.

To view the full report, visit

www.thecha.org/filebin/pdf/mapDocs/4_12_11_Report_FINAL_LR.pdf.

About the Plan for Transformation:

The Plan for Transformation is CHA's and the city's historic plan to rehabilitate or replace the entire stock of public housing in Chicago. In 1999 CHA properties were in disrepair, with many residents living in substandard conditions. Of the more than 38,000 units owned by CHA, less than 25,000 were habitable and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) condemned 14,000 outright. While HUD had originally called for the simple demolition of the housing and the 'vouchering-out' of all residents, Mayor Richard M. Daley insisted instead that the housing be either repaired or rebuilt – this time as mixed-income developments that would anchor communities and end the isolation of residents in definable pockets of poverty. Shortly thereafter, Mayor Daley agreed that the city would take back control of CHA from HUD and the Plan was born.

The Plan for Transformation formally began on February 6, 2000 when CHA and HUD signed an agreement, known as the Moving to Work (MTW) Agreement. That agreement committed HUD to providing \$1.6 billion in capital funding - subject to congressional appropriation each year - for the restoration or replacement of 25,000 units for public-housing-eligible residents; greater flexibility in the use of capital funds and greater regulatory flexibility. In return, CHA would demolish 14,000 CHA public housing units that did not satisfy HUD viability requirements; provide all new housing in mixed-income communities; and provide services to the 10/1/99 families to help them relocate and strive for self-sufficiency.

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