

# THE ENTERPRISE



THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKVILLE HOUSING ENTERPRISES

## “Why Is My Rent So High?”

February/March 2010

Often times RHE staff is asked “Why has my rent gone up so high?” When both the Public Housing and Section 8 Program calculate your new portion of the rent for the new year, we have regulations that govern how we can calculate your income.

If you are a working family or individual, you probably base how much money you earn on your paychecks.

The amount on your paycheck is considered “net income”. Your employer has already deducted the required contribution for Social Security and Medicare, plus any Federal and State of Maryland withholding.

Unfortunately, HUD regulations state that your portion of the rent is based on “gross income”. There are adjustments to gross income for child care and sometimes for allowable medical expenses.

However, the basis for your rent portion is the total income prior to any employer deductions. Therefore, it can seem as if we calculated your portion of the rent incorrectly, because often it is often greater than 30% of your “take home paycheck”. In fact, the calculation is correct.

For more information on how your individual rent is calculated and deductions that are available to you please contact Rockville Housing Enterprises and ask to speak with Gerry Peet at (301) 424-6265. All questions are reviewed case by case.



## Community Service

HUD requires all adults (18 years or older) living in public housing who are not working to complete 8 hours of community service each month. The only exceptions are for elderly (62 years or older), disabled (as defined by HUD), or those enrolled in school or a qualifying training program. If this re-

quirement is not fulfilled it is a lease violation. Public Housing residents are required to complete community service hours monthly. All community service hours must be turned in no later than the 30th of each month. See Florence Cole, Resident Counselor/ FSS Coordinator for Volunteer Time Sheets

and a list of agencies that need volunteers. If you are not able to complete service hours or have any questions about how many hours you might owe, please contact Ms. Cole as soon as possible at 301-424-6265 ext 311.

### Special points of interest:

- COMMUNITY SERVICE DUE 30TH OF EACH MONTH
- REPORT CHANGES TO YOUR INCOME WITHIN 10 DAYS
- MONEY MANAGEMENT
- CALENDER FEBRUARY & MARCH
- CENSUS NEEDS YOU

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# From the Public Housing Program

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## A Message to the Residents of David Scull Courts

As you may or may not be aware, RHE has started renovations of kitchens and bathrooms in many of the units on First Street. This renovation is going to be a year long project that should have all units finished by the end of 2010.

With that said, we have been renovating all vacant units first, then the senior building second and the remaining occupied units have been selected based on length of tenancy and whether the resident is a tenant in good standing.

Rockville Housing Enterprises asks that you please be patient if your unit has not been done yet. We will get to your unit in a timely manner. If you have any further questions or comments please contact Property Manager, Gerry Peete at (301) 424-6265.



## Reporting Changes

Residents: Rockville Housing Enterprises, would like to remind you that it is important to report any changes in your family income or composition within 10 days to the main office.

Changes include: an unemployed person becomes employed, a person who had no income begins to receive income of any kind.

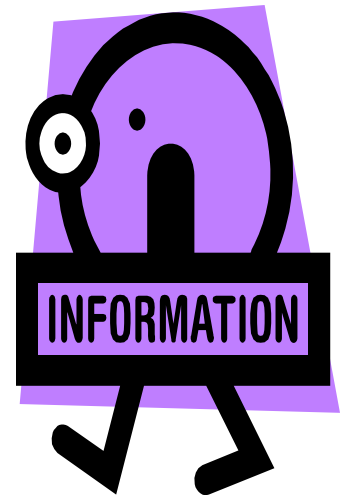
An Interim Change form

must be completed by the Head of Household and documentation attached. Please understand that it is important to report this information to avoid any retroactive rent charges to your rent.

If changes are not reported you will be subjected to owing additional rent for months that

changes went unreported. Also you must request approval in advance to move other people into your unit.

*For more information on reporting your information, please contact Stacy Brooks at (301) 424-6265.*



## Required Documents for Annual Recertification

Please be reminded that the annual re-examination is a requirement of the federal government. It is very important that residents bring all the requested documents to their re-examination interview that apply to their family's situation. If RHE is unable to complete the re-examination due to missing

documents, the resident may not be eligible for subsidy. Please help make your annual re-examination a smooth process and bring all required documents. For more information on this please contact Rockville Housing Enterprises at (301) 424-6265 or visit our website at [www.rockvillehe.org](http://www.rockvillehe.org)



*Make sure you have provided all the appropriate documents*

# From the Public Housing Program

## Attention Public Housing Residents

Rockville Housing Enterprises would like to inform all residents that if you are not in compliance with the trash policy you will be violating your lease.

RHE would like to notify all residents that it is your responsibility to keep your yard and the parking lot clean. In addition, it is a violation of Rockville City code to leave your trash can out front 24 hours after trash pick-up.

