



HOUSING PROGRAMS SPECIALIST

Effective: 1/1/03

DEFINITION/PURPOSE:

Perform a variety of client-service tasks in the development, implementation, and delivery of housing services to new and continuing Section 8 program participants. Determine continuing eligibility, reasonable rents, and participant portion of those rents. Conduct unit inspections to ensure rentals are decent, safe and sanitary. Provide program information and requirements to participants and landlords. Assure program compliance and required record maintenance. Recruit prospective landlords.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This classification is distinguished from the Eligibility Specialist by the requirements to work with clients, units, and landlords in the day-to-day field administration of the HUD Section 8 program. In addition, it conducts certification and verification of eligibility for program participation, the determination of reasonable rents, and the review of leases, notices, and other paperwork associated with Section 8 housing assistance within an environment of privately held units. It differs from the Section 8 Supervisor by the latter's responsibility for continuing supervision, training, and overall administration of a number of Housing Program Specialists administering a variety of Section 8-related programs.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:

Receives direct supervision and direction from the Section 8 Supervisor and Housing Programs Analyst as necessary.

This classification exercises no supervision over other Authority employees; however, may give lead direction to assigned clerical employees.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS: Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verify and document information provided by prospective and current tenants for certification. Determine income and allowances; compute total tenant payment; determine

appropriate rent; Authority Program payments; and utility allowances. Send out notices of approval/disapproval. Explain methodology to participants.

- Conduct Housing Quality Standard (HQS) inspections of Section 8 program units (e.g. annual, interim, and close-out inspections). Initiate and follow-up on repairs for HQS compliance.
- Determine client eligibility for continued assistance and unit and owner eligibility for participation in the Section 8 program. Provide program information, concerning a variety of programs, to prospective and participating landlords and assisted tenants.
- Counsel tenants on unit affordability and the maintenance of decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Advise and counsel clients and landlords concerning housing situations and problems. Motivate clients to meet program goals. Explain program procedures and objectives to program participants at assigned briefings. Conduct both individual and group briefing sessions to advise eligible tenants on obtaining leased units.
- Perform interim eligibility determinations based on changes in participant income, family status, and landlord rent increases. Perform annual eligibility determination to determine if eligibility has been properly maintained.
- Determine termination of participants from housing program assistance. Notify both participants and landlords.
- Calculate money owed to the Authority, set up repayment schedules, monitor payments, and terminate program participants in cases of fraud or other misconduct.
- Mediate disputes between tenants and landlords to resolve claim charges resulting from inspections. Make judgments on evidence submitted.
- Prepare a variety of periodic reports and maintain accurate participant records. Check accuracy of checks being sent to participating landlords.
- Input necessary data into the Authority computer system. Maintain an accurate and comprehensive program database for statistical and reporting purposes.
- Process contracts/leases. Review leases, eviction notices, and rent increases.
- Advise and implement portability opportunities and coordinate with other housing authorities to insure effective and efficient transfer of tenants.
- Maintain an awareness of housing availability and be alert to the prospect of recruitment of landlords to participate in the Section 8 program. May conduct a full-time program of landlord outreach and education to recruit new owners to participate in the Section 8 program, as assigned.
- Maintain a close working relationship with county and community governmental, social service, and law enforcement agencies for purposes of facilitating timely delivery of service, verification of information, and to protect program integrity.
- Respond to written and telephone requests and inquiries from the general public concerning programs. Prepare necessary correspondence.
- Schedule all tenant/landlord appointments. Also, respond to walk-ins who request unscheduled face-to-face meetings. Conduct periodic meetings with clients to provide extensive counseling and updating of required self-sufficiency plans.

