

Buford Housing Authority

"The Interview"

March 2020, Newsletter

welcome
SPRING



"Interview"

A newsletter for the Residents of the
Buford Housing Authority
Calendar of Events for March 2020

LAST DAY TO PAY RENT IS
MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020.



THE BUFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY IS GOING RAD!

You are invited to a resident meeting to talk about the Buford Housing Authorities plans to convert all of our public housing program units to HUD Section 8 rental assistance units under the HUD Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. The meeting information is:

**City Hall
2300 Buford Highway NE
Buford, Georgia 30518
(Located on the Ground Level in Commissioners Meeting Room)
Thursday March 26, 2020
Meeting Time 10:00 am - 12:00 noon
Meeting Time 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

RAD is a voluntary program run by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Under RAD, HUD will change the way it provides rental assistance to the property from public housing to a long-term Section 8 assistance contract. The Section 8 program would make it easier for the Buford Housing Authority to access money to make repairs and improvements to our properties both now and in the future. **Whether we participate in RAD or not, you will still get rental assistance based off of 30% of your income just like under Public Housing.**

At the meeting, we will describe the RAD program and our current ideas in more detail. If our RAD application is accepted by HUD, we will have at least one additional meeting with you about our plans. If there are any major changes in our plans for the project, we will certainly be notifying all our participants and we will invite you to additional meetings if key features of the plans change.

Our decision to participate in RAD does not affect your rental assistance eligibility. You are not subject to new eligibility screening. If we satisfy all HUD requirements and the property is placed under a Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract, you have a right to ongoing rental assistance as long as you comply with the requirements of your lease.

Because we are very early in the process, the plans for the RAD conversion are likely to change. We are holding these two resident meetings to share our current ideas and we will keep you informed about major changes to these ideas as we develop our plans. In addition, please come and share any ideas you believe would help improve our properties as we seek to modernize our housing stock. We will give that information to the people who are helping us figure out what work needs to be done at the property and how we can better achieve our goals of providing even better housing for our community.

We hope this letter gives you useful information and we encourage you to come to the resident meetings to learn more about our RAD conversion.

Sincerely,



Kevin Jones
Executive Director
Buford Housing Authority



SPRING BREAK: Spring Break is March 30th - April 3 for Gwinnett County Schools and April 6th-10th for Buford City Schools and Hall County Schools. Please watch out for children at play throughout the neighborhoods. Parents please make sure your spring breakers do not play around cars, in the streets, or in parking lots. Trash and toys should be cleaned up from of the yards every evening. We would also like to remind tenants that **swimming pools or pools of any sort, children's swing sets, chimeneas, firepits, trampolines are not permitted on housing authority property.**

DRIVE CAREFULLY: As the weather continues to warm, children will be out in the neighborhoods playing. Please use caution as you drive in and around the developments. Watch for children riding their bikes, playing with balls and running around. Please give yourself time and room to make a quick stop.

Parents, please remind your children not to play in the parking lots, driveways, or around any cars. We want this to be a safe and happy spring for everyone.



RENT CHANGES EFFECTIVE APRIL 1: **Please remember new rent amounts will go into effect April 1, 2020 for ALL tenants.** Recertification increases are immediate and therefore the standard 30-day delay on increased rent amounts do not apply. Please call the office if you have questions.



DAMAGED FLOORS: We have had several recent vacated apartments that have had damaged floors due to furniture. We would like to suggest that you place protective cups or bumpers under furniture to prevent floor damage. **Tenants are charged \$6.00 per damaged tile with additional charges for labor to replace each tile.**



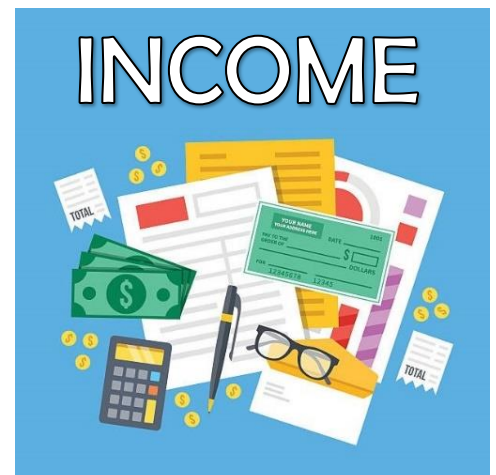
**ALL PAGES OF YOUR STATE AND
FEDERAL TAX RETURNS MUST BE
TURNED INTO THE OFFICE NO LATER THAN
FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH
To include all W-2s and any 1099s.**



TAXES: If you or anyone in your household files taxes you will need to bring your completed tax documents to the office **along with your W-2 forms and any 1099 documents** as certification of your 2017 income. State and Federal taxes are required documentation to complete your recertification. If you have any questions, please call the office.

NOTICE: This will inform you that Maintenance personnel will be going door to door with Holtkamp Heating and Air during **the entire month of March** to replace furnace filters and conduct preventative maintenance on all furnace and A/C systems. This is your NOTICE that Maintenance personnel will be coming into your apartment. **Please make sure your maintenance closet is not blocked with furniture or other personal belongings.**

REPORTING INCOME: If there has been a change in your income you are required to report those changes within 10 days to the office. Please have your documentation to the office **no later than the 2nd** of the month. We are getting the income information later and later and the office staff needs time to calculate your rent. **ALL income needs to be reported** whether paid in cash, check, or direct deposit. **EXAMPLES** of income are: Employment, Unemployment, Self-employment, Direct Selling, Babysitting, Social Security, SSI, VA, Child Support, Alimony, Retirement, Work Study, Military, Government pay whether local, state or federal etc.



How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond





Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.

 **95%** of households will receive their census invitation in the mail.



 **Almost 5%** of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home's physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).

 **Less than 1%** of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.

(This is separate from our follow-up efforts; census takers will visit all households that were invited to respond on their own and haven't.)

Note: We have special procedures to count people who don't live in households, such as students living in university housing or people experiencing homelessness.

How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond



What to Expect in the Mail

When it's time to respond, most households will receive an invitation in the mail.

Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Depending on how likely your area is to respond online, you'll receive either an invitation encouraging you to respond online or an invitation along with a paper questionnaire.

Letter Invitation

- Most areas of the country are likely to respond online, so most households will receive a letter asking you to go online to complete the census questionnaire (or to respond by phone).
- We plan on working with the U.S. Postal Service to stagger the delivery of these invitations over several days. This way we can spread out the number of users responding online, and we'll be able to serve you better if you need help over the phone.

Letter Invitation and Paper Questionnaire

- Areas that are less likely to respond online will receive a paper questionnaire along with their invitation. The invitation will also include information about how to respond online or by phone.

WHAT WE WILL SEND IN THE MAIL	
On or between	You'll receive:
March 12-20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)
March 16-24	A reminder letter.
	If you haven't responded yet:
March 26-April 3	A reminder postcard.
April 8-16	A reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
April 20-27	A final reminder postcard before we follow up in person.

We understand you might miss our initial letter in the mail.

- Every household that hasn't already responded will receive reminders and will eventually receive a paper questionnaire.
- It doesn't matter which initial invitation you get or how you get it—we will follow up in person with all households that don't respond.



"What Home Means to Me" Poster Contest

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials • Housing America Campaign



Contest Entry Rules:

- Theme - "What Home Means to Me"
- Size – All posters must be 22" x 28" and have a LANDSCAPE/HORIZONTAL orientation.
- Media - Contestant may use any art media (marker, crayon, paint, collage, textiles, etc.), but please consider that posters will need to be packaged, mailed and reproduced. Entries must be created by only one person.
- All contestants are asked to provide a short narrative on the inspiration, vision, and importance of their poster design. The narrative should be secured on the back of the entry.
- Contestants name, grade level, and housing authority must be written on the back of each poster entry in addition to being listed on the release form also attached to the entry.

Eligibility and Selection Categories:

Contest participation is open to all children in grades K-12 (**Elementary:** K to 5th grade; **Middle:** 6th to 8th grade; **High:** 9th to 12th grade) residing in affordable housing assisted directly, supported under community development, or participants in affordable housing programs administered by a NAHRO member authority (i.e., public or Section 8-assisted housing CDBG, HOME, LIHTC).

**In order to meet the GARAH deadline,
all entries must be turned in to the Buford Housing Authority office no-later than
Wednesday April 1, 2020.**

All posters entered will be judged at the April 17, 2020 **GAHRA** Executive Committee Meeting in Augusta. The top 3 selections in each category will be forwarded to **SERC-NAHRO** with winners being announced in June during the Annual Conference at Boca Raton, FL.

These winners will compete in the **National Housing America Competition.**

Applications are available in the Buford Housing Authority office.

Counting Young Children in the 2020 Census

Counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place

An estimated 5 percent of kids under the age of 5 weren't counted in the 2010 Census. That's about 1 million young children, the highest of any age group.

We need your help closing this gap in the 2020 Census. Here's what our research tells us about why young children are missed and what you can do to help make sure they are counted.



Common situations where young children aren't counted

How you can help?



The **child splits time between two homes.**

The child lives or stays with **another family or with another relative such as a grandparent.**

- Emphasize that the census counts **everyone where they live** and sleep most of the time, even if the living arrangement is temporary or the parents of the child do not live there.
- If the child truly spends equal amounts of time between two homes, count them where they stayed on **Census Day, April 1**. Coordinate with the other parent or caregiver, if possible, so the child is not counted at both homes.
- If it's not clear where the child lives or sleeps most of the time, count them where they stayed on Census Day, April 1.



The child lives in a **lower income household.**

- Explain to service providers and families that responding to the census helps determine **\$675 billion in local funding** for programs such as food stamps (also called the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program or SNAP), the National School Lunch Program, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). When children are missed in the census, these programs miss out on funding that is based on the number of children counted.



