Message from the Chief

I hope you have had an exciting, safe and fun-filled summer — we certainly have at CHA. From investing in our youngest residents through our Summer Youth Employment Program, to advancing community investment and development, to setting new benchmarks for housing, CHA has been busy — and we plan to keep up the pace. We are driving forward with exciting initiatives and developments on the horizon and are glad to have your continued support as we work to accomplish our goals together.

In this issue of Owner News, you will find HCV Program updates, tips for improving building security, information on Chicago Heat Ordinance and thermostat laws, a message from the Office of the Inspector General and an overview of CHA’s Owner Services Department.

We appreciate you keeping up with the latest news from CHA and hope you take advantage of the information offered in the newsletter so you can continue to provide quality housing to program participants.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer

What’s New

Revised Lease Effective Dates for New Moves — For all new moves executed on or after October 1, 2019, CHA will now allow the lease effective date to be any day of the month, except for the 1st. CHA’s previous policy only authorized lease effective dates to be the 2nd or the 16th of the month.

New HQS Inspection Demonstration Program — In an effort to expedite the HCV Program lease up process, CHA is implementing a demonstration program that allows eligible HCV participants to move in to a unit prior to receiving a passed HQS inspection as long as there are no emergency or life-threatening fail items. The demonstration program will be implemented on October 1, 2019 and applies to any initial inspections that occur on or after that date.
Safety Tips: Simple Ways to Improve Building Security

CHA’s mission for the HCV Program is to provide low-income families with safe, decent and sanitary housing opportunities. Property owners play a vital role in the successful achievement of this goal by ensuring that their buildings and units meet certain requirements. Below are a few ways that property owners can help make sure their buildings are safe for all tenants:

• Keep interiors and exteriors well-lit. Property owners are encouraged to maintain well-lit walkways surrounding the property, as well as hallways inside the property, especially at nighttime. Doing so can prevent accidents and burglary.

• Ensure locks and bolts on doors and windows are secure. Property owners should make sure such items are tamper-proof.

• Keep an eye out for suspicious persons lurking around the property. Tenants can also help by reporting sights of unfamiliar individuals loitering or lurking about the property. Property owners can encourage tenants to follow the “if you see something, say something” policy.

• Clear walkways of plants or shrubs. Property owners are encouraged to make sure walkways leading up to the property entrance are clear. Plants that screen the entrance make it possible for robbers to break in without being seen by tenants, other neighbors or even the police.

• Use curb appeal as an advantage. Property owners can plant thorny bushes such as roses or bougainvillea under windows and along fences. Doing so can deter intruders from hopping fences or breaking into windows.

• Don’t showcase items in front of the property. Leaving certain personal belongings, such as bikes or toys, in front of the building or in plain sight can lure thieves onto the property. Property owners are encouraged to advise tenants to store their items out of sight to avoid theft.

• By adopting some of these tips, property owners can help prevent damages by burglars as well as make their property safer for tenants and families.

A Message from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

The Office of the Inspector General is an independent body within the Chicago Housing Authority whose purpose is to investigate and audit matters concerning fraud, theft, waste, abuse and misconduct within or affecting CHA.

The OIG ensures that violations, as they relate to CHA residents, employees, contractors, subcontractors or any entity receiving funds from CHA, are investigated and prosecuted. As a property owner, if you have any information regarding fraud in your dealings with tenants, CHA employees or CHA contractors, you are encouraged to report this information to the OIG. Immediate reporting, while facts are still fresh in your mind, is helpful. Complaints can be kept confidential.

If you have any information relating to fraud or unethical activity within or affecting the Chicago Housing Authority, contact the OIG by calling our Hotline at 800-544-7139 or send us an email at fraud@thecha.org.
Attorney General Consumer Advocacy

Did you know that the Illinois Attorney General protects Illinois consumers and businesses victimized by fraud, deception and unfair business practices? An important part of the Division’s work is assisting in resolving disputes or complaints filed by individual consumers. If you’ve been a victim of fraud, deception or unfair methods of competition, visit www.ag.state.il.us/consumers to fill out a Consumer Complaint Form and browse fact sheets, news releases and other helpful resources.

The Owner Services Department is Here to Help!

If you have any problems, questions or concerns as a HCV property owner, CHA’s Owner Services team is here to guide you. Owner Services can assist with a variety of items such as:

- Contract and leasing document questions
- Navigating the Owner Portal
- Troubleshooting HAP adjustments
- Conflict resolution
- Understanding the HCV Program
- Providing program updates

If you have any questions or are interested in setting up an appointment with one of our Owner Liaisons, please contact ownerinfo@thecha.org.

Chicago Heat Ordinance & Thermostat Laws

The Department of Buildings enforces the Chicago Building Code. This includes the Chicago Heat Ordinance, which mandates that during cold weather months property owners/managers must supply heat to rental units or to any unit where property owners do not have individual control of heat.

- From Sept. 15th – June 1st the temperature inside a rental residence is required to be at least 68 degrees from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and at least 66 degrees from 10:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m.
- A property owner/manager can face fines up to $500 per day, per violation for each day they do not supply adequate heat. The reason for the lack of heat does not matter. Property owners/managers must follow the law and residences must be heated regardless.
Refer a Friend!

Come one, come all! CHA is working hard to expand housing choices for HCV participants. But, we need your help. If you know of any colleagues who own rental property in one of Chicago’s 77 communities, especially in a Mobility Area, and would be interested in taking advantage of the many benefits offered to HCV property owners, send them our way. Owner briefings are held at least once a month and are a great way to learn the basics of the Program. Information about what’s covered as well as a link to register are available online at www.thecha.org/hcvownerbriefing.

Property Owner Briefings

New to the HCV Program? Want to hear the latest updates on the Program? Join us for a two-hour orientation and learn the ins and outs of how CHA partners with property owners and managers to provide safe, decent and affordable housing to Chicago’s families.

Thursday, October 24 & December 19
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Thursday, November 21
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

CHA Central Office
60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605

Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center
4859 S. Wabash Avenue, IL 60615

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections Workshop

How do the CHA inspectors review a unit for the HCV Program? They follow the HUD inspection form! Join the inspections team as they methodically walk through a typical HQS inspection, highlight common fail items, and discuss HUD policy updates.

**Suspended property owners are required to attend this workshop to regain good standing with the HCV Program.**

Tuesday, October 17
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, November 12
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Thursday, December 12
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

CHA Central Office
60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605

Beverly Branch Library
1962 W. 95th Street, Chicago, IL 60643

CHA Central Office
60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605

Register to attend these events and see the full schedule at:
CHA-HCVevents.eventbrite.com