

Community Highlights



Transforming Lives & Communities

Vol. 12 April 2017

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Sign up for *AlertHouston!*

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- Tim Horan
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Have Questions?

Customer Service Hotline
713.260.0377

We value your feedback. Comments and article ideas are welcomed for the Community Highlights newsletter. Please include your name and phone number with your submission. Email submissions to njones@housingforhouston.com

The mission of the Houston Housing Authority is to improve lives by providing quality, affordable housing options and promoting education and economic self-sufficiency.



Houston Housing Authority

2640 Fountain View Dr.
Suite 400
Houston, Texas 77057
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HHA's MyGoals Program offers support to voucher recipients seeking employment & better incomes

In an effort to increase economic independence and job skills for low-income residents receiving rent subsidies, the Houston Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher Program is opportunities for its participants to obtain better jobs, earn greater incomes, and receive assistance in improving the management of personal finances – through its new program called **MyGoals for Employment Success**. Featuring innovative workforce coaching, financial rewards for participation, and support for retaining jobs, **MyGoals** is designed to aid participants in acquiring skills that employers need, while moving up their own individuals personal career ladders.



In partnership with the social policy research firm MDRC and supported by Houston Endowment and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, the concept of the **MyGoals** initiative is based on research showing that personal coping with day-to-day survival when living in poverty can drain a person's cognitive resources in ways that make it more difficult to plan for the future, succeed in school or training, and succeed in the labor market. To address this challenge, the initiative pairs HHA voucher recipients with specially trained coaches to set employment and training goals that are a good fit, along with making connections with local schools, training, and social service agencies. Also offered are financial incentives to reward participants' sustained engagement in the program and the coaching process, and their attainment of employment goals. Examples of these rewards include monthly cash allocations for participation, one-time bonuses for the finding of part-time or full-time employment, and quarterly cash awards for the retaining of jobs attained through working with **MyGoals**.

"Economic mobility is a vital component in the betterment of individuals and families," says HHA President and CEO Tory Gunsolley. "We look forward to streamlining this program so it can be a model for improving the job skills and livelihoods of people in Houston."

Eligible participants for **MyGoals** will be individuals in households receiving HHA housing voucher or public housing support, and meeting these additional criteria:

- 18-56 years of age and currently unemployed;
- Authorized to legally work in the U.S.;
- Not part of the HHA Family Self-Sufficiency Program.

Orientations are held bi-weekly at the HHA's main offices. Contact the agency at (713) 260-0590 or by email at MyGoals@housingforhouston.com to sign up for an orientation session and speak with a **MyGoals** career coach (limit one participant to a household.)

MyGoals for Employment Success is part of a study. Eligible individuals will be randomly selected for a limited number of spots.

Interim Changes in Family Composition...

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Housing Choice Voucher participants are required to report a change in family composition if a family member is added by birth, adoption or court-awarded custody, with or without increased income; the family wants permission to add a member by any other method other than birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody; or the family loses a family member. All family composition changes must be submitted in writing within ten (10) days of the change.

KEY POINTS:

- Houston Housing Authority (HHA) is required to approve the admission of other children as household members to the family of children by birth, adoption, or court awarded custody.
- HHA may permit the admission of other household members who were not a party to the lease, with written owner approval, based on the following criteria and provided member eligibility:
 1. Marriage;
 2. Temporary custody foster children;
 3. Other family members additions.
- Other than for children added by birth, adoption or court-awarded custody, addition of family members will not be approved by HHA, if the addition disqualifies the family for the unit size it was approved for at the time they sought to add a new member or members. The living room is permitted to be used as a living/sleeping room.
- Before any person age 18 or older will be added to the family, they will be subject to criminal history screening.
- Additional family members must be authorized by HHA and approved by the owner through a lease agreement amendment.
- A family member who has been removed from the lease at the family's request may not re-enter the household until the next annual, and then only with HHA's permission.
- Requests to remove a household member must be accompanied by supporting documentation that the member being sought to remove has another verifiable address (i.e. lease, utility bills, or driver's license.) for the person being removed.
- The HHA will increase or decrease a family's voucher to the appropriate bedroom size only at the time of the annual recertification or at the time of the move.
- Failure of the family to report a removal or addition to the family may result in termination from the program.
- The authority will increase or decrease a family's voucher to the appropriate bedroom size only at the time of the annual recertification or at the time of the move.
- Failure of the family to report a removal or addition to the family may result in termination from the program.

If you have a change in your family composition, you can complete the following packet [Change of Family Composition](#).

City of Houston Invites Residents to Sign Up for Emergency Alerts

Houston uses emergency notification systems to communicate directly with residents, businesses, and community organizations about emergencies in the city. Recent events have shown how important it is for local residents to be informed when such incidents occur. The city's emergency response agencies work cooperatively to help protect the public, and an essential way of doing that is by informing people of situations as they occur, and what to do in the aftermath..

AlertHouston is the city's emergency resource that notifies residents when an isolated emergency occurs in their neighborhood, or if such events affect the entire city or region. The system quickly send emails to registered users, and these alerts are posted directly on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and at [Nextdoor.com](#), so Houstonians have access to trusted, reliable emergency information.



Anyone living in Houston can sign up for AlertHouston by visiting houston.tx.gov/emergency. Registration is fast, free, and easy.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Recruitment Orientation

"Think about where you want to be in 5 years..."

Are you sick of living paycheck to paycheck?

Are you interested in buying a home?

Do you want to further your education?

If the HHA closed tomorrow, would paying bills force you to move from your home?

If you answered **YES** to any of these questions then the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) is for you! Please join us as we discuss the benefits to the FSS

Change your future by attending one of our Recruitment Orientations!

All orientations are held the 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 10 a.m.

April 20th

May 18th

June 15th

Where: Houston Housing Authority
2640 Fountain View Dr., Ste. 330
Houston, TX 77057

Space is limited. To RSVP, please email: EWashington@housingforhouston.com

IMPORTANT DATES:

APRIL

4/14

Good Friday – **HHA Closed**

4/18

Board of Commissioners Meeting @ Irvinton Village at 3 p.m.

MAY

5/16

Board of Commissioners Meeting @ Mansions at Turkey Creek at 3 p.m.

5/29

Memorial Day holiday – **HHA closed**

JUNE

6/20

Board of Commissioners Meeting @ 2100 Memorial Drive Apartments at 3 p.m.