Greetings from CHA, where we’ve been gearing up for months to ensure that this summer is a safe, healthy and successful one for our participant families. From park district camp programs and paid summer work to college scholarships and tuition assistance, we’ve been especially focused on opportunities to assist our youth and young adults. Don’t worry — we didn’t forget about the parents and caregivers! Last month, CHA hosted a Mother’s Day Makeover Celebration with the Daisie Foundation, where 100 moms were treated not only to a day of makeovers, pampering and giveaways, but also a day of inspirational presentations from guest speakers.

In this issue of Going Places, you will find even more information on the programs and services that CHA offers to HCV participant families (with feature articles on job placement and homeownership programs), tips on staying safe this summer and best practices for submitting requests and conducting business with the HCV Program.

From all of us at CHA, we wish you a safe, fun, and happy summer season.

Regards,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer

FamilyWorks Support Services
FamilyWorks providers offer a range of support services to HCV families, including direct clinical services, job training/placement, digital or financial literacy coaching and referrals to childcare, senior services or utility assistance. Providers are assigned by ZIP code — find yours at thecha.org/familyworks or call 312-935-2625.

Partners In Education
The Partners in Education program offers HCV families the opportunity to obtain a degree or certificate from City Colleges of Chicago at low or no cost (covers tuition, books, exams, uniforms, etc.). Learn more at thecha.org/education or call 312-786-3409.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program
FSS helps families work toward personalized financial goals, such as reducing debt, building credit, starting a business, earning a degree or purchasing a home. As they meet goals, families earn credits to a savings account, paid out when they complete the program. Learn more at thecha.org/fss or call 773-672-6644.

Workforce Opportunity Resource Center (WORC)
WORC is your one-stop resource for employment opportunities and business development. From virtual training courses, consultations and application assistance to apprenticeships, job placement services and networking opportunities, the WORC staff are committed to helping HCV families find fulfilling careers and achieving economic independence. Visit thecha.org/residents/worc or call 773-342-WORC.

But wait, there's more! See everything CHA has to offer at thecha.org/residents/services.
Budgeting for Homeownership

Are you dreaming of homeownership? Before you start swiping through listings, set yourself up for success by tackling these budgeting steps first:

1. Check your credit score, as well as current spending and saving habits to establish your baseline. Sign up for a free account to check your score, download helpful resources and set up credit and fraud monitoring at Experian.com.

2. Talk to a HUD-certified Housing Counselor, mortgage broker and/or other financial planning professionals to determine the loan amount you can qualify for, how much you need for a down payment, if you’re eligible for any grant or assistance programs … plus answers to a wide range of questions you might not know to ask! Visit hud.gov/counseling to find certified housing professionals near you.

Don’t be afraid to shop around for mortgage rates and loan terms that best suit your family’s needs. Just remember: Interest rates fluctuate regularly, so be prepared to adjust your budget if your homebuying journey takes more than a month.

3. Establish a realistic budget and if needed, make a plan to pay off debts and save for a down payment, closing costs, inspections, movers, renovations, property taxes, HOA fees and other expenses.

Remember, just because your monthly mortgage might come out less than your current monthly rent, doesn’t mean that you might not need that money for other monthly home costs.

Interested in using your voucher to purchase a home? CHA’s Choose to Own (CTO) Homeownership Program has been offering personalized homebuying assistance to eligible HCV families for over 20 years. Find out if you are eligible by visiting thecha.org/cto.

Summer Safety Reminders

As the days get longer and warmer, it’s important to remember that weather (and seasonal patterns generally) have a long-proven impact on crime rates. Your safety is important, so we strongly encourage you to:

Be alert. When visiting a new place, and even when you’re at home, be aware of your surroundings. Plan ahead, conceal valuable items, travel in open, public areas and trust your instincts if you feel unsafe.

