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CHA Launches Pilot Program To Support Voucher Holders Who Are Required To Move From Troubled Units by Offering up to \$1500 in Moving Fees

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The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) announced today that it is launching a pilot program to provide a grant of up to \$1,500 per household to Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holders who are required to move from troubled apartments. The grants will initially be available to voucher holders who live in apartments owned by Gary Carlson that have been identified as having significant life/safety violations and are subject to housing court proceedings filed by the City of Chicago's Department of Law.

CHA received approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to begin providing funding for moving assistance effective in 2023. CHA intends to expand the program in 2024 to all voucher holders living in troubled buildings and who are required to move.

In 2021, CHA added Carlson to its Do Not Lease list, which means he is suspended from accepting new Housing Choice Voucher tenants from CHA through at least March 31, 2025. While this designation does not cancel all existing voucher contracts with Carlson, 132 families have been identified as living in apartments that are no longer safe for occupancy and are required to move due to court action. Repeated attempts over the past year to have Carlson bring these apartments into compliance have not been successful. Carlson has also been on the City of Chicago's Building Code Scofflaw List since 2021.

CHA expedited the implementation of the new program after discussions with the Fair Tenants Union, which represents a group of tenants from Carlson's buildings. Fair Tenants Union is comprised of the Metropolitan Tenants Organization, Autonomous Tenants Union, and the Law Center for Better Housing.

"The health and safety of families who live in subsidized and public housing is CHA's top priority. We understand requiring a family to move places a burden on them that is no fault of their own. However, by repeatedly failing to maintain safe living conditions for these residents, Mr. Carlson has left CHA with no choice," said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. "By collaborating with organizations that

represent these residents, we have been able to identify a solution to help support these families during this challenging time.”

Eligible moving expenses include security deposits, move-in fees, and moving services and related expenses. CHA’s Housing Choice Voucher program specialists are reaching out to all families who are eligible for the grant, which will be administered by CHA’s mobility counseling partner, Housing Choice Partners. In addition to the grant, CHA also offers counselling services to participants through its mobility counseling program, including assistance with their housing search.