



going places

A newsletter for Participants in the Chicago Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Program

Winter 2013

Meet Our Board Members



The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Board of Commissioners makes decisions about CHA policies and programs to guide CHA's current and future programs. In this series we introduce you to new and sitting board members. For this issue, we present Commissioner Deverra Beverly.

A public servant in the City of Chicago's Department of Human Services (CDHS) for over 30 years, Commissioner Beverly stresses that great accomplishments require teamwork, relationship building and open communication. Mayor Richard M. Daley appointed Commissioner Beverly to the CHA Board of Commissioners in July 2009.

Since retiring from CDHS in 1997, Ms. Beverly has held numerous resident leadership positions, including president of ABLA Homes' Local Advisory Council, vice-chair of the Central Advisory Council (CAC) from 2002 to 2008, interim CAC chair from 2008 to 2009 and CAC treasurer in 2009.

Commissioner Beverly, a lifelong resident of ABLA Homes, has researched public housing infrastructure and private management across state lines and worked with the mayor and CHA leadership to implement progressive programs for residents.

Over the years, Ms. Beverly has received countless awards in recognition of her efforts to improve the quality of life in public housing. She is founder and chair of the National Public Housing Museum.

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Know Your Options and Take Advantage

Are you aware of all of the different neighborhoods in Chicago where you can choose to live? Everyone, including Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Participants, has the right to live anywhere they choose and can afford to live (a voucher is a protected class under source of income in Chicago).

One of CHA's many special programs, Mobility Counseling, helps Participants move to neighborhoods identified as Opportunity Areas.

Sometimes a new neighborhood can be the start of a whole new life. Opportunity Areas typically have lower crime rates, better schools and more access to jobs. If you've been thinking about a new neighborhood, now may be the time for you to take advantage of CHA's Mobility Counseling Program.

CHA has partnered with Housing Choice Partners and Housing Opportunities Unlimited to help Participants

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move to Opportunity Areas with support services such as:

- Workshops on home maintenance, financial management and tenant rights
- Tours of Opportunity Area neighborhoods
- Grants of up to \$500 to put toward a security deposit, new furniture or training to receive a driver's license

CHA Opportunity Area Map

★ CHA Field Office
 ● Area Information
 ■ Community Area
 ■ Lake Michigan
 ■ 2012 Opportunity Areas

Areas with less than 100,000 people are shaded in light green. Areas with 100,000 or more people are shaded in dark green.

0 1.25 2.5 Miles

CHANGE.
 CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY

Guest Article: Combating Childhood Obesity

The following is a guest article from Joseph Rhoiney, community outreach manager at Friend Family Health Center Inc (www.friendfhc.org).

Overweight children are much more likely to become overweight adults unless they learn to make healthy eating choices and exercise. Obese children and adolescents also risk developing bone problems, diabetes and other problems such as poor self-esteem.

Below are some tips you can follow to help combat childhood obesity:

- Limit recreational television and computer time to no more than two hours per day. A physical activity program doesn't have to be structured but it is important to keep kids active throughout the day.
- Don't always force your child to clean their plate. Children are normally good at listening to hunger cues. If kids are satisfied, don't force them to continue eating.
- Limit or avoid sweet drinks including soda and juices. A 12-ounce glass of juice can have the same amount of calories as a 12-ounce can of soda (180 calories). If your child drinks three cups of sweet drinks (juice, soda, etc.), they will drink about 142,000 extra calories in a year. Those 142,000 calories can add up to 40 extra pounds.
- Offer fruits and vegetables with each meal. Parents should try to serve meals that are 50 percent fruits and vegetables. Don't give up if your child says they don't like a vegetable; try to put a small serving on the plate and ask your child to taste it. Young children may need to try a new food more than ten times before they learn to like it.

Friend Family Health Center (FFHC) has been providing primary and preventive health care services to vulnerable and medically underserved populations on Chicago's Southeast and Southwest sides since 1997. For more information about FFHC's services and locations, visit www.friendfhc.org or call 773-702-0660.

