



# HAP CHECK NEWS

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH OWNER NEWSLETTER

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## REMINDER: Email Notifications of Direct Deposit

In a continued effort to reduce expenses and notify you sooner of your housing assistance payments (HAP), the Housing Authority plans to send your direct deposit HAP payment notification via email by July 1, 2008. To sign up for this service, please send an email to [HADirectDeposit@longbeach.gov](mailto:HADirectDeposit@longbeach.gov) with the following information:

- Your full name
- Your current address
- Last 4 digits of your social security number
- Email address or addresses to send the notification to

This will expedite the notification process, reduce costs and is another step in the Housing Authority's efforts to reduce paper.

## Requests for Rent Increases

Over the years, the Housing Authority has received many requests for rent increases by owners. Based on your questions, here is some basic information regarding requesting rent increases.

Even though a rent increase request can be made anytime after the first anniversary date of the lease, the Housing Authority strongly encourages requests to be made 90 days before the anniversary date of the lease. This is the perfect time to request an increase in rent-- the Housing Authority can conduct the annual recertification interview, and process the increase with the least amount of disruption to the owners and the tenant.

Requests for rent increases are accepted in any written form, but using the Housing Authority's "Request for Approval of Rent Increase" form (see enclosed form) gives the Bureau the information needed to process the request more quickly and efficiently. Also, remember to use the Housing Authority's payment standards as a guide when determining the amount of the increase request. The current standards are:

<u>0 Bdrm</u>	<u>1 Bdrm</u>	<u>2 Bdrm</u>	<u>3 Bdrm</u>	<u>4 Bdrm</u>	<u>5 Bdrm</u>	<u>6 Bdrm</u>	<u>7 Bdrm</u>
\$863	\$1041	\$1300	\$1746	\$2101	\$ 2416	\$2778	\$3195

To determine if the rent increase amount is reasonable, the Housing Authority uses a rent reasonable database to calculate the rent request. The (over)

information in the database includes: *Location* (zip code); *Type of Unit* (single family house, duplex, apartment, condo); *Size of Unit* (# of bedrooms & # of bathrooms); *Utilities* (allowance for any utilities paid by the owner); *Amenities* (allowance for any amenities the unit has to offer); and *Comparables* (rents of similar, non-Section 8 units in the same area).

While the location, type, size, amenities, and paid utilities are predetermined, comparables can and do change often. The Housing Authority will accept any comparables provided and will add them to its database, as long as the comparables offered are unassisted units in the same location, are for the same type and size of unit, and the information can be verified.

When requesting a rent increase, remember all rent increases require a 90-day notice and both the tenant and Housing Authority must be notified. It is better to request rent increases on a regular basis, preferably annually. An increase of \$75/year for three years is more manageable than a \$225 increase after three years of no increases. Excessively large rent increases often cause a hardship to the tenant and may not be approved. Also, the unit must be in a decent, safe and sanitary condition before a rent increase will be implemented.

The Housing Authority's goal is to approve a rent amount that is fair to both the owner and the tenant. Rent increase requests can be faxed (562- 499- 1090) mailed, or brought directly to the Housing Authority's office at 521 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, ATTN- Rent Reasonableness Desk Long Beach, CA 90802. If there are questions about a specific rent increase, please call (562) 570-5307 or send an email to [LBHARentInquiries@longbeach.gov](mailto:LBHARentInquiries@longbeach.gov)

### **New Tool to Assist in the Verification of Income**

The Housing Authority of the City of Long Beach will start using a new software program designed by HUD to assist the staff in verifying the income of the Voucher Program participants and to reduce improper subsidy payments.

This internet based tool, called Enterprise Income Verification (EIV), will allow the Housing Authority to view employment information, wages, unemployment compensation and social security benefit information at any point in time.

The EIV system also compares the Housing Authority's verified participant reported wages, unemployment compensation and social security benefits information reported on HUD form 50058, with the upfront income verification reported amounts for the same income sources, to identify families that have substantially under reported their household income.

An EIV report will be processed for each participant at annual re-certification, prior to a transfer and at interim reviews when necessary. The EIV system will have several measurable benefits. This includes increased efficiency and accuracy of income and rent determinations and it will assure that more eligible families are able to participate in the program. EIV will also help to resolve discrepancies in verifying income.



## REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RENT INCREASE

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Tenant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assisted Unit Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Bedrooms \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Bathrooms \_\_\_\_\_

Current Amount of Contract Rent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Increase Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Requested effective date of new increased amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Owner Name/Agent: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: HOME # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ CELL # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, STATE Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Contact:  Email  Mail

**(REQUEST MUST BE A MINIMUM OF 90 DAYS FROM THE 1ST OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH. EXAMPLE: REQUEST DATE OCTOBER 15, MINIMUM EFFECTIVE DATE FEBRUARY 1.)**

Justification for Increase: (If applicable, please note any pertinent information such as upgrades to unit, no previous rent increases, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACH COPY OF RENT INCREASE TO THE TENANT.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

For questions or further information, please contact the Inspection Unit Rent Reasonable desk at (562) 570-5307.