

Housing Choice Voucher Program News



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Lunch & Learns

The Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority will be introducing Lunch & Learn seminars late 2017–early 2018. A Lunch & Learn is a training opportunity FREE of charge available at the LMHA office located at 1600 Kansas Ave., Lorain.

These trainings will be available for tenants and landlords. The times of the trainings will be scheduled around lunch time. You would provide your own

lunch, unless otherwise stated.

Topics for Lunch & Learns will include:

- Affordability and Rent Reasonable Process
- Housing Quality Standards Inspections & Quality Control
- Rent Calculation

We are interested in hearing from you! What topics

would you be interested in? Please email me at dcarter@lmha.org and let me know.

Once we have scheduled the Lunch & Learns, you will be notified of the dates and times, as well as topics.



Landlord Briefings

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Family Obligations	2
Reporting Changes	2
HCVP Contact Info	3
HCVP Highlight	3

Landlords participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program are required to review the Landlord Briefing materials every 5 years.

Landlords that are new to LMHA must review the materials and submit a Certificate of Completion form prior to Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) being released. It is very important that this is done before the contracts expire.

HAP Contracts must be executed within 60 days of the effective date. If this does not happen, the contract and lease date must

be changed.

Materials are available on our website. You may visit www.lmha.org and click on "For Landlords". From there, you will click on "Landlord Certification".

You will select the appropriate link. If you are new to the HCV Program, you will click on "I am a new landlord". If you have already been participating in the HCV Program, you will click on "I am an existing landlord".

Once you have reviewed

the power point, it is very important that you complete the Online Recertification Document (or the Certificate of Completion form) and submit it to our office.

Once we have received this document, you will receive your Certificate of Completion in the mail and our records will be updated to reflect the date you reviewed the Landlord Briefing material.

You won't have to review it again for 5 years. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact us.

Remember Family & Landlord Obligations



As the temperatures begin to rise, we tend to be outside more, enjoying the beautiful weather. Family functions, graduation parties and family cook-outs are planned.

This is also a time when we experience an increase in complaints due to loud music, fighting and other disturbances.

It is important to remember your obligations as participants of the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Family obligations state:

The members of the family may not engage in drug-

related criminal activity or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.

The members of the household must not abuse alcohol in a way that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.

Landlords are obligated to enforce their lease agreement with their tenants. If

there are complaints, it is important that landlords communicate with their tenants and resolve any issues. Your lease should address disturbances and consequences for violating the lease agreement.

For more information on Family Obligations, visit our website at www.lmha.org and look for the HCVP Admin Plan in the LMHA Polices and Procedures tab under "About LMHA".

If you have questions, please feel free to contact a representative of the HCVP department and we will be happy to assist you.

Participants are required to report all changes in income and household composition within 14 business days.

Reporting Changes

Participants of the HCV Program are required to submit all changes in writing with 14 business days. These changes may include loss of employment, new employment, updated phone numbers and emails and change in student status. They also include Household Composition changes.

What is a household composition change? A household composition change occurs when the family size changes. A family size could change with the addition of a newborn child, when someone moves in or when an adult or child moves out. There are several reasons a family size could change. As a participant, you must report the change in writing within 14 business days.

Families receiving assistance are required to contact both the landlord and LMHA to begin the process to add

anyone into the household. Updated Household information is vital in emergency situations as well as keeping your HCVP participation in good standing. The voucher size is based on household composition. Families receive deductions for dependents. It is very important to keep this updated.

Landlords who are aware of an unauthorized individual residing in the home should contact the Occupancy Specialist immediately. Landlords should also document any action or conversation held with the tenant. It is important that landlords understand their obligation in enforcing the lease agreement and work with the housing authority to prevent any act of fraud. Violation from either party can be seen as an act of fraud.

With the holidays and sum-

mer, there may be times that family come to visit and stay for a few days. A visitor is permitted to reside in the home for up to 14 consecutive days. Anyone residing in the home after 14 days is considered an unauthorized household member. If you have family or friends visiting you, it is best to communicate this to your landlord.

