

Building Connections

Transforming Lives & Communities

Vol. 18 November 2017

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Houston Housing Authority Housing works with landlords moving forward after Hurricane Harvey

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Inspection Division Administrative Specialist Audrey Reese

Board of Commissioners:

LaRence Snowden, Chair
 Phillis Wilson, Vice Chair
 Shondra E. Wygal
 Kristy M. Kirkendoll
 Tim Horan
 David Enrique Ruiz
 Tory Gunsolley, President & CEO

Have Questions?

Summer Frank
 713.260.0314
 sfrank@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
 Phone: 713.260.0500
 713.260.0547 TTY
 www.housingforhouston.com

Houston Housing Authority Housing works with landlords moving forward after Hurricane Harvey



Hurricane Harvey and its catastrophic effects across Houston have left many property owners wondering what are the appropriate next steps for themselves and their tenants. To answer this need, the Houston Housing Authority has been actively working to advise and share information with impacted property owners. We rely and appreciate the assistance of our partner landlords over the past several weeks as the recovery process continues.

“We urge all landlords and property owners working with HHA to continue contacting us and providing information regarding the condition of your units,” says HHA President and CEO Tory Gunsolley. “If your rental properties are still habitable, you may still face unique circumstances with your tenants regarding their abilities to pay rent, due to lost time from work or other issues. In addition, many Houstonians in transition and seeking available units. Your listing of these units will be of great aid to families in need.”

HHA relies on the assistance of our partner landlords, and appreciates the partnerships that have been established with property owners across the city. We recommend that landlords take the following actions:

1. If you have units damaged by the storm, register online with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or call (800) 621-FEMA (3362). Once registered, you will be given a FEMA registration number. Write down your number and save it. You will need the number whenever you contact FEMA.
2. If your properties were undamaged and you are able to lease to individuals or families seeking relocation, register your unit online at www.housingandcommunityresources.net (use the 'List Your Properties for Free' tab) or at www.socialserve.com (and click the 'List a Property' tab.) We urge you to act promptly, as many families were affected by the storm and are actively searching to find available accommodations.
3. If you need additional help listing your unit, call (877) 428-8844, or the HHA Call Center at (713) 260-0500.

HHA urges you to reach out as soon as possible, as the supply of available units for tenants continues to fall beneath requested demand. Since September, HHA has been conducting inspections to determine usability of units owned by landlords participating in its HCV programs. If your unit(s) are inspected and it is confirmed they are uninhabitable, your tenants will be eligible to attend a move briefing.



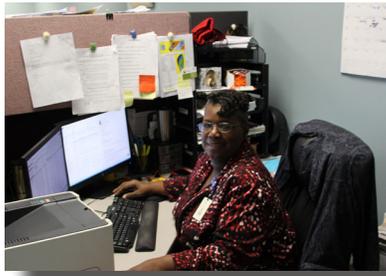
“It is important that you let us know if you have available units to lease. Time is critical, and the need remains great,” says HHA Vice President of HCVP Mark Thiele.

The HHA appreciate your attention to the continuing recovery and looks forward to serving you and your needs in the challenging times ahead.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:

Audrey Reese, Administrative Specialist

When visiting the Houston Housing Authority's Inspections Division, one of the first faces you'll see is Audrey Reese, who handles HHA's inspection scheduling – a VERY important job!



What duties do you perform with the HHA's Inspections Division?

I am responsible for monitoring and tracking the status of each Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) within the agency's Inspections Division. Our division works to ensure all RTAs are submitted, prioritized, and scheduled with accuracy and consistency. In addition, we work to be sensitive and understanding, especially when contacting landlords and property managers on a day-to-day basis.

How often does HHA require that inspections are performed on units that are part of its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program?

Initial (New Move-In) inspections are required before a Housing Assistance Payment contract is executed. After the initial inspection passes, they must be conducted biennially for all units except the HCV Program's Moderate Rehabilitation and Project-Based Voucher units, which continue to be inspected annually.

Inspections are scheduled based upon the zip code zone of the unit(s).

Tenants, landlords, or third parties may also request 'special' or complaint inspections at any time during the tenant's residency.

What are important tips landlords and property owners should know when preparing their units for inspection?

Some useful tips...

1. For all initial inspections, all utilities in the unit(s) must be connected. Landlords and Property Owners should confirm the working status of these services. If there is any unreadiness, please contact the department 24 hours prior to the scheduled date.
2. Landlords and Property Owners should attend at least one session of the agency's Landlord Orientation meetings, which are held monthly.
3. It is recommended that Landlords and Property owners visit the following web sites – for [HHA](#), [HUD](#), or the [Texas Property Code](#) – where you can find valuable information regarding Housing Quality Standards and State of Texas requirements for landlords of rental property.
4. A passed inspection is required before a Housing Assistance Payment contract is executed. After the initial inspection passes, they must be conducted biennially for all units except the HCV Program's Moderate Rehabilitation and Project-Based Voucher units, which continue to be inspected annually.

How has the workload of inspections been affected by Hurricane Harvey? Any change?

Our number of inspections – those requested AND conducted by the division – has increased significantly. It's required that everyone on the staff work harder, but we understand the need and remain willing and committed to providing our clients and partners the best service possible.

For other information on inspections, who should be contacted?

Landlords and Property Owners may refer inspections process questions to the HHA Landlord Liaisons (Summer Frank and Gail Bell) via email at inspections@housingforhouston.com, or via telephone to the HHA Call Center at (713) 260-0600.

HHA Landlord Liaison



As the Houston Housing Authority's Landlord Liaison, Summer Frank specializes in educating prospective and current property owners about the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Her duties focus on assisting property owners in providing quality, affordable housing for the Houston area and navigating the process of leasing to participant families.

With more than a decade of career experience in the Banking and Real Estate industries, Summer is well versed in both landlord and tenants' rights. She brings a unique perspective having represented landlords in negotiations and understands the issues property owners face.

Owner Meeting Schedule

HHA's monthly Prospective Landlord Meetings are held the last Wednesday of each month at the Houston Housing Authority, 2640 Fountain View Drive Houston, TX 77057.

Meetings are held monthly from 2-4 p.m. They are free of charge and open to the public. This seminar is an overview of the Housing Choice Voucher Program and answers many of the questions prospective and participating landlords face while working with HHA. Please RSVP [here](#). Below is the 2017 schedule.

November 15

December 13

Reasonable Accommodations

HHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program provides reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities so they may participate in our programs, services and activities. If your tenant needs an accommodation, including auxiliary aids and/or services, please contact HHA's Customer Call Center at 713.260.0500 (voice) or TTY: 713.260.0547.

Join our mailing list: <http://bit.ly/1IK3TM7>



Stay Connected with Us

www.facebook.com/housingforhouston

www.twitter.com/housing4houston

www.youtube.com/housingforhouston

www.linkedin.com/company/houston-housing-authority