WASHINGTON COUNTY CDA BRIDGES FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

Head of Household: **Certificate holder under rental assistance program, responsible for compliance with policies and regulations.**

Household Member: **Persons listed on the application/ recertification form as living in the unit.** **A** person who **cannot** verify a permanent address elsewhere and is in the household more than 14 consecutive days or 30 days in a year.

Visitor: **A** person that **can** verify a permanent address elsewhere and are guests who stay for **not** more than 14 consecutive days or a total of 30 days in a 12-month period.

GIVING TRUE AND COMPLETE INFORMATION

The Head of Household certifies that the information given to the Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA) on household composition, income, assets, and allowances and deductions is accurate and complete to the best of their knowledge. False statements or information are grounds for termination of housing assistance.

Households must supply true and complete information requested. If all requested information is not supplied within the designated timeline, assistance may be terminated. The CDA will send a termination notice with instructions and information on actions that can be taken by the household. An informal hearing may be requested by an impartial third party to review the determination.

The best way to contact your Housing Assistance Specialist is through email. If requested a video or telephone conference can be set up. Walk-ins are not accepted. Phone calls will be returned within 4 business days.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Upon issuance of a certificate, the unit approved on the Request for Lease Approval will be the household's principal residence and must be used solely for the residence of the household members listed on the application.

Unit

- The household may not own or have any interest in the assisted unit.
- The household may not sublease or transfer the unit to another household.
- The household may not obtain duplicate rental assistance.

Bedroom payment standards:

- One bedroom to the Head of Household and one other adult household member, regardless of relationship.
- Live-in aides will be allocated a separate bedroom. No additional bedrooms are provided for the live-in aide's family.
- Single Person families will be allocated one bedroom.
- Minor children of the opposite gender will be issued a separate bedroom at the age of 10.
- An adult and minor child of the same gender will be issued one bedroom.

When a minor turns 18, payment standard bedroom size may change at the next annual recertification.

Utility Allowance:
The utility allowance for a family shall be the lower of:

1) The utility allowance amount for the family's certificate size; or
2) The utility allowance for the unit rented by the family.

PAYMENT STANDARDS

Payment Standards are used to determine what portion of the rent the CDA will pay. Payment standards are reviewed and set yearly using the HUD determined fair market rents. If the Fair Market Rents set by HUD decreases, the CDA may decrease the payment standards. This decrease in payment standard will take effect whenever a new Housing Assistance Program contract is signed by a landlord or the second recertification after the effective date of the new payment standard, whichever comes first.

REPORTING CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD

The Head of Household certifies that the members in the household that are listed on the application/recertification forms are the only people that live in the assisted unit. Head of Household acknowledges the responsibility to report all changes in household composition to the CDA in writing within 5 days of the change unless noted below.

Being Away from the Unit:
A 30-day written notice is required when a household member will be away from the assisted unit for 30 or more days in a calendar year. Extended absences will only be approved for: educational activities, foster care placement, employment, illness of a person in the household, incarceration and court order. Failure to inform the CDA or to get prior approval will result in termination of rental assistance.

Adding Another Person to the Unit:
To add a person, the Head of Household must notify the CDA in writing before the person moves into the assisted unit—even if the person is previous household member. The CDA will not automatically increase the voucher bedroom size when members are added to the household other than by birth, adoption, court awarded custody, marriage or as a live-in aid. The Head of Household must receive written permission from the landlord to add a person and provide the CDA with a copy. Prior to moving in, the CDA must approve the person as a new applicant.

The new member's income will be added to the household income and the rental assistance will be recalculated. If the tenant portion is increased because of the additional person, the tenant portion will increase on the 1st of the month of the month they move in. The payment standard will not increase, if initiated, until the new household member has been in the unit for 12 consecutive months. The payment standard will change at the first annual recertification after the 12-month period.

Failure to report changes in household size to the CDA could result in termination of rental assistance. Theft and fraud charges may be brought under state and federal law.

ANNUAL RE-EXAMINATION

All participants are required to annually recertify their household information. The CDA will provide notice of when the re-examination is due, and the information needed. If the reexamination is not completed timely by the household, assistance may be terminated. Information may be submitted through Rent Café.

The CDA will attempt to give reasonable notice of new rent amounts. Delays in receiving verifications may delay the CDA's notice of new rent amounts. The Household should continue to pay the last calculated rent but will be responsible for payment resulting from an increase starting on the re-examination date.

REPORTING CHANGES IN INCOME/ INTERIM CHANGES

The Head of Household must report all changes in household income **in writing** to the CDA within **five (5) days of the change**. Changes may be made through Rent Café.

If the change results in an increase in rent, the CDA will give a 30-day notice if the household reported in the required time frame.

