

Community Service Policy

January 1, 2016

Community service is the performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community.

The Bruce Housing Authority shall require all adult tenants to perform 8 hours of community service or self-sufficiency activities per month unless they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Is 62 or older;
2. Is a blind or disabled individual as defined under 216(i)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act, and who certifies that because of this disability she (he) is unable to comply with the service requirements;
3. Is the primary caretaker of such an individual described in #2;
4. Is engaged in work activities;
 - a. Unsubsidized employment;
 - b. Subsidized private-sector employment;
 - c. Subsidized public-sector employment;
 - d. Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available;
 - e. On-the-job-training;
 - f. Job-search;
 - g. Community service programs;
 - h. Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual);
 - i. Job-skills training directly related to employment;
 - j. 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;
 - k. Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalency, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate;
5. Meets the requirements for being exempted from work under State welfare to work programs (Welfare-to-Work);
6. A member of a family receiving assistance, benefits, or services under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 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 noncompliance with such a program. (SNAP)

All non-exempt adults must fulfill the following community service requirements:

1. Contribute 8 hours per month of community service, not including political activities; or,
2. Participate in an economic self-sufficiency program for 8 hours per month; or
3. Participate in 8 hours per month of combined activities as described in #1 and #2 above.

Eligible **community service** activities include, but are not limited to, serving at:

- A. Local public or nonprofit institutions, such as schools, Head Start Programs, before-or after-school programs, childcare centers, hospitals, clinics, hospices, nursing homes, recreation centers, senior centers, adult daycare programs, homeless shelters, feeding programs, food banks (distributing either donated or commodity foods), or clothes closets (distributing donated clothing);
- B. Nonprofit organizations serving PHA residents or their children, such as: Boy or Girl Scouts, Boys or Girls Club, 4-H Clubs, Police Activities League (PAL), organized children's recreation, mentoring, or education programs, Big Brothers or Big Sisters, Garden Centers, community clean-up programs, beautification programs;
- C. Programs funded under the Older Americans Act, such as Green Thumb, Service Corps of Retired Executives, senior meals programs, senior centers, Meals on Wheels;
- D. Public or nonprofit organizations dedicated to seniors, youth, children, residents, citizens, special-needs populations or with missions to enhance the environment, historic resources, cultural identities, neighborhoods or performing arts;
- E. PHA housing to improve grounds or provide gardens (so long as such work does not alter the PHA's insurance coverage); or work through resident organizations to help other residents with problems, including serving on the Resident Advisory Board, outreach and assistance with PHA-run self-sufficiency activities including supporting computer learning centers; and,
- F. Care for the children of other residents so parents may volunteer.
- G. Perform work on PHA property or with or through PHA programs to assist with or enhance work done by a PHA employee.
- H. Any activity that has been previously approved by the BHA office.

The PHA may not substitute community service or self-sufficiency activities performed by residents for work ordinarily performed by PHA employees or employees of other organizations.

Eligible **self-sufficiency** activities include, but are not limited to:

- A. Job readiness or job training while not employed;
- B. Training programs through local One-Stop Career Centers, Workforce Investment Boards (local entities administered through the U.S. Department of Labor), or other training providers;
- C. Higher education (junior college or college);
- D. Apprenticeships (formal or informal);
- E. Substance abuse or mental health counseling;
- F. Reading, financial and/or computer literacy classes;
- G. English as a second language and/or English proficiency classes;
- H. Budgeting and credit counseling.

At lease execution or re-examination, after the effective date of the adopted policy, all adult members (18 or older) of a public housing resident family must:

- A. Provide documentation, if applicable, that they qualify for an exemption; (Documentation provided by the tenant will be used by the PHA to determine whether the tenant is exempt from the CSSR) and,
- B. Sign a certification (examples provided in Attachments A and B) that they have received and read the policy and understand that if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the community service requirement will result in nonrenewal of their lease, per 24 CFR 966.4(1)(2)(iii)(D).

When a non-exempt person becomes exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the PHA and provide documentation. When an exempt person becomes non-exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the PHA as soon as possible, but not less than 30 days.

The BHA shall require that all non-exempted adults who must participate in community service provide written documentation of such service to the BHA management office on a monthly basis to coincide with dwelling rent. This documentation shall include:

1. Place of service
2. Date of service
3. Hours served
4. Authorized signature of supervisor.

Those participating in economic self-sufficiency program must provide verifiable documentation of their participation in such program.

Failure to comply with the community service requirements will result in the following:

1. Notice to the tenant of noncompliance which will include:
 - A. Description of the noncompliance.
 - B. Notice that lease will not be renewed after the initial one year period is expired unless the noncompliance parties enters into a written agreement with the BHA, the form and manner required by the BHA, to cure such noncompliance or the tenant family can verify that the noncompliant party no longer resides in the unit.
 - C. Notice of the tenant to request a grievance hearing on the PHA determination

If a tenant does not agree with the PHA's determination of nonexempt status, the resident may dispute the decision through the PHA's Grievance Procedures