

COMMUNITY SERVICE POLICY

Section 512 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, which amends Section 12 of the Housing Act of 1937, established a new requirement for non-exempt residents of public housing to contribute eight (8) hours of community service each month or to participate in a self-sufficiency program for eight (8) hours each month. (24 CFR Subpart F §960.600-609). The Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 HUD/VA Appropriations Act temporarily suspended the community service and self-sufficiency requirement, except for residents of HOPE VI developments. The FY 2003 HUD/VA Appropriations Act reinstated this provision.

The Peekskill Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as PHA) believes that the community service requirement should not be perceived by the resident to be a punitive or demeaning activity, but rather to be a rewarding activity that will benefit both the resident and the community. Community service offers public housing residents an opportunity to contribute to the communities that support them while gaining work experience.

In order to effectively implement this new requirement, the PHA establishes the following policy.

A. Community Service

The PHA will provide residents, identified as required to participate in community service, a variety of voluntary activities and locations where the activities can be performed. The PHA does not claim these activities to be appropriate for all participating tenants. Each tenant is responsible to determine the appropriateness of the voluntary service within guidelines in this policy. The activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Unpaid services at the PHA to help improve physicals condition, including building clean-ups, neighborhood clean-ups, gardening and landscape work;
- Unpaid office related services in the development or Administrative Office;
- Assisting other residents through the resident organization;
- Unpaid services in local schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes, youth or senior organizations, drug/alcohol treatment centers, recreation centers, etc.;
- Active participation in neighborhood group special projects;
- Assisting in after-school youth programs or literacy programs;
- Unpaid tutoring of elementary or high-school age residents;
- Assisting in on-site computer training centers;

- Any other community service which includes the “performance of voluntary work or duties that a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community”.

NOTE: Voluntary political activities are prohibited from being considered to meet the Community Service requirement.

B. Program Administration

The PHA may administer its own community service program in conjunction with the formation of cooperative relationships with other community based entities such as TANF, Social Services Agencies or other organizations which have as their goal, the improvement and advancement of disadvantaged families. The PHA may seek to contract its community service program out to a third-party.

The PHA may directly supervise community service activities and may develop and provide a directory of opportunities from which residents may select. When services are provided through partnering agencies, the PHA will confirm the resident’s participation. Should contracting out the community service function be determined to be the most efficient method for the PHA to accomplish this requirement, the PHA will monitor the agency for contract compliance.

The PHA will assure that the service is not labor that would normally be performed by PHA employees responsible for the essential maintenance and property services.

In conjunction with its own or partnership program, the PHA will provide reasonable accommodations for accessibility to persons with disabilities.

C. Self-Sufficiency

The PHA will inform residents that participation in self-sufficiency activities for eight (8) hours each month can satisfy the community service requirement and encourage non-exempt residents to select such activities to satisfy the requirement. It should be noted that an individual may satisfy this requirement through a combination of community service and self-sufficiency activities totaling at least eight (8) hours per month. Such activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Apprenticeships and job readiness training;
- Voluntary substance abuse and mental health counseling and treatment;

- English proficiency classes, GED classes, adult education, college, technical schools or other formal education
- Household management, budget and credit counseling, or employment counseling
- Work placement program required by the TANF program
- Training to assist in operating a small business

The PHA may sponsor its own economic self-sufficiency program or coordinate with local social services, volunteer organizations and TANF agencies.

D. Geographic Location

The intent of this requirement is to have resident provide service to their own communities, either in the PHA's developments or in the broader community in which the PHA operates.

E. Exemptions

The following adult individuals, age 18 or older, of a household may claim an exemption from this requirement if the individual;

- Is age 62 years or older;
- Is blind or disabled (as defined under 216(i)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(i)(1); 1382c) and who certify that because of this disability they are unable to comply with the service provisions; or primary caretakers of such individuals;
- Is engaged in work activities (at least 30 hours per week) as defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(d), specified below:
 1. Subsidized employment;
 2. Subsidized private-sector employment
 3. Subsidized public-sector employment
 4. Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) only if sufficient private sector employment is not available;
 5. On-the-job training;
 6. Job-search and job-readiness assistance;
 7. Community service programs;
 8. Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual)/;
 9. Job-skills training directly related to employment;

10. Education directly related to employment in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency;
11. Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate; and
12. The provision of childcare services to an individual who is participating in a community service program.
 - Meets the requirements for being exempt from having to engage in a work activity under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare program of the State in which the PHA is located, including a State-administered welfare-to-work program.
 - Is a member of a family receiving TANF assistance, benefits, or service under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.); or under any other welfare program of the State in which the PHA is located, including a State administered welfare-to-work program and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in non-compliance with such program.