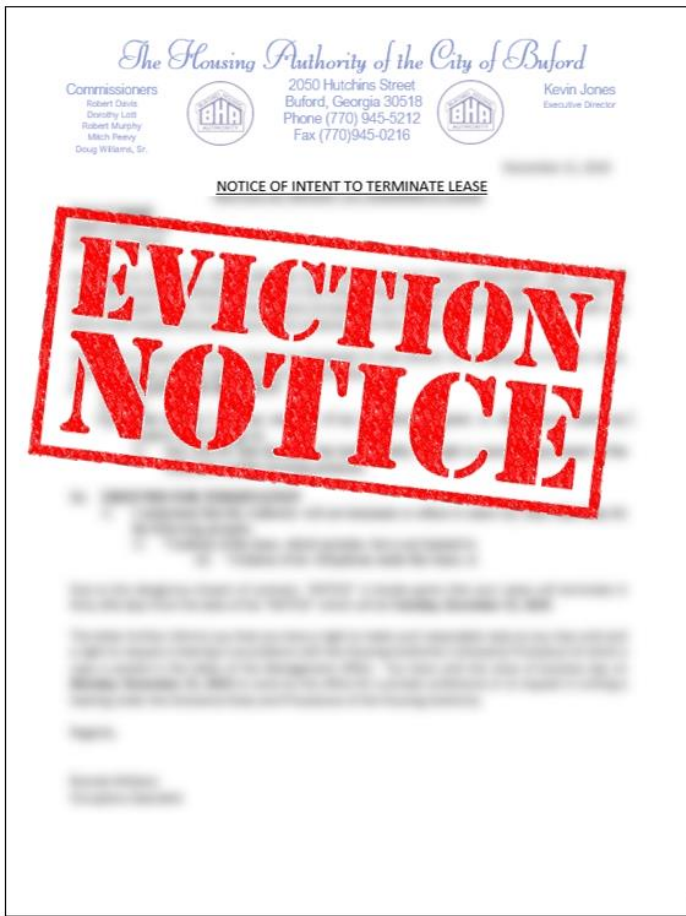
The child lives in a household with **young parents or a young, single mom.**

- Explain that filling out the census yourself, on your own schedule, is easier than having to respond when a census worker knocks on your door. Remind these households that the form should **only take about 10 minutes** to fill out and can be done online or over the phone, in addition to mailing it back.
- Encourage moms with young children to ask other household members to count them and their children on the form if others live in the household.



The child is a **newborn.**

- Emphasize that parents should **include babies** on census forms, even if they are still in the hospital on April 1.
- **Encourage facilities** providing services to newborns to remind parents about the importance of counting their children on the census form.
- Highlight the fact that the census form only takes about 10 minutes to complete, and parents can **fill it out online or over the phone in addition to paper** at a time that works best for them.



IS FRAUD WORTH IT?

What is fraud?

BHA Fraud policy states:

Fraud is defined as “a single act or pattern of actions made with the intent to deceive or mislead, including false statements, omissions of information or the concealment of a substantive fact made with the intention of deceiving or misleading the housing authority when the act or acts lead to the person or person(s) involved receiving benefits to which they are not entitled.

These are some examples of fraud activity committed recently by tenants. (your neighbors)

- Not reporting income (wages from **ANY SOURCE** paid by cash, check, or direct deposit, child support, SS or SSI benefits, Pensions, TANF, unemployment, or any other regular financial assistance)
- Not correctly reporting deductions (childcare or medical expenses)
- **Having persons living in your apartment (more than 14 days a year) who are not on your lease.**
- Counting a minor as living in your apartment who actually lives elsewhere.



Did you know if you commit fraud against the Housing Authority, not only could you lose your apartment, but you will be required to repay all overpaid rental assistance? In some cases, if the amount of retro rent owed to the Housing Authority exceeds \$5,000.00, the tenant will not be eligible for re-admission to the Housing Authority, regardless of repayment. All amounts owed are reported to HUD and shared with other inquiring Housing Authorities.

Fraud is one of the most common reasons for eviction. **IS FRAUD WORTH IT?**



March Programs

Highlighted program:

- **Get Started: Bike Safety (Children)**
Wednesday, March 18 at 4:00 pm
Gwinnett County Police Department review bike safety. Bring your bike and helmet.
- **Financial Aid 101 (Teens)**
Saturday, March 21 at 3:00 pm
Learn about types of financial aid with a guest speaker.
- **Build It! (Adults)**
Thursday, March 19 at 11:00 am
Kick off your home projects with basic construction tips.

Highlighted Service:



Come to the Buford-Sugar Hill Library to access test prep resources for the PSAT, SAT, ACT, GED, GRE, and more! Digital and print resources available to library cardholders.

Branch hours

Monday - Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm
Friday - Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 12 pm - 5 pm

Passport hours

Monday - Thursday: 12 pm - 7 pm
Friday - Sunday: 12 pm - 3 pm
First come, first served.

Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 4th from 11:00 – 2:00

Buford Housing Resident Association Easter Egg Hunt

WHO CAN ATTEND: Resident children ages 1-13

WHEN: Saturday, April 4th from 11 am – 2 pm

WHERE: The empty lot next to the office at 690 South Church St., Buford. Free hotdogs, chips and drinks are provided for attending resident children.

Please RSVP by returning the completed form below to the office no later than Friday, March 16th.



Parent's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____

Child's name: _____ Age _____