

December 2013

## BREAKING NEWS

# NOFA Funds Available for Homeless Housing

On November 22, 2013 HUD announced that \$1.7 billion will be awarded for the development of programs to assist homeless people. The Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will provide funds for both permanent and transitional housing to the homeless, as well as services such as job training, health care, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment and child care.

Local programs can apply for Continuum of Care grants, which will be competitive. HUD Secretary Sean Donovan made a point of saying that HUD has made great progress in reducing homelessness, especially among veterans and people who are chronically homeless. "We shouldn't be cutting our budget on the backs of the most vulnerable in our society. Investing in these programs is the right thing to do - not just for the lives it will save, but also for our economy", said Secretary Donovan.

HUD's most recent assessment, the Point-in-Time count, reported that since the Obama administration launched the Opening Doors program in 2010 chronic homelessness dropped 16%, homelessness among families decreased 8% and homelessness among veterans fell 24%.

This initiative was the country's first strategic plan to end homelessness

in America. It is a coordinated effort across 19 federal agencies to end veteran and chronic homelessness by 2015, and to end homelessness among children, families and youth by 2020.

Project applications are available at [www.hud.gov/esnaps](http://www.hud.gov/esnaps). If you need help with a grant application online training is available at [www.hudhre.info/esnaps/](http://www.hudhre.info/esnaps/). Grant applications are due no later than February 3, 2014.

## Form G-845 Link Now Working on HUD.gov

HUD Handbook 4350.3 REV-1 CHG-4 was released through RHIIP Listserv Posting #303 on August 22, 2013. At that time, the link on HUD's website for Exhibit 4-2 of the handbook indicated that the website page could not be found. Since then, HUD's website has been updated to include a working link for Exhibit 4-2, which is the Document Verification Request Form G-845 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The link from HUD's website brings you to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website. This website includes a link for the 6 page Form G-845 and with a link to 2 pages of instructions regarding how to complete this form. This form should be used when individuals claiming eligible

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## 2014 PHONE CLASSES

### Our 2014 Phone Class Schedule is now available.

Visit, [www.pmcs-icap.com](http://www.pmcs-icap.com), to view our new class schedule. We will be adding more classes, so be sure to check our website for updates.

#### About our Phone Classes:

Training... right from your desk! Our 90-minute phone classes are inexpensive, convenient and include certificates of completion. The interactive format allows for discussion and Q&A. Topics range from HUD basics to the latest updates.



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## BREAKING NEWS

## HUD Announces Changes in Field Office Transformation Plans

On November 25, 2013 Ben Metcalf, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Multifamily Housing, announced three key changes in its field office reorganization plan. The following changes were made as a result of feedback HUD received about its transformation project:

1. Keeping MF staff in Minneapolis and Baltimore to add geographic coverage and support for the NY and Chicago regions, which will be the two largest in terms of staff and workload. The Minneapolis office will be a Chicago Hub satellite; the Baltimore office will be NY Hub satellite. HUD will ask employees to choose their top four relocation preferences among the twelve future state offices, including Minneapolis and Baltimore.
2. Raising its travel budget to make sure that HUD staff can assess unusual environmental conditions, service troubled properties and participate in interagency preservation activities where field offices are being consolidated.
3. Training one Field Policy & Management HUD staff member in each consolidating location to maintain close ties to communities, lenders, and other stakeholders as Multifamily staff relocate. These staff liaisons will facilitate communication with MF staff in the Hub and satellite offices.

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ben Metcalf, expressed his confidence that the transformation will increase HUD's ability to deliver on its mission working as a team. For more information on HUD's Transformation, visit the HUD website or send questions to [MFT@hud.gov](mailto:MFT@hud.gov).

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### Form G-845 Link Now Working on HUD.gov

non-citizen status cannot be verified through the online SAVE system. This form must be completed manually and mailed to the applicable U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office.

To obtain the mailing address for your Form G-845 form, be sure to click on 'Related Links' from the main U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website.



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## Social Security: Cost of Living Increase for 2014

The Social Security Administration has announced that the cost of living adjustment (COLA) will be 1.5% for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits in 2014. The Medicare Part B premium will remain unchanged from 2013 at \$104.90 per month for most people.