If you need a special trash pick-up call (240) 314-8568. If you are unable to reach someone at the city number then call our main office, (301) 424-6265 and ask for Gerry Peet.

**Anyone who does not comply with their lease or Rockville City code will be in violation of their lease.**

For more information refer to your lease, Paragraphs VIIg., VII 1., VIII n., and VIIIr.

For more information on Rockville City code, call (240) 3148568 or contact Gerry Peet at 301-424-6265.



Your responsibility to keep your yard and the parking lot clean.

## Notice of Unit Entry for Pest Control Services

Pest control services continue to be provided **every Tuesday of each month by Orkin Pest Control.**

Regular extermination is very important to maintain pest-free units.

We ask the full cooperation of all residents in allowing this important free service.

RHE selects units to be serviced or residents may request the service by calling (301)424-6265, and advising the office to place their name on the list for the next service date.

For more information on the pest control service, please contact the main office at

(301) 424-6265 and speak with Mr. Gerry Peet.



**PEST CONTROL IS DONE EVERY TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH**

## Bedbugs-They're Back!

There has been a resurgence of bedbugs in the last year. The way most people know they have bedbugs is when they have tiny bite marks on their body and/or small red spots on bed sheets. Bedbugs are very small and can be hard to see. If you believe you have

bedbugs, call the office and place a work order. Section 8 participants, you must inform your landlord. It is better to be safe. It takes a lot of work to get rid of them, so your cooperation is needed.

Depending on how badly you have them, you may have to throw away your

bedding and furniture. If that is the case, call the Resident Counselor, Florence Cole, and she can assist you in finding furniture for little to zero costs. Overall, be aware of your surroundings when you visit someone or have someone visit you.



Bugs have got to go

# From the Family Self-Sufficiency Program

## FSS PROGRAM

If you are a Public Housing Resident or a Housing Choice Voucher Resident

If you are single, married, a parent, or elderly

If you want to own a home, open a business, or even go back to school or accomplish something else,

**The FSS Program can help you make your goals and dreams come true.**

Call RHE at (301) 424-6265. If you are a Public Housing Resident, ask to speak with Florence Cole.

If you are a Section 8 Resident, ask for Jean Caraway.



## FSS Program Spotlight!

Congratulations to Kandice French's daughter Imani French for creating the winning poster for Human Rights Day.

Her poster was selected from among hundreds of other applications in Montgomery County.

Her poster will be printed and posted on Ride On Buses throughout the county. Great Job!



**Human Rights Diversity Camp  
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
(240) 777-8450**

**Imani Frenche,  
Twinbrook Elementary School**

## Family Self-Sufficiency Program

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Orientations are held monthly for interested participants hosted by the FSS Coordinators Florence Cole, Public Housing and Jean Caraway, Section 8.

At the orientation the coordinators explain

what the program is about and about escrow savings accounts.

Please call Florence Cole or Jean Caraway at (301) 424-6265 for additional information. Hope to see you at the next orientation.



# Resident Council Corner

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## Support Your Community !

Residents, please come to the Resident Council meetings. We have good attendance, but we need more representation from Scattered Sites and Section 8 program participants.

The meetings are an opportunity for residents to express their concerns to management and work together to improve our communities.

Meetings are held on the First Tuesday of each month at the David Scull Community Center. If you would like to have more information about the Resident Council Meetings, please contact Florence Cole, Resident Counselor at (301) 424-6265.



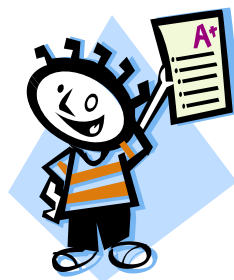
## Recognition for Good Grades

Rockville Housing Enterprises wants to invite all parents to let the staff know of any of your children who have at least a B average (3.0) in the current grading period.

Please let us know so that the hard work of these good students (and their parents) can be recognized.

We have certificates for them! Call Jean Caraway or Florence Cole at (301) 424-6265.

We know how important education is and want your son or daughter to shine for their efforts.



Congratulations to John David Guerrero for maintaining his B average! Great Job!

GREAT JOB  
KEEP UP THE GOOD  
WORK!.

## Budget Alert!

Residents, budget counseling is available to you if you are having problems with paying your rent on time each month.

Residents who are consecutively late with paying their rent will be required to attend Basic Money Management workshops held on Saturdays each month at 30

Courthouse Square Suite #100 Rockville MD 20850. For additional information on the money management workshops and other workshops in the city please contact Alfred Thompson at (240) 314-8319 or call Resident Counselor, Florence Cole at (301)424-6265.



# From the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)

## Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections

Units placed under lease in the (Section 8) Housing Choice Voucher Program will meet the housing quality standards specified in the regulations published in the Federal Register. The federal government will not provide rental assistance in any unit that is not decent, safe, and sanitary.

