

During his tenure as HUD Secretary (1997-2001), Andrew Cuomo was a powerful, tireless champion for the needs of millions of low-income people throughout the country. He stood up to the budget cutters, protecting federal housing and community development initiatives. As an Assistant Secretary at HUD (1993-1997), Cuomo was a leader in developing the Continuum of Care strategy and increasing the role of communities and residents in planning decisions.

ANDREW CUOMO

Featured Speaker for October 24 Conference:

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Connecticut Housing Coalition
Public Housing Resident Network
30 Jordan Lane
Wethersfield, CT. 06109
phone: 860.563.2943
fax: 860.529.5176
email: PHRN@ct-housing.org
website: [Http://www.phrn.org](http://www.phrn.org)

•PLEASE CHECK OUT THE INSIDE OF THIS EDITION FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 24!!

◆Does your housing authority have a citywide resident council? If not, consider working with residents to start one. Call PHRN if you need help.

How to Negotiate Receiving Resident Participation Funds from Your PHA

Do you want to know how to negotiate with your housing authority for your resident participation funds? Then come to our annual conference and learn how in our Public Housing workshops. To get you started, here is a sample letter you can write to your housing authority:

DRAFT LETTER TO YOUR HOUSING AUTHORITY ASKING ABOUT THE RESIDENT PARTICIPATION FUNDING

Dear [Director of the Housing Authority]:

We the _____ [name of your resident council] write to ask for a meeting with you to discuss the \$25 per occupied unit, per year, funding. As you know, the _____ [name of your housing authority] received resident participation funding in 2001, 2002 and again in 2003 as an add on to the operating subsidy. In accordance with HUD directives, these funds must be used for resident participation and the _____ [name of your housing authority] must work with the _____ [name

of resident council, or if there is no duly elected resident council reference the RAB] to determine how the funds are to be used and how they are to be distributed. See HUD Notice PIH 2001-3 (Jan. 18, 2002).

Prior to the meeting we would like to know exactly how much money the _____ [name of housing authority] received for resident participation in 2001, 2002 and 2003. That information is available from the HUD form 52599. Please provide us with a copy of that form.

At the meeting we would like to discuss our ideas as to how the funds may best be spent in 2003 and what plans, if any, you have developed for the use of the funds.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Yours truly,

[RESIDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT]

cc: HUD Office
PHA Board of Commissioners

Questions & Answers

Question: My housing authority recently started enforcing the community service work requirement. I work a part-time job of only 15 hours and my housing authority says HUD requires a minimum of 30 hours for me to qualify for an exemption. Is this true?

Answer: It is up to the housing authority to decide in their Admissions and Occupancy policy what their definition of work is and how many hours it is composed of. HUD has issued a "guidance" to housing authorities recommending 20-30 hours. This is only "guidance" and is not mandated. This is yet another opportunity for residents to be able to negotiate with their housing authority on ways to proactively carry out the community service requirement.

Special Housing Authority Resident/Staff Registration Form

Attendee Name and Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Housing Authority or Resident Group: _____

We are offering a special discounted rate to Housing Authorities sponsoring 10 or more residents and staff members. Please submit one form per person!

FEE (PER PERSON):

_____ \$75 (1 to 9 people) _____ \$60 (10 to 19 people) _____ \$50 (20 or more people).

Food Selection:

_____ Creole Chicken _____ Grilled Salmon _____ Linguini w/ Tomatoes, Capers and Olives

Make checks payable to: "Connecticut Housing Coalition" and fax this form to us at: (860) 529-5176 and mail payment to: Connecticut Housing Coalition, 30 Jordan Lane, Wethersfield, CT 06109

Other workshops for the day include:

A Connecticut Fair Housing Primer; Getting the Right Word Out - Helping Others to Help Themselves; Housing Vouchers on the Move; One State or 169 Towns?; Regions Take Charge on Housing; Financial Literacy Training - Making It Real for Low Income People; Technology for Homeownership Counselors; State Housing Trust Funds - Key to Permanent Production Funding; Campaign to End Long-Term Homelessness; and more.

