



Berkeley Housing Authority

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Telephone (510) 981 5470 Fax (510) 981 5480

Item 7B
NEW BUSINESS
Feb. 10, 2022

Office of the Executive Director

To: Honorable Chair and Members of the Berkeley Housing Authority Board
From: Rachel Gonzales-Levine, Acting Executive Director
Subject: Monthly Report

Covid-19 Updates

As reported last month, there have been no additional pandemic-related interim adjustments since November. The average increase for the 157 Covid-19 related adjustments that were processed has remained at \$568 per household per month.

Covid-19 Supplemental Leave: cases surged with the entry of the omicron variant. In early 2021, BHA extended the 2021 Covid-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave (SPSL) to its employees. This entitled employees up to 80 hours of Covid-19 related sick leave from January 2021 to September 2021. The City of Berkeley extended the availability of the SPSL to City employees through June 30, 2022. On January 21, 2022, the Executive Director deemed it necessary to extend the same to BHA employees. The extension of time does not provide additional leave; whatever hours remain from the original 80 SPSL leave will be available for use by each employee accordingly.

Continued Covid Waivers: Staff has submitted our expedited Waivers request to HUD for: (a) Increase in Payment Standard during the HAP contract term—so our clients are not responsible for an overage in rent payment if the landlord insists on a rent increase prior to the contract anniversary date; (b) forgoing a SEMAP score for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022; and (c) increasing Payment Standard to 120% of the FMR. As of Feb. 3, we now have approval for implementing each of these.

Annual Plan

Staff has sent out a Client Newsletter (Attachment 1) recruiting for the Resident Advisory Board (RAB), which the Board will approve in the March 10 Board meeting. Staff is working on writing up the proposed Admin Plan changes, which will be reviewed and commented upon by the RAB, later in March.

As shared with the Board in a recent email, among other proposed changes, staff is drafting proposed Waitlist Preference Categories given that we will open our Tenant-based Waitlist in June, which will include language, as legally allowable, for displaced households.

Note: staff will have to draft an *MTW Supplement* to the Annual Plan, however due to various HUD-prescribed implementation requirements including further opportunities for public input, and timing of those

requirements, that will not be possible to include in the April 2022 Board approval of the Annual Plan, which will be submitted to HUD as required (see MTW update report in this agenda packet).

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs)

Staff continues to work collaboratively with our EHV housing advocate partners, meeting bi-monthly. This helps us to work on troubleshooting challenges that arise, answer questions, and most importantly updating each of the crucial partners on where each referral is in the lease up process. Staff continues to schedule twice-monthly Briefings (BHA voucher orientation) for new voucher holders and their advocates, where vouchers are issued and the lease up process including program obligations are explained.

- As of the writing of this report, BHA now has received 33 referrals of the 51 EHV's awarded, from the County Homelessness Program.
- Of those 33 referrals, 20 have been processed by staff for intake, and have participated in a Briefing, also now in receipt of their vouchers.
- 4 formerly homeless clients are now leased up in Berkeley utilizing their EHV.
- The remaining 9 referrals are in some stage of being reviewed by staff, and once paperwork is complete/background checks cleared, BHA will schedule these applicants for a Briefing.
- The County still is gathering documentation for the remaining 18 EHV referrals for BHA.

City Housing Element

BHA was approached by the City's Land Use Planning Division to participate in a session with other housing-focused city departments, to provide input on the City's update to its Housing Element. The various housing element priorities as presented to this group included: eliminating homelessness, advancing fair housing, protecting tenants/reducing displacement, preserving housing, encouraging infill/transit-oriented development, mitigating constraints on development, providing rental assistance, funding affordable housing, maintain safe housing, ensuring accessibility. Please see Attachment 2 for a copy of the Staff comments on some of these topics.