To assure that units meet HUD's Housing Quality Standards (HQS), **RHE inspects units before move-in, at least once each year after move-in,** and whenever there is a complaint by the tenant or the landlord regarding the condition of the unit.

There are some criteria that focuses on health and safety concerns and require the Section 8 staff to determine unit acceptability **regardless of the tenant's possible willingness to accept any deficient condition.**

Program participants must cooperate in the inspection process or face possible termination from the program.

### Initial Inspections

Initial inspections are used to determine if the unit and property meet HQS to document the current unit conditions for any future comparisons of normal wear and tear issues, and to document information to be used to determine rent reasonableness.

Units will be inspected and meet HQS before lease approval and execution of the HAP contract.

### Failing Inspections

If a unit fails inspection, the landlord or tenant, whoever is responsible for the failure, is given notice that repairs must be completed within 24 hours for life-threatening violations or 30 days for less serious violations. completed.

Following this period, the unit is re-inspected and if it fails once again then assistance is stopped and no payments are made until repairs are

### Making Repairs

If repairs continue not to be made, the contract between RHE and the landlord will be terminated. If the HQS violations are not the tenant's fault and the landlord is refusing to complete repairs, the HCV participant will be issued a voucher to move.

*For more information on Housing Quality Standards (HQS) please contact RHE at (301) 424-6265 and ask to speak with a Housing Choice Voucher specialist or visit our website at [www.rockvillehe.org](http://www.rockvillehe.org) .*

IF A UNIT FAILS INSPECTIONS, THE LANDLORD OR TENANT, WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE, IS GIVEN NOTICE



# From the Homeownership Coordinator

## Smart Decisions at Tax Time

By: Susan A. Cheney  
Homeownership  
Coordinator

If homeownership is one of your goals, making smart decisions with your tax returns can pay off. Your tax returns are an important part of your overall finances. They warrant careful preparation, because they can help with your money management skills, help you set and work toward your goals, build your savings and could affect your credit history.

### Money Management

The tax return is a summary of your yearly income and some of your expenses. From this you can plan your spending for the forthcoming year. Compare the previous two years' tax returns to see if your income is the same or is increasing. This will help you set up a spending plan for the next year. If your income is not increasing, you might need to evaluate your current job situation, and to pursue additional skills and educational opportunities.

### Goal Setting

Whether you get a refund or earned income credit (EIC) or even owe some taxes, each year you will see how much of your income goes to taxes. From this you can

plan your budget for the next year to reach your short term and long term financial and personal goals.

### Build Savings

If you receive a refund or EIC, you could use the funds to set up a savings account and to pay down debt. If you don't get a refund, you could use a set monthly amount of your income to save into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and reduce your tax obligation. *Remember, if you have built up debt during the year in expectation of paying it off with your refund, you could build savings next year by breaking this cycle. Resolve to not increase debt next year so you can put next year's refund into a savings account to pay for some important goals such as furthering your education and skills or buying a home.*

### Credit Report

If you do not pay your taxes that are due, a tax lien can be placed in the public records and will show up on your credit report. Credit reports are viewed by lenders when you buy a new car, buy a home and apply for a credit card. Some employers also review credit reports of people they are considering hiring. Tax returns are often required as proof of income

when making an application to a lender for a home mortgage. If they are not properly filled out, your income may not be fully counted.

### Smart Consumerism

If you have a preparer fill out your returns, check it for thoroughness and for validity. You are responsible for the information. Make sure you understand it. Ask questions!

*For more information on this and other tax information please visit the Internal Revenue Service website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or contact Homeownership Coordinator, Susan Cheney at (301)424-6265*

YOUR TAX RETURNS  
ARE AN IMPORTANT  
PART OF YOUR  
OVERALL FINANCES



Make sure you receive all your w-2's before you file your taxes

# Calendar

## Welcome to February

# February 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Resident Council Meeting 5:30pm - 7:00pm	3	4	5	6 Tax Preparation 10:00am to 12 noon  Census Testing 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
7	8	9	10 Valentines Social 6:00m to 7:00 pm	11	12 Video Gaming Night 6:30 to 7:30 pm	13
14 Valentines Day	15 Presidents Day Office Closed	16	17 Board Meeting	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Story Teller 6:00pm to 7:00pm	26	27
28						

February is Black History Month. Celebrate Black History Month with your children this February, and spend some extra time learning about the extraordinary accomplishments of African-Americans.

### Did you know?

(Greensboro, N.C.) Four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College begin a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Although they are refused service, they are allowed to stay at the counter.

The event triggers many similar nonviolent protests throughout the south.

## Maryvale Elementary School Linkages to Learning Program

The Linkages to Learning Program at Maryvale Elementary School will assist students and their families with services to help children be successful in school, at home, and the community.

