

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE  
MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

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**SUBJECT:** Interim Recertifications

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**SCOPE:** These policies and procedures apply to all residents of low-income public housing except residents of public housing units in HOPE VI partnership properties. Certification of income and rent for these residents is governed by the properties' management plans.

**POLICY:**

Rents shall be calculated in accordance with Board Resolution 4785, June 20, 2005, adopting the Moving to new Ways rent policy and the provisions in the public housing dwelling lease regarding Income and Household Composition. Rent shall be established annually in accordance with SHA's Rent Policy (L11.1-1). Residents shall be required to report all changes in household income and composition as they occur. SHA shall conduct an "Interim Recertification" and increase or decrease rent, as dictated by the Rent Policy, based on reported income or household composition changes that are anticipated to last for the remainder of the eligibility period. For reported decreases in income that are due to special circumstances not anticipated to last for the remainder of the eligibility period, a "Special Review" will be conducted. Under a special review, the rent shall be adjusted based on the income actually received by the household in the prior month, and rent shall be reduced or only one-month at a time.

**IMPLEMENTING POLICY:**

SHA shall conduct an interim recertification under the following circumstances:

- If SHA makes a calculation error at admission or at an annual recertification, an interim recertification will be conducted, if necessary, to correct the error.
- When a resident reports an increase in income greater than \$100/month.
- When a resident reports a decrease in income or changes in allowances and deductions that would reduce rent.
  - Effective, 4/1/99, (24CFR5.615) rent will not be reduced for residents whose welfare assistance is reduced specifically because of fraud, failure to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or failure to comply with a work activities requirement. Staff may deny the request only after obtaining written verification from the welfare agency that the family's benefits have been reduced because of noncompliance.
  - Residents who claim Zero Income will not necessarily be eligible for the minimum rent, if the household is apparently eligible for TANF or Unemployment benefits. If the household appears to be eligible for TANF or Unemployment benefits, staff shall impute the benefit amounts the household would receive and calculate the household's rent accordingly. For TANF, the imputed amount is based on the household size. For unemployment benefits,

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- the imputed amount is based on the minimum weekly benefit amount, as published by Employment Security.
  - If a resident has received an interim rent reduction due to a decrease in income, any reported increase in income, including increases less than \$100/month, will be counted and rent will be adjusted accordingly until the calculated rent equals the rent level set at the most recent annual recertification.

SHA shall conduct a special review under the following circumstances:

- When a resident reports a decrease in income that will last for a minimum of one-month, but is not anticipated to last for the remainder of the eligibility period.

Special / Interim recertifications can be conducted through the mail or residents may request an appointment with staff to conduct the review in person.

Minimum Rent – Hardship Exemption. Residents may request a Hardship Exemption to the established minimum rent, reducing it to \$25 or \$0 based on their income in accordance with SHA's Rent Policy, L11.1-1. At no time will the monthly rent be reduced to less than \$0.

Timely Reporting of Changes in Income or Household Composition. Residents are expected to report the reason for and amount of any change in income and or household composition to the Housing Authority no later than 14 days from the date of the occurrence. Residents may phone in changes or submit them in writing to their property management office.

A Resident with a minor in the household who turns 18 years of age between annual recertifications is not required to report the 18 year old's income as an "increase" but the income of the 18 year old will be captured at the resident's upcoming annual recertification.

A Resident with a full-time student in the household who no longer qualifies for this status, (e.g., graduated, quit school, reduced credits taken) between annual recertifications is required to report their income as an "increase."

If a resident fails to report, in a timely manner, income or household composition changes that would result in a rent increase, when SHA becomes aware of and verifies the new household circumstances, a new rent amount will be calculated and applied retroactively in accordance with SHA's Manual of Operation (L11.2-1).

Verification Standard. Only the reported change in income or household composition shall be verified at an interim recertification. Acceptable verification may include resident-provided or 3<sup>rd</sup> party verification. Staff shall refer to SHA's Manual section L 11.1-5, for further guidance. The Housing Authority shall change the rent based on the verified change in income or household composition.

Notification of Rent Change. Residents will be notified of the new rent amount through a lease amendment mailed to them. Resident signatures on the lease amendment are not required to apply a new rent amount.

Residents shall be given a minimum of 30-days notice of a rent increase. If the rent increase is greater than 10 percent, 60-days notice will be given in accordance with Seattle Landlord Tenant law.

If the reported change in income is due to the resident becoming employed after being without employment for the past six consecutive months, and the change is reported no later than 14 days from the date of employment, a 90-day notice of the rent increase will be given.

Any decreases in rent shall become effective on the first day of the month following the date on which the change was first reported to the Housing Authority. However, if a resident does not provide documentation or necessary signatures for a rent reduction in a timely manner, the rent will not be reduced until the first of the month following the date all necessary documentation is received.

Informal Hearing: Any resident who disagrees with a rent adjustment may request an informal hearing. The request must be made in writing to the Senior Property Manager.