



## Rental Assistance Demonstration

### Resident Questions

### HCAAC Answers

(Updated August 9, 2016)

- Question 1** Do we get vouchers?  
**Answer** No, but it is a similar subsidy program and rent is calculated the same way.
- Question 2** Will HCAAC let people with criminal backgrounds move-in?  
**Answer** HCAAC will continue to conduct criminal background checks upon move-in and during annual recertifications.
- Question 3** Will there be recertifications and inspections?  
**Answer** Yes, HCAAC will continue to conduct recertifications annually. Instead of Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS) inspections a third party will conduct a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection.
- Question 4** Would residents have to pay utility bills?  
**Answer** Many of the buildings are currently not individually metered; therefore this will be evaluated for each community.
- Question 5** When are upgrades scheduled?  
**Answer** HCAAC has not yet determined that RAD will be feasible for any or all of our communities. If RAD is further pursued then dates will be coordinated and you will individually be notified in advance of upgrades that will occur in your unit.
- Question 6** What are the upgrades planned?  
**Answer** The upgrades will vary by community based on a HUD approved inspection. An example of possible upgrades consists of: kitchen renovations, bathroom renovations, heating and cooling upgrades, building systems upgrades. HCAAC anticipates that each unit will receive \$10,000-\$20,000 in upgrades.

- Question 7** Where are you going to get the money for upgrades?  
**Answer** The funding sources for RAD are still to be determined. HCAAC will continue to receive federal subsidies and will possibly pursue financial institutions as well as the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development.
- Question 8** If HCAAC does not pursue RAD will residents still receive the upgrades to units?  
**Answer** Due to limited funding in the public housing program upgrades will only occur on an emergency basis and as indicated in the five-year capital fund schedule.
- Question 9** When will the residents find out if the RAD application is accepted or denied?  
**Answer** HCAAC received notification from HUD that the applications were accepted. There are still many factors that remain before being able to finalize, such as financing. Residents will be notified in writing on further required actions.
- Question 10** Will HCAAC check credit reports?  
**Answer** No, if you are already a resident then there will be no additional action taken regarding your background investigations.
- Question 11** If HUD runs out of Section 8 (Housing Choice Voucher) funds will the residents have to pay their own rent?  
**Answer** This is not a likely situation to occur. HCAAC provides affordable housing and this will continue. If the voucher funds are not available then there would be other resources to offer assistance.
- Question 12** Is the voucher transferrable out of state?  
**Answer** There is a required one (1) year time period to remain at your original property. If after the first year you are interested in relocating then you may be eligible if HCAAC has voucher funding.
- Question 13** Would the communities still be governed under federal programs?  
**Answer** Yes, the project based rental assistance program is a federal regulated program.
- Question 14** Would the rent increase?  
**Answer** There could be a slight adjustment the monthly rent as the project based voucher program uses the Fair Market Rents prescribed by HUD. The project based voucher program uses a similar formula to calculate rent based on 30% of your income.
- Question 15** What is the earliest foreseeable start date?  
**Answer** Likely in 2017. The deciding factors will be acquiring all of the money, getting the bank and investors to agree to the program, and then hiring all of the contractors to start the renovation and construct the new building (if we find the money).

- Question 16** Will the annual recertification date change?  
**Answer** This has not yet been determined. It is possible that the date may be based upon your voucher issuance date.
- Question 17** Will you have to have a job in order to receive a voucher?  
**Answer** No, if the property is converted to RAD you will not have to re-qualify as a current resident.
- Question 18** Would the laundry room receive an upgrade?  
**Answer** The upgrades will be based on the inspection and funding availability. The laundry rooms could receive improvements from the individual property budgets or capital funds.
- Question 19** Do you have to be a resident for 20 years in order to participate?  
**Answer** No, you will automatically participate by residing in the community if the RAD conversion takes place.
- Question 20** Will you be able to switch to a larger unit size?  
**Answer** The occupancy standards will remain the same for the project based voucher. The bedroom size is defined by the number of members in your family.
- Question 21** Will any of the communities be closing or shutting down?  
**Answer** No, and we have no idea where this notion has come from. Nothing is getting torn down, sold to a new owner (other than HCAAC and the bank) and you are welcome to stay with us.
- Question 22** Do we have to move?  
**Answer** No, residents are protected under this program and will keep their homes. This is an improvement program for the community, however moving forward, you will notice some changes as demographics change.
- Question 23** Why do this?  
**Answer** The Federal Government is reducing funds each year and giving less money for the upkeep of public housing. So, HUD has allowed our agency the option to use other ways to upgrade the communities and maintain them.
- Question 24** What will happen?  
**Answer** Upgrades to the overall look of the communities; possibly renovated kitchens, bathrooms, air conditioning and heating, flooring, exteriors, and many small items that will improve the community for each of you.
- Question 25** Will the name of the Freetown community change?  
**Answer** The possibility exists, but that has not been determined yet. Some years ago, the name was about to be changed and several options were chosen, but the agency tabled the idea. What were the names? Whitaker Square, Whitaker Crossing and Wendover Run.

**Question 26** What do the residents have to do?

**Answer** Largely nothing, sign a new lease and watch the improvements happen. You will not be rescreened or put through any new procedures, just the normal re-certification process and inspections you have had in the past. Congress, HUD and HCAAC have no interest in making anyone move, unless you violate the lease.

**Question 27** Will there be new units?

**Answer** It is highly possible there will be new units in Freetown and Meade Villages, but it is not determined yet. There is vacant land and if possible (funding and county approval) the agency might be able to add some new units and they might not be subsidized units. SO, there could be new parking lots and common areas. The agency has over 15,000 families still waiting for some type of affordable housing.

**Question 28** What do we need from you?

**Answer** We need input from residents as we begin the planning for renovations. Please understand that costs are limited, but we do want solid information about kitchens, bathrooms, flooring, and other items. We have a small focus group that we will continue to talk to. Also, we will need to have discussions about community name changes and other needs that are affordable.

**Question 29** What's Next?

**Answer** We will be back with more information and will likely have other community wide meetings prior to starting renovations so that everyone is aware of the timelines and plans.