

**D.C.H.A. RESIDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS
JULY 19TH AND 20TH, 2017**

REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) is responsible for managing over 8,000 public housing units throughout the District of Columbia. The residents at each public housing development have the opportunity to organize a Resident Council. The Resident Council membership is comprised of residents who are interested in improving the quality of life in and around their community. Each Resident Council Executive Board serves as the liaison between the residents and DCHA.

There are several requirements that a Resident Council must adhere to in order to receive recognition and funding from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and DCHA.

HUD Regulations CFR 24 Parts 700 to 1699, Subpart B-Tenant Participation, §964.100 Role of Resident Council.

The role of a resident council is to improve the quality of life and resident satisfaction and participate in self-help initiatives to enable residents to create a positive living environment for families living in public housing. Resident councils may actively participate through a working partnership with the Housing Authority (HA) to advise and assist in all aspects of public housing operations.

§964.115 Resident Council requirements.

A resident council shall consist of persons residing in public housing and must meet each of the following requirements in order to receive official recognition from the HA/HUD, and be eligible to receive the funds for resident council activities, and stipends for officers for their relative cost for volunteer work in public housing:

- (a) It may represent residents residing:
- In scattered site buildings;

- In areas of contiguous row houses; or
- In one or contiguous buildings;
- In a development; or
- In a combination of these buildings or developments;

(b) It must adopt written procedures such as by-laws, or a constitution which provides for the election of the residents to the governing board by the voting membership of the residents residing in public housing, described in paragraph (b) of this section, on a regular basis but at least once every three (3) years. The written procedures must provide for the recall of the resident board by the voting membership. These provisions shall allow for a petition or other expression of the voting membership's desire for a recall election, and set the number or percentage of the voting membership ("threshold") who must be in agreement in order to hold a recall election. This threshold shall not be less than 10 percent of the voting membership.

(c) It must have a democratically elected governing board that is elected by the voting membership. At a minimum, the governing board should consist of five (5) elected board members. The voting membership must consist of heads of households (any age) and other residents at least 18 years of age or older and whose name appears on a lease for the unit in the public housing development that the resident council represents.

§964.130 Election procedures and standards

At a minimum, a resident council may use local election boards/commissions. The resident council shall use an independent third party to oversee election and recall procedures.

(a) Resident councils shall adhere to the following minimum standards regarding election procedures:

- (1) All procedures must assure fair and frequent elections of Resident Council members-at least once every three years for each members.
- (2) Staggered terms for resident council governing board members and term limits shall be discretionary with the resident council.
- (3) Each resident council shall adopt and issue election and recall procedures

in their by-laws.

(4) The election procedures shall include qualifications to run for office, frequency of elections, procedure for recall, and term limits if desired.

(5) All voting members of the resident community must be given sufficient notice (at least 30 days) for nomination and election. The notice should include a description of election procedures, eligibility requirements, and dates of nominations and elections.

(b) If a resident council fails to satisfy HUD minimum standards for fair and frequent election, or fails to follow its own election procedures as adopted, HUD shall require the HA to withdraw recognition of the resident council and to withhold resident services funds as well as funds provided in conjunction with service rendered for resident participation in public housing.

(c) HAs shall monitor the resident council election process and shall establish a procedure to appeal any adverse decision relating to failure to satisfy HUD minimum standards. Such appeal shall be submitted to a jointly selected third-party arbitrator at the local Level. If costs are incurred by using a third-party arbitrator, then such costs should be paid from the HAs resident service funds pursuant to 964.150.

Revised DCHA Requirement

In order to ensure that each Resident Council elects officers least every three years, DCHA procures the services of an Independent Third Party Monitor (ITPM). DCHA in consultation with Resident Councils will ensure that every resident receives a minimum 30-day notice of the upcoming election and candidate procedures. The ITPM is responsible for educating Resident Council leaders about the election process. The ITPM will also explain how it will observe each election with regard to fairness and for compliance with the required HUD and DCHA procedures. DCHA in collaboration with the Resident Council will conduct a pre-election information meeting at each property, at which time each community will receive written procedures and instructions about how to run for office, rules and regulations for campaigning and the date and time of the individual elections.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESIDENT COUNCIL ELECTION.

