

## HUD 40% Rule Applies Only When Requesting to Lease a Unit

Any new admission or participant family who moves may not pay **more** than 40% of their monthly-adjusted income toward the family share, if the gross rent (rent plus any tenant paid utilities) is greater than the applicable payment standard for the family.

- The **40% rule applies at initial leasing** of a unit and does not apply for subsequent renewals.
- Each family is different and their monthly-adjusted income varies.

See Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 982.305(a) for further leasing requirements.

## 211 Hotline Gives Access to Many Types of Social Services

By dialing 2-1-1 from any phone, Oklahoma residents can connect with trained specialists who can help them find training, employment, food pantries, affordable housing options, support groups and other essential human services.

All phone calls are confidential, and translation services are provided in a variety of languages.

More information about 2-1-1 can be obtained by visiting the website [www.211oklahoma.org](http://www.211oklahoma.org) or by calling 2-1-1 free of charge.



# News on 8

A Newsletter for Section 8 Rental Assistance Landlords and Tenants  
Published Twice Yearly by Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency



## Finding A Forever Home

**A**lthough they have three grown children of their own, Debra and Tracy Biddle knew they wanted more children. They opened their hearts and their home when they adopted nine children.

Eight of them are boys and the youngest is a girl. While their hearts expanded with the addition of each new child, their three-bedroom home did not.

“When you have boys you need lots of room,” Debra said.

At the time of the adoptions, the Biddles participated in OHFA’s Family Self-Sufficiency Program. A staff member, Ryland Moore, encouraged them to apply for its Section 8 Homeownership Program. The program helps individuals and families complete the steps needed to qualify for and purchase a home, and provides monthly mortgage assistance.

After a long search, the Biddles found their forever home—a five-

bedroom house sitting on three acres of land. It also came with an underground storm shelter that holds 25 people. The home features spacious bedrooms, hardwood floors, and a large kitchen.

“You could tell it was meant and built for a large family,” Debra said.

Inside their new home, the Dibble family can all sit together at the large dining room table for meals. Outside, the children have flat, open fields for playing sports.

“Being here where they can play baseball, football and run or just climb a tree, they are a lot happier,” Debra said.

Homeownership made it all possible.

“Being a homeowner surely changes your way of life,” she said. “It gives you that pride of owning something that is yours.”

Debra and Tracy can’t think of a better place to watch their children grow and prosper.

“We’re not moving ever,” Tracy said.



## Contact List

TTY	(405) 848-7471
Recertification Team 1 <i>Alphabet A,D,G,H,K,M,O, and X</i>	(405) 419-8166 Fax: (405) 419-9166
Recertification Team 2 <i>Alphabet B,C,I,J,N,P,T,U, and Y</i>	(405) 419-8167 Fax: (405) 419-9167
Recertification Team 3 <i>Alphabet E,F,L,Q,R,S,V,W, and Z</i>	(405) 419-8168 Fax: (405) 419-9168
Initial Certification Team	(405) 419-8169 Fax: (405) 419-9169
Preapp Status line	1-866-569-6306 or (405) 879-6365
Local Leasing line	(405) 842-2471
Toll-free Leasing line	1-800-256-1489
Fax Number	(405) 879-8822
Office Operations <i>Mary Hoock, Manager</i> <i>Ken Erb, Supervisor</i>	(405) 419-8266 (405) 419-8233
Field Operations <i>Kenneth Love, Manager</i> <i>Dodie Pool, Supervisor</i>	(405) 419-8268 (405) 419-8230
FSS/ Home Ownership Specialists <i>Kathy Stafford</i> <i>Ryland Moore</i> <i>Sheila Calvin</i>	(405) 419-8236 (405) 419-8197 (405) 419-8171



Oklahoma Quality Award Winner

**OHFA's Administrative Plan for the Section 8 Housing Voucher Program may be viewed at [www.ohfa.org](http://www.ohfa.org) or at its central office by appointment.**

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## TRIO Gives Free Support Services to College Students

**F**ederal TRIO programs provide free educational opportunities for individuals who are low-income, disabled, or military veterans.

Student Support Services (SSS) is a TRIO program with the goal of increasing the college retention and graduation rates of its participants.

Through SSS, funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education.

Services provided by SSS are: Campus Visits, Tutoring, Academic Mentoring, Career Counseling, Community Service Referrals, and Academic Advisement. SSS may also provide grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants.

To be eligible for the program, one of the following must apply:

- You meet federal financial guidelines
  - Neither of your parents graduated with a four-year degree
  - You have a documented disability
- In addition, participants must be:
- A U.S. citizen or meet the residency



**Angela Lake (left) and Jermaine Hardison (center) meet with their tenant, Leslie McMorris.**

## Rent Increase Requests

Rent increase requests **must** be submitted on OHFA's Rent Increase Request Form. Incomplete forms will not be processed. The form may be accessed at [www.ohfa.org](http://www.ohfa.org) on the Section 8 Landlord Resources page under the Property Owners and Managers tab.

