TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 2011-08-24 (3)

DATE: August 24, 2011

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Michael Mirra, Executive Director

RE: Adoption of THA Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy

Background

The Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) relates to the administration of the Public Housing program. HUD requires every public housing authority with public housing units to have an ACOP. The purpose of the ACOP is to establish policies for carrying out the program in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives contained in the THA's Moving to Work Plan. This ACOP plan is available for public review as required.

Before bringing the document to the board for approval, THA elicited community comment during a 30 day public comment period using the following methods:

- The ACOP was posted on THA's website
- Newsletters to all Public Housing and Section 8 households explaining changes
- Newsletters to all landlords explaining changes
- THA staff feedback sessions and focus groups
- Meeting with Northwest Justice Project
- Feedback session with THA's contracted hearing officer
- Two Public Hearings
- Meetings at THA's senior/disabled buildings

Staff also took phone calls and emails throughout the comment period. The full range of comments and questions is attached.

Below is a list of major policy changes, the current policy/practice, proposed policy and associated policy chapters in the documents.

Topic	Proposed policy	Community Comment	THA Recommendation
Medical marijuana ACOP Plan page 89	Disallow the use of medical marijuana. Revisit the topic if State establishes legal means to obtain medical marijuana.	The feedback on this issue has been positive. There have been some questions on what will happen if the federal government makes medical marijuana legal.	THA will not allow medical marijuana in its programs. THA can revisit the subject if there are changes in federal or state laws.
Criminal background screening for households members Page 72	Screen all household members over the age of *13*	Legal advocates disagreed with this policy. The reasoning was that many young people need stable housing to improve their situations.	THA will screen all household members age 16 and older. This will allow THA to still screen household members in an age group that has caused problems. Households will have an opportunity for an informal review if denied.
Criminal background screening for households members Page 69	Deny admission to households with drug/violent activity within the past *5* years	Comment on this section was positive from staff. There was little comment from outside THA.	Move forward with the policy
Criminal background screening for households members Page 69	Deny households with a registered sex offender;	Comment from outside the agency was that the policy was too strict. Some thought that people who had minor issues while younger could be caught up in this policy.	Move forward with the policy. All households that are denied will have an opportunity for an informal review.
Criminal background screening for households members Page 69	Deny households where anyone has ever produced methamphetamine	Positive feedback both inside and outside the agency	Move forward with Policy

Topic	Proposed policy	Community Comment	THA Recommendation
Income and subsidy determinations	• 25 minimum rent (no more utility reimbursement payments); the minimum rent will escalate to $50+ in later years for the work-able population • Apply a 28.5% TTP calculation within the table • All households will be on tiered rents • Eliminate dependent and eld/dis deductions • Implement medical allowance bands starting at $2500 (for eligible elderly/disabled HHs) • Conduct biennial recertification's • Allow households to self-certify assets below $25,000 • Simplify the utility allowance schedule	Overall there were not many comments on the income and subsidy determinations with a small amount of them being negative. There were questions about the policies, but most residents were satisfied once their specific question was answered. There were some at the public hearing that stated the new income and subsidy determinations harm the residents and help the housing authority	Move forward with the policies: All of the policies have been approved by the board and HUD as part of the Moving to Work Plan except the new interim policy. The Moving to Work Plan Amendment simplifies the previously approved activities. The Moving to Work changes need to be incorporated into THA Policy.
Interim Policy	• Limit interims to only process 3 interim decreases biennially • Decreases must be 10% of adjusted income in order to be processed.	Staff has provided valuable feedback which has led to us creating this interim policy. We have changed the minimum decrease amount from $200 per month to 10% of adjusted income. The change will allow families of lower income more	Move forward with revised interim policy

Topic	Current Policy	Proposed policy	Community Comment	THA Recommendation
terim Policy	• Process interims for all decreases in income	• Limit interims to only process 3 interim decreases biennially • Decreases must be 10% of adjusted income in order to be processed.	Staff has provided valuable feedback which has led to us creating this interim policy. We have changed the minimum decrease amount from $200 per month to 10% of adjusted income. The change will allow families of lower income more opportunity for decreases if needed	Move forward with revised interim policy

*PH = Public Housing; **PBV= Project-based voucher; ***TTP=Total tenant payment

During the course of the public comment period staff did not feel we had adequately communicated with the applicants on the waiting lists to gather enough feedback to make changes to THA's waiting list management. We will take an additional thirty (30) days to solicit feedback from applicants through a mailing to all applicants and additional public hearings before requesting approval of the Administrative Plan chapter relating to wait list management.

Recommendation

Approve Resolution 2011-8-24 (3) authorizing THA to adopt the ACOP excluding Chapter 4 APPLICATIONS, WAITING LIST AND TENANT SELECTION

TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 2011-8-24 (3), ADOPTION OF THA ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY

WHEREAS, The Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) relates to the administration of the Public Housing program and is required by HUD

WHEREAS, The ACOP is to establish policies for carrying out the programs in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives contained in the THA's Moving to Work Plan

Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City Of Tacoma, Washington, that:

1. Approve Resolution 2011-8-24 (3) authorizing THA to adopt the amended ACOP excluding Chapter 4 APPLICATIONS, WAITING LIST AND TENANT SELECTION

Approved: August 24, 2011

Janis Flauding, Chair