

**NORTH CHARLESTON HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Housing  
Choice  
Voucher  
Program**

**UPDATE**



**Landlord's Corner**



With record-breaking summer heat upon us, and air-conditioners (A/C) working overtime, now would be a great time to service your rental AC so that its operating at its ultimate cost-saving efficiency. It is better to pay now to service your A/C than to pay expensive repair costs later. Now would also be a good time to make sure your tenant understands that they must change their A/C filters every month.

We complete an initial move-in inspection and annual inspection for *every* unit on our Section 8 Program. We suggest that landlords complete their *own* inspection on a monthly basis. Once you are assured in knowing your rental unit is being taken care of, inspections can then be done on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.

We have a new policy, if your rental unit fails inspection and the housing assistance payment (HAP) has been abated, when you have completed the needed repairs in your unit we *must be* notified in writing by fax or email when the repairs have been completed and the unit is ready for re-inspection. Also, corresponding with our Inspection Department by email or by fax is *always* easier and more convenient for all of your inspection needs.

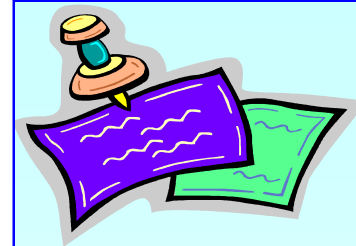
(continued) We want to remind landlords that when you complete the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) for your prospective tenant and your rental unit is not ready for a Move-In Inspection, please make a note on the RFTA the date the unit will be ready for inspection. This will make our inspection process easier.

**Bits and Pieces** - While inspecting Section 8 Tenants' homes, we have found an increase in units with roach infestation. Roaches are biologically night creatures. For each single roach you see in the open, it probably represents hundreds more hiding behind your dry-wall or between your floorboards.

Roaches have a never ending pursuit for food, they often follow the footsteps of humans into homes and stay close to sources of water and food which is why they are often found in bathrooms, kitchens, and places where food is kept and prepared. Keeping a home clean is the most effective way to get rid of roaches. Cockroaches invade homes usually to seek out food and water. You home must be kept clean! Wash dishes after every meal and wipe down kitchen counters frequently, as roaches like to snack on greases and food oils. Vacuum your carpet once or more a week and wipe down your hardwood floors and tiles as often as you can to ensure no food or liquid particles remain to feed the roaches. If you have pets, their food and water area needs to be kept in the same manner.

Don't forget a landlord can evict a tenant for not maintaining their home in a clean and sanitary manner. Don't let that tenant be you!

*News from the Section 8 Department*



Two new employees have been added to our Housing Inspection Team. Mr. Larry Johnson, who has an extensive background in Housing Quality Standards (HQS), joins us as an Inspector. Ms. Trisa Smalls, who has worked in subsidized housing management for several years has taken the position of Inspection Clerk. We are happy to have these professionals on our team as we strive to provide quality housing for our community.

The past several months, the department has taken over four-hundred (400) families from its Section 8 Waiting List to issue eligible families Housing Choice Vouchers for them to seek suitable housing. With this, we are experiencing a large number of new families coming onto the Section 8 Program. This is also good news for Landlords and Owners who have vacant homes or apartments for rent.

~If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other ~ - Mother Teresa -

~ Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step ~  
-Martin Luther King, Jr. -

*"Providing Safe and Decent Housing for the Citizens of North Charleston."*

NCHA

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**Employee Spotlight**

**Serena Gibbs, Section 8 Case Manager**



Serena Gibbs was born and raised in the North Charleston area.. It's easy to see that she likes living here by the way her face lights up when talking about life in Charleston. "I love the beaches and the local seafood!" When asked what she does in her spare time she said she loves shopping, (what woman doesn't!), dancing, and meeting people of different cultures.

While we talked about life in general, she said she believes in living a purposeful life - a life with meaning. "Right now I am working on my Bachelors Degree in Business Administration and Computer Applications. I stay busy. That's why I love where I live and love what I do."

When Ms. Gibbs was asked what she likes best about working for the housing authority, she was quick to say how much she enjoys working with the staff. She is also happy her job gives her the opportunity to provide support to her clients and their landlords. Even if you only have a short conversation with Ms. Gibbs, you walk away knowing that she wants the best for her clients. "I want them to keep their focus and to learn how to develop short and long term goals. They can accomplish anything they set their minds to." I agree Ms. Gibbs, those are words we all can live by!

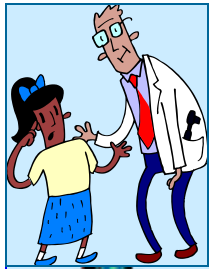


Serena Gibbs, Case Manager



~Try not to become a man of success but a man of value ~  
- Albert Einstein -





**Palmetto Children's Health Initiative**  
Do you know a child who needs health insurance? If you qualify, the insurance is **FREE!** Benefits includes: check-ups, doctor visits, dental care, prescription drug coverage and more! Call (843)577-4121 today!



**What do Inspectors Check When Inspecting a Rental Unit?**

We are often asked how should a landlord/tenant prepare for a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection. The following check-list will help you.