F. Family Obligations

At the time of annual recertification, all public housing household members age eighteen (18) or older must:

- Receive a written description of the community service requirement, information on the process for verifying exemption status and the affect of noncompliance on their tenancy.
- Complete certification forms regarding their exempt on non-exempt status from the community service requirement and submit the executed forms within ten (10) days of their recertification appointment. If a household member claims an exemption from the requirement, he/she must submit written verification of the exemption or provide information for obtaining third-party verification along with their completed exemption form.

At the time of the annual recertification appointment, each non-exempt adult household member must present their completed monthly record and certification form (blank form to be provided by the PHA at time of certification or recertification) of activities performed over the past twelve (12) months.

If a family member is found to be noncompliant, either for failure to provide documentation of community service or for failure to perform community service, he/she and the head of household will sign an agreement with the PHA to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period. The entire household will be allowed to enter into such an agreement only once during the household's entire tenancy with the PHA.

If, during the twelve (12) month period, a non-exempt person becomes exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the PHA and to provide documentation within ten (10) calendar days of the occurrence. The community service requirement will remain in effect until such time as the exempt status is reported to the PHA and verified.

If, during the twelve (12) month period, an exempt person becomes non-exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the PHA within ten (10) calendar days of the change in status. He/she will be provided with appropriate forms and information for fulfilling the community service requirement. A household member who fails to report a change from exempt to non-exempt status will be required to enter into an agreement to complete an equivalent of eight (8) hours per month of community service for each month of unreported non-exempt status within ninety (90) days of discovery or the household's lease will be subject to termination.

Each household member must supply the PHA with accurate written information regarding exemption status. Failure to supply such information and/or misrepresentation of information is a serious violation of the terms of the lease and may result in termination of the lease.

3. PHA Obligations

To the greatest extent possible and practicable, the PHA will provide names and contacts at agencies that can provide opportunities for residents to fulfill their community service obligation.

The PHA will provide the household a written description of the community service requirement, the process for claiming status as an exempt person for PHA verification of such status in the notice of annual recertification. The PHA will provide the household with appropriate forms on which to claim exempt or non-exempt status and for tracking the community service hours.

The PHA will make the final determination as to whether or not a household member is exempt and/or in compliance with the community service requirement.

As failure to complete the community service requirement constitutes noncompliance with the terms of the Lease, the family may use the PHA's Grievance Procedures if they disagree with the determination of exemption status or noncompliance.

The PHA will assure that procedures are in place and residents the opportunity to change status with respect to the community service requirement. Such changes include, but are not limited to:

- Going from unemployment to employment;
- Entering a self-sufficiency program;
- Entering a classroom educational program which exceeds eight (8) hours monthly.

All exemptions to the community service requirement will be verified and documented in the resident file. Required verifications may include but not be limited to:

- Third-party verification of employment, enrollment in a training or education program, welfare to work program or other economic self sufficiency activities;
- Birth certificates to verify age 62 or older; or
- Third –party verification of disabilities preventing performance of community service.

Families who pay flat rents and live in public housing units or families who income was over income limits when they initially occupied such a public housing unit will not receive an automatic exception.

H. Cooperative Relationships with Welfare Agencies

The PHA may initiate cooperative relationships with local service agencies that provide assistance to its families to facilitate information exchange, expansion of community service/self sufficiency program options and aid in the coordination of those activities.

I. Lease Requirements and Documentation

The PHA's lease has a twelve (12) month term and is automatically renewable except for non-compliance with the community service requirement. The lease also provides for termination and eviction of the entire household for such non-compliance. The lease provisions will be implemented for current residents at the next regularly scheduled reexamination and for all new residents effective upon occupancy. The PHA will not renew or extend the lease if the household contains

a non-exempt member who has failed to comply with the community service requirement.

Documentation of compliance or non-compliance will be placed in each resident file.

J. Noncompliance

A resident who was delinquent in community service hours under the lease in effect at the time of the suspension will still be obligated to fulfill his/her community service and self-sufficiency requirements for FY 2001, provided that the resident was given notice of noncompliance prior to the expiration of the lease in effect at that time.

