

Policy for Community Services

Bloomington Housing Authority

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ECONOMIC SELF SUFFICIENCY REQUIREMENT

As established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Public Housing Notice 2003-17, all Housing Authorities must reinstate the Community Service program for public housing residents.

The Community Service requirement was suspended for Federal Fiscal Year 2002, for all developments except HOP VI developments (Dept. of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriation Act, 2002, at Section 432). The requirement has been reinstated for Federal fiscal year 2003.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM

Each adult resident of the Bloomington Housing Authority shall:

- Contribute 8 (eight) hours per month of community service (not including Political activities) within the Bloomington community; or
- Participate in an economic self-sufficiency program (defined below) for 8 (eight) hours per month; or
- Perform 8 (eight) hours per month of combined activities (community service and economic self-sufficiency program).

EXEMPTIONS

The Bloomington Housing Authority shall provide an exemption from the Community Service requirement for any individual who:

- 1.) Is 62 years of age or older;
- 2.) Is a blind or disabled individual, as defined under section 216 (i)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act, and who is unable to comply with this section, or is a primary caretaker of such individual;
- 3.) Is engaged in a work activity as defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act; a minimum of 20 hours per week.
- 4.) Meets the requirements for being exempted from having to engage in a work activity under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, or under any other welfare program of the State of Indiana, including a State-administered welfare to work program; or
- 5.) Is in a family receiving assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, or under any other welfare program of the State of Indiana, including a State administered welfare to work program, and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in noncompliance with such program.

The Bloomington Housing Authority will re-verify exemption status annually except in the case of an individual who is 62 years of age or older.

The Bloomington Housing Authority will permit residents to change exemption status.

DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

For purposes of satisfying the community service requirement, participating in an economic self sufficiency program is defined, in addition to the exemption definitions described above, by HUD as: Any program designed to encourage, assist, train or facilitate economic independence of assisted families or to provide work for such families.

Community Service is defined as “the performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community.” Community Service is not employment and may not include political activities (CFR# 960.601).

ANNUAL DETERMINATIONS

For each public housing resident subject to the requirement of community service, the Bloomington Housing Authority shall, at least 30 days before the expiration of each lease term, review and determine the compliance of the resident with the community service requirement.

Such determination shall be made in accordance with the principles of due process and on a non-discriminatory basis.

The Bloomington Housing Authority will verify compliance annually. If qualifying activities are administered by an organization other than the BHA, the BHA will obtain verification of family compliance from such third parties.

Family members will not be permitted to self-certify that they have complied with community service requirements.

NON-COMPLIANCE

If the BHA determines that a resident subject to the community service requirement has not complied with the requirement, the BHA shall notify the resident of such noncompliance, and that:

- 1). The determination of noncompliance is subject to the administrative grievance procedure under the Bloomington Housing Authority’s Grievance Procedures; and
- 2). Unless the resident enters into an agreement to comply with the community service requirement, the resident’s lease will not be renewed; and
- 3). The BHA may not renew or extend the resident’s lease upon expiration of the lease term and shall take such action as necessary to terminate the tenancy of the

household, unless the BHA enters into an agreement, before the expiration of the lease term, with the resident providing for the resident to cure any non-compliance with the community service requirement, by participating in an economic self-sufficiency program or contributing to community service as many additional hours as the resident needs to comply in the aggregate with such requirement over the 12 month term of the lease.

4). The head of household and the non-compliant adult must sign the Agreement to cure.

Ineligibility for Occupancy for Non-Compliance

The BHA shall not renew or extend any lease, or provide any new lease, for a dwelling unit for any household that includes an adult member who was subject to the community service requirement and failed to comply with the requirement.

BHA IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

The Bloomington Housing Authority will administer its own community service program, with cooperative relationships with other entities.

The BHA will provide to residents a brochure of Community Service and volunteer opportunities available throughout the community.

ANNUAL RE-EXAMINATION

At each new lease execution and annual re-exam, at least 30 (thirty) days prior to annual renewal, the Resident Services Coordinator will meet with all adult family members. At this time, all adult members must:

- 1). Provide documentation that they are exempt from the Community Service requirement. If they qualify for an exemption, and
- 2). Sign a certification that they have received and read this policy and understand that if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the Community Service requirement will result in non-renewal of their lease.

At each annual re-examination, non-exempt family members must present completed documentation (form provided by the BHA) of activities performed over the previous twelve (12) months. This form will include places for signatures of supervisors, instructors, or counselors certifying to the number of hours contributed.

If the family is found to be non-compliant, the family members must sign a statement that they understand if the hours are not made up and they remain non-compliant, their lease will not be renewed the following year.

BHA OBLIGATION

To the greatest extent possible and practicable, the BHA will provide names and contacts of possible volunteer opportunities, as well as provide in house opportunities for volunteer work and self sufficiency activities.

ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

1). **Volunteer work** which includes, but is not limited to:

Work at local institution, including schools, child care centers, hospitals, hospice, recreation center, senior center, adult day care center, garden center, homeless shelter, food bank, etc.

Work with a non-profit organization that serves BHA residents or their children such as: Boys and Girls Club, Girl Scouts, 4 –H programs, City or Community clean up programs, youth or senior programs.

Work at the BHA to help improve:

Physical conditions;

Children’s programs;

Senior programs;

Special Projects;

Resident Council; or

Resident Advisory Board.

Caring for resident’s children so they can volunteer or go to school.

NOTE: Political activity is excluded.

Self-Sufficiency Activities which include, but are not limited to:

Job readiness programs;

Job training programs;

GED classes;

Substance abuse or mental health counseling;

English proficiency (reading) classes;

Apprenticeships;

Budgeting and credit counseling;

Any kind of class that helps a person toward economic independence; or

Full time student status at any school, college or vocational school.

The BHA will provide the family with exemption verification forms and recording / certification documentation forms and a copy of this policy at initial application and at lease execution.

The BHA will make the final determination as to whether or not a family member is exempt from the Community Service requirement. Residents may use the Authority’s grievance procedure if they disagree with the BHA’s determination.