

Newsletter

We are excited to announce that the Housing Authority applied for and was successful in obtaining financing through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's FHA Guarantee 221 (d)(4) Loan Program for the construction of 140 units of Affordable Housing!



Pictured: Henry Rodriguez, Board Vice-Chairman, Oscar Ramirez, Board Commissioner, Juan Maldonado, Board Commissioner, Mike Lopez, Executive Director, and Noe Reyes, Board Chairman



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Mike Lopez, Executive Director

Adela M. Gonzalez, Deputy Director/CFO

Dora Quintanilla, Executive Secretary

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

Noe Reyes, Chairman

Henry Rodriguez, Vice-Chairman

Cris M. Torres, Commissioner

Juan J. Maldonado, Commissioner

Oscar J. Ramirez, Commissioner

MANAGERS:

Teresa Villa, Section 8 HCV Program

Patricia Moya, Northside Apartments

Dora L. Carrizales, Memorial Apartments

Evy Balensiefen, Public Housing Manager

Jerry Garcia, Maintenance Director

Groundbreaking Ceremony!



On Friday, December 18, 2020, the Housing Authority held a Groundbreaking Ceremony to kick off the construction of the Hacienda San Miguel Apartments that will be built in the City of Donna. The project is a collaboration between the Hidalgo County Housing Authority, the City of Donna, the Economic Development Corporation, and the Donna Housing Authority.



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (SECTION 8) PROGRAM

The Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program announces that we will re-open the waiting list only during the month of March 2021. Applications may be picked up at the office daily or downloaded from the website. The applications will also be accepted daily by placing them in the available slot located at the HCV office.



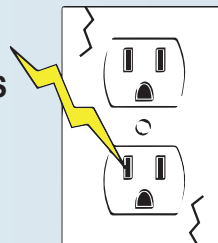
The HCV Program introduces our new Housing Quality Standards Inspector, Mr. Tony Garcia. Mr. Garcia is a local Weslaco resident.

Mr. Garcia returns to our Housing Authority with many years of knowledge and experience with the program.

Our new HQS inspector would like to note the important items to look for during the HQS inspections, we have listed commonly failed items below:

MOST COMMON HQS FAILED ITEMS

- Non-functional smoke detectors
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Railings that are not present where required
- Peeling exterior and interior paint
- Trip hazards caused by installed floor coverings
- Cracked or broken windowpanes
- Inoperable burners on stoves or inoperable range hoods
- Missing burner control knobs
- Inoperable bathroom fan / no ventilation
- Leaking faucets or plumbing
- No temperature/pressure relief on water heaters
- No dead bolt locks and no locks on windows
- No peep hole on door
- Floors should be sound and firm



It is important that these items are taken care of in the unit while it is under the Housing Program or please look out for these items when you are searching for a new unit. The HCV Program Department would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year.



PUBLIC HOUSING NEWS

The holidays came a little different this year.



**Elizabeth Saldivar,
FSS Coordinator**

The families of Public Housing were practicing safe measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we did not forget Christmas for the kids! Goodie bags filled with candies, fruits and items donated from local agencies were provided to the families in a "Drive Thru" Christmas event.



PH Volunteers

Thank you to the volunteers who helped us with the event! Your time and generosity helped us make this a successful event for our residents.



We are excited to showcase our new marquee that was recently installed at Villa San Juanita Rutledge in San Juan! Thank you to Jerry Garcia, Maintenance Director for working hard to find a local vendor to create this beautiful design. Our new marquee is located at the entrance of the development. Landscaping coming soon!

REMINDER TO ALL TENANTS:

If you have not removed your holiday decorations from outside of the units, please remove them. Christmas lights and all other decorations should have been removed since early January. Let us continue to keep the development clean and remove any debris from the yards. If you need to have the maintenance department pick up items like unwanted furniture, from the curb, please call the office to place a work order.

Also, we accept public housing applications daily.

If you know of anyone who is interested in applying, please refer them to my office.

Be safe and practice social distancing.

**Evvy Balensiefen
Public Housing Manager**

Northside Apartments

On Wednesday, November 25, 2020,
Northside Apartments assisted Cigna Health Spring
to distribute turkeys with trimmings to our senior/elderly
residents that met their age qualifications.

We would like to thank Cigna Health Spring for their
contributions to our senior/elderly residents!



