



# The BULLETIN

News about the SHA Housing Choice Voucher program

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Published quarterly for landlords and service providers

**1** VASH program will help SHA house 52 homeless veterans and their families

**2** Workshops, workshops: One daylong, two on Tuesday evenings

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## Voucher program update

### SHA to provide rental assistance to 52 homeless veterans



Dear housing provider,

A PROGRAM run jointly by the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs has awarded Seattle Housing Authority funds with which to provide long-term affordable housing to 52 eligible homeless veterans and their families.

The goal of the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program is to provide Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) rental assistance vouchers combined with case management and clinical services to homeless veterans, enabling them to lead healthy, productive lives in the community and to succeed in housing.

The Department of Veterans Affairs identifies homeless veterans for whom the VASH program may be suitable. Some of these veterans may have psychiatric or substance abuse disorders or both. Participating veterans will have received treatment and become medically stabilized prior to their being issued Section 8 program vouchers.

The Seattle Veterans Administration Medical Center will refer eligible households to the Seattle Housing Authority.

Intensive case management, timely long-term therapeutic interventions, and stable housing are the essential elements in providing services to homeless veterans, according to the Veterans Administration.

In addition to rental assistance, services provided to participants enrolled in the VASH program may include in-patient hospitalization for stabilization, outreach and community-based case management services, clinical and vocational services and continuing follow-up to avoid relapses. Not every participant will need these services, of course.

I hope you agree that the VASH program is an excellent way to provide for men and women who served our country and who are now in need of a helping hand to get off the streets or out of shelters into safe, affordable housing. In order for us at the Seattle Housing Authority to help them, clearly we need the help of our supportive landlords. I hope you will consider participating.

If you have any questions about the program, please don't hesitate to ask Toni Manjarrez, an occupancy supervisor here at PorchLight. Toni's telephone number is **206-239-1619**, and her e-mail address is **tmanjarrez@seattlehousing.org**.

ON THE NEXT PAGE is a description of a workshop, sponsored by Seattle Neighborhood Group, that will be held here at PorchLight next month—on **Tuesday, October 21**. We hosted an identical workshop last year, and by all accounts it was a great success. I'm told that it would be a good idea to register for the workshop early.

THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN for participating in the Section 8 program. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me.

LISA CIPOLLONE-WOLTERS  
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING ADVOCACY  
AND RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS  
206-239-1523

## *An informative daylong workshop returns to PorchLight*

Seattle Neighborhood Group and Seattle Housing Authority invite you to a workshop especially for landlords with Section 8 tenants

### **'Keep illegal activity out of your rental property'**

*Tuesday, October 21*

**8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.**

**PorchLight Community Room  
907 NW Ballard Way, Suite 200**

*Protect your investment by learning proven techniques and strategies of the Seattle Landlord Training Program to—*

- Screen applicants effectively, fairly and legally
- Create strong rental agreements and enhance your ability to prevent illegal activity
- Identify & resolve problems before they escalate
  - Prevent illegal activity, including drugs
- Help build a strong community with residents
- Avoid situations that lead to expensive evictions

\$25 fee

*includes manual, handouts and lunch*

**Pre-registration required**

To register, go to  
**[www.sngi.org/landlord.html](http://www.sngi.org/landlord.html)**

or call **206-323-9666**

**For more information,  
contact Mike Jung  
206-239-1672**

or **[mjung@seattlehousing.org](mailto:mjung@seattlehousing.org)**

*Sponsored by*  
Seattle Neighborhood Group

*Workshop presenters:*

National Association of Housing & Redevelopment director Ron Oldham; SPD narcotics detective Gary Kinner; attorney Chris Benis; Seattle Neighborhood Group's Lois Grammon-Simpson, Kelly McKinney and Mary Williams; and SHA Section 8 Owner Liaison Mike Jung

### More Landlord

#### *Tuesday workshops*

Every third Tuesday,  
February through November,  
from 5:30 until 7:00 p.m.  
in the PorchLight Community Room

*Tuesday, September 16*

### **Screening & lease enforcement issues for Section 8 landlords**

*Topics:*

Avoid problems by screening prospective tenants

*What to do if there are problems with your tenant*

What are the "Participant Obligations,"  
and how does SHA enforce them?

*What's the relationship between the lease  
and the HAP Contract?*

*Tuesday, November 18*

### **The Housing Choice Voucher program (Section 8): An overview**

*Topics:*

How the voucher program works  
& why it might be a good fit for your rental units

*What to do when a voucher-holder  
wants to lease a unit*

How much rent can you charge?  
The Voucher Payment Standards

*Lease renewal and enforcement issues:  
How SHA can assist you*

***Questions? Ideas for workshops?***

Contact Mike Jung, Owner Liaison  
**[mjung@seattlehousing.org](mailto:mjung@seattlehousing.org)**  
or 206-239-1672

## Keeping clear of Fair Housing issues

Fair Housing agencies look into complaints, yes—but that's not all

### Fair Housing agencies just investigate discrimination complaints, right?

Civil rights agencies do accept and investigate Fair Housing complaints, but they do other things too.