Below is a summary of the election process. Further details are included in the Candidate Training Materials, Polling Site Monitor Training Materials and the 2017 DCHA Resident Council Election Policies and Procedures Manual.

Informational Meetings

An informational meeting notice will be posted at your property. If you can't attend the regularly scheduled meeting, an additional meeting is scheduled to take place at Sibley Plaza, 1140 North Capitol St, NW at noon on Friday, June 2, 2017.

Eligibility Requirements

A resident interested in running for a Resident Council Executive Board position must be:

- Eighteen (18) years old or older;
- Currently on the lease;
- Residing on the property; and
- A resident in full compliance with the lease and no rental payment delinquency.

Exclusion to Candidacy

1. A resident is not eligible for candidacy if he or she has a case pending in court/fair hearings as a result of a lease violation.
2. A resident can have no pending lease violations, i.e. "fight back issued."

Candidate Requirements

1. Any resident who wishes to run for office and become an official candidate must complete an application and have the property manager verify their application. The resident must then submit the verified and completed application to the ITPM no later than 5:00 PM EST Friday, June 16, 2017.
2. Verified residents who have submitted their applications on time and have been properly trained by the ITPM will be listed on the election ballot as verified candidates. The trained candidates may then seek voter support and post campaign information in designated areas.

Campaigning

1. Once a verified candidate is trained by the ITPM, they may begin campaigning subject to the official rules provided to the candidate at the training.
2. Candidates are allowed to form a committee to help get the word out during their candidacy. Candidates should remain cautious at all times of their actions. Any damage to public or personal property is a lease violation and will result in candidate disqualification by DCHA.

Candidate Forums

Candidate forums will take place at properties where more than one candidate is running for the same office so that the candidates may discuss their views and answer questions from the residents at their property. Candidate forums will be scheduled for the week of July 10, 2017 and notices will be posted no later than July 8, 2017.

Election Day

1. In order to be eligible to vote residents must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Must be at least 18 years old
 - b. Must be on the lease
 - c. Must present a valid ID
2. All residents who want to vote must go to the polling site and complete an official ballot from the ITPM. (Note: Residents who are disabled or need translation assistance will receive special accommodations upon request as detailed below.)
3. A resident may submit only one ballot.
4. Absentee ballots will not be permitted.

Special Accommodations

Any resident who is eligible to vote but needs translation assistance or is unable to get to the polling site on their Election Day due to any documented health/disability reason will be given a special accommodation upon advance request with their property manager or directly to the ITPM. Property Management staff should make residents aware of this process and complete the Special Accommodations Pre-Election Request Form (which lists the name and

unit number of residents who qualify for a special accommodation). This form should be submitted to the ITPM no later than July 14, 2017 at 5:00pm. The ITPM staff will visit these residents before the polls open and allow them to vote in their presence. These ballots will be counted on Election Day with all other ballots.

Publicizing the Outcome of Election

1. Upon completion of the election, the ballots will be tabulated on site by the ITPM monitors and documented on a Preliminary Voting Results Report. The report along with ballot box contents will be sealed by the election monitors and submitted to the ITPM Director for quality assurance and official certification off-site. ITPM staff and DCHA security personnel will transport the sealed ballot boxes to an ITPM location for the quality assurance review.
2. Notices of the official results will be posted in the meeting areas (community room, Resident Council office, or recreation center) and at the property management office for the public housing property.
3. The newly-elected officers for 2017 will be contacted by the DCHA staff to schedule a swearing-in ceremony.