Agenda:

- 8:15 a.m. Registration and Coffee • 9 a.m. Welcome and Speaker • 10:45 a.m. Session 1 Workshops
- 12:15 p.m. Luncheon • 1:30 p.m. Session 2 Workshops • 2:45 p.m. Session 3 Workshops
- 4 p.m. Reception and Networking • 5 p.m. Adjournment

Directions:

The Mystic Marriott Hotel is located at 625 North Road (Route 117) in Groton. **•From the North (Hartford):** Take I-91 South to Route 9 South to I-95 North. Follow I-95 North to Exit 88 (Route 117). Turn Left at bottom of the exit ramp. The hotel is on the right on Route 117. **•From the East (Rhode Island):** Take I-95 South to Exit 88 (Route 117). Turn right at the bottom of the exit ramp. The hotel is on the right on Route 117. **•From the West (New Haven):** Take I-95 North to Exit 88 (Route 117). Turn left at the bottom of the exit ramp. The hotel is on the right on Route 117. **•From the West (Waterbury):** Take I-84 East to I-691 East to I-91 North to Route 9-South. Follow rest of Hartford's directions from Route 9 South. The hotel's toll free number is: 866-449-7390.

◆For more information on our conference, please email us at: PHRN@ct-housing.org or call us toll free at 1-888-415-2564.

Don't miss Connecticut's largest gathering of affordable housing practitioners, resident leaders and advocates...

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

**Connecticut Housing Coalition's Annual Conference
Friday, October 24, 2003**

**8:15 am – 5:00 pm
Mystic Marriot Hotel**

Four Special Workshops for Public Housing Residents:

Public Housing Residents Advocating for Themselves

There are a lot of things going on in Congress these days that impact the lives of public housing residents. Now, more than ever, there is a need for residents to understand how to advocate for themselves. This workshop will provide participatory training for residents in effective techniques to make their voices heard!

Building Strong Resident Organizations

Back by popular demand, this hands-on workshop provides training for residents looking to build power! Those attending the Building Strong Resident Organizations workshop can expect to get up off their feet and move around, as this is a fully participatory workshop. This will be a double-session training that will cover an array of topics, including: writing effective bylaws; how to negotiate with housing authorities; writing a practical Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and much more!

The "New" Community Service Work Requirement

With the Community Service Work Requirement now in force, residents and housing authorities are confused about how to implement it. There is also concern about how HUD's renewed volunteer work requirement will affect the lives of residents. Attend this workshop to learn more about the requirement and discuss innovative and practical ways to implement it.

Current Issues in Public Housing

To be effective advocates, residents and public housing practitioners, knowledge is key! The Current Issues in Public Housing workshop will explore the changing landscape of both state and federal public housing policy. Issues discussed will include the transfer of state public housing from the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), the federal Hope VI program, and more! Come equip yourself with the knowledge needed to live in the ever changing world of state and federal public housing.

Want to attend this workshop but need transportation and money to pay for it? Then ask your housing authority to sponsor residents for this training and provide them with a copy of this page of the newsletter:

Under 24 CFR 964.140(a) it states: "...HUD encourages a partnership between the residents, the HA and HUD, as well as with the public and nonprofit sectors to provide training opportunities for public housing residents." PIH 2001-3 instructs HAs to use funds received for resident participation activities for trainings such as this one. If your housing authority still won't pay for this training, then give us a call!

Resident Participation Funding: Do Resident Councils Get \$15 or \$25?

Residents and housing authorities continue to be confused over how much money to provide to resident councils from the resident participation funding housing authorities receive. The confusion comes from the 964 Regulations (24 CFR 964.150) which indicates that housing authorities should give to resident organizations \$15 per occupied unit and hold back \$10 per occupied unit. HUD later issued PIH Notice 2001-3 which doesn't require the split.

Residents from the Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants - the statewide resident organization - finally received the answer to this question in writing from HUD in Boston. The letter is written by HUD on behalf of Donna J. Ayala, who is the director of HUD's Office of Public Housing New England, which oversees all of New England's public housing, including Connecticut. Here is what HUD had to say in its written response:

"Your letter questions the amount of funding (\$15 or \$25 per unit) a Public Housing Authority (PHA) is required to give to recognized organizations for resident participation activities. PIH Notice 2001-3 states, "Each PHA shall include in the operating subsidy eligibility calculation, \$25 per occupied unit per year for resident participation activities." While 24 CFR 964.150 does indicate a split in this funding...PIH Notice 2001-3 does specify, "These instructions will remain in force until such time as HUD can complete rulemaking to revise 24 CFR Part 964." Therefore, although PIH Notice 2001-3 has not been reinstated or extended formally, the notice does supercede the regulations..."

In short, HUD says turn over the whole \$25 per occupied unit to resident organizations. But they clearly state that the resident council must be a "recognized resident organization." And of course, that means the resident council must have had a HUD certified election.

The resident participation funds are subject to proration if any year and only for such years the PHA did not receive all funding requested for its operating subsidy.

For more information on resident participation funding, give PHRN a call toll free at 1-888-415-2564.

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Conference Contacts

If you are a public housing resident or staff member attending our 2003 Conference and are from the following towns, please contact the person listed below at your agency to register for the conference:

NEW HAVEN: Edith Rawls, 203-498-8800 ext. 1102

STAMFORD: Max Thaxton, 203-977-1400 ext. 3327

NEW BRITAIN: Grizzella Haughton, 860-225-3534
ext. 233

E. HTFD: Nilsa Marquez-Deleon, 860-290-8306

MERIDEN: Dave Sunshine, 203-235-0157, ext. 238

NORWALK: Carla Conway, 203-838-8471 ext. 176

BRIDGEPORT: Kimberly Ford, 203-337-8816

HARTFORD: Anna Sarraga-Cieri, 860-723-8420

Residents/Staff from all other housing authorities should contact COURTNEY ANDERSON, PHRN COORDINATOR, toll free at: 1-888-415-2564.

Who We Are & What We Do

The Public Housing Resident Network provides a variety of assistance to residents of public housing in Connecticut. The Network informs residents of new and important state and federal policy information and is a source of mutual support for residents.

Founded in the fall of 1996, the Network is an informal organization open to participation from any public housing resident - whether elected leadership or interested resident. We welcome requests for services from residents and public housing authorities. The services we provide are free of charge to the residents and we encourage you to attend our Network meetings.

This newsletter is mailed to those who are on our mailing list. Contact us to be added to our mailing list. All we ask in return is your participation and interest!



New "Proposed" HUD Rule Could Allow PHAs to Evict Over-Income Families

Based on a proposed rule by HUD, housing authorities in the future could evict families who live in public housing but become over income. In its proposal, HUD states: "This proposed rule would give public housing agencies (PHAs) the discretion, in accordance with federal law and regulations, to evict public housing tenants who are over the income limit for eligibility to participate in public housing programs." HUD goes on to further state, "PHAs may decide that such families should be able to find other housing and that public housing units should be made available for families with greater housing need."

The proposed rule has received mixed opinions from resident leaders, public housing advocates and public housing agencies. Some residents believe this rule would unfairly impact a lot of families who may have adult children who temporarily work and could cause the household income to go over limit. If the adult child later moves and the head of household becomes eligible for public housing, that person would have to apply for public housing all over again.

Legal advocates of public housing believe this rule goes against HUD's public statements about revitalizing public housing in a way that does not create "pockets" of poor people. Advocates claim that by evicting higher income residents, HUD perpetuates the problem by creating pockets of the poorest of the poor.

In its proposed rule, HUD says it "believes that public housing should be available to low-income families and that it is inappropriate to limit the ability of a PHA to move over-income families out of public housing to make room for low income families on waiting lists." HUD further states: "...PHAs should be free to make local decisions to serve low income families. Those with incomes over 80 percent of the median - the upper limit for public housing admissions eligibility - should be able to find housing in the private market, and the PHA will therefore be able to focus its efforts on families with lower incomes."

If passed, there are some restrictions on when an over-income family can be evicted. First, HUD states that if a family has a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) contract (which requires head of households to seek employment), and finds employment, that family cannot be evicted until after the expiration of the contract. Also, families that qualify for the two-year earned income disregard, cannot be evicted because they have found employment until after the expiration of the income disregard. HUD states that this rule is only discretionary and does not mandate housing authorities to evict over-income families.

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments regarding this rule to the Regulations Division, Room 10276, Office of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20410-0500. Comments should refer to the docket number (FR-4824-P-01) and title (PHA Discretion in Treatment of Over-Income Families). All comments are due by September 30, 2003.

A look at what's inside:

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