- Negotiate contracts and rents with owners/landlords within applicable Fair Market rents and execute leases. Certify and document rent reasonableness limitation tests for geographic area at initial acquisition of housing unit.
- Review, interpret, implement, and keep updated on all rules and regulations concerning Section 8 programs, as well as applicable local, State, and Federal laws, regulations, and codes, and Authority rules, regulations, and administrative plan.
- Perform operational and/or field training of new specialists, as directed.
- Conduct preliminary investigations of fraud, illegal drugs, controlled substance activity, violent criminal activity, destruction of property, neighborhood disturbance. Take authorized action because of findings.
- Mail out and receive verifications of information used for determination of continuing eligibility/rent changes, etc. for entire caseload. Request, receive, interpret, and distribute INS and criminal background checks.
- Assist in the preparation of the Authority's defense, in accordance with CFR and Authority policy, in the event of suit.
- Assist in the preparation and implementation of proposals and applications for funding.
- Monitor and assist in the evaluation of the administration and effectiveness of various Section 8 programs (e.g. new construction programs [CHISPA, Steinbeck], Mod Rehab, Family Unification; Family Self Sufficiency, Welfare to Work, etc.).
- May provide face-to-face individual case management. Interact with and counsel participants on a variety of potentially intense life situations and advise on the challenges of program participation. May prepare individual contracts for program participation. Work closely with family members. Provide participants access to a variety of low-income housing-related support services.
- Maintain a professional and cordial attitude towards co-workers and clients.
- Maintain consistent and regular attendance.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Represent the Authority in small claims court, as needed.
- Attend a variety of Authority meetings.
- Attended hearing for Eligibility Department regarding criminal background checks.
- Represent the Authority and its programs to community groups, businesses, and governmental agencies.
- Perform related duties as assigned.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledge of – The eligibility requirements and the administrative requirements of a variety of available public housing programs. Methods and techniques of client interviewing and counseling. Local social services agencies and appropriate contacts. The local housing markets. Pertinent Federal, State, and local, statutes relating to rental and leased property. Correct use of oral and written English and proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and composition. Standard

business mathematics and document formats. Operate standard office equipment. Uses of personal computers. Basic Authority organization and rules and regulations. Modern office procedures.

Ability to – Effectively interview and gather, record, and correctly evaluate data. Correctly interpret rules and regulations for recipients, landlords, prospective landlords, and the general public. Appropriately advise, motivate, and assist program participants. Initiate and answer correspondence independently. Organize and prioritize work effectively, meet required deadlines, and accommodate change. Work under pressure.

Maintain accurate and systematic records. Make complex mathematical computations. Maintain confidentiality. Effectively, sensitively, and patiently relate to clients, landlords, the general public, and coworkers. Function effectively in diverse cultural settings. Make independent analyses, make clear judgments, and take appropriate action. Maintain a sense of surroundings to assure personal safety. Communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing. Operate a personal computer using various Windows-based applications programs. Maintain the mental capacity to make sound judgments and the physical capacity to effectively perform the duties as assigned.

Physical Abilities and Work Environment – Sit and stand for lengthy periods of time in both indoor and outdoor environment. Drive an Authority owned automobile between properties in neighborhoods featuring a variety of cultural influences. Climb stairs, walk over uneven ground, stoop, and bend. Have manual dexterity enabling manipulation of a telephone and operation of keyboard equipment and other office machines. Lift or carry up to 25 lbs.

Licenses and Certificates - Must possess and maintain an applicable California Driver License and a driving record acceptable to the Authority's insurance carrier. Possession of a Housing Specialist Certificate is desirable.

Other: Provide proof of US citizenship or, if an alien, either lawful admission for permanent residence or authorization for appropriate work by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

- Bilingual skills in English and Spanish are desirable, however may be required in some positions.

- Be insurable by the Housing Authority's insurance carriers.

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION GUIDELINES:

Any combination of experience and education that would be likely to provide the required knowledge and abilities could be qualifying, as determined by the Authority. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

Experience – Three (3) years of responsible experience in the provision of direct social, community, or housing services in a multi-cultural environment and dealing with different socioeconomic levels.

Education – Graduation from an accredited high school, or possession of an equivalent certificate or diploma recognized by the State of California (e.g. G.E.D.), supplemented by courses in social sciences. Possession of an associate degree, or two full academic years of training, from an accredited college or university with a major in social sciences, or related field is desirable.