Be respectful. Treating others (as well as their belongings, spaces and perspectives) with kindness and respect can go a long way to prevent and de-escalate conflict. Keep in mind that respect can also be given by not engaging with someone’s business ... and as you put yourself in their shoes, remember that what makes sense to you may not make sense to others.

Report crimes in progress or emergencies to 911. If you believe the crisis is related to a mental health issue, ask the 911 operator for Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officers to respond, as they are specially trained.

Anonymously submit non-emergency crime tips or suspicious activity to the Chicago Police Department:

- Visit www.CPDtip.com from your smartphone, tablet or computer.
- Text CRIMES (274637) ... start your message with CPD, a space and then your crime tip information. You can include pictures, video and audio.

Illinois Primary Elections — June 28, 2022

Are you ready for the Illinois Primary elections? It’s not too late to register to vote or request a mail-in ballot. Plus, early voting is open now!

Visit ChicagoElections.gov today to register to vote, update your voter registration, find your polling place, review your sample ballot and more.
Streamline Your Requests to CHA

Did you know that missing information is the #1 reason for processing delays when it comes to move requests, interims and reasonable accommodations? Help CHA assist you faster with these quick tips!

Always include supporting documentation when submitting an Interim Re-Examination request.

- Adding a household member? Submit a copy of their birth certificate, Social Security card and photo ID (adults only) with your request.
- Reporting a loss in income? Submit documents that show the decrease … multiple consecutive paystubs, a severance letter, a printout of benefits, etc.

Respond to requests for signature or additional information in a timely manner.

- Once you submit a request to CHA, check your phone and email regularly, since staff may need to reach you to complete additional steps.
- If you receive a document to complete or sign, don’t wait! Complete and return the document as soon as possible … or contact CHA with any questions that are preventing you from completing or signing the document.

Don’t miss important calls and emails:

- Make sure your contact information (email and phone number) is up to date on your account, and remove old contacts you no longer use.
- Add 312-935-2600 to your contacts, so you know when CHA staff are calling.
- In your email, add @thecha.org and @chacontractor.org to your safe senders list.
- Check your Junk or Spam email folders regularly, and mark any emails from CHA as "safe".

Neighborhood Spotlight

At just under 4 square miles, Auburn Gresham spans from approximately 75th Street to 89th/91st Street and from Hamilton to Eggleston (and the adjacent railroad tracks). Originally part of Lake Township (which joined Chicago in 1889), the community experienced several dramatic growth and decline cycles throughout the 1900s. Today, it is one of 10 priority communities for Mayor Lightfoot’s INVEST South/West community development initiative.

Neighborhood Resources & Community Organizations

Thurgood Marshall Branch Library
7506 S. Racine Avenue | 312-747-5927

6th Ward — Ald. Roderick Sawyer
6ward.com | 773-635-0006

16th Ward — Ald. Stephanie Coleman
16thward.org | 773-306-1981

Note: New neighborhood aldermanic ward boundaries (6, 17, 18 and 21) are expected to go into effect in July.
HCV Webinars: Online Learning Available All Year Round

CHA is invested in the success of HCV participant families. That’s why we’re excited to continue offering online educational workshops in 2022! HCV Webinars can be viewed from the comfort of your own home, office or even on-the-go using a computer, tablet or smartphone. Join us at one of our upcoming events, where we dive in to everything you need to know (but might not know to ask) about CHA’s HCV Program as well as helpful information for lifestyle planning.

For the full schedule or to register for any of the sessions (or view recordings of past sessions on-demand), visit www.thecha.org/hcvparticipantevents.

Ask CHA Anything about the HCV Program

From moving and inspections, to enforcement, re-examinations and subsidy payments, our panel of CHA staff are ready to share their HCV Program knowledge with you.

Thursday, July 7
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

Affordability and You: How CHA Determines Rent for HCV Families

There are many factors that influence how CHA determines rent for HCV families. Join us to learn about them and try out the math yourself!

Tuesday, July 12
1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer