

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SELF SUFFICIENCY POLICY

Lee County Housing Authority(LCHA)

The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires that all non-exempt (see definitions) Public housing adult residents (18 – 62 years of age) contribute eight (8) hours per month of community service (Volunteer work) or participate in eight (8) hours of training, counseling, classes or other activities that help an individual toward self sufficiency and economic independence. This is a requirement of the LCHA’s Public Housing Lease.

Community Service (24CFR 960.601):

The performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increases resident self-responsibility in the community. Community service is not employment and may not include political activities.

Volunteer work, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Work at a local institution including but not limited to: school, child care center, hospital, hospice, recreation center, senior center, adult day care center, homeless shelter, indigent feeding program, cooperative food bank, etc.;
- Work with a non-profit organization that serves PHA residents or their children such as: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys or Girls clubs, 4-H program, PAL, Garden Center, Community cleanup programs, beautification programs, other youth or senior organizations;
- Work at the Authority to help improve physical conditions;
- Work at the Authority to help with children's programs;
- Work at the Authority to help with senior programs;
- Helping neighborhood groups with special projects;
- Working through resident organization to help other residents with problems, serving as an Officer in a Resident organization, serving on the Resident Advisory Board; and
- Caring for the children of other residents so they may perform volunteer activities.

NOTE: Political activity is excluded.

Self Sufficiency Activities - activities that include, but are not limited to:

- Job readiness programs;
- Job training programs;
- GED classes;
- Substance abuse or mental health counseling;
- English proficiency or literacy (reading) classes;
- Apprenticeships;
- Budgeting and credit counseling;
- Any kind of class that helps a person toward economic independence; and
- Full time student status at any school, college or vocational school.



Exempt Adult - an adult member of the family who

- Is 62 years of age or older;
- Has a disability that prevents him/her from being gainfully employed;
- Is the caretaker of a disabled person;
- Is working at least 30 hours per week; or
- Is participating in welfare to work program. Is a member of a family receiving assistance, benefits or services under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other welfare program of the State in which the PHA is located and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in noncompliance with such a program.

Requirements of the Program

1. The eight (8) hours per month may be either volunteer work or self-sufficiency program activity, or a combination of the two.
2. At least eight (8) hours of activity must be performed each month. An individual may not skip a month and then double up the following month, unless special circumstances warrant special consideration. LCHA will make the determination of whether to allow or disallow a deviation from the schedule.
3. Activities must be performed within the community and not outside the jurisdictional area of the LCHA.
4. Family obligations
 - At lease execution or re-examination after February 1, 2000, all adult members (18 or older) of a public housing resident family must:
 1. Provide documentation that they are exempt from Community Service requirement if they qualify for an exemption, and
 2. Sign a certification that they have received and read this policy and understand that if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the Community Service requirement will result in non renewal of their lease.
 - At each annual re-examination, non-exempt family members must present a completed documentation form (to be provided by LCHA) of activities performed over the previous twelve (12) months. This form will include places for signatures of supervisors, instructors, or counselors certifying to the number of hours contributed.
 - If a family member is found to be noncompliant at re-examination; he/she and the Head of Household will sign an agreement with LCHA to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period.
5. Change in exempt status:
 - If, during the twelve (12) month period, a non-exempt person becomes exempt, it is his/her responsibility to report this to LCHA and provide documentation of such.

- If, during the twelve (12) month period, an exempt person becomes non-exempt, it is his/her responsibility to report this to LCHA. LCHA will provide the person with the Recording/Certification documentation form and a list of agencies in the community that provide volunteer and/or training opportunities.

LCHA's Obligations

1. To the greatest extent possible and practicable, LCHA will:
 - Provide names and contacts or agencies that can provide opportunities for residents, including disabled, to fulfill their Community Service obligations. (*According to the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act, a disabled person who is otherwise able to be gainfully employed is not necessarily exempt from the Community Service requirement*); and
 - Provide in-house opportunities for volunteer work or self sufficiency programs whenever possible.
2. HAFCM will provide the family with exemption verification forms and Recording/Certification documentation forms and a copy of this policy at initial application and at lease execution.
3. LCHA will make the final determination as to whether or not a family member is exempt from the Community Service requirement. Residents may use LCHA's Grievance Procedure if they disagree with LCHA determination.
4. Noncompliance of family member:
 - At least thirty (30) days prior to annual re-examination and/or lease expiration, LCHA will begin reviewing the exempt or non-exempt status and compliance of family members;
 - If LCHA finds a family member to be noncompliant, LCHA will enter into an agreement with the noncompliant member and the Head of Household to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period;
 - If, at the next annual re-examination, the family member still is not compliant, the lease will not be renewed and the entire family will have to vacate, unless the noncompliant member agrees to move out of the unit;
 - The family may use LCHA's Grievance Procedure to protest the lease termination.



Community Service Compliance Certification

I/We have received a copy of, have read and understand the contents of the Authority's Community Service/Self Sufficiency Policy.

I/We understand that this is a requirement of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 and that if we do not comply with this requirement our lease will not be renewed.

Resident Signature: _____ Date: _____

Resident Signature: _____ Date: _____

Resident Signature: _____ Date: _____

LCHA Rep. Signature: _____ Date: _____

10/2003