When walking through the rental unit, carefully look at all the things our inspectors will be checking. This is not a complete list, however, it will help you prepare for our HQS inspection.

**General**

- Address and unit numbers are displayed in a conspicuous place and easily visible.
- Lead Paint: All painted surfaces are free from cracks, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose paint. (This rule applies to units built prior to 1978 when a child under the age of 6 or a pregnant woman will live in the unit).
- Appliances provided in the lease are working properly and all parts are operational.
- Working smoke detectors are located on each level of the unit (including basements and finished attics) and in common laundry rooms. Smoke detectors can not be located in the kitchen area.

**Plumbing**

- The water supply is adequate and plumbing lines and fixtures are free of serious leaks or defects.
- Hot water tanks have a temperature/pressure relief valve and a discharge line that goes to the exterior of the unit or down to within 6 inches of the floor.
- Fixtures and the waste disposal system work properly.

**Heating**

- Heating devices are permanently installed, operate and vent properly, and maintain an adequate and comfort level for the climate.

**Walls, Ceilings & Floors**

- There are no serious defects such as severe buckling, bulging or leaning that threaten the structural safety.
  - Floor has no tripping hazards.
- There are no damaged/loose structural members or large holes

**Electrical**

- All electrical junction boxes have covers.

- There are no wires lying in or located near standing water or other unsafe places.
- There are no missing or badly cracked cover plates on switches or outlets.
- Circuits are not overloaded and there are no exposed fuse box connections or open spaces in the electrical panel.

**Security**

- There are no double-keyed deadbolt locks on doors and all exterior doors lock securely.
- Windows that are accessible from the outside and are designed to be opened must lock properly.
- In a bedroom with security bars, there must be at least one window that will open and allow for escape in case of an emergency.



**The Sun is Shining on Devern Ulmer**

Ms. Devern Ulmer has a lot to smile about these days. The Mother of four, raised her children in Public Housing, has four very successful children. She beams with pride while talking to me about her children. She has reason to – all of them have either finished college and are working in their chosen field or they are currently in college. Her oldest son, Clayton, finished college and is now working in Washington, D.C. as an Executive Director with Lockheed Martin. He's happily married and his wife works with Homeland Security. Her daughter, Shira, is in her second year of college seeking to be a Nursing Assistant. Her son, Timothy, graduated from college and is now working in his chosen field as a Computer Technician. Christian, her youngest child, just graduated from High School with two art scholarships. He will be attending college in Florida to obtain his B.A. in Visual Arts. While talking about Christian, Ms. Ulmer told me that while he was in high school this past year, he taught art classes on Thursdays to children at Morningside Middle School. He is never one to stay idle. He is always drawing, sketching or maybe even dreaming of when he becomes a famous artist.



Ms. Devern Ulmer - Holding two pictures drawn by her son, Christian

I asked Ms. Ulmer how she managed to raise such successful children in these difficult times as a single parent living in Public Housing. She was fast to say that God gave her insight to be a good parent.



**Message from George L. Saldana Executive Director**

George L. Saldana Executive Director

The housing authority has a very large number of families from our Section 8 Waiting List who are looking for suitable housing. I would like to encourage landlords and owners who have vacant apartments or houses that are not currently listed with us, to contact our office so that we can list your rental unit with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. When families are searching for housing, this is their first resource to locate housing!

By renting your unit through our program, you are *guaranteed* a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) *every* month as long as your rental unit meets Housing Quality Standard (HQS) and your Section 8 Tenant qualifies for our program. Renting through the Section 8 Program is very similar to renting through the open-market. Landlords use their own lease, (we attach a HUD required addendum) and landlords manage their own property just as if the tenant was not on our rental assistance program. If you have any questions, please contact a Section 8 Department representative at (843) 747-1793.

The North Charleston Housing Authority now has a website! Our website has a lot of information about participating in the Section 8 Program for landlords, tenants and applicants. It also has the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract, Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA), Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection form, and many other forms that can be downloaded for your convenience. Please visit our site at [www.nchashousingauthority.com](http://www.nchashousingauthority.com). Please let us know what you think about our website - your suggestions are appreciated!

I hope you have a great summer!



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**Home Ownership Can Be Your Reality**

Are you a Section 8 Tenant who would love to own your own home? Call your Case Manager today for important information on how your dreams can become reality!

*~ Accept responsibility for your life. Know that it is you who will get you where you want to go, no one else ~*  
**Les Brown**



**NCHA Fraud Program**

The NCA is proud of its Fraud Program. We take fraud very serious! We believe only qualified and eligible families should receive housing assistance.

To report fraud please call Cpl. Shivers, NCHA Fraud Investigator, at (843)308-4718



**Reminders from Section 8 Case Managers**

We want to remind Section 8 tenants that they must notify our office of income and household member changes, in writing within ten (10) days from the date of the change, by completing an "income change packet."

When you receive notice of your Annual Exam and you want to move from your current unit, please notify your Case Manager immediately. They will then explain the procedures necessary for you to move with Section 8 assistance.