One is to provide “technical assistance” to the public – information about and interpretation of Fair Housing laws. Fair Housing agencies welcome telephone calls, e-mails and letters from property owners, property managers, residents and others who have questions about whether and how Fair Housing laws may apply in certain situations.

For example, if a resident thinks he may have experienced racial harassment, or if a manager is curious about whether a disability accommodations request is really “reasonable,” they could contact any Fair Housing agency, which can discuss those topics and provide referrals and resources.

Civil rights agencies in our state have joined together as the “Fair Housing Partners of Washington” to develop and distribute a number of helpful brochures, posters, and guidebooks about Fair Housing, which are available in print form and on compact disc.

Fair Housing agencies also provide training workshops and seminars. Six times a year, the Fair Housing Partners offer free three-hour Fair Housing Basics workshops and two-hour Advanced Fair Housing seminars in downtown Seattle.

The next event is **Wednesday, September 24**. From 9 a.m. to noon is a Fair Housing basics workshop; an advanced Fair Housing seminar follows, from 1 to 3 p.m. They're at the Jackson Federal Building, 915 Second Avenue, 4th floor, South Auditorium. Bring your photo I.D. —there's a security checkpoint. To register and to arrange for reasonable accommodations, call **206-296-7592**.

To learn more, visit

[www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/qtrtrain.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/dias/ocre/qtrtrain.htm)

### When Nick calls a previous rental manager for a reference about an applicant, can he ask whether the applicant ever filed any discrimination complaints?

When Nick contacts a previous landlord or manager to inquire about an applicant, it is appropriate to gather information about that person's rental history – his timely payment of rent, whether he followed the community rules, etc. Since denying someone housing just because he or she exercised their civil rights would be considered to be retaliation, it is not okay to inquire about discrimination complaints.

### The Blackberry Ridge community has several applicants for the same apartment. Can't manager Samantha just choose the one she believes to be the best, based on her experience?

Some individuals who look okay turn out to be good residents and some turn out to be bad residents. But if Samantha is working on her “gut,” on assumptions and experience alone, she may not know which until after entering into a lease agreement. Samantha will have more consistent results and fewer discrimination complaints if she establishes a fair screening process and applies it equally to all applicants.

It's best to screen applicants on a first-come, first-served basis, to stop screening when a qualified applicant meets the screening criteria, and then to offer the apartment to that applicant. It's a good idea to date and time-stamp the applications so you know the exact order in which they were received. Pre-printed documents help ensure you're gathering similar information from all applicants and that you're not requesting any inappropriate information.

“In Seattle, protected classes are race, color, national origin, religion/creed, sex, disability, parental status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political ideology—and whether or not one has or will have a Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher.”

### What policies or rules will help my management company comply with Fair Housing laws?

Most rental housing communities have general tenancy rules that outline expected actions and behaviors, such as making timely payments, observing quiet hours, parking in assigned spaces, etc. It's a good idea to review these rules or policies to make certain they do not target any protected class group. (Example: Don't say, “Children cannot ride bikes in the parking lot;” say, “Bicycle riding is not allowed in the parking lot.”)

If you're in doubt about whether written policies and rules comply with Fair Housing laws, ask a Fair Housing agency to review them.

Many housing communities have adopted general anti-harassment and antidiscrimination policies. Be certain any such policy mentions all protected classes of individuals for your rental housing's locale.

In Seattle, protected classes are race, color, national origin, religion/creed, sex, disability, parental status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political ideology—and whether or not one has or will have a Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher.

—Courtesy King County Office of Civil Rights

## Inspector's corner

### Clearing up confusion regarding lead-based paint

Deteriorated paint is any interior or exterior coating (paint, stain, varnish) that is peeling, chipping, chalking or otherwise separating from its surface (substrate). Often a landlord will assure an inspector that a surface has just been painted, and wonder why that isn't sufficient remedy for any possible lead-based-paint problem. The nub of the problem is that when the upper layers of paint deteriorate, the underlayers, where lead paint is most likely to be, are exposed.

The HUD rules regarding whether we write up deteriorated paint as a problem to fix are based on the year the unit was built—before 1978—and whether the tenant has children under the age of 6 or the household includes a pregnant woman. Knowing this may explain why we can write up deteriorated paint as a problem now, when a family with young children lives in a unit, but didn't do so previously, when a tenant had no young children.