Dashboard

**Berkeley Housing Authority
50058 Reporting**

		<i>Jul-21</i>	<i>Aug-21</i>	<i>Sep-21</i>	<i>Oct-21</i>	<i>Nov-21</i>	<i>Dec-21</i>
A	<i>Utilization (Leased/Total Units)</i>	1596/1975	1585/1975	1521/1975	1488/1975	1483/1975	1490/1975
	<i>In Units (%)</i>	80.81%	80.25%	77.01%	75.34%	75.09%	75.44%
	<i>In Dollars (%)</i>	96.60%	96.20%	95.10%	94.80%	94.40%	94.40%
A.1	<i>Tenant Based %</i>	78.53%	77.61%	74.66%	73.19%	72.58%	72.58%
	<i>(Leased/Total Units)</i>	1280/1630	1265/1630	1217/1630	1193/1630	1183/1630	1183/1630
	<i>Voucher issued</i>	4	4		8		3
	<i>New Admissions</i>	3	1	2	1	1	
	<i>Voucher expired prior to leasing</i>	2					
	<i>Voucher Ported prior to leasing</i>						
	<i>Vouchers searching</i>	8	11	7	14	13	16
A.2	<i>Project Based%</i>	87.87%	87.87%	87.87%	87.54%	88.20%	90.49%

	(Units)	268/305	268/305	268/305	267/305	269/305	276/305
A.3	VASH (%)	65.00%	65.00%	65.00%	70.00%	77.50%	77.50%
	(Leased/Total Units)	26/40	29/40	29/40	28/40	31/40	31/40
	Voucher issued	4	1				
	New Admissions	3	0	0	1	2	
	Voucher expired prior to leasing		1	0			2
	Voucher Ported prior to leasing						
	Vouchers searching	8	8	8	7	5	3
B	Mainstream (%)	63.74%	67.03%	68.13%	62.64%	68.13%	72.53%
	(Leased/Total Units)	58/91	61/91	62/91	57/91	62/91	66/91
	Voucher issued	4	3		4	2	2
	New Admissions	1	1	4	1	5	4
	Voucher expired prior to leasing		2				2
	Voucher Ported prior to leasing						
	Vouchers searching	20	20	16	19	16	12
C	EVH (%)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	(Leased/Total Units)	0/51	0/51	0/51	0/51	0/51	0/51
	Voucher issued				7	9	7
	New Admissions					1	2
	Voucher expired prior to leasing						
	Voucher Ported prior to leasing						
	Vouchers searching				7	15	20
D	Terminations	31	72	12	11	8	3
E	Success Rate	52%	55%	55%	53%	53%	56%
F	New Landlords/Unit		2	3	2	5	3
G	Mod Rehab %	86.73%	85.71%	83.67%			
	(Units)	85/98	84/98	84/98	82/98	81/98	81/98
H	Project Move Up	9/10	9/10	10-Sep	10/10	10/10	
I	FSS	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)	37 (23 enrolled, 3 graduated, 11 pending)
J	Port Ins (BHA Currently Absorbing)		10	6	2	2	2
	Port Outs (Managed by other PHAs)		0	0	2	3	1
K	Late/Missing Annual Recert	67	74	28	28	23	21
L	Late HQS	559	666	711	711	765	815
M	Rent Increases - Received		6	7	8	30	8
	Rent Increases - Processed		6	7	8	30	8
N	Re-exams - Processed	150	164	180	216	159	173

O	# of disabled in program	899	881	897	904	912	911
	# of elderly in program	681	680	684	687	688	695
	# of families in program	396	397	399	401	403	406
	# of eman. yth in prog	14	14	14	14	15	15
	# of HOPWA in program	10	10	10	10	10	10
P	# of Families on WL	603	603	597	587	579	567

Attachments:

1. Client Winter 2022 Newsletter
2. BHA Comments on Housing Element



Berkeley Housing Authority

BHA Client Newsletter

Winter 2022



BHA wishes you a Healthy, Happy and Peaceful 2022!

Inspections and Unit Safety Reminders: As required by HUD, BHA Annual Inspections have started up again. Please be on the lookout for letters indicating your inspection date. As a safety precaution, our Inspector will be asking whether anyone in the home is experiencing Covid symptoms prior to entering. If the answer is yes, he will not conduct the inspection that day and instead your inspection will be re-scheduled.

Should something not be working in your unit, you do not need to wait until your annual inspection. You (and all landlords) have the right to request a Special Inspection. Please give your landlord or property manager enough time to respond to your call for service, and if no response after allowing for sufficient time, please contact Krystal at kcoleman@cityofberkeley.info or 510-981-5490 to schedule a Special Inspection. More on unit safety below!

Staying Warm and Safe: If your heater is not working, **do not use your stove or anything meant for outdoor use to heat your home!** It is dangerous and could lead to a fire. If you have access to a space heater, **do not plug it in using an extension cord, as it is a fire hazard!** Space heaters should only be plugged directly into a properly working outlet.