A copy of that notice of noncompliance should be included with the written notice to residents about the reinstatement of the community service and self-sufficiency requirement. In order to obtain a lease renewal on the expiration of the current lease, residents must be in compliance both with any delinquent community service requirements and current requirements.

If the PHA determines that a resident who is not an "exempt individual" has not complied with the community service requirement, the PHA will notify the resident:

1. of the noncompliance;
2. that the determination is subject to the PHA's administrative grievance procedure;
3. That unless the resident enters into an agreement under paragraph 4 of this section, the lease of the family of which the non-compliant adult is a member may not be renewed. However, if the noncompliant adult moves from the unit, the lease may be renewed;
4. that before the expiration of the lease term, the PHA must offer the resident an opportunity to cure the noncompliance during the next twelve (12) month period; such a cure includes a written agreement by the non-compliant adult and the head of household (as applicable) to complete as many additional hours of community service or economic self-sufficiency activity needed to make up the total number of hours required over the twelve (12) month term of the lease.

Resident Community Service Monthly Time Sheet

Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act

(Eight Hours Required Monthly)

Resident's Name: _____

Address: _____ Unit #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Development Name: _____ Project #: _____

Name of Head of Household: _____

Soc. Sec. No.: _____ Telephone #: _____

Name of Agency or Company Employed By: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone #: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____ Telephone #: _____

Location & Description of Work: _____

Date	Beginning Time			Ending Time			Supervisor's Initials	Total Hours Worked
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM		
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Posted to PHA Family Comm. Service Log: _____ Total Hours: _____

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: Total Monthly Hours For Each Resident to be Posted to Dwelling Unit Community Service Log In Unit File.

Use Of This System Should Be Addressed In Annual Plan Submission

Warning: This Sheet Should Be Turned In To Unit Manager To Avoid Non-Renewal of Lease (Eviction)

RESIDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

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

I/We understand that this is a requirement of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 and that if any non-exempt adult member of the household does not comply with this requirement, our lease will not be renewed and we may receive a 30-day notice of lease termination.

I/We have been given the opportunity to claim an exemption to the requirement for performance of community service and the following adult household members do not claim such exemption.

List name of each adult household member who does not claim an exemption below:

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

I/We have been given the opportunity to claim an exemption and one or more adult household members will separately certify to his/her eligibility for an exemption.

List name of each adult household member who will separately certify to his/her eligibility for an exemption below:

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

Adult Name

Adult Signature

As affirmed by the below signatories:

Signature, Head of Household

Date

Signature, Spouse or Co-Head

Date

Signature, Other Adult Household Member

Date

**COMMUNITY SERVICE SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM
EXEMPTION CERTIFICATION**

I certify that I am eligible for an exemption from the Community Service requirement for the following reason:

- I am 62 or older.
- I am blind or disabled, and as a result I cannot comply with the community service requirements. I am verifying my disability by:
 - My receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSDI) benefits for a disability recognized by the Social Security Administration (SSA).
 - My receipt of Transitional Assistance Disability benefits (have applied for SSI disability benefits and has been found by DHS to meet the SSI disability standards).
 - My receipt of Aid for Aged, Blind, or Disabled (AABD) benefits.
 - My receipt of worker's compensation for my disability with documentation provided by a medical provider.
 - I am providing documentation provided by a medical provider demonstrating that I meet the disability requirement.
 - I am providing documentation of medical assistance or interim SSDI benefits.
 - I am receiving no benefits but am able to submit documentation from a medical provider that my blindness or disability, as defined by the Social Security Act, prevents them from meeting the community or economic self-sufficiency requirement.
- I am the primary care provider of a (temporarily or permanently) blind or disabled person who meets the disability definition (as described above) and I am submitting the Community Service Exception Certification for verification;
- I am temporarily or chronically ill and am able to submit documentation from my medical provider.
- I am responsible for the full-time care to another household member due to that member's medical condition and am able to submit documentation from a medial provider.
- I am a student enrolled in a recognized school, training program, or school of higher education.
- I am working at least 30 hours per week (*Employment Verification form will serve as documentation*).
- I am a participant of a State welfare program and am in compliance with all economic sufficiency or work activity requirements or am exempt from program requirements (Must provide verification).
- A member of my household is receiving assistance, benefits or services under a State welfare program with a work requirement and the family member is in compliance with all program requirements.

A separate certification must be signed by each exempt adult household member. Proof of exemption must be provided by the tenant, or else no exemption will be granted.

Signature of Resident Claiming Exemption

Date