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Buford Housing Authority

“The Interview”

October 2020, Newsletter

WELCOME

October



“Interview”

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

**LAST DAY TO PAY RENT IS
THURSDAY, October 8, 2020.**

LOBBY HOURS: Please be aware that our lobby will remain **CLOSED** until further notice. We strongly encourage tenants to utilize the **ONLINE** payment system on the payment portal located on our website (www.bufordhousing.com). The other option for rent payment is US Mail or placing payment in the drop box located in the brick wall to the right of our front door (see the picture below).



These payment options follow the current distancing regulations and reduce risk of exposing tenants and staff to COVID-19. The Lobby will remain closed until further notice. **If you need to drop off any documentation including paystubs, please place this paperwork in the drop box.** Please call the office if you have any questions or if you need any assistance.



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.



Failure to report any changes in income is a serious lease violation and Federal housing program violation and can result in lease termination and eviction.

These are some examples of fraud activity committed recently by tenants.

- Not reporting all new income or changes in current income (wages from EVERY SOURCE whether paid by cash, check, or direct deposit, child support, SS or SSI benefits, Pensions, TANF, child care, unemployment, CARES Act, direct selling of any merchandise including automobiles, or online selling, or any regular financial assistance from family or other source) within 10 days of the first payment or change.
- Not correctly reporting deductions (childcare or medical expenses)
- Having persons living in your apartment (more than 14 days in a 12-month period) who are not on your lease.
- Counting a minor as living in your apartment who actually resides 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? This is called retro rent. If the amount of retro rent owed to the Housing Authority exceeds \$2400, your lease will be terminated. In some cases, if the amount of retro rent owed to the Housing Authority exceeds \$5000, the tenant will not be eligible for re-admission to ANY 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?**



PORCH AND YARD DECOR: There have been changes in the lease to clarify regulations regarding porch plants and décor. Repeated lease violations can result in lease termination and eviction. From your lease:

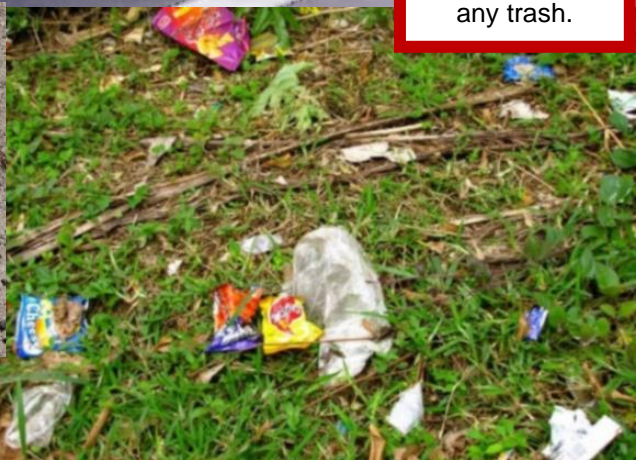
6. OBLIGATION OF RESIDENT

I agree:

LL. I understand that exterior decorating is limited to my porch only and does not include the front or back yard or walkway leading to my apartment. All outdoor furniture, potted plants, solar lights, or any other outdoor items must be located on either my front or rear patio porch. In addition, all patio items must be organized in such a way that a clear path to my doorways is maintained. Anything that impedes egress or blocks doors or screens from opening fully on exterior doors must be removed.

TRASH IN YARD: We would like to remind all tenants of the Trash Violation charge of **\$20.00**. If the Housing Authority cleans up trash in your yard or parking space, you will be charged **\$20.00 for each occurrence**. We are seeing increased quantities

of discarded facemasks and gloves. It would be a good idea to get into a habit of checking your areas every day and throw away the trash you see as you come and go from your apartment. This is a simple task and would be a great way of getting children involved in keeping the neighborhood clean and safe. If children are responsible for keeping trash picked up, they might be less likely to litter to begin with.



There is a \$20 fine if the Housing Authority has to clean up trash in your yard or parking space. Please check your yard daily and throw away any trash.

NOTICE: This will inform you that Maintenance personnel will be going door to door on one of the following days **November 30th, December 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th** to replace furnace filters. Please be aware staff may be in your unit on any of these days to change your furnace filter, and 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.**

PET REMINDERS: Here are a few reminders for pet owners and potential pet owners:



From your Lease:

6. OBLIGATION OF RESIDENT

I agree:

- E. Not to keep a pet in or around the apartment unless I have signed a separate "Lease Addendum for Pets" and have paid the required \$150.00 pet deposit. There will be a \$20.00 charge imposed for the first time an unauthorized pet is discovered. Eviction will result from a second occurrence. I further agree not to feed stray animals or animals for which I have not paid a pet deposit and such action shall be considered as my having UNAUTHORIZED PETS. I shall not encourage a population of feral animals to

feed at my apartment. I shall not tamper with animal cages or traps owned by the Housing Authority and put out by the Housing Authority to manage the population of animals in my neighborhood. My failure to abide in this clause of my Lease is a serious violation of my Lease and may result in Termination of my Lease and Eviction from the property.