A word about smoke detectors: each bedroom and common area in your unit must have a working smoke detector; if you have gas appliances, you must have a working carbon monoxide detector too. Lack of a working smoke/carbon monoxide detector is a very common fail item. Please check the batteries on these devices and use the test button to ensure proper functioning as soon as possible—to ensure your family's safety!

2022 Resident Advisory Board: Annually, BHA updates our Section 8 “Administrative Plan” which guides staff on our program operations. As part of the process we appoint a Resident Advisory Board (RAB), who is asked to review the proposed changes and provide comment during a meeting held in March (via Zoom). RAB members receive \$50 for participation in the meeting.

To volunteer for the 2022 RAB, please contact us in writing by February 18 at 4:00 pm with the following, via email to caguilar-vasquez@cityofberkeley.info:

- your name, address, phone number, and email (if you have an email address).

If you do not have access to email please place the info. listed above in an envelope addressed to Celinda Aguilar-Vasquez, and into one of the drop boxes inside or outside the BHA office building, 1947 Center Street (more on drop boxes below).

Or, you can mail by regular mail – must be postmarked by Feb. 18:

BHA - RAB
1947 Center Street, 5th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

If you have any questions about the RAB, please contact Celinda Aguilar-Vasquez: caguilar-vasquez@cityofberkeley.info or 510-981-5483. NOTE: we welcome all, including those who have served in prior RABs!

Document Dropboxes! Located just outside the front door of our office at 1947 Center Street, and inside the building, to the left of the front doors, are BHA’s two document drop boxes for BHA clients and landlords. The drop boxes are checked regularly Mondays through Thursdays. Please use the box when you are not able to email or fax documents to staff.

NOTE: if the outside drop box is full, **do not attempt to shove or stuff the exterior drop box.** Instead wait until the building opens and use the interior drop box near the left hand side elevator on the ground floor. Emails are listed below; our fax number is 510-981-5480.

Contacting BHA Staff: please reach out to staff with questions, or to schedule a phone meeting, and to provide your completed forms/paperwork.

Staff	Position/Client Last Name Begins with:	Phone: 510-981-	Email: @cityofberkeley.info
Lynda DeShazier	Housing Specialist A, B, C, D, K, L, O	5482	ldeshazier
Tracy Jackson	Housing Specialist E, F, G, H, I, J, M, N	5486	tjackson
Althea Maybon	Housing Specialist Mc, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z	5478	amaybon
Tilda Barnes	Housing Choice Voucher Supervisor/ New Contracts/ Ports/Mod Rehab.	5484	tbarnes
Tyra Pumphrey	Receptionist	5470	tpumphrey
Krystal Coleman	Inspections Desk	5490	kcoleman
Celinda Aguilar-Vasquez	Acting Mgmt. Analyst/Exec. Assistant/FSS Coordinator	5483	caguilar-vasquez
Jesy Yturralde	Finance Manager	5488	jyturralde
Jayla Fuentesilla	Office Asst. II/Accounting	5474	bfuentesilla
Maggie Wang	Accountant	5477	ywang
Rachel Gonzales-Levine	Acting Executive Director	5485	rgonzales-levine

Other important Resources:

- For anyone looking for information about **Covid booster shots and vaccines**, please visit: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/covax/>
- If you are looking for **Covid testing information**, please visit: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/gettested/>
- Note: BHA remains closed to the public, but you may schedule a **contactless appointment** if needed. Visit our website for the appointment request form: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/BHA/Home/Forms for Owners and Tenants.aspx>
- BHA will be **closed Feb. 14 and 21** (Lincoln and Presidents Day). Office is also closed every Friday.

BHA Comments on City of Berkeley's Housing Element Goals

Protect Tenant Rights:

BHA will be opening up our voucher waitlist this year; we are exploring the legality of a preference category for former Berk. residents who have been displaced.

Maintain Safe Housing:

There are several BHA clients with dangerous hoarding challenges. Can the City set aside funds for a collaborative project between BHA/legal advocacy org/social services agency to help these clients (ultimately making their building and neighbors safer)?

Preserve Housing:

BHA is interested in how owners of vacant buildings can be incentivized to partner with BHA to house our voucher holders.

Ensure Accessibility:

Agreed. There are too few units that are wheelchair accessible.

Provide Rental Assistance:

BHA struggles to compete in the open market in attracting landlords with vacant units. Are there tax break incentives the City would consider? Other breaks on City fees/exemptions?