Grievance Process

1. If a resident protests the election process they must fax, mail or email a formal letter of protest to be received by the ITPM no later than 5:00pm on the third (3) working day after the election.
2. The letter must include all evidence of the violation(s) and describe the issue(s) or concern(s) and explain which Election procedure(s) were violated and how those violations relate to the issue(s) or concern(s) raised.
3. The ITPM has three (3) working days from the date and time the formal letter was received to respond in writing to the formal letter of protest and submit its decision to the protester and the ORS.
4. If a resident is dissatisfied with the response of the ITPM, the protester may appeal in writing to the Office of Resident Services who will review the protest and the ITPM's subsequent response in order to make a final decision.
5. The written appeal must be filed with the ORS by 5:00 p.m. on the second (2) working day from the date of the ITPM decision.

6. The ORS will review the protest and the recommendation of the ITPM, and then render a final decision within two (2) working days from the date of the receipt of the appeal, which will be sent to the protester and the ITPM. The decision by the ORS is final.

Election Results

- The ITPM will certify or decertify the election results within two weeks after the election.
- The ITPM must tabulate and submit preliminary results of the election to DCHA with 24 hours of the election date and provide certified results to DCHA and the Resident Councils on or about August 4, 2017.
- The ITPM will submit a Final Report by August 2, 2017 that includes election information i.e. notices, conference call report, sample ballot copies, flyers and certified voting-turnout to the DCHA.

Responsibilities of Resident Council Executive Board Officers

Below is a brief description of the responsibilities for each officer on the Resident Council. Actual duties vary depending on the bylaws of the Resident Council.

President

- Call and preside over meetings of the Resident Council and appoint and guide the committees.
- Carry out the objectives of the Resident Council, and develop short and long term goals with the Executive Board for approval by the Resident Council.
- Promote resident participation in the Resident Council.
- Communicate with other Resident Councils to share ideas and plan joint initiatives.
- Inform the Resident Council of all meetings attended and progress made regarding the property and any other issues of concerns.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures of the Resident Council are followed.
- Welcome new residents and encourage them to participate in the Resident Council.
- Sign financial transactions along with the Treasurer.

- Work closely with the Office of Resident Services. Inform them of any problems that occur and request technical assistance when needed.

Vice President

- Assist the President at all times and perform the presidential duties in his/her absence.
- Work closely with all of the committees.
- Communicate regularly with the President and Executive Board and disseminate information.
- Develop and maintain working relationship with the Office of Resident Services.

Secretary

- Prepare and read the minutes of all meetings and maintains the attendance roster.
- Assist the President with developing meeting agendas, maintaining records, and drafting Board correspondence.
- Ensure a quorum is present at each Resident Council meeting and a record of voting is maintained.

Treasurer

- Responsible for developing and maintaining a financial management system that tracks all of the financial transactions undertaken by the Resident Council.
- Receive, count, and deposit all funding submitted to the Resident Council.
- Prepare a monthly written financial report showing receipts and total expenditures for that month. This report should be available at each Resident Council meeting and to residents upon request.
- Pay bills and invoices approved by the Resident Council.

Sergeant at Arms

- Strong working knowledge of the process used by the Resident Council to conduct meetings and ensure that the By-laws are being followed.
- Responsible for establishing order to any meeting convened by the Resident Council.

ELECTION DATES AND LOCATIONS

JULY 19 ELECTION

Barry Farm
Benning Terrace
Carroll Apartments
Claridge Towers
Colorado Apartments
Columbia Road
Elvans Road
Fort Dupont
Fort Lincoln
Highland Dwellings
Hopkins Apartments
Horizon House
Kenilworth Courts
Kentucky Courts
Knox Hill
Lincoln Heights
Montana Terrace
Park Morton
Richardson Dwellings
Stoddert Terrace
The Villager
Woodland Terrace

JULY 20 ELECTION

Garfield Family
Garfield Senior
Greenleaf Gardens
Greenleaf Midrise
Greenleaf Senior
Harvard Towers
James Apartments
James Creek
Judiciary House
Langston Dwellings
Ledroit Apartment
Lincoln Road
Potomac Gardens
Potomac Gardens Senior
Regency House
Sibley Plaza
Sibley Townhomes
Sursum Corda
Syphax Gardens

Additional information will be posted online at www.ResidentParticipation.com, as it becomes available.