

**Seattle Housing Authority**  
**Notes on the Project-based and Mod Rehab Programs**  
**Brown Bag Meetings**

**Meeting of May 2, 2008, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Agenda**

- New contacts on SHA Checklist
- Criminal background check criteria
- Utility allowance changes

*Items in italics require follow-up.*

**New contacts on SHA Checklist**

*Handout: SHA Checklist*

- The SHA Checklist has been updated to reflect the recent changes with Project-based/Mod Rehab staff.
- *The new Checklist is not yet posted on our website, but will be soon.*

**Criminal Background Check Criteria**

- The criminal background check criteria changes that were recently approved by SHA's board will affect Tenant-based Vouchers much more than Project-based or Mod Rehab. The Project-based and Mod Rehab programs have always been and will remain more flexible because of the level of services provided to the residents.
- The changes are consistent with King County Housing Authority and are generally more lenient than before.
- Level II and III sex offenders still cannot be accepted. Level I offenders can be considered with supporting information. (Level I offenders are sometimes classified as Level II simply if they have no address, we will also take this into consideration.)
- Anyone convicted of manufacturing of methamphetamines cannot be accepted.
- An applicant with repeated and current offenses where there is no evidence of rehabilitation may be denied, but a supportive services plan can be provided as mitigating circumstances.
- SHA normally denies applicants who have been evicted from federally subsidized housing within the past 3 years and/or have been evicted from federally subsidized housing for non-compliance with program policies within the past 5 years, but supportive services plans can also be considered as mitigating circumstances in these cases.
- SHA's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) criminal background check criteria can be found in our Administrative Plan's chapters 2 (general) and 5 (Project-based). Mod Rehab has its own Admin Plan, but it defaults to the HCV Admin Plan if an item is not covered.
- The waiting periods that are listed in the Admin Plan are measured from the date of release from incarceration. If there is a question as to the actual release date of an Applicant, the Applicant will be required to furnish the required information.

- Normally if an applicant owes a debt to SHA they cannot be approved until the debt is paid in full. However, Project-Based has recently begun considering payment plans for applicants who can demonstrate they have income to pay a monthly amount and have a designated person that can facilitate the payments. If it is determined that payment plans are not being fulfilled and/or SHA is unable to implement the same practice for Mod Rehab due to technology constraints, then Project-based may discontinue this practice. May is the first month we expected payments for most of the first round of payment plans, so evaluation may continue for a few more months.

## Utility Allowance Changes

- SHA's utility allowances were recently revised, so expect to receive a revised Exhibit A from the Contracts Coordinator with the new portions. In most cases the contract rents have been adjusted and the gross rents will remain the same. (There are only 3 contracts where the contract rent will remain the same and the gross rent will adjust.)
- Most adjustments for existing participants will begin with August Annual Recertifications.

## Open Discussion

- Project-based does not yet have a timeline for conversion to an Electronic Document Management System. Throughout the design process several ideas for streamlining processes have been discussed and may be implemented soon. Please feel free to continue to make suggestions.
- Reminder: The Washington State Housing Finance Commission accepts SHA's 50058 in place of their certification packet for tax credit units.
- *At least one Project-based/Mod Rehab partner has requested the Brown Bags be held at a different time of the month because the first week of the month is busy with rent collection. The last week of the month is busy for SHA due to month-end closing.*
- Future Brown Bags may include presentations/visits from agencies such as DSHS if feedback from the housing providers indicates enough interest.
- In general, all that is needed for zero-income applicants/participants is either the SHA or the WSHFC Zero-Income Affidavit. However, SHA may ask for additional documentation in some cases.
- In an effort to approve applications as soon as possible, we generally approve applications before we receive the Employment Security report (there is approximately a 1-2 week delay between the request date and receipt). Thus, we may contact the housing provider upon receipt to adjust the rent portions estimated at the time of approval. For reoccurring temporary or seasonal work, income is averaged over 4 quarters. The housing provider can provide supporting documentation if work is not expected to continue in the future, e.g. stop work verifications, verification of a recent disability that prevents work, etc.
- A Seattle building was featured in a 4/29/08 USA Today article commending the "housing first" mission.
- The tenant-based waitlist lottery accepted 4000 of over 10,000 requests. Waitlist numbers have been assigned and mailed. Applications have been sent to the first 600 households. The last list of 4000 took approximately two years to cycle through.
- The next meeting on June 6, 2008 will be a training specific to Project-based buildings.