From your Lease Addendum for Pets:

- I must have my dog on a leash any time it is out of my apartment on Housing Authority property. The leash must be held under control by a responsible person. My pet cannot be tethered in any way in lieu of a human. I will collect feces or other deposit left by my pet and dispose of it in a sanitary manner.
- I must accept complete responsibility for any damages to property caused by my pet. This includes other residents' property as well as all Buford Housing Authority property.
- I must accept complete responsibility for the behavior of my pet at all times. I must control my pet while it is inside my apartment with regard to noise such as barking so it doesn't disturb neighbors. I must control its behavior when in the presence of employees of the Housing Authority.
- A visiting pet in your home must be accompanied by its owner and the pet's stay is limited to the Fourteen (14) Days per year of its owner. You are responsible for the behavior of visiting pets. Pet sitting, that is taking in the pet of another person, is contrary to the terms of this Pet Policy and will not be permitted.

Buford Housing Authority will give me a NOTICE TO VACATE and will end my lease if there are repeated or continuous problems with my pet.



AWAY FROM YOUR APARTMENT: Did you know that you are required to let the office know if your apartment is going to be vacant for more than 7 days? This includes absences due to travel or illness. If your apartment is vacant for more than 7 days, you must submit a notice in writing of the dates you plan to leave and return as well as an emergency contact name and phone number. If the office has not been notified the Authority will assume the apartment has been abandoned, and may remove any

personal property in the apartment, change the locks after a 30-day absence. You do not want to be evicted in this manner, so please keep the Housing Authority office informed if you plan to be away.

AUSENTE DE TU APARTAMENTO: ¿Sabía que debe informar a la oficina si su apartamento estará desocupado por más de 7 días? Esto incluye ausencias por viaje o enfermedad. Si su apartamento está desocupado por más de 7 días, debe enviar un aviso por escrito de las fechas en las que planea irse y regresar, así como un nombre y número de teléfono de contacto de emergencia. Si la oficina no ha sido notificada, la Autoridad asumirá que el apartamento ha sido abandonado y puede retirar cualquier propiedad personal del apartamento, cambiar las cerraduras después de una ausencia de 30 días. Si no desea que lo desalojen de esta manera, porfavor mantenga informada a la oficina de la Autoridad de Vivienda si planea estar ausente.

PORCH FURNITURE: It has become necessary for us to clarify what is and what is not appropriate porch furniture. From your lease:

6. OBLIGATION OF RESIDENT

I agree:

T. To keep the apartment, adjacent grounds and such other areas as may be assigned to me for my exclusive use, clean, neat, and safe. I will not place any furnishings outside of my dwelling (including porches) that are not designed or intended for outdoor use. The Authority may charge me for noncompliance.





INSPECTION: **APARTMENT INSPECTIONS ARE COMING SOON!** We are waiting for scheduling, and you will only have a two-week notice. NOW would be a good time to review the expectations, so you are prepared. Every room of your apartment will be inspected. Please read the following suggestions that will help you get ready.