The CDA will conduct interim re-examinations to increase the rent portion in the following situations:

- An additional person is added to the household.
- The CDA determines the household is reporting incorrect information.
- There is a pattern of decreasing income prior to annual recertification to avoid a rent increase.
- If a household member is at zero income.
- If it is a temporary medical leave and the household member will return to work after the medical leave.
- If a household member has a consistent history of employment, or history of receiving some form of income or assistance and was temporarily not receiving this income.

If household income decreases, the Head of Household must report change in writing for the CDA to conduct a interim examination. Change can be reported using the Rent Café system.

For an interim decrease, the income decrease must be for at least 30-day duration. The interim decrease will start on the 1st of the month after a 21-day verification period. The 21-day verification period starts on whichever is later:

1) The date the CDA received written notification
   OR
2) The date of the last payment received.

REPORTING PLANS TO MOVE AND/OR TERMINATE ASSISTANCE

The CDA requires a **written** 60-day notice of the intent to move. Proper written notice per lease, must be given to the landlord, with a copy given to the CDA. To move to a new unit, the Head of Household **must** supply a completed "Request for Lease Approval" form to the CDA by the 15th of the month for rent assistance to start in the new unit the following month. Rental assistance for participants currently in Washington County only begins on the 1st of each month. To continue receiving Bridging rental assistance, the new unit must be located within Washington County.

The household may **not** rent a unit if the owner is the parent(s), child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother of any member of the household. A reasonable accommodation may be requested if the unit meets a specific need for a household member with a disability.

Assistance for a household who vacates the assisted unit in violation of the lease will be terminated.
The CDA may deny permission to move if:

- The household has violated a family obligation and is not in good standing with current landlord.
- The household has moved within the last twelve months.
- The household did not give proper notice to the CDA or Landlord

Eviction:
The Head of Household must give the CDA a copy of any eviction notices within 5 days of receipt of notice. If the household is evicted by a court ordered judgment on behalf of the owner, the CDA may terminate the household's rental assistance.

Reporting Moves Required By The Landlord
The Head of Household must provide written notice within 5 days if the household must leave the unit for catastrophic reason(s), failure of inspection standards, or the landlord requires or requests the unit change. Failure to notify the CDA of a change in units will result in termination of rental assistance.

The new unit must be inspected before the CDA can pay rental assistance. The household is responsible for the full rent until the CDA approves the rent and inspects the unit.

INSPECTIONS
The CDA is required to inspect and approve all units assisted under the Housing Assistance Program. An inspection will be held at move-in and on an annual basis. The Head of Household **must** allow the CDA to inspect the assisted unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice.

Only two attempts to conduct the inspection will be made to the household. Rescheduled appointments are considered one attempt. If the second attempt to inspect the unit is unsuccessful, rental assistance will be terminated.

Inspection violations caused by household members or guests must be corrected within the time frame designated on the written notice of violation. The CDA may terminate assistance in accordance with state or funders regulations for a violation of the inspection caused by the household or guests.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS:
If you have a disability that would require a reasonable accommodation to fully use the benefits of the program, please contact your Housing Assistance Specialist. Reasonable Accommodation requests must be reviewed annually.

DRUG-RELATED OR VIOLENT CRIMINAL ACTIVITY NOTICE
Household members may not engage in illegal use of a controlled substance or violent criminal activity; or abuse of alcohol that threatens the health and safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. The family is responsible for the illegal drug or violent criminal activity of guests in the assisted unit.

TERMINATIONS FOR FRAUD
If it is determined fraud has occurred, the household has violated the Family Obligations and is no longer eligible for the rental assistance program as of that date the fraud started. The household must repay all Housing Assistance Payments made on behalf of the household from the date of the violation.

SIGNATURES
The signature(s) below indicates that all Household members aged 18 and over as of the recertification date have read and understand all the policies and statements on this form. By its signature, the family agrees to fulfill the program responsibilities noted above, and understands that failure to do so, BY ANY FAMILY MEMBER, may result in permanent loss of housing assistance eligibility, and criminal prosecution.

SIGNATURE AND DATE OF ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS 18 AND OVER

1. _____ Date_____

2. _____ Date_____

3. _____ Date_____

4. _____ Date_____

If you feel you have been discriminated against, you may call the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity National Toll-Free Hot Line at 1-800-669-9770.

SECTION 504 NOTICE:
The Washington County CDA does not discriminate in admission, access to, or treatment or employment in its federally assisted programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, gender, gender-identity or disability. The Washington County CDA's 504 Coordinator is responsible for coordinating efforts to comply with the non-discrimination provisions set forth in 24 CFR Part 8.