**Numbers to Know**

**Resident Services Information Line**  
(312) 786-6601

City Colleges of Chicago  
(312) 553-2830

**Choose to Own Homeownership Program**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #4

**Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #4

**FamilyWorks (CHA family coaching program)**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #1

**HCV Customer Service Center**  
(312) 935-2600

**Legal Assistance Foundation (LAF)**  
312-341-1070

**Occupancy Customer Service Center**  
(312) 913-7266

**Section 3 Employment and Business Development Program**  
(312) 542-8802

**Senior Services Hotline**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #2

**Victim Assistance Program**  
(312) 913-7396

**Workforce and Employment Programs**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #6

**Youth Information Line**  
(312) 786-6601 and enter prompt #3

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**“Trusted Space” Groups Meet to Improve Mixed-Income Communities**

As part of its commitment to supporting residents and strong communities, CHA created an engagement activity called "Trusted Space" last year at Westhaven, City Gardens, Park Douglas, Legends South, North Town Village, Jackson Square and West End. Lathrop is on deck.

"Trusted Space is about engagement and activities that bridge the entire community together,” said Crystal Palmer, CHA’s Assistant Director of Resident Engagement. "It’s not a public housing thing. Since you don’t live on CHA property, you’re not a CHA resident anymore. It’s the CHA that pays your subsidy. So it’s not about the old high rises. It’s about a community that works together and makes things happen.”

The activities can include education, organizing around tenancy issues, safety and security, property improvement and health and wellness.

The goal is getting people comfortable.

"We have food, we have music; we’re trying to make it a social event, so that people are comfortable and can let their hair down and be themselves,” Palmer said. "They bring food. And if people break bread together, they get to know each other better."

At various sites, mixed-income residents have partnered to start a playground patrol, go on fitness excursions, plant gardens and provide everyday services.

The program is thriving at Westhaven, where residents met with the alderman and police commander to set up a block club that would address issues such as lights, streets and garbage.

"I have people come out and look at that one,” Palmer said. "That group is so closely-knit. We don’t have to do anything for them. They do it themselves. They get the idea that, 'This is yours.’

“At the end of the day, it’s about how you want to work with each other.”
Who We Are

Crystal Palmer
Ombudsman & Assistant Director of Resident Engagement

Ms. Palmer, a former public housing resident, serves as the CHA’s liaison to the residents’ Central Advisory Council and the Ombudsman. Before joining the CHA staff, Ms. Palmer served on the CAC as President of the Henry Horner Homes-Westhaven Local Advisory Council. Among the honors Ms. Palmer has received are being named one of the “Ten Most Influential Women on the West Side”, a “Community Hero” by LISC/Chicago and BPI’s “Champion of the Public Interest 2014”. Ms. Palmer also serves as Vice Chair of the National Public Housing Museum’s Board of Directors.

Sharon Wheeler
Resident Engagement Specialist

As a specialist, Ms. Wheeler collaborates with residents and local stakeholders on community building efforts in mixed-income housing developments that arose under CHA’s Plan for Transformation. Prior to joining CHA, she was the Program Manager for the Near North Unity Program (NNUP) in the Cabrini Green community working with residents and stakeholders concerning safety, employment, housing and youth & families issues. In 2014 Ms. Wheeler received NNUP’s Community Advocate Award.

What We Do

Like all renters in a community, property management is the first place that residents turn to when they have individual questions or concerns. But sometimes, residents need the assistance of another voice. As a resident in a mixed income property, you have access to a CHA Ombudsman’s Office. The Ombudsman’s Office can assist residents with:

• an ongoing concern or issue not settled by property management
• connecting with CHA to learn about opportunities and resources
• community building and engagement efforts in their development, such as Trusted Space Network Nights. (see back for more information)

About the Office of the Ombudsman

CHA established the Office of the Ombudsman in 2009 to address the concerns of CHA residents living in mixed-income developments. The Ombudsman serves as a liaison between residents, property management, and/or community stakeholders.

The Office of the Ombudsman’s goal is to partner with local stakeholders to achieve their vision of a healthy and thriving community. The Office routinely works with the following to address individual and community-wide concerns, as well as improve residents’ quality of life:

• CHA FamilyWorks service providers
• CHA Housing Rights and Nondiscrimination (includes ADA and Section 504 Reasonable Accommodation)
• CHA Property Office
• CHA Relocation and Right of Return
• Central Advisory Council/Local Advisory Councils
• Community organizations and institutions
• Local businesses
• Property management firms

Contact Us

(312) 913-7899 phone
(312) 786-6981 fax
ombudsman@thecha.org
www.thecha.org/residents/