The HUD terms, "*less than de minimis*" and "*greater than de minimis*" refer to the amount of deteriorated paint found on the interior and exterior of a unit. The term applied determines the type of training a worker must have to stabilize the paint and surface.

"Less than de minimis" describes interior surfaces such as walls, floors or ceilings that have less than two (2) square feet per room of deteriorated paint; exterior surfaces that have less than twenty (20) square feet of deteriorated paint total; and deterioration of less than ten (10) percent of the total surface area of such interior and exterior components as doors, baseboards, windows and trim.

"Greater than de minimis" describes interior surfaces that have

more than two (2) square feet of deteriorated paint per room; more than twenty (20) square feet total of deteriorated paint on such exterior surfaces as siding, soffits, decks, foundations, fences, out-buildings and garages; and deteriorated paint on more than ten (10) percent of the surface area of such interior and exterior components as doors, baseboards, windows and trim.

Your unit may contain both "less-than" and "greater-than" deteriorated paint at the same time. The important distinction is that "less-than" surfaces can be stabilized by the owner or maintenance person using safe work practices. Remediation of "greater-than" surfaces must be performed by a Washington State-certified Lead-Based Paint worker who can present proof of training by an EPA/HUD LBP trainer. If you're dealing with "greater-than" surfaces, we suggest that you contact a firm that can provide a Risk Assessor who will help you through the process.

If a lead-based-paint deficiency is noted for your property and you're uncertain how to proceed, please feel free to call the inspector whose name and number are at the top of the deficiency letter.

Many landlords in the SHA Section 8 program have already had their properties tested. We keep the results of those tests on file. If we don't have test results for your property, please send a copy of the test results and/or clearance to Donna Kelly, HQS inspections scheduler, for our files. Her address is PorchLight, 907 NW Ballard Way, Suite 200, Seattle WA 98107-4637.

—Lora Wait-Hoy, Housing Quality Standards Inspector



Phone: 206-239-1500 | Fax: 206-239-1770

E-mail: porchlight.info@seattlehousing.org | website: [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org)

#### GENERAL QUESTIONS

To speak with a customer service agent about any Housing Choice Voucher program issue, call 206-239-1728 and press '0'

#### TO LIST AVAILABLE UNITS

Call 206-239-1663 or go to [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org) and click on "Section 8 Landlords" under the 'Housing' menu

#### OWNER INFORMATION

**NOTE:** Changes must be submitted in writing  
Fax 206-239-1770, attention Mike Jung.  
Questions? Call Mike at 206-239-1672

#### HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

**MANAGER** Barbara Strayer 206-239-1620

#### OWNER LIAISON

Mike Jung 206-239-1672

#### OCCUPANCY SUPERVISORS

Tenant-based—  
"Aa" through "Lara" 206-239-1619  
"Larb" through "Zz" 206-239-1636  
Mod. Rehab. & Project-based 206-239-1649

#### NEW MOVE-IN TEAM

Status of tenancy approvals—  
contracts and leases  
"Aa" through "Lara" 206-239-1676  
"Larb" through "Zz" 206-239-1635  
New move-ins fax number 206-239-1760  
New move-in team supervisor 206-239-1621

#### INSPECTIONS

Annual inspections & reinspections 206-239-1645  
New move-in inspections—  
"Aa" through "Lara" 206-239-1676  
"Larb" through "Zz" 206-239-1635  
Judy Huertas, HQS supervisor 206-239-1621

#### HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS INSPECTORS

Bill Francis 206-721-1457, ext. 10  
Paul Gimmi 206-239-1632  
Sue Nigg 206-239-1639  
Jonathan Shibuya 206-239-1616  
Jason Shirley 206-239-1646  
Nancy Shutes 206-770-6880  
Lora Wait-Hoy 206-721-1457, ext. 11

## What is PorchLight?

PorchLight Housing Center is a division of the Seattle Housing Authority, the city's largest provider of low-income and affordable housing. PorchLight manages the Housing Choice Voucher program and applications for public housing.

## Did you know...

...that owners can find support on our website? Visit [www.seattlehousing.org](http://www.seattlehousing.org) today and click on "Landlords" for helpful information and resources.

...that SHA's Impact Property Services provides lead-based paint abatement services? Impact Property Services offers affordable, efficient service to help solve your deteriorated paint problems. We can provide both EPA-certified lead-based paint risk assessors and EPA-certified lead-safe workers, including painters and carpenters. Call Impact Property Services at **206-716-1310**, extension 13.

...that the City of Seattle provides free information about property owners' rights and city ordinances? Call **206-684-7979** for more information.