

## Scattered Sites – Rental Assistance Demonstration Program

### Questions from Tenants Attending Tenant Meetings February 22- February 24, 2016

#### Home Purchase

Q1. **Question:** For the home purchase option, is the Section 8 One Year requirement still necessary?

**Answer:** In the RAD process you do not need to be on Section 8 for one year to take advantage of the homeownership option. You can start your home purchase effort from the beginning and we will be encouraging those who are interested in homeownership to begin the process well in advance of closing because preparation for purchasing a home takes time.

Q2. **Question:** Since there is a backlog of capital needs in these homes, how will that be handled in a home purchase situation?

**Answer:** We are still going to maintain these homes in the good shape we always have in the past. Nothing is going to change in that regard, and we will not be curtailing any necessary maintenance. Our projections for capital needs considers the lifetime of that specific component of the home, how much life is left and what the anticipated cost to replace it is. The figures we shared with you are just that.

Q3. **Question:** Can I purchase the home I'm in?

**Answer:** Yes, if you meet the criteria all homebuyers have to meet such as credit scores, down payment needs, and other requirements a mortgage has. Once we know if our application has been successful we will begin working with non-profits that offer first time homebuyer's assistance and try to match tenants interested in working towards homeownership the opportunity.

Q4. **Question:** What would the monthly payments be based on?

**Answer:** Similar to a standard home mortgage, the monthly payments would be based on the purchase price, the interest rate, and in your case, the value of the voucher. We anticipate all of the homes will be appraised to establish a fair sales price for each. Your monthly payment will be calculated on those factors.

Q5. **Question:** Could I purchase another house in the pool if I would like to?

**Answer:** It would appear possible that purchasing another house in the portfolio is an option. However, the current resident will have the right of first refusal on purchasing the home in which they are currently living. So, if the home you are interested in is being vacated and the current resident does not wish to purchase it, we may be able to make it available to you if you have met all the requirements for purchasing the home.

Q6. **Question:** Can we use a 'Rent to Own' approach when purchasing the home?

**Answer:** We do not have the ability to do this with the RAD program.

Q7. **Question:** What if we wanted to buy another PHA property that better suits our situation?

**Answer:** It would appear possible that purchasing another house in the portfolio is an option. However, the current resident will have the right of first refusal on purchasing the home in

which they are currently living. So, if the home you are interested in is being vacated and the current resident does not wish to purchase it, we may be able to make it available to you if you have met all the requirements for purchasing the home.

## Communication

**Q8. Question:** I'm on limited income. How do I pay deposit and rents if I choose to relocate permanently?

**Answer:** As part of the process the housing authority will provide relocation assistance to help with those tenants that choose a voucher and wish to find housing elsewhere. Part of that relocation assistance can assist with getting you established in your new location.

**Q9. Question:** When do I move?

**Answer:** Right now a best guess would be that, if approved, the public housing would convert in the second half of 2017 at the earliest, and the first half of 2018 at the latest. After conversion you would receive your voucher and be capable of moving.

**Q10. Question:** How will we be notified of the steps we need to take?

**Answer:** The website will be a starting point for updates on the process and all project related information for current tenants. In addition, continue to work with your staff contacts. We anticipate holding meetings to share with tenants more specific details regarding each of the alternatives. You will be notified by mail of those meetings and we will post the information on the website.

**Q11. Question:** Will we be kept up to date on the process/project?

**Answer:** Yes. We will be using the website as well as written communication through the regular postal service to notify you of our progress, important dates, upcoming meetings, etc.

## Tenant Options

**Q12. Question:** Is the Section 8 voucher able to be used where ever?

**Answer:** Yes, the voucher is entirely portable within and outside of Spokane County. You can go most anywhere with voucher.

**Q13. Question:** If we choose the option to move to a comparable home, will you be providing a list of homes that can be rented?

**Answer:** The Spokane Housing Authority is currently in the process of hiring a relocation consultant who will work with the tenants on an individual basis. They will be tasked with understanding the household's choice of the alternatives and explaining in careful detail the benefits available, the process, the timeline, and what is required of the tenants. If a comparable unit is desired, the consultant will work with the tenant to review up to three comparable units that the tenant can choose from.

**Q14. Question:** We currently live in a two-bedroom house; can we go to something bigger?

**Answer:** With a conversion from public housing to Section 8 housing, during the first year a tenant is capable of retaining the two bedrooms, but following the first year you're required to

meet the standard of two persons per bedroom. For the first year in your new housing it is not possible to reduce the current occupancy standard.

**Q15. Question:** If I choose to take a voucher and move to another state, what is the first step?

**Answer:** Wait. Do not make any arrangements to move out of your housing until we have converted from public housing to Section 8 and you have received a Section 8 voucher. Once you have received the voucher you are capable of finding housing in another location.

**Q16. Question:** Will I eventually have to move?

**Answer:** Maybe. It depends upon the option you choose and who eventually may purchase your unit. If you choose the option to stay in your current house, we anticipate placing the house for sale within the first twelve months following conversion from public housing. After being put up for sale, one purchase scenario is that a new owner gladly accepts the current tenant and the Section 8 contract. In that case the existing tenant would not need to move. Another scenario is that the home is purchased by someone with an interest in personally living there. In this case, the tenant would be obligated to move and the housing authority would assist that household.

**Q17. Question:** We have three vouchers; can we all use them on one property?

**Answer:** No. If you choose to live together, you can share one voucher.

**Q18. Question:** If we choose to relocate to a new unit, can we use the basement in that new unit as an additional bedroom?

**Answer:** The rent and bedroom arrangement has to work with your associated income, so a tenant can rent any unit that works within the payment standard and their income. For example, if a tenant wishes to rent a 10 bedroom unit they can, as long as it works with their associated income. As for space within the home, the housing authority does not tell any tenant how to use the space in the unit.

**Q19. Question:** When do we get a voucher?

**Answer:** Right now a best guess would be that, if approved, the public housing would convert in the second half of 2017 at the earliest, and the first half of 2018 at the latest. Following the conversion you would get your voucher.

**Q20. Question:** Do we have Section 8 houses in the Spokane Valley? Near Progress?

**Answer:** We don't know. If a tenant's choice is to stay in a comparable unit in their current neighborhood, the tenant would work with the relocation consultant to identify comparable units in and around their current unit. If/when one is found and the owner accepts Section 8 vouchers, the relocation consultant would work to arrange for the relocation benefits package and the successful relocation.

**Q21. Question:** What percentages of the RAD Applications are accepted by HUD?

**Answer:** Not certain of that figure, however, we do know that the number of scattered site, detached, single-family public housing homes converted under the RAD program is likely quite small. We believe we are at the leading edge of using RAD with scattered site homes.