



Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, Missouri

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To: Residents Advisory Board

From: Phil Steinhaus, CEO

Date: May 7, 2009

RE: Revisions to Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) Regarding Guests, Time Limit for Acceptance or Refusal of Unit Offers, Utility Reimbursement and Repayments to PHA .

When the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) was revised over the past two years, there were a couple of items that we missed and one policy change that conflicted with HUD regulations. We need to correct those items now.

Item 1 - Guests

Item 1 concerns the length of time an overnight guest may stay. Our lease allows guests to stay for seven consecutive days; Chapter 3 of the ACOP states 14 days. The public housing managers have followed the lease, allowing seven consecutive days unless the resident requests signed written permission from the manager for a longer stay. A resident recovering from surgery who needed temporary live-in care might be given permission to have a guest for several weeks, for instance. The managers find the seven days stated in the lease to be effective in stopping guests from becoming semi-permanent, non-documented, non-paying residents. We would like to revise the ACOP to agree with the current PH lease.

Item 2 – Unit Offers

Item 2 concerns the number of days an applicant is given to accept or decline a unit offer. Currently, the ACOP allows an applicant three business days to accept or decline a unit offer. The managers would like to revise that to allow five days total for an applicant to act. Although applicants should have finances in place before they are removed from the wait list, often their financial support is fragile and they find themselves struggling at the last moment. Two extra days might make the difference and will not substantially slow down the intake process.

Item 3 – Utility Reimbursement and Repayment Agreements

Item 3 concerns a policy which conflicts with HUD regulations. We *must* change this. Our current ACOP states that when a resident who receives a utility allowance owes a debt to CHA, we will apply the utility reimbursement to that debt before sending the money to a utility company. Both chapters 6 and 15 have such statements. According to HUD regulations and guidance, *a housing authority may not interfere with the utility reimbursements*. Please see the attachment for the pertinent CFR and Public Housing Guidebook citations.