You must have at least one child at Maryvale Elementary School.

### Services Include:

\*Education Support- Mentoring, tutoring, coaching for students and teachers.

\*Health Services- Preventative health care services.

\*Assistance to parents in

accessing health care for children both insured and uninsured. \*Health educational outreach. \*Social Services-Help families obtain medical, dental, and employment services. \* Family outreach, evening education and recreational programs. Acculturation workshops.

\*Community -wide Summer Events. \* Emergency financial assistance. Assistance with legal and immigration issues.

\* Mental health services- individual child, parent and family therapy. Consultation with school staff and other agencies.

\*Prevention, early intervention and therapy groups for children. \* In-service training for teachers.

For more information contact any of the Linkages to Learning staff at (301) 279-8508. Please note that they take referrals by appointment only.



# Calendar

## March 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 <i>Resident Council Meeting 5:30pm – 7:00pm</i>	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 <i>Day Light Savings begins</i>	15	16	17 <i>Board Meeting St. Patrick's Day</i>	18	19	20 <i>First Day of Spring!</i>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### Welcome to March

Did you Know? In the early nineteenth century, women in the United States were considered second-class citizens whose existence was limited to the interior life of the home and care of the children. Women were considered sub-sets of their husbands, and after marriage they did not have the right to own property, maintain their wages, or sign a contract, much less vote. It was expected that women be obedient wives, never to hold a thought or opinion independent of their husbands.

## Plumbers and Gasfitters Apprenticeship School

### Earn While You Learn!!!

Washington DC Plumbers & Gasfitters Local No. 5

Joint Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee

8509 Ardwick-Ardmore Road

Landover, MD 20785

How Do You Apply?

Apply in person on one of the following dates from 7:00 am and 12:00 noon:

April 6, 2010 and July 6, 2010

Your application will not be accepted unless you present the following items:

1. Birth Certificate or Passport. You must be at least 18 years or older to apply.
2. High School Diploma or G.E.D Certificate.
3. Official Transcript of your high school grades (this would have the school seal stamped on it or placed in a sealed envelope, unopened) or your G.E.D test scores.
4. A valid State Issued I.D. Card with picture or valid Driver's License.

For more information about this application call (301) 322-8810 or visit the website at [www.ua.org](http://www.ua.org)

# The Enterprise

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKVILLE HOUSING ENTERPRISES

Rockville Housing Enterprises  
621-A Southlawn Lane  
Rockville MD 20850

Phone: (301) 424-6265  
Fax: (301) 217-5857

**RHE Staff** Ruth O'Sullivan (Executive Director) Mary Ellen Jones (Director of Administration)  
Julie Jones (Receptionist)

Accounting: Brenda Smith( Director of Finance) Christine Bernstein (Accounting Assistant)

**Housing Programs:** Stacy Brooks (Director of Housing Programs) Florence Cole( Resident  
Counselor/Public Housing FSS Coordinator) Gerry Peet (Property Management Team Leader)

Maintenance Michael Green (Maintenance Supervisor) Ron Brown( Maintenance Technician)  
Charles Johnson (Maintenance Technician)

Meta Lim (Occupancy Team Leader) Tosha Dyson (Occupancy Clerk) Jean Caraway (Housing  
Choice Voucher FSS Coordinator) Susan Cheney (Homeownership Specialist)

We're on the Web!

[www.rockvillehe.org](http://www.rockvillehe.org)

## The Census Needs You!!



The U.S. Census Bureau is recruiting temporary, part-time census takers for the 2010 Census. These short-term jobs offer good pay, flexible hours, paid training, and reimbursement for authorized work-related expenses, such as mileage incurred while conducting census work.

Best of all, census takers work right in their own communities **AND THEIR WAGES ARE NOT COUNTED BY HUD AS INCOME FOR CALCULATING RENT.**

**Census taker jobs are excellent for people who want to work part-time, those who are between jobs, or just about any-**

**one who wants to earn extra money while performing an important service for their community. Hundreds of thousands are needed for temporary jobs.** Conducting the census is a huge undertaking. Hundreds of thousands of census takers are needed nationwide to help locate households and conduct brief personal interviews with residents.

Most positions require a valid driver's license and use of a vehicle. However, use of public transportation may be authorized in certain areas. All census takers must be able to speak English, but people who have bilingual skills are needed in communities where a large number of residents primarily

speak other languages.

If you have the appropriate language skills and cultural knowledge to communicate well in your community, we encourage you to apply.

Rockville Housing Enterprises has partnered up with US Census to bring the jobs to you. We will be conducting testing at the David Scull Community monthly for all interested parties.

*For more information contact Resident Counselor, Florence Cole at (301) 424-6265 or you can apply by contact your local census office at 240-780-3950*