
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Charges for Late Payment of Rent

SCOPE: These policies and procedures shall apply to all low-income housing rental programs administered by the Seattle Housing Authority.

POLICY:

Timely payment of established rents is a critical factor in the Housing Authority being able to meet its financial obligations. Timely payment of rent is also a basic premise in the private rental market and it is important that those Housing Authority tenants seeking to achieve upward mobility and transition on to non-subsidized housing understand this premise if they are to be successful. Housing Authority staff expend considerable time and effort to insure that rents are paid on time and the burden of these efforts should be placed as fully as possible on those who fail to meet rent due dates. Therefore, the Housing Authority has adopted the following policy and procedures to encourage timely payment of rent and to impose a reasonable charge against those tenants who do not.

The Housing Authority shall impose a charge on tenants whose rent is not received by the 8th of each month. This charge shall be an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the tenant's monthly rent (net rent after utility allowance) but not less than \$10.00 nor greater than \$25.00 (rounded to the nearest dollar). The charge shall be automatically calculated and charged to the tenant's account by the Resident Information and Accounting System (RIAS); however, Managers will have the authority to review such charges and waive them in certain circumstances.

The waiver of the late rent charge shall be at the discretion of the Manager but to insure uniformity in the administration of the late rent charge the following criteria shall be used in judging whether or not a late rent charge should be canceled. A late rent charge should be waived if or when:

1. there is a Housing Authority staff or bank error or delay (these include but are not limited to difficulties in receiving correct and timely information from banks, acceptance of rent payment in a Management Office prior to the eighth (8th) of the month and failure to have the payment posted, the scheduling of a rent review so that the resident does not know the correct rent to pay until after the due date);
2. the tenant provides verification of a delay in receiving their income which is no fault of the tenant (these include but are not limited to agency failure to mail tenant's check due to processing difficulties or case manager error even though the tenant has complied with regulations, delay by an employer in meeting or mailing payroll checks as scheduled, support payments delayed or not received);
3. there is other good cause of which the Manager is informed **prior** to the eighth (8th) of the month (good cause is defined as a serious medical emergency or death in the tenant's domiciled family or other close family members or theft of a check and shall be limited to no

more than three separate instances in a twelve month period);

4. the tenant's rent is late for the first time after the adoption of this policy (this is a one time waiver to be applied to existing tenants as well as new tenants in the future and which will serve as clear notice of the late rent charge even after the charge is canceled.

The waiver of the late rent charge does not mean that legal charges which will begin to be incurred at a later date in each month will necessarily be waived if the rent is not paid by those dates. Waiver of legal charges shall be a separate matter to be decided by the Manager, but may be considered if good cause along the lines of late rent fee waiver criteria exists.