



Community Development Commission
of Mendocino County

HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

FROM TODD CRABTREE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of everyone at the Community Development Commission of Mendocino County (CDC), I would like to welcome you to our first newsletter. I hope you will find a lot of useful information for you and your families.

Going into 2015, Congress has just passed a budget for their fiscal year. That means we know our funding for housing programs until the end of September, 2015 (The federal government fiscal year is from October 1 – September 30). They basically funded housing programs at the same levels as last year. This means we expect to continue with the same levels of housing assistance for this year.

The need far outweighs the amount of assistance we can provide. We have had to close the wait list for Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) and do not see it reopening this year with these funding levels. We do have an additional seven vouchers for veterans this year, but these will be the only new ones. Those are administered in cooperation with the Veterans Administration.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and I hope all of you have a great 2015.

BIENNIAL INSPECTIONS FOR HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER AND HUD-VASH PROGRAMS

Section 220 of the 2014 Appropriations Act allows CDC to inspect assisted dwelling units once every two years instead of annually.

In accordance with CDC's administrative plan units will be selected for two year inspections if the assisted unit:

- Passed the previous annual inspection on the first scheduled inspection date, and
- In the interim there have been no verifiable or documented complaints from the landlord or participant.

Please keep in mind it is the family's and landlord/owner's responsibility to ensure the unit remains in compliance with the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) between inspections. The family must not cause a breach in HQS pertaining to tenant supplied utilities or appliances furnished by the tenants, or cause tenant/guest damages to the unit or premises beyond normal wear and tear.

CDC would like to encourage both the landlord and participant to report in writing any breaches or potential breaches in the Housing Quality Standards directly to CDC.

NOTICE FROM LEGAL SERVICES

Tenants' Rights in Foreclosed Homes

This article discusses the current state laws that protect California tenants living in foreclosed homes.

In 2012, California passed the Homeowner Bill of Rights (HBOR), effective January 1, 2013. Similar to the federal Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA), the HBOR extended California's basic notice period for tenants in foreclosed homes to 90 days. Under the HBOR, as long as the former homeowner is not living in the home with the tenant, the tenant is entitled to 90 days' notice.

Under the HBOR, a tenant with a lease now also has the right to remain in the home until the end of the lease term, and the new owner is required to honor the terms of the lease unless the tenancy is not a "bona fide" tenancy as defined by the HBOR.

The HBOR also added a number of other rights for post-foreclosure tenants. The HBOR makes it clear that post-foreclosure owners have all the same duties as the former landlord, including maintaining safe conditions at the home. New owners of rental property, including post-foreclosure owners, have always been required to inform tenants how to pay rent and how to contact them. The HBOR prohibits new owners from *evicting* tenants for unpaid rent that accrued before the owner gave notice of new ownership; in other words, new owners may no longer serve a 3 day notice to pay rent or quit for back rent unless they actually informed the tenant where and how to pay the rent. Tenants have additional rights when/if an eviction ("unlawful detainer") case is filed against them.

For additional information or if you have questions, contact Legal Services of Northern California. The LSNC-Ukiah Office provides free legal services to low-income residents and seniors of Mendocino and Lake Counties. You may reach the LSNC-Ukiah Office at (707) 462-1471 or toll free at (877) 529-7700.

Legal Disclaimer: The information in this article does not constitute legal advice, and the author and LSNC are not acting as your attorney. Do not rely on this information without consulting an attorney or the appropriate agency about your rights in a particular situation. The author and LSNC shall not be held responsible for any use to which the information in this column is put.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS FROM THE HOUSING INSPECTOR

- Keep anything flammable at least 3 feet from heating equipment, such as the furnace, fireplace, woodstove or portable space heater.
- Have a 3 foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected yearly by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn off and unplug portable heaters before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Always use manufacturer specified fuel for fuel burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before placing them into a metal container. Keep container a safe distance from your home.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.

DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT NEWS

Interested in reducing your energy bills? CDC has a program to help!

CDC's Development and Sustainability Department offers the Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) program for lower income residents in Mendocino and Lake Counties. Qualified customers receive a no cost energy audit and energy education. Selected energy efficiency measures are installed at no cost to residents.

Here are a few of the most common energy efficiency measures eligible for installation:

- * New energy efficient lighting
- * Hot water saving measures
- * Refrigerator replacement (for qualified refrigerators)
- * Weather Stripping

CDC has contracted with Rural Communities Housing Development Corporation (RCHDC) to implement the Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) Program. If you are interested in this opportunity, please schedule an appointment with RCHDC by calling (707) 463-1975; for English dial ext. 128 and for Spanish dial ext. 113. ESA is a program of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.

HOUSING PROGRAM SPECIALISTS REMINDERS & TIPS

A participant's portion of rent is determined by a household's income. Participants must report ALL income or occupancy (someone moves in or out) changes in writing to CDC within 10 calendar days. Failing to report changes may result in an application for assistance being denied. Tenants/Participants who fail to report a change in income may owe money to CDC and/or have their assistance terminated. Please take the time to report income changes according to the Family Obligations.

ANNUAL RECERTIFICATIONS BY MAIL

Annual Reexaminations by mail – CDC conducts reexaminations by mail for elderly families and/or disabled families when 100 percent of the families' income consists of fixed income such as: Social Security, Supplemental Social Security and Social Security Disability (SSI / SSDI) income or Federal, State, local and private pension plans. Other periodic payments received from annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, disability or death benefits, and other types of periodic receipts that are of substantially the same amounts year to year may qualify for reexamination by mail.

MAIL IN RECERTIFICATION TIPS

- Double check the recertification application cover sheet to verify you are providing all documentation which pertains to your household.
- Double check all pages (front and back) for signatures.
- Provide all pages of bank statements.
- Provide all pages of utility bills which you are responsible to pay.
- If you are reporting medical expenses, including over the counter medications, supplements or eye glasses, etc... further instruction can be found on page 5 of the recertification application.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:
[HTTP://CDHOUSING.ORG](http://cdhousing.org)

**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
OF MENDOCINO
COUNTY**

Phone: (707) 463-5462

FAX: (707) 463-4188

Website: <http://cdhousing.org>

Business Hours:

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Monday – Thursday

**Committed to providing safe,
sustainable, affordable housing
within our community.**

The Community Development Commission of Mendocino County operates many housing programs for Mendocino County including Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly Section 8) Permanent Supportive Housing (formerly Shelter Plus Care), and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program.

We also own and operate many homes and projects throughout Mendocino County.

In addition to this, we administer programs that provide funding for home purchases and housing rehabilitation. Our agency also offers energy efficiency programs for homeowners, businesses and local governments with the assistance of Pacific Gas & Electric Company. And we assist the City of Ukiah with their economic development programs.

Community Development Commission of
Mendocino County

1076 N. State Street

Ukiah, CA 95482

TO: