

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SELF SUFFICIENCY POLICY

A. Background

The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires that all non-exempt (see definitions) public housing adult residents (18 or older) contribute eight (8) hours per month of community service (volunteer work) or participate in eight (8) hours of training, counseling, classes or other activities that help an individual toward self sufficiency and economic independence. This is a requirement of the Public Housing Lease.

B. Definitions

Community Service - volunteer work which includes, but is not limited to:

- Work at a local institution including but not limited to: school, child care center, hospital, hospice, recreation center, senior center, adult day care center, homeless shelter, indigent feeding program, cooperative food bank, etc.;
- Work with a non-profit organization that serves PHA residents or their children such as: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys or Girls Clubs, 4-H Program, PAL, Garden Center, community cleanup programs, beautification programs, other youth or senior organizations;
- Work at the Authority to help improve physical conditions;
- Work at the Authority to help with children's programs;
- Work at the Authority to help with senior programs;
- Helping neighborhood groups with special projects;
- Working through Resident Organization to help other residents with problems, serving as an officer in a Resident Organization, serving on the Resident Advisory Board; and
- Caring for the children of other residents so they may volunteer.

NOTE: **Political activity is excluded.**

Self Sufficiency Activities - activities that include, but are not limited to:

- Job readiness programs;
- Job training programs;
- GED classes;
- Substance abuse or mental health counseling;
- English proficiency or literacy (reading) classes;
- Apprenticeships;
- Budgeting and credit counseling;
- Any kind of class that helps a person toward economic independence; and
- Full time student status at any school, college or vocational school.

Exempt Adult - an adult member of the family who:

- Is 62 years of age or older;
- Has a disability that prevents him/her from being gainfully employed;
- Is the caretaker of a disabled person;
- Is working at least 30 hours per week; or
- Is participating in welfare to work program.

C. Requirements of the Program

1. The eight (8) hours per month may be either volunteer work or self sufficiency program activity or a combination of the two.
2. At least eight (8) hours of activity must be performed each month. An individual may not skip a month and then double up the following month, unless special circumstances warrant special consideration. The Authority will make the determination of whether to allow or disallow a deviation from the schedule.
3. Activities must be Performed within the community and not outside the jurisdictional area of the Authority.
4. Family Obligations
 - At lease execution or re-examination after February 1, 2000, all adult members (18 or older) of a public housing resident family must:
 1. provide documentation that they are exempt from the Community Service requirement if they qualify for an exemption, and (Page 4)
 2. sign a certification that they have received and read the July 18, 2003 letter from the Housing Authority and understand that, if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the Community Service requirement will result in non-renewal of their lease. (Page 5)
 - At each annual re-examination, non-exempt family members must present a completed documentation form (to be provided by the Authority) of activities performed over the previous twelve (12) months. This form will include places for signatures of supervisors, instructors or counselors certifying to the number of hours contributed. (Page 6)
 - If a family member is found to be noncompliant at re-examination, he/she and the Head of Household will sign an agreement with the Authority to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period.
5. Change in exempt status:
 - If, during the twelve (12) month period, a non-exempt person becomes exempt, it is his/her responsibility to report this to the Authority and provide documentation of such.

- If, during the twelve (12) month period, an exempt person becomes non-exempt, it is his/her responsibility to report this to the Authority. The Authority will provide the person with the Recording/Certification documentation form and a list of agencies in the community that provide volunteer and/or training opportunities. (Page 7)

D. Authority Obligations

1. To the greatest extent possible and practicable, the Authority will:
 - provide names and contacts at agencies that can provide opportunities for residents, including disabled, to fulfill their Community Service obligations. *(According to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act, a disabled person who is otherwise able to be gainfully employed is not necessarily exempt from the Community Service requirement);* and
 - provide in-house opportunities for volunteer work or self sufficiency programs.
2. The Authority will provide the family with exemption verification forms and Recording/Certification documentation forms and a copy of this policy at initial application and at lease execution. (Pages 4 & 6)
3. The Authority will make the final determination as to whether or not a family member is exempt from the Community Service requirement. Residents may use the Authority's grievance procedure if they disagree with the Authority's determination.
4. Noncompliance of family member:
 - At least thirty (30) days prior to annual re-examination and/or lease expiration, the Authority will begin reviewing the exempt or non-exempt status and compliance of family members;
 - If the Authority finds a family member to be noncompliant, the Authority will enter into an agreement with the noncompliant member and the Head of Household to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period; (Page 8)
 - If, at the next annual re-examination, the family member still is not compliant, the lease will not be renewed and the entire family will have to vacate, unless the noncompliant member agrees to move out of the unit;
 - The family may use the Authority's grievance procedure to protest the lease termination.

Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Requirement

The community service and self-sufficiency requirement applies to all adult residents in public housing except for those exempted under Section 12(c) of the Act. This requirement does not apply to Section 8 tenants.

The public housing tenants exempt from the community service and self-sufficiency requirement are those:

- * Age 62 years or older.
- * Blind or disabled (as defined under 216(i)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(i)(1); 1382c) and who certify that because of this disability they are unable to comply with the service provisions; or primary caretakers of such individuals.
- * Engaged in work activities as defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(d)), specified below:
 1. Unsubsidized employment;
 2. Subsidized private-sector employment;
 3. Subsidized public-sector employment;
 4. Work experience (including work associated with the Refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available;
 5. On-the-job-training;
 6. Job-search and job-readiness assistance;
 7. Community service programs;
 8. Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual);
 9. Job-skills training directly related to employment;
 10. Education directly related to employment in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency;

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11. Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate; and
12. The provision of childcare services to an individual who is participating in a community service program.

Public housing agencies (PHAs) are encouraged to consider 30 hours per week as the minimum number of hours for a work activity exemption as described in Section 407(d) of the Social Security Act, and implementing regulations 45 CFR Section 261.31(a)(1)). See Attachment B. PHAs can use reasonable guidelines in clarifying this statutory list of work activities in coordination with the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) agency, as appropriate.

- * Meet the requirements for being exempt from having to engage in a work activity under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare program of the State in which the PHA is located, including a State-administered welfare-to-work program.
- * If a member of a family receiving TANF assistance, benefits, or service under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.); or under any other welfare program of the State in which the PHA is located, including a State administered welfare-to-work program and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in non-compliance with such program.



Community Service Exemption Certification

I certify that I am eligible for an exemption from the Community Service requirement for the following reason:

- () I am 62 or older
- () I have a disability which prevents me from working
(Certification of Disability will serve as documentation)
- () I am working (at least 30 hours per week)
(Employment Verification form will serve as documentation)
- () I am participating in a Welfare to Work Program
(Must provide verification letter from agency)
- () I am receiving TANF and am participating in a required economic self sufficiency program or work activity
(Must provide verification from the funding agency that you are complying with job training or work requirements)
- () I am a full time student
(Must provide verification letter from school attended)

Resident (Print Name)

Resident's Signature

Date



Community Service Compliance Certification

I/We have received a copy of, have read and understand the contents of the Authority's Community Service/Self Sufficiency Policy.

I/We understand that this is a requirement of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 and that if we do not comply with this requirement, my/our lease will not be renewed.

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____

Resident _____ Date _____