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## HANO Housing Choice Voucher Program Newsletter | Summer 2016

### WELCOME HOME

*Former HCVP resident becomes first-time homeowner in her family*



*New Homeowner Kemoni Pollard's New Orleans East Home*

For many families, owning a home is a lifelong dream. The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) strives to assist in making that dream a reality for many residents through its Homeownership Program.

The Homeownership Program provides a variety of resources to assist HANO families' transitioning from public housing and Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) participants to homeowners. Applicants must be a resident of the agency's rental programs, and currently pay equal to or more than the typical cost of a mortgage payment of the average HANO

family assisted by the agency's Homeownership Program.

Last month, Kemoni Pollard, a mother of two daughters, fulfilled her dream of becoming the first homeowner in her family through the Housing Authority's Homeownership Program. Ms. Pollard utilized the Section 8 program for rental assistance for over seven years. In 2014, she joined the Homeownership Program, and purchased her home last June.

"HANO's Homeownership Program provided me with the opportunity to create a better life for my two daughters. I have always wanted to give them a home of their own," Ms. Pollard said.

After completing the intake and assessment process, Ms. Pollard was referred to preparation classes, including financial fitness and homebuyers education. "I was pretty clueless about the whole homebuying process prior to joining the program," Ms. Pollard said. "The Financial Fitness course was extremely helpful, especially when it comes to learning how to budget your money."

After months of preparing the necessary paperwork and financial planning, Ms. Pollard has completed the purchase of her home located in New Orleans East and is now officially moved in. "I truly believe that becoming a homeowner was a very necessary step that I had to take in my life for my daughters. I knew I could always become a homeowner, however without the help of the program, I would not have achieved this dream so quickly," Ms. Pollard said.

Ms. Pollard is truly thankful for the assistance provided by the Homeownership Program, and is encouraging her mother and other family members to apply for the program. "HANO's Homeownership Counselors are very helpful throughout the process, and the program can also make their lives better," Ms. Pollard said.

To apply for HANO's Homeownership Program, contact HANO's Homeownership Counselors Audrey Williams and Carol Griffin at (504) 670-3428 and (504) 670-3277.

## HUD RECEIVES ADDITIONAL HUD-VASH ALLOCATION TO PROVIDE 22 HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

HANO recently announced the award of an additional \$141,504 for the 2016 fiscal year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program to fund vouchers for homeless veterans identified in Orleans Parish. HANO will utilize the additional funding to provide 22 housing vouchers to homeless veterans in partnership with the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System.

“HANO takes great pride in continuing the commitment of providing affordable and sustainable housing for the brave men and women who served our country,” said HANO Executive Director Gregg Fortner. “We look forward to our continued partnership with HUD, and acknowledge the Department for their relentless efforts in addressing veteran homelessness within our community.”

In 2011, HANO distributed 100 VASH vouchers to

## HANO IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HUD TO HOST FREE FAIR HOUSING FORUM FOR HCVP RESIDENTS

This month, HANO and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s New Orleans Field Office will host the first in a series of free fair housing forums for Section 8 residents at the Helen W. Lang Memorial Board Room. The training will be held on Friday, August 26th from 10am to 12:30pm, and is limited to the first 100 registrants ages 18 and older due to space restrictions.

During the forum, residents will hear about tenants' rights and responsibilities directly related to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination in rental housing based on race, disability or familial status.

This meeting is part of a series of workshop trainings to educate local housing providers and tenants on a number of topics, such as reasonable accommodation/modification, familial status, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and Retaliation, Harassment, and Intimidation.

HANO and HUD hosted its most recent fair housing

homeless veterans identified by Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System, aiding the national call to offer clinical assistance to the men and women who served our country. Between 2012 and 2015, HANO's allocation increased to a total of 321 VASH vouchers available for distribution. Prior to HANO's recent allocation, the VASH inventory consisted of 250 VASH vouchers currently under lease, 47 VASH voucher holders awaiting placement in eligible housing units, and 24 VASH vouchers available for distribution. Effective August 1, 2016, the additional 22 vouchers awarded to HANO will increase the cumulative allocation to 343, totaling the entire VASH inventory to \$2.88 million.

The HUD-VASH program is designed to assist homeless veterans in locating permanent housing through HUD's rental assistance program and connects them with case management and clinical services at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers in the community. The eligible veterans will be identified by the VA, and referred to HANO to determine their income eligibility and facilitate leasing dwelling units that accommodates the family's needs.

For more information on the HUD-VASH program, visit [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) or [www.hano.org](http://www.hano.org).



*A HUD representative speaks with housing providers during free fair housing training in the Helen W. Lang Memorial Board Room*

training on Friday, April 22 providing a forum for landlords to engage in an in-depth discussion with housing experts about the Fair Housing Act, specifically focusing on the unlawful discrimination of tenants based on race or national origin.

To sign up for any upcoming fair housing trainings, visit [www.HANO.org](http://www.HANO.org).

# HCVP Policy and Procedure Reminders

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS: OWNERS AND TENANTS



HANO would like to emphasize the required responsibilities of all participants of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP). Owners of approved units, and tenants with Section 8 vouchers must play essential roles in the success of this program. All responsibilities must be honored for program participation continuance. If for any reason HANO determines that program participants (landlords and tenants) have not honored the signed Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) agreement, the agency reserves the right to terminate the HAP contract.

