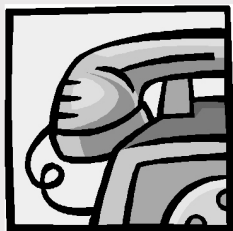
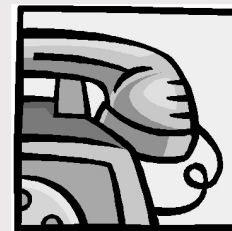


June 2017



housing hotline



Norwalk Housing Authority
Newsletter

Know Your Rights and Obligations Under Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) protects Section 8 applicants and participants from being denied assistance on the basis or as a direct result of being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. Most of the VAWA regulations involve action by the Housing Authority but some situations involve action by property owners.

Denial of Tenancy. Owners cannot deny tenancy to an applicant who may otherwise qualify for the unit on the basis that an applicant has been or currently is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Eviction: Incidents or threats of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking will not be considered a serious or repeated lease violation by the victim, or good cause to terminate the tenancy of the victim. Protection also applies to household members or any guest or other person under the tenant's control if the individual is the victim or threatened victim. However, this provision does not prevent the owner from evicting a tenant for other lease violations as long as the owner does not subject the victim to more demanding standards than other tenants when deciding whether to evict. Also, the owner may evict if the owner can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at the property if the tenant is not evicted.

Moves: A victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may move in violation of their lease if the move is required to protect their safety. For example, a tenant may move during the initial term of their lease or without providing 30 day written notice. If a move results in the termination of the Housing Assistance Payment Contract, the lease is automatically terminated.

Lease Bifurcation: Owners may choose to bifurcate a lease, or remove a household member from a lease in order to evict, remove, terminate occupancy rights, or terminate assistance to such member who engages in criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against an affiliated individual or other individual. To avoid unnecessary delay in the bifurcation process, HUD recommends that owners seek a court-ordered eviction of the perpetrator pursuant to applicable laws. This process results in the underlying lease becoming null and void once the owner regains possession of the unit. The owner would then execute a new lease with the victim. The Housing Authority requires copies of all eviction notices and new leases.

If an applicant or tenant requests VAWA protection, the owner may request documentation but is not required to do so. If the owner wants to request documentation, the owner should contact the Housing Authority for a list of acceptable documentation. The tenant may choose to provide any document from the list. The owner is prohibited from requesting third party verification unless the submitted documentation contains conflicting information. Be sure to keep any and all information confidential. If you have any questions, contact the Housing Authority at (562) 929-5588.

Costly Consequences of Ignoring Lead Safety

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been conducting enforcement of the Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule established in 2010. The rule requires anyone who conducts renovations, repairs, or painting of housing, which will disturb more than six square feet of paint, replaces windows or involves demolition, must be lead-safe certified. This rule applies to all pre-1978 dwelling units regardless of whether government subsidies are provided.

As a rental property owner or manager, it is your responsibility to select a contractor who is lead-safe certified by requesting a copy of your contractor's EPA training certificate. You should also ask the contractor how they will minimize lead hazards during the work. You can verify that a contractor is certified by checking the EPA website at www.epa.gov/getleadsafe or by calling the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-5323. In addition to the personal certification required for each worker, the firm must also be registered with the EPA .

If you usually perform the work yourself or have maintenance staff, then you and your staff must be trained and certified in lead-safe work practices. If not, you could face tens of thousands of dollars in fines. Plus, you put the health of yourself, your workers, and your tenants at risk, which could result in lawsuits.

Lead-safe work practices include:

- Containing the work area.
- Avoiding renovation methods that generate large amounts of lead-contaminated dust.
- Cleaning up thoroughly.

To become certified, individuals must attend a full-day Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule Course. To find an accredited trainer, visit <http://www.epa.gov/getleadsafe> or call 1-800-424-5323.

For more information, visit <http://www.epa.gov/getleadsafe>.

Latest Raffle Winners

Every month, the Housing Authority holds a Landlord Appreciation raffle. Landlords will receive a raffle ticket with each new Section 8 Contract. Just sign and return the raffle ticket and Contract, and you will be entered into the next drawing. Each winner receives a \$25 gift card to a Norwalk business.

March (Starbucks)
CMW Apartments

April (Lowe's)
Maria Benitez



City Council

Luigi Vernola, Mayor
Leonard Shryock, Vice Mayor
Tony Ayala, Councilmember
Jennifer Perez, Councilmember
Margarita Rios, Councilmember

Housing Authority Commission

Luigi Vernola, Chair
Leonard Shryock, Vice Chair
Tony Ayala, Commissioner
Gardenia De La Garza, Commissioner
Leslie Franklin, Commissioner
Jennifer Perez, Commissioner
Margarita Rios, Commissioner

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