
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Requirement

SCOPE: This policy and procedure shall apply to all Low-Income Public Housing programs and units administered by the Seattle Housing Authority. Residents of public housing units subject to management agreements, partnership agreements, regulatory agreements and/or financial agreements that have been incorporated into a management plan approved by HUD and/or SHA; the policies set forth in those documents shall take precedence for residents of such units.

POLICY: The Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Requirement are mandated by the Quality Housing and Work Reform Act of 1998. This law requires that low-income families in public housing, as a condition of receipt of Federal housing assistance, provide community service, participate in a self-sufficiency activity or a combination of both. Under this provision, and Seattle Housing Authority's dwelling lease, non-compliance with the community service and self-sufficiency requirement is a violation of the lease and cause to evict.

IMPLEMENTATION POLICY:

A. Time Frame for participation:

New Resident- The community service and self-sufficiency requirement (CSR) begins 30 days after the lease is signed unless an exemption is granted.

B. Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Requirement:

The CSR obligates each adult household member, age 18-61 year old, to perform community service or participate in a self-sufficiency activity (See, 24 CFR Subpart F Section 960.603). Except for those who are exempt, each adult household member must:

1. Contribute eight hours per month of community service; or
2. Participate in a self-sufficiency activity for eight hours per month; or
3. Perform eight hours per month of combined activities of community service and economic self-sufficiency.

NOTE: Hours must be earned *each* month. Extra hours earned in a month cannot be deducted from the next month's required CSR hours.

C. Self-Sufficiency Activity:

A self-sufficiency activity is any activity designed to encourage, assist, train, or facilitate the economic independence of HUD-assisted families or to provide work for such families.

These activities include:

1. job training (such as Vocational Education/Job Skills Training);
2. employment counseling or placement, (such as SHA's Job Connections);
3. vocational or higher education courses;

4. English proficiency training;
5. workfare;
6. financial or household management educational programs;
7. apprenticeship programs;
8. substance abuse or mental health treatment programs; or
9. any organized program provided to ready a participant for work or other CSR activities.

D. Community Service:

Community service is the performance of voluntary work or duties that provide a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency or increase resident self-responsibility in the community. Community service is not employment and does not include political activities.

E. Exemption from CSR:

Any resident or household member who is blind or disabled; or who works for 8 hours or more per month is exempt from the CSR.

This policy provides for exemptions for which Residents may *qualify* for with appropriate verification as outlined in the Community Service / Self-Sufficiency Requirement Certification & Requirement Exemption Request Form, SHA-133.

Exemptions may be given for the following:

1. Residents age 55 or older and unable to comply with community service provisions.
2. Resident who is a victim of domestic violence, and program participation would put her/him at risk.
3. Resident who is pregnant.
4. Resident who is a Parent/ Legal Guardian of a child under the age of 13 in his or her home.
5. Residents who are recent graduates from educational or training programs, within the past 6 months, and are currently job searching.
6. Residents who are work exempt under WA State Welfare-to-Work or Social Security Administration program.
7. Resident who is a member of a family who is compliant with DSHS Welfare-to-Work program requirements.
8. Resident is the primary caretaker of a Disabled or Elderly Person
9. Resident is the primary childcare provider for a household member performing community service work.
10. Resident with a pending DSHS / Social Security Administration / Unemployment benefits.
11. Resident with an active DSHS / Social Security Administration dispute.
12. Resident suffering a temporary disability expected to last a minimum of 60 days

13. Parent / legal guardian home-schooling a child under the age of 18

14. Resident is an active duty reservists and/or military personnel

Residents must complete and submit an Exemption Request form, SHA-133, along with the required verification, within 30 days of leasing or 60 days prior to the effective date of their Annual Recertification. Requests for an exemption must be submitted to the Senior Property Manager or the Senior Property Manager's designee.

Exemption Requests received after the 30-day or 60 day timeline may be considered effective as of the date of approval. Households will remain responsible for compliance with the monthly community service hours for the months an exemption was not in effect.

Approved exemptions will be in effect until the resident's next Annual Recertification.

Disputes related to exemptions and qualifying self-sufficiency and community service activities shall be reviewed and resolved by the CSR Review Committee (See E.1 below).

F. Compliance:

SHA may renew a resident's dwelling lease annually upon the household's compliance with the CSR.

1. Each household member's compliance with the CSR shall be verified at the time of the resident's annual recertification. Upon verification of compliance, SHA may renew the resident's dwelling lease and document the household's compliance for the 12 month period.
2. If each household member's compliance with the CSR cannot be verified, the resident shall be considered in non-compliance. SHA shall notify the resident of the household's non-compliant status and the resident shall be given the opportunity to enter into a "cure agreement".
3. Cure Agreement: A cure agreement shall be between SHA, the adult household member in non-compliance and/or the head of household. The agreement shall outline what is required and the agreed upon action plan to bring the household into compliance over the next 12-month period (maximum). SHA shall accept the removal of the non-compliant household member(s) from the dwelling lease as a cure to the resident's non-compliance.
4. SHA shall not renew a resident's dwelling lease for any household that is not in compliance with the CSR, and may terminate the resident's tenancy. Residents whose lease is not renewed for this reason may request a grievance hearing in accordance to SHA's Grievance Policy.

G. CSR Review Committee:

To comply with its responsibilities as outlined in 24 CFR, Subpart F Section 960.603, SHA has formed a CSR Review Committee to review and act as the final arbitrator of all resident disputes and cure agreements.