### The following basic responsibilities and requirements must be observed by the unit owner:

Unit owners must perform all obligations listed within the Housing Assistance Payments contract and tenant lease including but not limited to management and rental functions for the assisted unit and the selection of the voucher holder/family. The owner must maintain the unit in accordance with Housing Quality Standards (HQS), and must comply with fair housing and equal opportunity requirements and enforce tenant obligations under the lease.

The owner is obligated to allow the tenant to make modifications, at the tenant's cost, to a dwelling unit occupied/to be occupied by a disabled tenant. The tenant must convert the property back to its original condition after the termination of tenancy, if so required by the owner. (For more information, please visit HUD's website at [www.HUD.gov](http://www.HUD.gov) - *Disability Rights in Housing*) The owner must also comply with the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 (VAWA) when screening or terminating tenants.

Once a security deposit is assessed and the tenant rental portion is determined, the property owner may not increase the tenant payment portion unless approved by HANO, and may not accept any additional funds from the tenant family. The agency may abate or suspend Housing Assistance Payments or terminate the HAP contract if owner certification requirements or basic responsibilities to maintain the unit are not met.

An owner can be barred from participation if HANO has been informed of a violation of the Fair Housing Act or other federal equal opportunity requirements, or if such action is pending. The owner must cooperate with

HANO and HUD in conducting any equal opportunity compliance reviews and complaint investigations in connection with the HCV program and the HAP contract with HANO.

### The following basic obligations must be observed by the occupying tenant/family:

Tenants must provide any information requested by the agency or HUD before participation is granted, and update the information during the reexamination period. The family is responsible for any Housing Quality Standards (HQS) breach by the family caused by the failure to pay tenant-provided utilities or appliances, or damages to the dwelling unit beyond normal wear and tear. Damages in excess of normal wear and tear may be deducted from the security deposit.

The addition of household members as occupants is subject to housing occupancy standards, and must be approved in advance by HANO. Occupants must not commit fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program. Alcohol abuse, drug-related and/or violent criminal activity that may threaten the health and safety of residents and persons in the immediate area is prohibited.

A family must not receive HCV program assistance while residing in a unit owned by a spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family unless approved by HANO. Finally, the occupant must notify HANO and the owner before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease. If an eviction notice has been received, the family must promptly provide a copy to HANO for further examination.

To review all basic obligations and responsibilities of program landlords and participants, visit [http://www.hano.org/home/agency\\_plans/2016%20REVISED%20ADMIN%20PLAN.pdf](http://www.hano.org/home/agency_plans/2016%20REVISED%20ADMIN%20PLAN.pdf).



**Daughters of Charity Health Center – Louisa has moved to the newly developed Desire Community Square complex!**

Our new, larger space offers greater access to primary and preventive care for the entire family – children, adults and seniors – under one roof.

FOOD, FUN AND  
SCHOOL SUPPLY GIVEAWAY!



If you have a reasonable accommodation request relative to any HANO facility, please contact the Client Services Department at (504) 670-3300 at least seven (7) days prior to your visit.



## CONTACTS

**Main Office**  
(504) 670-3300  
4100 Touro St.  
New Orleans, LA 70122

**Office Hours:**  
8:30 AM - 5:30 PM M-F

**HANO PD Hotline**  
(504) 670-3372



**HANO Housing Choice Voucher Program**  
4100 Touro Street  
New Orleans, LA 70122

## UPCOMING HOLIDAY CLOSURES

September 5, 2016 - Labor Day  
November 11, 2016 - Veteran's Day  
November 24, 2016 - Thanksgiving Day  
December 25, 2016 - Christmas Day  
December 26, 2016 - Day After Christmas

## CRIME PREVENTION CORNER: *Five Rules for School Safety*



HANO PD patrols The Estates community

By Marshall Pierre, HANO PD Officer

In August, students will begin heading back to school for the 2016-2017 school year. Though school safety is ultimately the responsibility of the principal and its faculty, parents can take a few basic steps to ensure a safe school experience. Here are a few tips for school safety recommended by the National Association of Elementary School Principals:

**1. Learn the school's emergency procedures.** Emergency plans and phone numbers are usually included in school handbooks and posted in classrooms. Taking a few extra minutes to familiarize yourself and your child with emergency information can give him or her the confidence that he or she needs to act quickly in emergency situations.

**2. Know travel routes to and from school.** Make sure you and your child know both primary and alternate routes. In an emergency, roads can be blocked, and it's important to have a backup plan.

**3. Know and follow school security and safety measures.** These measures might include signing in when visiting the school, being escorted when walking through the

building, or wearing a visitor pass.

**4. Inform school staff about health and emotional concerns.** Whether your child has a food allergy, a physical disability, or has been subject to bullying, make sure to keep your child's teachers and principal in the loop.

**5. Get involved.** Talk with the principal about what you can do to increase school safety, such as organizing parents to form a neighborhood watch before and after school.

To report suspected fraud or program abuse, contact the HANO hotline at (504) 670-3395. To report any criminal activity in your community, contact the HANO PD at (504) 670-3372.

