



For Immediate Release

Section 8 Voucher Program scores dramatic 300% improvement

Newark NJ—April 24, 2009— The annual inspection required by the federal government shows that the Newark Housing Authority has dramatically improved the management of its Section 8 housing voucher program, tripling its score since 2006.

NHA is submitting an 85% (out of 100%) projected performance rating for the annual completion of its Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) certification. That compares to a rating of 29% in 2006.

The SEMAP is a self-certification program under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under which housing authorities report their performance. The rating is based on 14 different key areas focusing on the quality of the home and appropriateness of the rents being charged the low-income clients.

Executive Director Keith Kinard said the performance score is a big accomplishment for the authority, but the transformation of the program is not yet complete.

“Although our housing voucher performance score has vastly increased over the past three years, this is not the end. My goal is to achieve the rank of “high performer,” Kinard said.

When Kinard arrived at NHA in 2006 the agency was in dire financial condition and its performance had already landed NHA on the “troubled” list of housing authorities. He responded by making sweeping structural changes.

With this major turnabout in results, NHA expects to be removed from the troubled list as soon as HUD validates the authority’s submission.

“This achievement would not have been possible without our making sweeping management and structural changes in the way we manage our voucher program. Our systems for assuring the quality of the housing and services to tenants now reflect the highest professional standards,” Kinard said.

Board of Commissioners Chairman Modia Butler said the higher SEMAP score would put the NHA in a better position when requesting funds from HUD.

“This is the result of good teamwork and sound leadership principles,” Butler said. “The beneficiaries are our clients and their neighbors.”

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