1. If you live in a handicap apartment, please pay attention to the emergency cords in the bedroom and bathroom. The cords should reach the floor and should be within reach. Please pull the cord right now so that you can check it out and if you do not hear the bell ring outside or the cord will not reach the floor, please call the office.
2. Every apartment should be clean and neat, porches free of trash and accumulation. Trash should be picked up in the yard and around the apartment. Trash cans should not be overflowing.
3. All wires should be up off the floor or they will be counted as a TRIP HAZARD; these include internet, TV, and computer cables as well as lamp and appliance cords.
4. All plates on light switches and electrical outlets should be whole and unbroken. If you have missing, broken, or cracked electrical plates, please call the office now. You will be charged \$20.00 for EACH damaged plate found during inspection.
5. Any dripping plumbing, non-working plumbing, or leaking pipes especially under the sinks or hose bibs located on the exterior of the building, should be reported to the office. Toilet, tub, shower, and sinks should all work and drain well. Bath sinks and tubs should have stoppers that hold water. Hot and cold-water handles must be in place and working.
6. The caulk around the tub and bathroom sink should not have damage and there should be no mold, mildew, or peeling paint anywhere in the apartment.
7. All smoke detectors should be in place and working. There is a \$20.00 charge for EACH damaged, missing, or disabled smoke detector. 2ND occurrence will result in EVICTION.
8. Blocked windows or doors – one window in every room needs to have easy access for fire escape. Do not block with furniture or other items that may prevent escape in case of fire. All windowsills should be clean and clear of clutter. Every window will be checked, and they should stay up when raised.
9. Any broken glass including photographs and picture frames, mirrors, tabletops, etc. should be removed. Broken windows should be reported to the office for repair.
10. Stoves and ovens should be clean and free of grease. All burners on the stove as well as the oven must light. If they do not work, please call the office.
11. Refrigerator gasket seals cannot be broken or damaged on refrigerator or freezer doors.
12. If you see roaches or know that you have them, please call the office now for treatment.
13. Access to the electrical panel, furnace, and water heater doors cannot be blocked by furniture or other items that are not easily moved.
14. Exterior door seals, weather stripping and door sweeps on exterior and storm doors must be in place without damaged. Door hardware should not be loose and should lock and/or latch properly.
15. There should be no damage to sheetrock or holes in walls.
16. All Flammable/Combustible Materials – must be properly stored. (Charcoal, lighter fluid must be stored inside the covered grill outside on the porch.)

Please call the office and schedule maintenance repairs on any of the above items ASAP!



TO OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

NEW MAINTENANCE STAFF: We are very excited to introduce our new maintenance staff member, Donnie Weckerly.



Donnie comes to us with over 45 years of experience in the Construction/Maintenance field. He has a wide range of skills and abilities to include carpentry/woodworking, flooring/tile work, roofing, sheetrock/painting, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, heavy equipment, operator, EPA Universal Certification. Donnie previously worked for Jones Lang LaSalle as well as numerous other nationally recognized construction companies. He is also a former longtime construction company owner in the Auburn/Winder area.

We look forward to his addition to our team and the skills he brings to the maintenance department!

FULL-TIME STUDENT: In order to qualify for a full-time student deduction, we require documentation of the hours that **COLLEGE AND WORKING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS** are taking each semester. This documentation can be brought into the office, faxed to 770-945-0216, or it can be emailed to the office email at bufordhousing@bufordhousing.com. The current semester transcript must contain a contact name and phone number where the Housing Authority office personnel can call to verify and authenticate the hours reported. **It is the tenant's responsibility to provide this documentation to the office.** We will not ask for this information over and over. The deduction will simply be removed; any income the student earns will count toward the household rent; and community service hours will be required for tenants 18 years and older.





NON-SMOKING LEASE ADDENDUM: We would like to remind all smokers of the smoking policy. You will find the full policy attached to back of the lease you received at recertification. If you have any questions, please call the office.

3. **Non-Smoking Area.** Resident agrees and acknowledges that the designated **non-smoking area includes** the premises to be occupied by Resident and members of Resident's household and any common areas, including but not limited to sidewalks, community patios and gardens, playgrounds, common hallways, administrative offices, community centers, day care centers, laundry buildings, parking lots and any other area of any building or facility that is accessible to employees, residents and guests and is within **25 feet from any of the above mentioned areas**. Resident and members of Resident's household shall not smoke anywhere in said Non-Smoking Area. Nor shall Resident permit any guests or visitors under the control of Resident to smoke in said Non-Smoking Area.

7. **Effect of Breach and Right to Terminate Lease.** A breach of this Lease Addendum shall give each party all the rights contained herein, as well as the rights contained in the Lease. A material or continuing breach of this Addendum shall be a material breach of the Lease and grounds for termination of the Lease by the Landlord. Any resident, including the members of their household, guests, or visitors will be considered in violation of the lease if found smoking in any the housing authority facility or apartment or anywhere on housing authority property that is deemed nonsmoking area. Four (4) violations of this policy per household will be considered to be repeated violation of the material terms of the lease and will be cause for eviction. Violations of this policy will be enforced with the following actions:
 - a. 1st violation - written reprimand and referral to a smoking cessation class
 - b. 2nd violation - notice of lease violation
 - c. 3rd violation - final notice of lease violation and required conference with the Executive Director
 - d. 4th violation - notice of lease termination



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2100 BUFORD HWY

BUFORD GA 30518

Comidas Listas Para Llevar!

Comenzando 1 de septiembre a las 11 am

LOS MIÉRCOLES

BIBLIOTECA DE BUFORD

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