On Monday, December 21, 2020, we hosted a Christmas Drive-Thru event
held at our community room parking lot. Goodie bags filled with candy,
chips, drinks, and cookies were handed out to all residents.
Toys and gifts were also given out.



Thank you to all our residents for attending our events
and adhering to CDC safety guidelines!

A special thank you to the Northside Apts. Staff for making this event possible!

Memorial Apartments

The new swimming pool is well on its way to being complete. It will be located behind the bus stop and will be restricted for residents' use only. The pool will have perimeter fencing with a keypad installed at the gate entrance.



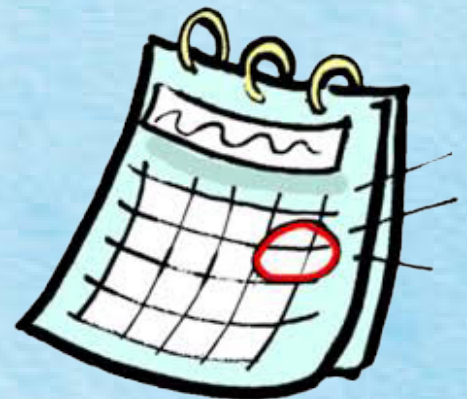
We ask that parents do their part and watch their children closely and keep them away from this area. The safety of all children is very important to us!



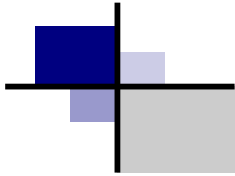
We are also pleased to announce that we are currently in the process of leasing available units in the 400 series. This section is nearly 100% complete, with construction crews putting the final touches on the last nine units and parking lot.



A reminder to everyone to come in for your scheduled appointments or call to re-schedule (956-686-4771). It is very important that all certification paperwork is completed with your Caseworker before families can be converted to the Tax Credit Program.



Dora L. Carrizales
Development Manager



Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo FSS Program coordinators continue to guide FSS Participants to reach their Self-Sufficiency goals. At this time we are accepting applications from HCV Section 8 clients interested in enrolling.

If you.....

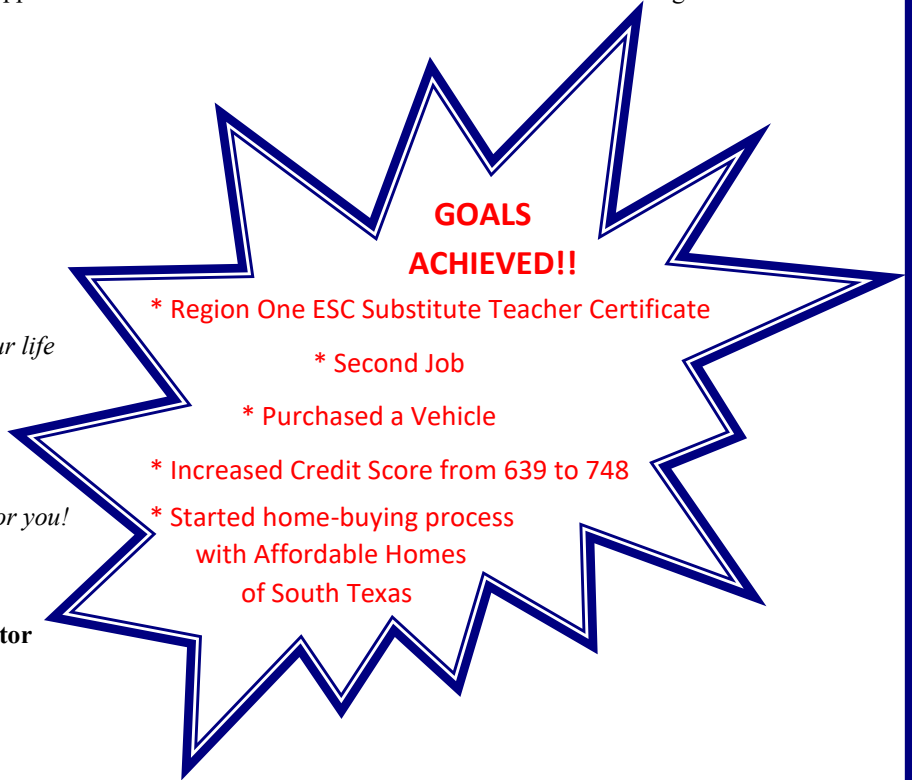
- ⇒ *Are 18 years of age or older*
- ⇒ *Live in HCV Section 8 or Public Housing*
- ⇒ *Want to further your education*
- ⇒ *Want to obtain a job*
- ⇒ *Want career counseling and direction in your life*
- ⇒ *Want to save money for your future*
- ⇒ *Want to become financially independent*

.....then the Family Self-Sufficiency Program is for you!

