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SECTION 8/HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER WAITING LIST OPENS

*After Being Closed for Nearly a Decade the Rochester Housing Authority
Will Now Accept 3,000 New Applications*

ROCHESTER, N.Y., August 16, 2016 – The Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) announced today that the waiting list for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, more commonly referred to as Section 8, will open for new applications on September 12, 2016 at 12:01 a.m. and close at 11:59 p.m. on September 26, 2016. The rental assistance program, which uses funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), helps subsidize the cost of housing for low-income families and individuals who meet the program eligibility requirements. The Rochester Housing Authority Section 8 waiting list has been closed since February 2009.

“We’re pleased to make this announcement in partnership with the City of Rochester and the Mayor’s office today,” said Rochester Housing Authority Deputy Director Shawn Burr. “Opening the waiting list for Section 8 enables us to continue our mission of providing quality housing opportunities and supportive services for people in our community.”

As of today, RHA is assisting more than 9,000 households utilizing Section 8 vouchers with 1,020 people on the waiting list. Currently, Rochester has more people living at less than half the federal poverty level than any other similarly-sized city in the U.S. (Rochester Area Community Foundation).

“The Board heard loud and clear that the community was concerned about limited Section 8 opportunities, so we enacted a sub-committee to review our processes and define areas for improvement,” said George Moses, Rochester Housing Authority Board Chairman. “In less than a year, we’ve completely reorganized the process with an efficient, customer-centered approach that enables us to help more people on their path to self-sufficiency.”

Moving forward, new participants will be accepted into the program at the same time a current participant exits, which will keep the waiting list numbers low. In addition, as funding opportunities arise there will be more openings to accept new participants.

“In order to achieve self-sufficiency, our residents must first have stability, and that’s exactly what the Rochester Housing Authority provides through the Housing Choice Voucher Program,” Mayor Lovely Warren said. “With today’s announcement, thousands of Rochestarians will now have better access to jobs, safe neighborhoods, and better educational opportunities, which, in the end, will uplift our community as a whole.”

Applications can only be submitted through Rochester Housing Authority’s website at www.rochesterhousing.org. Those who are unable to access the website can receive assistance through

partner agencies by calling RHA's Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List call center at 585-697-6114 or emailing waitinglist@rochesterhousing.org. Once the application period is over, there will be an electronic random selection process of all applications. Selected applicants will be notified by mail within 90 days and placed on the waiting list immediately. Those that are not selected for the program will also be notified within 90 days of their application being submitted.

About The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

HCV, commonly referred to as Section 8, is a federally-funded HUD program which subsidizes the rents of eligible low-income households. Vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from HUD to administer the voucher program.

Only applicants on the RHA Section 8 tenant-based waiting list are eligible for the voucher program. Eligibility is based on the total annual gross income and family size but ultimately determined by RHA. The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines HCV rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

RHA received a perfect score from HUD for the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) in 2015.

About Rochester Housing Authority

Established in 1955 as an independent public corporation by New York State Public Housing Law, the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) serves more than 25,000 lower-income families, seniors and disabled residents and program participants in the five-county Greater Rochester area. Approximately 20% of those reside in the 2,400+ RHA public housing units, while others served receive assistance in the form of voucher or certificate programs that help them afford eligible, private housing. In 2015, RHA received a "High Performer" rating from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Rochester Housing Authority does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, family status or disability in leasing, rental, occupancy, use or other disposition of housing or related facilities.

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