

P 301.791.3168 F 301.791.2755 www.hawcmd.org

HCV Newsletter

Introductions

Introducing Benjamin Cook, HCV Program Supervisor:



I would like to introduce myself as the new HCV Program Supervisor at the Housing Authority of Washington County. I started in October of 2020. I come to HAWC with over 10 years' experience working at the Franklin County Housing Authority in Franklin County, PA. I managed the Public Housing development in Chambersburg, PA and worked alongside the Section 8 department throughout my time there. I am excited about the opportunity to

utilize my subsidized knowledge and experience to help the greater Washington County community.

I am a graduate of Penn State University and have attended PSU football games since a child. I met my wife, Stefanie, while attending school and we now reside in Waynesboro, PA with our much-loved pets. We enjoy hiking, camping, and traveling the world.

Introducing Shelly Crate, Administrative Assistant:

"Being of service; that is what I do!" Shelly has been assisting the Housing Authority of Washington County (HAWC) in many other ways all while learning about what HAWC does to help those in our community to find safe, decent and affordable housing.

Shelly can answer questions and provide information about the Waiting Lists and field questions about the Housing Choice Voucher program. She works to collect documentation from new voucher holders and assists with the collection of Annual Recertifications and supporting documents.



Important upcoming dates:

Offices Closed for Holiday

Veteran's Day 11/11/21

Thanksgiving 11/25/21-11/26/21

Christmas 12/25/21-

12/27/21

New Year's Eve 12/31/21

Program Updates

YARDI

Effective July 1st, 2021, HAWC updated our tenant/participant software to Yardi. This is a major upgrade for our organization and specifically for the HCV Program. A part of the Yardi system is RentCafe; a user based system wherein participants are able to log in and process recertifications, check HAP payments, contact office staff, review inspections, and request interim changes. Enclosed is your registration letter to activate your account. We look forward to implementing this new software to help our agency mission and goals.

FSS (Family Self-Sufficiency)

Ready to take the next step towards becoming free of welfare assistance programs? Join the Family Self-Sufficiency Program! This program offers low-level case management that helps you identify the goals you want to work towards over the course of 5 years. During that time, your FSS Coordinator will help you identify areas of your life that you can improve, such as your education, employment, and financial outlook. They will help you create goals that will push you towards self-sufficiency while providing you with accountability and support. For more information, please see the included flyer. Contact Allison at apalmer@hawcmd.org.

Portability Requests

Our portability request form is located in our office lobby or can be sent mail or email, by request. As a reminder, portability is the process of 'taking' your voucher from one housing authority location to another. It is important to determine whether the new housing authority is 'absorbing', or taking your voucher, or 'billing', where we still hold your voucher and the housing authority bills us for payment. It is important to note, some housing authorities have higher payment standards and we may not be able to afford the difference in payment. Please contact Benjamin if you have interest in porting.

Recertifications

The HCV department is required to recertify your rent on an annual basis. We have had some difficulties obtaining documentation from participants during the recertification process. We send the recertification packets out more than 90 days prior to the effective date and provide plenty of time for the information to be returned to the office. Below are a couple of pointers to expedite the process:

- Keep bank statements when distributed by the bank
- Keep receipts of all out-of-pocket medical expenses; contact your pharmacy for printouts of payments
- Contact Social Security early to obtain your benefits letter
- Provide court documentation for any child support arrangements
- Print out the unemployment benefit rate from their online website

For any assistance in the recertification process, please contact Shelly.

HCV Contact Information:

Shelly Crate
Administrative Assistance
301-791-3168, ext. 206
scrate@hawcmd.org

Benjamin Cook HCV Program Supervisor 301-791-3168, ext. 225

Allison Palmer FSS Coordinator 301-791-3168, ext. 205 apalmer@hawcmd.org



HAWC Website
We have a new website!
Please visit hawcmd.org
for information.

COVID-19 Update

We are committed to operating in compliance with COVID recommendations and regulations. I am available to meet in person with participants. However, I can also easily be contacted through email at bcook@hawcmd.org or by phone at 301-791-3168, ext. 225. The office is currently open and we are not mandating the use of masks for individuals who have been vaccinated, per guidelines. Should you have any questions about COVID polices, please visit Maryland at https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/ or HUD at https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus.

Administrative Plan Changes

HAWC HCV policies are contained within our Administrative Plan, or 'Admin Plan'. A copy of the Admin Plan can be found on the HCV page on our website www.hawcmd.org. We are required to review and update our plan annually. We performed our review in March 2021 and all changes went into effect July 1, 2021.



As a reminder... Guest Policy

A "Guest" shall be defined as a person that spends more than two consecutive nights in the unit, no more than one time per month, and no more than 14 cumulative days in any 122 month period, without prior written approval from the landlord and from the Housing Authority.

Absence from Unit

Notify the Housing Authority in writing of any absence from the rental unit by *any* family member for 30 consecutive calendar days or more.

Intent to Move

If you wish to move with your voucher, please complete the notice of intent to move from, have your landlord sign it, and provide proper notice per your lease agreement