Please contact:

Andrea Roldan, Section 8 HCV FSS Coordinator

(956) 968-8669



IMPORTANT NOTICE December 2020—June 2021 GRADUATES

Do you have a son or a daughter that is graduating this upcoming year (Dec. 2020-June 2021) and plans to further their education? If so, please contact the individuals listed below to get more information about the different scholarship applications, requirements, deadlines, etc....

We encourage you to take advantage of this great opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact:

Andrea Roldan
andrear@hidalgocha.org
FSS Coordinator
Section 8 HCV Program
1800 N. Texas Blvd.
Weslaco, Texas 78599
(956) 968-8669

or

Elizabeth Saldivar
elizabeths@hidalgocha.org
FSS Coordinator (Public Housing)
Villa Sandoval-Longoria
1102 Lilia Dr.
Weslaco, Texas 78599
(956) 520-8122

Public Housing FSS Program

We continue to work with agencies that provide much needed guidance in assisting our FSS families to become Self-Sufficient. The Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo extends a big thank you to the following agencies that helped out this last quarter: Access Esperanza, Cigna, Denta Quest, El Buen Pastor United Methodist Church-Edinburg, MHP SALUD, Nuestra Clinica Del Valle, Rio Grande Valley Empowerment Zone, Rio Grande Valley Literacy Center, Work Force Solutions and the 211 program. Here are some pictures of our events!



El Buen Pastor United Methodist Church
Food Box Donations
Villa Sandoval-Longoria, Weslaco



RGV Literacy Center
Food Box Donations
Villa Sandoval-Longoria,
Weslaco



Villa Sandoval Longoria
volunteers helping
prepare gift bags
donated by Cigna for
senior residents



Letters to Santa at Villa
Sandoval Longoria, Weslaco



MHP Health and Nutrition
Classes at Villa San Juanita
Rutledge, San Juan



MHP SALUD Graduates at
Valley View Apartments



La Palmilla Homes
coloring books and
colors giveaway to the
children



Christmas Bingo
participants at Delta
Estates Apartments



FSS Participant receiving MHP
SALUD certificate of completion at
Villa Sandoval-Longoria, Weslaco



Arts and crafts sessions at
Delta Estates Apartments



"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure."
- Colin Powell

Bianca C. Garcia

College of Education & P-16 Integration
Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies

In closing out the year 2020, the FSS program would like to congratulate Bianca Garcia for completing her Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Dec.10, 2020. She is currently working on her final goal of finding a full-time job within her field of study, doubling her current income, and becoming self-sufficient.

The FSS program is looking forward to starting the New Year with new Zoom classes that will help FSS participants achieve their FSS goals. These new classes will include financial literacy, health and fitness, nutrition, ESL, GED, U.S. Citizenship, resume writing and job fairs with Workforce Solutions, COVID-19 health updates and information, growing your FSS escrow and preparing for home ownership (Affordable Homes of South Texas).

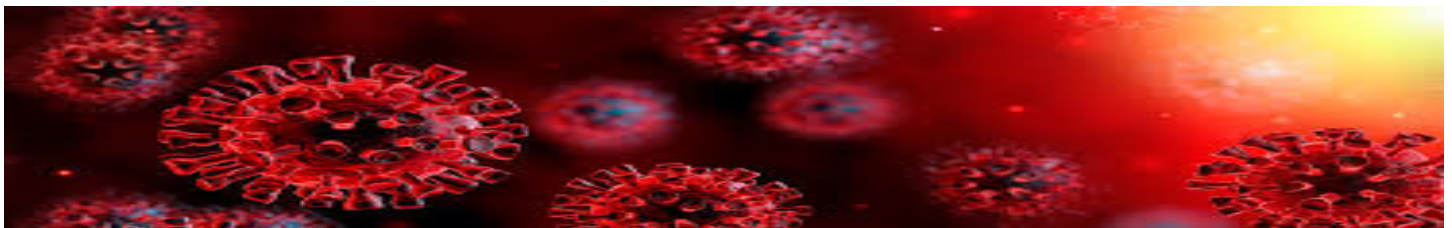
If you are interested in participating in these classes or have any questions concerning the FSS program, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Saldivar, FSS Coordinator at (956) 520-8122.

