

Housing Assistance Review

A quarterly newsletter for Owners & Tenants of the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program



November 2012

**City of Cedar Rapids
Housing Services**

**101 First St SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
www.CityofCR.com/Section8**

GENERAL INFORMATION

**286-5872 - Main
286-5870 - Fax**

PROGRAM STAFF

CASE MANAGEMENT

PAM AMMETER 286-5237
CHRIS BRODT 286-5183
ANNETTE LORENZ 286-5184

HOUSING INSPECTIONS

JIM BORSCHEL 286-5181
MARIE ANDERSON 286-5189

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

PAM MOSBAUGH 286-5195
RANDY KNUDSON 286-5196

SUPPORT STAFF

JEANNE VICE 286-5193
AMANDA RABEY 286-5159

HOUSING PROGRAM MANAGER

LaSHEILA YATES 286-5192

Landlords & Smoke-Free Housing

By Katie Jones, Linn County Healthy Homes

Why Go Smoke-Free?

Second-hand smoke is deadly, toxic, and expensive.

Information for Owners and Managers

Property owners and managers typically spend 2 to 3 times more money to clean units in which smoking took place. Smoking is also the leading cause of residential fire deaths in the United States. Plus, many tenants want smoke-free housing. In a 2012 survey, nearly 75% of Iowans said they would choose a smoke-free apartment building.

There is no state or federal law that prohibits 100% smoke-free policies. Smoking is not a legal right and smokers are not a protected class. Smoke-free housing is supported by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department as well as other national groups. Nothing stops landlords from prohibiting smoking on their property.

Information for Tenants

Second-hand smoke is a carcinogen (cancer-causing agent). It can cause heart disease in non-smokers, increase risk for lung cancer, and increase risk of asthma in children. Even if you don't allow smoking in your unit, up to 65% of air is exchanged between units, meaning that you may be breathing smoke from your neighbors even if you don't know it.

If you're interested in working to make where you live smoke-free, contact Linn County Healthy Homes at 319.892.6065. We can help you become an advocate for your health and provide you with smoke-free resources. Consider talking to your landlord or manager about why you would like to make your home smoke-free.

The Sun Prairie Example

In 2009, Sun Prairie apartments in West Des Moines made 9 of their 41



**All Units are
Smoke free!**

Thank You!

Why Go Smoke-Free?

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buildings smoke-free. Those 9 buildings were the fullest. After cigarettes caused a fire and \$1 million in damages in one of their non-smoke-free buildings, they decided to make all 41 of their buildings 100% smoke-free. Nearly 3,000 people live in the apartments.



Linn County Public Health Is Here To Help

If you're considering going smoke-free, Linn County Public Health can provide technical assistance for tenants, owners, and managers. Check out our website: www.lchh.org/home/smoke-free-housing, for additional information, including sample smoke-free lease addendums and tenant letters and surveys.

Owners and managers - once you've adopted a policy, we can put you on the new statewide smoke-free housing registry and give you free smoke-free signs (on a first come, first serve basis). Contact Katie Jones at 319.892.6065 or katherine.jones@linncounty.org if you would like to set up a time to meet or would like more information.

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Linn County Healthy Homes Needs your feedback



Dear Linn County Resident,

Did you know that people spend 50% of their time inside their home? Because so much time is spent inside, it is important to make sure that the home is safe and healthy. The Linn County Lead and Healthy Homes Coalition is interested in gaining a better understanding of health and housing conditions in Linn County. Please help us make a difference in our community by taking a short healthy homes survey. Thank you for your time and input, The Linn County Lead & Healthy Homes Coalition

www.lchh.org/lead-and-healthy-homes-survey

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Check us out on Facebook

Family Self-Sufficiency has their own Facebook page.

Get the latest:

- **Program Updates, Community updates, & Participant comments**

"I just wanted to say thank you for believing in me. I have passed my GED successfully and if it wasn't for your kind words and encouraging me to stay strong i don't think i could have made it. Thank you so much."

