

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

The Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia Housing Authority ("DCHA") hereby gives notice of intent to take final rulemaking action to adopt these rulemakings in not less than (30) days from the date of the publication of this notice, the proposed rulemaking which amends Title 14 DCMR, "Chapter 62: "Low Rent Housing: Rent and Lease", by adding a new section 6214 will read as follows:

6214 NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR CARE PROGRAM

6214.1 Purpose of the Program. The District of Columbia Housing Authority ("DCHA") Neighbor to Neighbor Care Program is a program designed to assist public housing residents participate in activities that are a benefit to themselves and the community. The Neighbor to Neighbor Care Program is designed to give families a greater ownership in their communities and to facilitate upward mobility. Participation for certain residents is required by HUD, participation for others is voluntary. The objective, whether participation is voluntary or required, is to facilitate residents achieving economic self sufficiency and contributing to their neighbors and community.

6214.2 Definitions.

- (a) "Adult" means any individual 18 years of age or older residing in a unit owned by DCHA.
- (b) "Approved" means any approval provided by DCHA to the head of household and/or a family member in writing.
- (c) "Approved Service Program" is a program approved by DCHA in accordance with 6214.3 hereof.
- (d) "Exempt" means an individual for whom participation is not required but only voluntary as a result of one or more of the conditions described in 6214.5 below.
- (e) "Family Member" means all authorized occupants under the lease agreement with DCHA, excluding Live-in-Aides.
- (f) "Head of Household" means the individual(s) who signed the lease agreement with DCHA.
- (g) "Participation Requirement" is the service requirement specified in Section 6214.4(3) below and met through participation in an Approved Service Program.
- (h) "Qualified Assistance Program" is a District of Columbia program funded

under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. §601 *et seq.* or under any other District of Columbia welfare program including a welfare to work program.

6214.3 Approved Neighbor to Neighbor Care Programs.

- (1) The Office of Resident Services shall maintain a list of approved Neighbor to Neighbor sponsors and activities which offer opportunities for service and economic and educational advancement for residents. The list shall be available to the DCHA City Wide Advisory Board and all DCHA Resident Councils as well as from each Property Manager.
- (2) Additional programs and activities may be approved and added to the list from time to time, as follows:
 - (a) A resident may request the addition of a Program to the list by submitting documentation from the Program as to its activities and an authorized representation that it does not engage in political activities and that the resident will not be employed by the Program.
 - (b) Any Resident Council or the City Wide Advisory Board may request the addition of a Program by submitting documentation about the Program as to the scope of its activities and that the Program is not engaged in political activities.
- (3) Approved Programs may include programs and activities such as those listed below.
 - (a) Voluntary Community Service Activities, such as: Serving in leadership positions in the Resident Council, District of Columbia City-Wide Advisory Board, the DHCA Board of Commissioners or the Resident Advisory Committee, but no political activities or voter registration activities.
 - (b) Resident Council or City-Wide Advisory Board sponsored Service Programs
 - (c) Participating in DCHA sponsored community service programs, including but not limited to Orange Hat patrols, building playgrounds and landscaping events;
 - (d) Tutoring or other support program at a local public or private school in the resident's community
 - (e) Participation in church sponsored programs that support the community and individuals in the community
 - (f) Civic and public interest organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, AmeriCorps and Vista;
 - (g) Volunteer and support programs at a local public or non-profit institution, such as the public, charter or private school, Head Start, before or after school programs, childcare center, hospital, clinic,

hospice, nursing home, recreation center or senior center.

- (h) Educational Advancement Programs, such as:
 - (i) English proficiency or literacy classes;
 - (ii) English as a second language classes;
 - (iii) Financial Management,;
 - (iv) Credit Counseling;
 - (v) Household Management; or
 - (vi) Others as approved by DCHA.

6214.4 Voluntary or Required Participation

- (1) All adult members of a household leasing a rental unit in a public housing development exempt or non-exempt under 6214.6, may participate in any Approved Service Program as identified in 6214.3 above.
- (2) Each adult member of a household leasing a rental unit in a public housing development, unless exempt under Subsection 6214.5, shall, as a condition of their continued occupancy, contribute the equivalent of eight (8) hours per month, for a total of at least 96 hours in any given year, in an approved voluntary community service activity as specified in 6214.3.
- (3) Political activities, including campaigning, voter registration, voting or getting out the vote, do not qualify for meeting the Participation Requirement specified in 6214.4(2) above. Work that is compensated as employment does not qualify to meet the Participation Requirement.