Checklist: What You Can Do to Prevent Bed Bugs

Bed bugs can be a serious problem and can affect anyone or any home. You can, however, help limit the spread of bed bugs through prevention and early detection. Use the following checklist to help put a stop to these unwanted “guests”:

- Buy a cover for your mattress and/or box spring
- Vacuum regularly and dispose of the vacuum bag or its contents in a tightly sealed plastic bag
- Eliminate clutter
- Do not store items under the bed
- Wash clothing and bedding regularly
- Seal cracks and crevices, such as along baseboards and around windows, with caulk
- Once a month, inspect your home’s sleeping and resting areas for signs of bed bug activity
 - Red smears or stains on your sheets, mattress or other furniture
 - Live or dead bed bugs seen through a magnifying glass
- Avoid bringing used/discarded furniture and mattresses into your home

Do you think that you might already have a bed bug problem? Inform the Property Owner/Manager of your unit immediately.

For more information (and resources) on how you can help prevent the spread of bed bugs, visit the Safer Pest Control Project’s website at www.spcpweb.org.

Access Living Workshops for Homeowners and Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities often experience barriers in finding accessible and affordable housing. CHA partners with Access Living, an advocacy group, to support the independence of persons with disabilities that take part in CHA’s programs.

Access Living (www.accessliving.org) works to foster an inclusive society that enables Chicagoans with disabilities to live fully engaged and self-directed lives. As a part of that mission, Access Living administers grants of up

to \$5,000, from a fund financed by CHA, given to HCV Program Participants that may need to make changes to a unit in order to live there. Changes may include adding ramps, lifts or other equipment to a unit.

Access Living is hosting monthly sessions on housing modifications, financial literacy and other services offered to homeowners and persons with disabilities. Sessions will be held at 115 W. Chicago Ave. on the following Fridays: March 15, April 19, May 17 and June 21.

For more information about the sessions or to register, please contact Gloria Esquivel at 312-640-2181.

Care and Respect: What Makes a Good Neighbor

A good neighbor is someone that cares for and feels responsible for the condition of their neighborhood. They also understand that a team of good neighbors built on healthy relationships is what makes a community healthy. A good neighbor is considerate and does not want to disturb their neighbor just as they don’t want their neighbor to disturb them. One of the HCV Program Family Obligations is based on that same idea.

Family Obligation 26 states that any participating family must not: **“Engage in or allow guests to engage in any behavior that disturbs the peaceful and quiet enjoyment by others of the premises and the neighborhood.”** This obligation boils down to being a considerate neighbor who does not disturb people in the community where he or she lives.

Many of the HCV Program Family Obligations provide guidance on how to be a respectful member of a community. Each Participant agrees to abide by the Family Obligations or risks having their assistance terminated. And just like a neighbor might, **CHA holds participants responsible for not only their own behavior, but also the behavior of their guests and any members of their household.**

To review all of the Family Obligations you must follow as a Participant, see your Participant Guidebook which is also available online at www.thecha.org/education.

Space Heater Safety Tips

Winter in Chicago is tough. This past January, some Chicagoans battled the sub-zero wind-chills with portable heaters in their homes.

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) estimates that 900 home fires caused by portable heaters are reported each year. In addition, USFA estimates that each year those fires contribute to 70 deaths, 150 injuries and \$53 million in losses.

It's important to make sure that if you use a portable heater, you use it safely.

Follow these portable heater tips from USFA to keep you and your family safe:

- Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room
- Keep anything that can burn (like bedding, clothing and curtains) at least three feet away from the heater
- Only use portable heaters tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory
- Only use heaters with an automatic shut-off so that they shut off if they tip over
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets and never into an extension or power strip



An example of a mark from a recognized testing laboratory

Recognizing Extraordinary Property Owners and Managers

Some of the Property Owners and Managers that rent units to HCV Program Participants go above and beyond the rest. To encourage Property Owners and Managers to be their best, CHA created the Owner Excellence Program. Members of the program enjoy extended office hours, staff devoted to members only, discounts at area home improvement retailers and, in some cases, special inspections benefits.



Only the best can call themselves members of the Owner Excellence Program. Among other requirements, to qualify for membership a Property Owner or Manager must have participated in

the HCV Program for the past 12 months, have no record of abatement in the past 12 months and have no units in a "fail" inspection status.

Do you think the Owner or Manager of your unit might have what it takes? Tell them about the Owner Excellence Program and ask them to apply at

www.thecha.org/excellence.

Going Places

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