FSS Participant

Cedar Rapids Family Self-Sufficiency Program



Holiday Food Box Registration

Registration Dates:

October 29th — November 16th

Monday — Friday

9:30am—11:30am & 1:30pm—4:00pm

Evening Opportunities

November 1st, 6th & 15th

4:00pm—7:00pm



Register at The Salvation Army

1000 C Avenue NW

To register you **MUST** have the following:

- **Current Iowa Drivers License or Photo Identification** – If you do not have Iowa identification, you will need to bring in a piece of mail with your name and Iowa address on it.
- **Social Security Cards for Every Member in Your Family** – If you do not currently have Social Security cards, you can apply for them at a Social Security office. You will be given a sheet of paper indicating that you have applied. The Social Security number(s) must be written on that paper and then it will be accepted. **Just Social Security numbers alone will NOT be accepted.** You must bring in the actual cards or the paper from the Social Security office as described.
- **Proof of Income (Must have one of the following) –**
 - Pay check stub from the last month
 - Bank statement indicating Social Security payments or employers direct deposit
 - Print out from Social Security or letter stating amount received
 - WIC Booklet
 - SNAP (Food Stamp) Card
 - LIHEAP Approval Letter
 - Note: Title 19 cards will **NOT** be accepted as a proof of income

No registrations will be accepted after the 18th of November. If you register with another organization for food or toys you may be removed from this program at any time without notice.

Energy Assistance

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is designed to assist low-income families

meet the cost of home heating. This program is not intended to pay a household's total energy costs, but to pay a portion of residential heating costs for eligible households.

Applications are accepted on a first come/first served basis from **November 1 through April 15** (October 1 through April 15 for households with an elderly or disabled member).

To see if you are eligible or request an application or to apply in person, please call **2-1-1** or toll free **1-866-469-2211**, **Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm**, to schedule an appointment at a HACAP Family Resource Center.



Looking to buy a home?
Not sure what you can afford?
Not sure what your credit score is?

Find the answers that lead to
happily ever after at
Headed for Home
Horizon's Homebuyer Workshop

Upcoming Workshop Dates

- Saturday, November 17, 2012
8:30am - 4:30pm
- Saturday, January 5, 2013
8:30am - 4:30pm

Free Lunch is provided
RSVP to 398-3576
www.horizonscccs.org





CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS:

Mon - Nov 12, Vets Day
Thu - Nov 22, Thanksgiving
Fri - Nov 23, Day after T-Day
Mon - Dec 24, Christmas Eve
Tue - Dec 25, Christmas Day
Tue - Jan 1, 2013, New Years



New Section 8

Website Link:

www.CityofCR.com/Section8

Tenant Info - Landlord Info - Family
Self Sufficiency Info - Home Own-
ership Info - Change Form can be
found on our web page as well as
many downloadable forms & other
Program information.



Change Forms

**Change Forms must be received on or
before the 10th of the month in order to
process decreases for the 1st of the fol-
lowing month. They are due within 10
working days of the change.**



Section 8 - Landlord Orientation

- Overview of Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Common Forms & Leases / Evictions & Program Terminations
- Inspections & Notices / Housing Quality Standards & Common Repairs

Dates & Locations

Wed - November 7, 2012 / 5pm -7pm
City Hall - City Hall Training Room (Basement)

Tue - March 5, 2013 / 3pm - 5pm
City Hall Training Room (Basement)

For more information, call Amanda at 286-5159



Public Shut Down

**On Wednesday &
Friday afternoons
1pm-5pm, is public shut
down for case manag-
ers. During these times
they will be unavailable
for phone calls or walk-
in appointments.**



A Little Short on rent or deposit?

**Here are some local
resources:**

- **Helping Hands:**
 - 366-2651
- **Way Point:**
 - 365-1458
- **St. Vincent de Paul:**
 - 365-5091

**A more comprehensive
list of community
resources can be found on
the Linn County website
(linncounty.org) under
Community Services or do
a Google Search for Linn
County Community
Services**



Moving?

It is recommended
you give a 60-day written
notice to your landlord &
Section 8. From the 1st of
the month to the end of the
following month.



Save Money This Tax Season

As sure as the snow is about to
fly, tax season will soon be here.
It is very tempting to file a rapid
refund through for profit tax prepara-
tion companies. These are short term
loans called Refund Anticipation Loans
(RAL). On a \$1500 refund the cost is
\$61.22 which translates to 149% for a 14
day loan. The more your refund the
more it will cost you.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance
(VITA) will help e-file for FREE & your
refund will be in your hands within 14
days. Call 2-1-1 or visit:

www.cedarrapidstaxes.org

You've waited 11 months, what's
another two weeks?