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HUD Awards \$2.6 Million to Kitsap County Housing Authorities to Provide Rental Assistance for 210 More Families in Bremerton and Kitsap County

BREMERTON, WASHINGTON – Bremerton Housing Authority (BHA) and Kitsap Consolidated Housing Authority (Housing Kitsap) were recently notified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that they received a combined award for over \$2.6 Million to continue to issue additional rental assistance vouchers. As a result, over 200 more individuals and families in Kitsap and Mason Counties will have the opportunity to live in safe, decent, affordable, and dignified housing.

This is a direct result of both BHA and Housing Kitsap actively pursuing ways to maximize their ability to serve as many households as possible. Because Federal funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program is limited each year, public housing agencies are often not able to utilize all allocated vouchers as quickly as possible. Since this type of rental assistance is permanent as long as the household remains eligible, the appropriate amount of funding must be available to continue to afford to pay private market rents.

“This is fantastic news for our community and the people waiting for a voucher,” said BHA Executive Director Jill Stanton. “Because we have done such a tremendous job utilizing our vouchers and spending every dollar allocated to us from HUD for this program, we became eligible to apply for additional funding. With over 130 more families able to use a voucher in the past year, we brought over \$4.8 Million directly into Kitsap. This new award will do so much to expand our ability to pay more perpetual funding directly to landlords and help even more families continue to stabilize and thrive in their own homes.”

[PIH Notice 2023-07](#), issued April 4, 2023, implemented the Housing Choice Voucher program funding provisions of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. The 2023 Act provides \$200 million for Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) that are eligible for HAP set-aside funding. Both BHA and Housing Kitsap applied for “Category 5 – Lower-Than-Average Leasing” because they demonstrated how the Kitsap housing market has been preventing voucher holders from successfully leasing up.

There are many challenges faced by low-income individuals and families when searching for an affordable home in Kitsap and Mason County. Even if they have a voucher that guarantees they will not have to pay more than 30-40% of their income towards rent, they still have to compete for apartments in the private market which usually requires meeting strict screening criteria like a positive rental history and high minimum credit score. The lack of available rentals in general makes finding a unit even more difficult. Therefore, the additional Housing Choice Vouchers will also be supported by the new Housing Navigator position made possible by funding from the City of Bremerton and Kitsap County to provide supportive services to voucher holders looking for their next homes.

For more information about Bremerton Housing Authority, visit www.bremertonhousing.org.

For more information about Housing Kitsap, visit www.housingkitsap.org.

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