Procedure for Pre-Occupancy Briefings

# Pre-Occupancy Orientation Sessions: General Information

To ensure that families moving into the new homes at the Authority have the best possible quality of life, PHA has decided that every family shall receive a pre-occupancy briefing. Accordingly, before signing their leases, everyone moving into any public housing or project-based voucher development will receive pre-occupancy training. In the classes, applicants will have an opportunity to meet some of their new neighbors, get an accurate understanding of PHA’s expectations, and get their questions about their new homes and their leases answered.

Topics to be covered include an orientation to the neighborhood, each development itself, and the rental units. The trainers will address the roles and responsibilities of the Housing Authority, the manager, and the resident. Special emphasis will be placed upon the various policies and procedures affecting the community as a whole and individual households. Training will also familiarize new residents with resources available in the greater community.

**Orientation Sessions**

The following material will be covered in the course of each Orientation Session

Introduction to your new home

* Walking tour of the site
* Care of the unit - surfaces, fixtures and appliances
* Services provided by Property Management
* Additional revitalization planned in the neighborhood
* Schools, commercial services and houses of worship

###### Community Facilities and Services

* Description of services to be provided at each facility
* Transportation and parking
* Daycare and before and after school care
* Educational center
* Job training and placement center
* Self-sufficiency connection
* Services for students/ drop-out prevention
* Health care referrals
* Historic Exhibit and oral history project
* Supportive services for elderly residents
* Nutrition
* Health screening and referral services
* Special transportation

###### Safety and Security

* Applicant screening and lease enforcement
* Criminal History Checks
* Informal Hearings for Rejected Applicants
* Annual Credit Checks
* Lease Termination for Criminal Activity
* Physical security features of the site
* Police protection and other security
* Accident prevention and reporting

###### The PHA Rental Agreement and Grievance Procedures

* Terms and Conditions
* Management Obligations
* Resident Obligations
* Visitors
* Criminal activity
* Housekeeping Standards
* Community Living
* Grievance Procedure (PH) and Informal Hearing Procedure (PBV)

###### Comfort and Utility Conservation

* Utilities provided by the development/management
* Resident paid utilities
* Saving utilities
* Making minor home repairs

###### Getting the most out of your new home

* The Resident Council
* Participating in services and programs
* Community gardens
* Recreation, parks and fun

# Description of Housing at the development

# The features and amenities of each new development will be thoroughly explained.

# Maintaining a Clean and Healthy Living Environment for Every Family

All families living at the development are required to meet Housekeeping Standards. PHA emphasizes housekeeping both because it wishes to preserve the development in the best possible condition and because of the difficulty of exterminating thoroughly in any multifamily development. If even one family in the development fails to keep their apartment clean, their neighbors are likely to suffer.

Presented below are PHA’s required housekeeping standards for each room. If maintaining a clean home is difficult for a resident because of a disability[[1]](#footnote-1), management staff will attempt to link the resident with an affordable housecleaning service as a reasonable accommodation. In any case, all residents are responsible for meeting housekeeping standards, whether they clean their own homes or someone else cleans for them.

## Floors and Hallways

All floors and carpet (provided by PHA) must be free of dirt, grease, litter, debris, paint, stains, cigarette ashes and butts, and food.

## Ceilings

All ceilings must be free of cobwebs, smoke stains, masking tape and any other form of adhesives. The smoke detectors must be in working condition and contain working batteries at all times. It is the resident’s responsibility to replace the batteries when needed.

## Windows and Screens

All window glass, screens, and windowsills shall be free of dirt, mold, accumulation of dust, and decoration. All windows must open smoothly and easily. Window coverings (blinds, curtains, shades, drapes) must be clean and in usable condition.

## Electrical Fixtures, Outlets, Baseboards, and Cover-plates

All electrical equipment and appliances must be free of debris, grease, and dust.

## Doors, Hardware, Handrails, Room Trim

All doors, knobs, locks, doorstops, hardware, handrails, and room trim must be intact, and kept free of dirt, dust, and grease.

## Stoves and Ovens

To prevent fire hazards from grease and food spills that will attract insects, all parts of the exterior and interior of the stove (knobs, burners, grates, trim rings, oven door, and side panels), must be kept clean and free of grease, food spills, and burnt-on food.

## Refrigerator

The interior and exterior of the refrigerator must be kept clean, without sticky food substances on shelves, spoiled foods or accumulated food spills. Frost accumulation shall be no more than one-Central inch thick in the freezer compartment.

## Food Storage

All perishable food shall be properly refrigerated. All food not needing refrigeration must be stored in closed containers.

## Shower Walls, Bathtub, Sink, Medicine Cabinet, Faucets, and Bathroom Floors

These items shall be free of mold, mildew, grime, stains, or other residue.

## Toilet

The interior and exterior of the toilet bowl, as well as the surrounding floor area, seat, and tank, shall be free from all stains, dirt, residue, and odors.

