



## **COMMUNITY SERVICE POLICY**

(included in Admissions & Continued Occupancy Policy)

### **13.1 COMMUNITY SERVICE/SELF SUFFICIENCY**

In order to be eligible for continued occupancy, each adult family member who is not exempt must either (1) contribute eight hours per month of community service (not including political activities) within the community in which the public housing development is located, or (2) participate in an economic self-sufficiency program (as defined in the regulations) or (3) perform eight (8) hours per month of combined activities (community service and economic self-sufficiency programs).

Family members may not skip one month and make up the hours during the following months, unless special circumstances warrant it. The Housing Authority will make the decision to deviate from this schedule on an individual basis.

Family members, who believe they have a special circumstance which will prevent them from completing their community service hours for a given month, must notify the Housing Authority in writing within 10 business days of the circumstances becoming known. The Housing Authority will review the request and notify the family member, in writing, of its determination within 10 business days. The Housing Authority may require documentation to support the family members claim.

Although individual family members may complete more than the required minimum 8 hours of community service or self-sufficiency, the Housing Authority will only count the 8 hours for any given month.

### **13.2 EXEMPTIONS**

The following adult family members of tenant families are exempt from this requirement:

- A. Family members who are 62 or older.
- B. Family members who are blind or disabled and who certify that because of their disability they are unable to comply with the service provisions.
- C. Family members who are the primary care giver for someone who is blind or disabled.



- D. Family members who work a minimum of 30 hours per week at a defined work activity or combination of work activities as defined in Section 407d of the Social Security Act listed below.
- E. Family members who are exempt from work activity under part A title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other state welfare program, including the welfare-to-work program.
- F. Family members receiving assistance under a state program funded under part A title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other state welfare program, including welfare-to-work and who are in compliance with that program.

### **13.3 NOTIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENT**

The Housing Authority will notify all family members of the community service requirement at admission and at annual and interim recertifications. The notification will include the requirements and exemptions from the requirements and will provide the family member the opportunity to claim and explain an exempt status. If the family member claims an exemption, they will be required to complete an exemption form. The Housing Authority shall verify all exempt claims using the verification and documentation requirements. The Housing Authority will make the final decision to grant or not grant the exemption from the community service requirement.

The notification will advise families that their service obligation will begin for:

- new tenants, on the first day of the first full month after admission
- existing tenants, on the first day of the first full month after determination of a non-exempt status.

The notification will also advise family members that failure to comply with the community service/self-sufficiency requirement will result in ineligibility for continued occupancy at the time of any subsequent annual recertification.

### **13.4 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Community service includes performing work or duties in the public benefit that serve to improve the quality of life and/or enhance resident self-sufficiency, and/or increase the self-responsibility of the resident within the community.

An economic self-sufficiency program is one that is designed to encourage, assist, train, or facilitate the economic independence of participants and their families or to provide work for participants. These programs may include programs for job training, work placement, basic skills training, education, English proficiency, work fare, financial or household management, apprenticeship, and any program necessary to ready a participant to work (such as substance abuse or mental health



treatment).

The Housing Authority will coordinate with social service agencies, local schools, and the Human Resources Office in identifying a list of volunteer community service positions.

Together with the resident advisory councils, the Housing Authority may create volunteer positions such as hall monitoring, litter patrols, and supervising and record keeping for volunteers.

### **13.5 IMPLEMENTATION**

At admission and each annual recertification thereafter, the Housing Authority will do the following:

- A. Provide a list of volunteer opportunities to the family members.
- B. Provide information about obtaining suitable volunteer positions.
- C. Provide a volunteer timesheet to the family member. Instructions for the time sheet require the individual to complete the form and have a supervisor date and sign for each period of work.
- D. Assign family members to the Housing Authority Tenant Services Coordinator who will assist the family members in identifying appropriate volunteer positions and in meeting their responsibilities. The Tenant Services Coordinator will track the family member's progress monthly and will meet with the family member as needed to best encourage compliance.
- E. Thirty (30) days before the family's annual recertification, the Tenant Services Coordinator will advise the Housing Authority whether each applicable adult family member is in compliance with the community service requirement.

### **13.6 NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT**

The Housing Authority will notify any family member found to be in non-compliance with the requirement. The notice will:

1. Briefly describe the non-compliance.
2. State that the Housing Authority will not renew the lease at the end of the twelve-month lease term unless:
  - a. The tenant, and any other noncompliant resident, enter into a written agreement with the Pekin Housing Authority to cure the noncompliance, and in fact cure such non-compliance in accordance with such agreement;  
or
  - b. The family provides written assurance satisfactory to the Housing



Authority that the tenant or other noncompliant resident no longer resides in the unit.

3. State that the tenant has the right to request a grievance hearing on the Pekin Housing Authority determination.

### **13.7 OPPORTUNITY FOR CURE**

The Housing Authority will offer the family member(s) the opportunity to enter into an agreement prior to the recertification of the lease. The agreement shall state that the family member(s) agrees to enter into an economic self-sufficiency program or agrees to contribute to community service for as many hours as needed to comply with the requirement over the past 12-month period. The cure shall occur over the 12-month period beginning with the date of the agreement and the resident shall at the same time stay current with that year's community service requirement. The first hours a resident earns goes toward the previous commitment until the previous year's commitment is made.

The Tenant Services Coordinator will assist the family member in identifying volunteer opportunities and will track compliance on a monthly basis.

If any applicable family member does not accept the terms of the agreement, does not fulfill their obligation to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, or falls behind in their obligation under the agreement to perform community service by more than eight (8) hours after three (3) months, the Housing Authority shall take action to terminate the lease.



### Community Service Credit for Tenants Attending College

Tenants who are attending college either on campus or online at an accredited college will be given credit for current and past due community service hours owed on the following terms:

- A tenant must register and enroll in courses for each semester to qualify for the community service credit.
- After verification of enrollment from the college, the tenant will then receive a credit of 8 hours of community service for each month of full time status (minimum of 12 credit hours) or 4 hours of community service for each month of part time status (minimum of 4 credit hours).
- Credit will not be awarded until the end of the semester after the completion of the classes.
- The credit will be subtracted first from past due (previous year) hours and then from the current community service hours owed.
- If, at any time, the tenant drops from college courses, the credits will also stop and the tenant will begin to accumulate community service hours.



### Community Service Credit for Tenants Working Full-Time

Tenants who are working full-time jobs (30 hours per week or more), will be given credit for current and past due community service hours owed on the following terms:

- A tenant must work in a fulltime job for 60 days or more for at least 30 hours per week to qualify for the community service credits.
- After the 60-day period of work for at least 30 hours per week, the tenant will then receive a credit of 8 hours of community service for each month of continuing employment.
- The credit will be subtracted first from past due (previous year) hours and then from the current community service hours owed.
- Once all past due community service hours have been credited and the tenant continues to work at least 30 hours per week, he/she will be placed on exempt status for the community service requirement.
- If, at any time, the tenant stops working at least 30 hours per week, the credits will also stop and the tenant will begin to accumulate community service hours.