Anyone who is residing in the home that is not listed in the household is consider an unauthorized individual. Allowing an unauthorized individual to reside in your home is a direct violation of your family obligations. Failure of Family Obligations may cause your HCVP assistance to terminate.

Iliana Lopez



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HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM CONTACTS				
Clients Whose Last Names Begin With...	Occupancy Specialist	Direct Phone Line	Direct Fax Line	Email Address
E K L P	Elva Rivera	(440) 288-7448	(440) 288-7379	erivera@lmha.org
N O Q V X "Vash"	Janet O'Connell	(440) 288-7467	(440) 288-7376	joconne@lmha.org
A S U	Julie Davila	(440) 288-7446	(440) 288-7378	jdavila@lmha.org
C T	Leota Jordan	(440) 288-7443	(440) 288-7372	ljordan@lmha.org
R W Z	Melissa Pacheco	(440) 288-7449	(440) 288-7368	mpachec@lmha.org
D M	Kimberly Haskins	(440) 288-7450	(440) 288-7370	khaskin@lmha.org
G H I Y	Iliana Lopez	(440) 288-7447	(440) 288-7369	ilopez@lmha.org
B F J	Daniele Strozier	(440) 288-7444	(440) 288-7374	dstrozi@lmha.org
Homeownership & FSS	Dolly Justice	(440) 288-7433	(440) 288-7363	djustic@lmha.org
Clients Whose Last Names Begin With...	Inspection Scheduler	Direct Phone Line	Direct Fax Line	Email Address
A C D M R S T U W Z	Kristy Puckett	(440) 288-7452	(440) 288-7391	kpuckett@lmha.org
B E F G H I J K L N O P Q V X Y & VASH	Linda Boyd	(440) 288-7453	(440) 288-7391	lboyd@lmha.org
Supervisors				
HCVP Manager	Debbie Carter	(440) 288-7425	(440) 288-7366	dcarter@lmha.org
HCVP Assistant Manager	Carol Langham	(440) 288-7454	(440) 288-7367	clangha@lmha.org
HCVP Administrative Asst	Carol Schaffer	(440) 288-7489		cschaff@lmha.org

HCVP Highlight

The employees of the HCVP department were invited to the Lake Erie Landlord Association (LELA) on March 7, 2017 to present information about the HCV Program.

The presenters were Debbie Carter, HCVP Manager, Dolly Justice, HCVP Homeownership & FSS Coordinator, Maribel Rivera, HCVP Assistant Manager, Iliana Lopez and Janet O'Connell, Occupancy Specialists.

The presentation included an overall description of the HCV Program as well as common issues that the Occupancy Specialists deal with on a daily basis. Ms. O'Connell presented the LMHA VASH program; a col-

laboration with HUD and the VA to house homeless veterans. Ms. Justice presented the homeownership and family self-sufficiency programs.

During Ms. Rivera's presentation, she demonstrated how landlords can lose money by not acting quickly when there are damages or unpaid utilities. She used a bucket and green paper to illustrate how landlords throw money away when they don't address unpaid rent, damages or unpaid utilities in a timely manner. When tenants fail to pay rent or cause damage to the property, it is important that landlords contact LMHA immediately. Landlords should address these matters with the ten-

ant and follow-up in writing with the Occupancy Specialist that is handling their tenant's case.

Not paying rent or utilities and causing damages to the home are examples of violating family obligations and are grounds for termination.

Ms. Rivera, who has held a variety of roles in her 20+ years of experience with LMHA, is currently the Portability Officer and one of the HCVP Assistant Managers. Portability is the term used to transfer the HCVP voucher from one jurisdiction to another.

She trains new occupancy specialists and doesn't mind



performing Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections when we are in need of them. She considers herself to be an advocate for safe, decent and affordable housing in Lorain County.

For a copy of the power point slides used during the presentation, please email Debbie Carter at dcarter@lmha.org.