The cost of living adjustments are not available from SSA for uploading into EIV until the end of the year. When processing recertifications effective January through April 2014, use one of the methods described in Section 9-6 B1e of the 4350.3 REV-1 CHG-4 listed below:

1. Use the benefit information reported in EIV that does not include the COLA as third party verification as long as the tenant confirms that the income data in EIV is what he/she is receiving;
2. Use the SSA benefit, award letter or Proof of Income Letter provided by the tenant that includes the COLA adjustment if the date of the letter is within 120 days from the date of receipt by the owner;
3. Determine the tenant's income by applying the COLA increase percentage to the current verified benefit amount and document the tenant file with how the tenant's income was determined; or
4. Request third party verification directly from SSA when the income in EIV does not agree with the income the tenant reports he/she is receiving (See Paragraph 9-15)

## MONTHLY NEWS

## New SDS (Safety Data Sheet) Labels Required by OSHA

You're most likely familiar with MSDS Sheets (Material Safety Data Sheets) that are required primarily for our maintenance personnel. The MSDS and SDS (Safety Data Sheets) are basically the same; however, there are some important differences.

On March 20, 2012 OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) Director Dr. David Michaels announced a new initiative to revise the Hazardous Communication Standards (OSHA 1910.1200). This new program is the Global Harmonization System. In order to improve chemical safety worldwide, GHS was developed and introduced by the United Nations to help improve the way the international community identifies and communicates the level of hazard associated with chemicals.

Not only will GHS help create a safer work environment by reducing workplace accidents and injuries caused by chemical exposures, it will enable employers and employees to more quickly obtain and understand the information about the hazards of the chemicals they're being exposed to.

The new SDSs have 16 sections listing specific information. The MSDSs had only 7-10 sections. Each label will have pictograms (symbols) and signal words (such as "Danger" or "Warning") to identify the severity of the hazard, as well as hazard statements that describe their nature.

By December 1, 2013 all employees should be trained about the new GHS changes in the chemical labeling and the new SDSs. By December 1, 2015 all employers that use, handle or store chemicals must ensure that the chemical containers include the new GHS labels (containing the signal word, pictogram, hazard statement and precautionary statement).

The main reason OSHA instituted the GHS is to simplify and standardize the communication of hazards to improve chemical safety. You can find the Guide to The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## Pet Addendum for Section 8 Elderly Sites

If a Section 8 Elderly property wants to adopt the pet provisions used by 202/8 and 202 PAC subsidies, Change 4 to the 4350.3 Handbook requires that these provisions be a pet addendum (and not just wording added into the lease). HUD or the Contract Administrator must approve this lease addendum (6-5 C 4).

Prior to Change 3, when HUD headquarters required a move to the current leases, such approval was not required as long as management used language that matched the

wording HUD Forms 90105B, 90105C or 90105D and simply moved it to a pet addendum.

If you have a Section 8 Elderly property that created a pet addendum at the time of that lease change, you do not need to get HUD or CA approval now. However, if you have not had a pet addendum in the past and you want to add one now, you do need to get the approval of your HUD office or Contract administrator.

## QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS

### Question:

I have a tenant who has a Repayment Agreement, and should be paying \$5 a month on it. This tenant gets a utility reimbursement check every month for \$37. Sometimes he tells me he doesn't have enough money to make the payment. Can I deduct it from his utility check? ~Marian in Georgia

### Answer:

A utility reimbursement check must be given to the tenant (or the utility company) within 5 days of receiving your voucher funds. It can't be used for anything else, such as a payment toward a Repayment Agreement. If there's been a change in household income, the payment amount can be re-negotiated. If the tenant stops his Repayment Agreement payments, eviction proceedings should begin.

### Question:

Do I need to verify student status on minors? Our compliance department states that we do need to know if minors are attending school. It is on our AR questionnaire and on our student verification forms. Royal in Utah

### Answer:

Everyone under 18 is a dependent, whether s/he is a student or not. "Student status" on the 50059 only applies to people age 18+ and therefore no verification is needed to determine if someone under 18 is a student.

## Maintenance Safety

Does your property have an Accident Prevention Plan? Although it's not a requirement, it is a "best business" practice to provide your maintenance team with one. This could be a very valuable tool if there is an accident.

**For management to consider:**

1. Is there a written safety policy statement?
2. Is the policy statement signed by management?
3. Are copies of the policy provided to new employees?
4. Are there individual(s) responsible for the development, implementation and enforcement of the Accident Prevention Plan?
5. Are employee and supervisor responsibilities and authority assigned?
6. Has a safety team been set up to monitor your safety and health program?
7. Is there an established procedure for handling safety and health complaints?

Take the challenge, and look at your current guidelines. Your state may have a checklist of their own with respect to Workers' Health and Safety as well.



*Happy Holidays*

*From your friends at*