Maintenance Department

Greetings Esteemed Tenants,

I hope this message finds you all well and in good spirits! As you know we are in the midst of a global pandemic and the Housing Authority of the County of Hidalgo recognizes that we are living in extraordinary times. That is why we have taken extraordinary measures to ensure the health and safety of our residents and staff as we continue to serve our community's needs.

It is critical that we all work together to help quell this pandemic. Small practices such as wearing face coverings and frequent hand washing can make a huge difference in preventing the spread of COVID-19. We ask that you please continue to follow all CDC recommendations when visiting our facilities as well as when receiving maintenance services in your homes. Together we can get through this pandemic!



Memorial Apartments

Construction Updates!

Construction and Renovations!

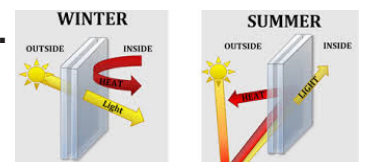
Work in the 600's and 700's is moving along as well. The first of these units are scheduled to be turnover for occupancy in February.



Villa Sandoval Longoria (Public Housing)

Great News!!

The contract for Phase 2 of our low-e window replacement project is being finalized. Residents in units 1-17 will be receiving construction notices soon. Please be sure to read and follow all instructions carefully.





HIDALGO COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY

UTILITY ASSISTANCE

The Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) is a utility assistance program designed to assist low-income households in meeting their immediate energy needs and to encourage consumers to control energy costs for years to come through energy education. It provides relief to those low income, elderly and/or disabled households most vulnerable to the high cost of energy for home heating and cooling. Furthermore, it provides assistance in an energy-related crisis or during severe weather situations.

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION

Documentation for every household member is required

- ❑ Permanent Resident:
 - ❑ Residency Card
- ❑ U.S. Citizen:
 - ❑ Birth certificate with D.L. or ID
 - ❑ U.S. Passport
 - ❑ Certificate of Naturalization/Citizenship with D.L. or ID



APPLICANTS MUST:

- Be residents of Hidalgo County, Texas
- Present government issued identification
 - Meet income and program criteria
 - Complete an application

For more information, please call (956) 383-6240



HIDALGO COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY

ASISTENCIA DE SERVICIOS PÚBLICOS

El Programa Integral de Asistencia Energética (CEAP) es un programa de asistencia de servicios públicos diseñado para ayudar a los hogares de bajos ingresos a satisfacer sus necesidades energéticas inmediatas y alentar a los consumidores a controlar los costos de energía durante los próximos años a través de la educación energética. Proporciona alivio a los hogares de bajos ingresos, ancianos y / o discapacitados más vulnerables al alto costo de la energía para la calefacción y el aire acondicionado del hogar. Además, brinda asistencia en una crisis relacionada con la energía o durante situaciones climáticas severas.

FORMAS ACEPTABLES DE IDENTIFICACIÓN

Documentation for every household member is required

- ❑ Permanent Resident:
 - ❑ Residency Card
- ❑ U.S. Citizen:
 - ❑ Birth certificate with D.L. or ID
 - ❑ U.S. Passport
 - ❑ Certificate of Naturalization/Citizenship with D.L. or ID



LOS SOLICITANTES DEBEN:

- Ser residentes del condado de Hidalgo, Texas
- Presentar identificación emitida por el gobierno
- Cumplir con los criterios de ingresos y del programa
 - Complete una solicitud

Para obtener más información, llame a (956) 383-6240

What You Can do if You are at Higher Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19

Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness?



Based on what we know now, those at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- Older adults

People of any age with the following:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
- Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Smoking
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Here's What You Can do to Help Protect Yourself



Limit contact with other people as much as possible.



Wash your hands often.



Avoid close contact (6 feet, which is about 2 arms lengths) with others outside your household.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.



Avoid all unnecessary travel.

Call your healthcare professional if you are sick.

For more information on steps you can take to protect yourself, see CDC's [How to Protect Yourself](#).