## Exterior Property Areas

* Residents who have yards must keep the yard free of all debris, garbage, litter, or trash regardless of how it was put on the property. Exterior property areas include yards, patios, parking lots, grass, balconies, decks, window wells, and other outdoor areas assigned to apartment.
* Certain yard maintenance will be performed by the property manager. Residents shall be responsible for the remaining work needed to keep their yards clean and neat, including the trimming of bushes and hedges, weeding, cutting grass so that it does not exceed five inches in height. Residents must also remove the accumulation of leaves and cut grass left in yard.

**Pest Extermination Procedures**

Residents should immediately report any insects or rodents to the property manager. The property manager will arrange for their apartment to be exterminated. If they are able to do so, residents should prepare for this treatment by

* Removing all food, dishes, and utensils from cabinets.
* Washing the area behind and beneath the refrigerator and stove prior to the exterminator’s arrival.
* Removing all towels and cosmetics from bathroom shelves
* Moving all furniture one foot out from the wall so that the exterminator has access to the baseboards

After an apartment has been treated, residents should not wash away pesticides. If left undisturbed, pesticides will continue to work for up to six weeks after being applied. Cockroaches need water, food, shelter, and warmth to live. In order to eliminate cockroaches, follow these housekeeping tips

* Keep the apartment clean. Wash away all grease, food spills, and crumbs.
* Keep dishes clean. Do not let dishes stack up in sink. After each meal, clean and dry the dishes.
* All food should be stored in a tight container.
* Do not leave water in sinks or tubs for insects to drink. Report all water leaks.
* Throw out trash every single day.
* Keep your apartment cool. Bugs like warm environments.
* Keep moisture in home low. Air your apartment out if it gets humid after cooking or showering.

If a resident has an allergy to certain pesticides, the property manager should be informed. There is usually an alternative pesticide that can be used that will not cause health problems for the resident.

**Property staff’s Responsibilities for Maintaining a Safe and Healthy Living Environment**

The staff’s responsibilities focus on making each family's living environment safe and healthy. Activities include:

## Common Areas

Property management will maintain the common areas of all buildings and grounds in a decent, safe, and sanitary condition.

### Repairs

Property management will make all necessary repairs to apartments, but, it is the resident’s responsibility to report need for repairs. Property management will make all repairs to electrical, plumbing, heating, sanitary, elevator, and ventilation systems required because of normal wear and tear. Repairs that are needed because of carelessness or intentional damage by the resident will be billed to the responsible household. Failure to pay such charges is grounds for lease termination.

## Non-Tenant Controlled Utilities

Property management will provide and maintain electrical, plumbing, sanitary, heating, water supply systems. Appliances, will also be maintained by PHA.

## Trash Collection

Property management will provide a container for trash disposal, and the cost to haul away trash is part of the utility cost for which residents receive an “allowance for utilities”.

## Maintain Building Codes

Property management is obligated to maintain the buildings and site in a manner that complies will all applicable building codes, housing codes, and HUD requirements.

# The Lease

The lease is a legal and binding contract between PHA and the resident family. It specifies family-related information (how many members are in the household, each member’s name, birth date, social security number, and relationship to the head of household; unit address, occupancy date; utilities and appliances; and an emergency maintenance telephone number for maintenance related problems during off hours). It also includes the terms and conditions applicable to all residents. The Lease was written in accordance with federal regulations.

## **Utility Services**

Residents responsible for paying the utility service directly to the utility company must abide by all regulations of the utility company. Failure to pay utility bills is a violation of the PHA lease and is grounds for eviction.

# Important Addresses and Telephone Numbers

## ***Emergency Numbers***

All emergencies must be reported to your management office. All emergencies that result from faulty PHA equipment or property (faulty electrical lines, water leak) as well as emergencies that result in property damage should be reported the maintenance office immediately.

* Fire, Police, Ambulance
* Non-emergency police assistance
* Non-emergency fire department number
* PHA emergency maintenance (after hours/during the weekend)
* Poison Control Center
* Suicide Prevention
* Emergency Social Service attention (after hours and weekends)

# *PHA Phone Numbers and Staff Contact*

* Manager’s Name
* Assistant Manager’s Name
* Office Phone Number
* Hours of management office
* Sign Language Interpreters:
* Resident Initiatives Office
* Resident Organizations
* Management Offices

# *Community Services*

* The Boys and Girls Club
* Crime Victim Crises Center
* Family Services
* Public Transportation
* Senior Transportation
* Resident’s Union
* Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment (PHA’s EEO Officer)
* HEADSTART
* Childcare Referrals
* Poison Control Center
* Public Health Department
* Blood Lead Level Testing

1. Persons with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations, which are changes in procedures or practices that will enable such persons to participate fully in PHA’s housing and non-housing programs. Any person with a disability may request such an accommodation or a modification in their unit. PHA is not obliged to make modifications that create an undue financial and administrative burden or that represent a fundamental alteration in their programs. Thus, using the example above, PHA staff will attempt to link a resident with a housekeeping service, but PHA will not provide housekeeping services. This would be a fundamental alteration in the nature of PHA’s service. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)