



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **PHA Offers Financial Incentives to Attract More Private Rental Property Owners**

*Many PHA clients have vouchers but cannot find homes to rent*

**Philadelphia – March 16, 2022** – The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is now offering property owners financial incentives, a streamlined administrative process, and expanded customer service to make more private homes and apartments available for rent to residents with low incomes.

Clients of PHA’s Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program have run into a serious problem — a lack of private market rental property owners willing to rent to them.

“PHA’s voucher holders are having a hard time finding affordable units in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “Almost half of our voucher holders are taking more than four months to find a suitable home. PHA recognizes the difficulty these clients are facing, and with the steps we are announcing, we feel confident we can expand the number of available units.”

The problem is twofold. The demand is high in Philadelphia’s real estate market, and there is a shortage of affordable housing for rent in the city. Second, some property owners do not like dealing with the red tape involved in working with a government-subsidized program.

PHA’s new initiative tackles both issues by offering signing bonuses and speeding up the process from application to approval.

Under this program, available through April 30th, any property owner or manager who rents to a PHA voucher holder and submits the required paperwork will receive a **\$300** signing bonus. Property owners who rent to a PHA Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) holder will receive a \$500 bonus. These emergency vouchers are dedicated exclusively to homeless households referred to PHA by the City of Philadelphia.

These 863 emergency vouchers come with additional funding related to retaining and supporting HCV property owners because they were paid for by the American Rescue Plan Act. This allows PHA to provide security deposit assistance equal to as much as one month of the approved PHA contract rent.

## PHA Offering Incentives to Attract More Landlords to Voucher program / Pg. 2

Separately, a \$1,000 bonus is available to landlords who participate in HCV's Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) and rent a unit to an HCV household in a qualified opportunity area. These are neighborhoods that generally have a lower poverty rate and access to higher performing schools and employment opportunities.

Additionally, PHA has established an Owner Assurance Fund, designed to protect property owners from unexpected damages beyond normal wear and tear. PHA will reimburse property owners who participate in the HCV program up to \$2,500.00 to help cover repair expenses after subtracting any security deposit that was held for damages. This is an additional level of protection for property owners they would not normally be available.

"These incentives were created as a direct result of feedback from landlords," said Kelvin A. Jeremiah, PHA's President and CEO. "At a time when many rental property owners are struggling, PHA offers guaranteed rent, monthly income, and coverage for damage to their unit. It's win-win, and now is an opportune time to start."

PHA's HCV program can pay similar rents to those collected from private market tenants. PHA uses neighborhood rents paid by private market tenants in determining rent levels.

Owners who participate in the HCV Program also have a designated team of PHA employees — including an Owner Liaison — who assist with navigating through the program's processes.

HCV tenants pay 30% of their income toward rent while PHA pays the rest directly to the owner. Each month PHA pays over \$12 million to participating property owners in Philadelphia in rental assistance payments. If a tenant's income decreases, PHA would then pay a larger portion of the rent, protecting both the household and the property owner.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides rental assistance to over 19,500 low-income families, elderly and disabled citizens in Philadelphia, and partners with over 5,000 private landlords.

"We have thousands of quality property owners in our program serving low-income families and receiving guaranteed rent payments, yet we need many more," Jeremiah said. "These signing bonuses represent the largest incentives PHA has offered. We knew we had to act because without homes to rent the housing vouchers really have no value."

To learn more, attend one of the free landlord briefing sessions held virtually every Monday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Interested owners can learn more at [www.pha.phila.gov](http://www.pha.phila.gov) or email us at [hcvlandlords@pha.phila.gov](mailto:hcvlandlords@pha.phila.gov). You can also find us on Facebook @PHAHCVlandlord.

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**The Philadelphia Housing Authority** is the nation's 4th largest housing authority, serving nearly 80,000 residents. PHA is also a major real estate developer. Learn more at [www.pha.phila.gov](http://www.pha.phila.gov).