6214.5 Exemptions.

- (1) Certain adult household members are exempt from required participation in the Neighbor to Neighbor Care Program if they can document that they are:
 - (a) 62 years old or older;
 - (b) Blind or disabled as determined in accordance with Federal regulations implementing the Social Security Act;
 - (c) The primary caretaker of an individual identified in (b) above;
 - (d) Engaged in one, or a combination of, the work activities identified below for at least the same number of hours per week (or total over the course of a year) as specified in 6214.4(d) above:
 - (i) Employment;
 - (ii) on-the-job training,
 - (iii) job search and job readiness programs, including, but not limited to, registration with the Department of Employment Services and the DCHA Section 3 program.

- (iv) job skills training directly related to employment,
 - (v) vocational educational training,
 - (vi) education directly related to employment, for individuals who have received a high school diploma or a certificate of general equivalence;
 - (vii) satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence,
 - (viii) provision of child care services to an individual who is participating in a Neighbor-to-Neighbor activity or an activity that exempts an individual from required Neighbor-to-Neighbor activities.
- (f) Exempt from having to engage in a work activity under a Qualified Assistance Program,
- (g) A member of a family receiving assistance, under a Qualified Assistance Program, provided that the family has not been found by the administering agency to be in noncompliance with such program;
- (2) DCHA shall review the exempt status of each adult family member as part of the recertification process.

6214.6. Reporting

- (1) All adult family members required to participate in the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program shall provide to DCHA as part of the family's recertification package, a signed statement by each such adult describing the Neighbor-to-Neighbor activities pursued since the household's last recertification and certifying the hours of service provided.
- (2) Each adult family member claiming exemption from required Neighbor-to-Neighbor program participation according to the provisions of 6214.5, above shall provide to DCHA as part of the family's recertification package:
- (a) a signed statement by each adult claiming an exemption certifying either:
 - (i) a statement of the basis of the exemption under 6214.5 (a) – (c) (f) or (g) hereinabove, or
 - (ii) a description of the work activities pursued by each exempt adult member under 6214.5(d) or (e) hereinabove.
- (3) DCHA may require a release from the family member authorizing DCHA to obtain verification of any or all information provided in the household's annual report of Neighbor-to-Neighbor activities and DCHA may, subsequent to submission, seek third party verification of any or all information supporting an exemption.
- (4) The provision of false certifications or information that can not be verified

by a third party shall be cause for a determination of non-compliance in accordance with 6214.8 below.

6214.8 Compliance and noncompliance.

- (1) At least thirty days prior to the household's annual recertification date, DCHA shall determine that the head of household and all adult family members that are not otherwise exempt hereunder have met the Participation Requirement through taking part in one or more Approved Service Programs.
- (2) If DCHA determines that a family member who is required to fulfill the Participation Requirement failed to meet the requirement, DCHA shall provide written notice to the family member of DCHA's determination which shall describe such noncompliance.
- (3) DCHA shall provide an opportunity for the head of household and noncompliant family members to cure the non-compliance by :
 - a) Entering into a written agreement whereby the head of household and/or noncompliant family member agree to a Personal Service Plan that provides for the hours required under 6214.4(2)(a) or 6214.5(d) above, as well as the hours that were not provided in the preceding year, over the next twelve (12) month period;
 - b) Agreeing to a date certain to vacate the leased premises.
- (4) If at the next recertification, any adult family member is still not in compliance, DCHA may serve a notice to quit or cure and, unless the head of household provides third party documentation in form satisfactory to DCHA that the noncompliant family member no longer resides with the family in the unit, then DCHA will seek judicial termination of the household's lease.
- (5) A head of household may request a grievance hearing on DCHA's determination of noncompliance in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 63 of this Title.

Comments on these proposed regulations should be submitted, in writing, to Margaret McFarland, General Counsel, 1133 North Capitol Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002, Suite 210, within (30) days of the date of publication of this notice in the DC Register. Additional copies of these proposed rules are available from the above address.