



Tacoma Housing Authority



## **TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY PARTNERS WITH TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PRIORITIZE LOCAL HOUSEHOLDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

***Tacoma households experiencing homelessness and housing instability will be placed in THA's local preference waitlist***

**TACOMA, WA – March 28, 2024**— Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) and Tacoma Public Schools (TPS) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish and collaborate on the creation of a local waitlist preference that prioritizes families of TPS students who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability for housing assistance. Through this partnership, THA and TPS seek to expand access to housing programs for vulnerable, low-income local households who are experiencing multiple barriers and the greatest marginalization in the community.

"Tacoma School District has the largest number of students experiencing homelessness in Washington State," said Tacoma Housing Authority Associate Director of Rental Assistance Fernando Ruiz. "With this newly established local waitlist preference, these students and their families in dire need of stable and affordable housing will be able to get assistance when they need it most."

TPS will identify and refer eligible applicants to THA's local preference waitlist who meet THA eligibility criteria, as provided, and who are receiving supportive services through the District.

"We know that a lack of stable housing has a direct impact on student learning and well-being," said Tacoma Public Schools Director Taj Jensen, who oversees support for students qualifying for McKinney-Vento services. "For students to succeed in the classroom and after graduation, their basic needs must first be met. We are grateful for the continued partnership with THA to remove this critical barrier."

Eligible applicants will be placed in THA's local preference waitlist and will be offered the first available THA housing resource. THA's commitment to provide housing resources outlined in the MOU is conditioned on the continued availability of funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and THA's voucher utilization needs.

## *About Tacoma Housing Authority*

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority provides high-quality, stable and sustainable housing and supportive services to people in need. It does this in ways that help them prosper and help our communities develop equitably. THA develops and manages real estate and provides rental housing. In partnership with thousands of private landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market. It delivers supportive services to help families succeed as “tenants, parents, students, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance.” THA seeks to do its work in ways that help our community be an “attractive place to live, work, attend school, shop and play,” and that help Tacoma be “safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive and just.” Learn more at [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).

## *About Tacoma Public Schools*

[Tacoma Public Schools](#) (TPS) is one of the largest districts in Washington State serving approximately 28,000 children in preschool through grade 12. During the 2023-2024 TPS is serving over 2,000 students who are experiencing homelessness. The district has 36 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, 11 high schools and four early learning centers. TPS has nearly 5,000 employees and is one of the largest employers in Tacoma.

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