A rent increase request must be submitted to OHFA for approval 60 days prior to the requested effective date. For multi-family properties, a separate rent increase request form must be submitted for each unit.

OHFA will review the request to ensure the requested increase is reasonable as compared to similar unassisted units. OHFA will notify the owner and family in writing if the request is approved or denied. No rent increase will be approved during the initial term of the lease.

requirement for federal student financial assistance

- Admitted to a college or university
- Committed to succeeding in college

Individuals may find more information about the SSS Program and other TRIO programs at <http://tinyurl.com/trio-student-services> or by contacting a college or university.

## Creating Quality

**A**ngela Lake and Jermaine Hardison purchased their first rental home for the tax break and ended up helping a family in need.

"We were able to provide housing for a working single mother with four sons," Angela said. "We were proud of that."

Wanting to assist more people with rental housing, they purchased additional houses through their business, Teal Advance, LLC. They now have a total of six tenants with Section 8 Hous-



# Increasing Accessible Housing for People With Disabilities

rental unit accessible for a person with disabilities.

## FAIR HOUSING ACT REQUIREMENTS

The Fair Housing Act states that a landlord must permit, **at the expense of the disabled person**, reasonable modifications of existing premises occupied or to be occupied by such person if such modifications may be necessary to afford such person full enjoyment of the premises.

Where it is reasonable to do so, a landlord may condition permission for a modification on the tenant agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted.

Examples of modifications that typically are reasonable include widening doorways to make rooms more accessible for persons in wheelchairs; installing grab bars in bathrooms; lowering kitchen cabinets to a height suitable for persons in wheelchairs; adding a ramp to make a primary entrance accessible for persons in wheelchairs; or altering a walkway to provide access to a public or common use area.

To show that a requested modification may be necessary, there must be an identifiable relationship between the

requested modification and the individual's disability.

For more information about the Fair Housing Act, contact Metropolitan Fair Housing Council of Oklahoma, Inc. toll free at (866) 677-7541.

**T**here is currently a shortage of accessible housing in the rental market for people with disabilities. This shortage can be attributed to the misconception landlords have about accessibility requirements and modification costs.

Due to these misconceptions, people with disabilities, especially those with limited or fixed income, often feel they are left with no choice but to rent an inaccessible unit and “make-do” until an accessible unit can be found.

Studies have shown that a person with a disability is far less likely to move as often as a person without a disability if they occupy a unit that meets their accessibility needs.

However, private landlords have been hesitant to market to this population because of the expense they presume they would incur if required to make a

## Changes to Phone Number, Email & Mailing Address

Please immediately notify OHFA in writing every time your telephone number, email or mailing address changes.

## Housing Assistance Payment Line

Report concerns or questions regarding rental assistance payments to (405) 848-1144, Ext. 2898. Leave a detailed message and a phone number where you can be reached.

## Housing Assistance Payment History

Property owners may access payment history 24/7 at [www.hapcheck.com](http://www.hapcheck.com).

## Listing of Available Rental Properties

Visit <http://ohfa.gosection8.com> to view or list available units for free or call (866) 466-7328.

## Field Agents

- **Chris Anderson**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Luke Brooks**  
*East Oklahoma*
- **Senna Franklin**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Christina Hines**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Jack Howell**  
*East Oklahoma*
- **Gary Kessinger**  
*SW Oklahoma*
- **Corey King**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Rhonda Murrell**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Philippe Jamet**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Sandy Lindsley**  
*East & NE OK*
- **Debbie Mauldin**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Shannon Ogle**  
*SE Oklahoma*
- **Shawnta Ward**  
*Floater Agent*
- **Judi Wright**  
*Floater Agent*

## Homes for Quality People

ing Choice Vouchers.

“Our motto is quality homes for quality people,” Angela said.

Angela and Jermaine maintain high standards when it comes to the condition of the interior and exterior of their homes. They focus on the little details, knowing they can make a big difference to tenants.

“We are really tedious about electrical plates matching and paint matching,” Jermaine explained. “We don’t want anyone to feel they are less for-

tunate than anyone else because they don’t own a home.”

When the central air conditioning unit in one property didn’t work properly, Jermaine delivered window units at midnight just so they didn’t have to go through one night without it.

“We go above and beyond,” Angela stated.

As landlords, they want their tenants to see the amount of care they put into their rental homes and ask their tenants to do the same.

## Important Dates

### 2015-2016 Holidays (Offices Closed)

December 24 & 25, Christmas  
January 1, New Year's Day  
January 18, MLK, Jr. Day  
February 15, Presidents' Day  
May 30, Memorial Day

### 2016 Landlord Meetings

September 22 - Lawton; October 6 -  
Tulsa; & October 20 - Oklahoma City

### 2015-2016 Rental Assistance Trainings (Staff Unavailable)

December 3, March 10, June 9,  
September 8 & December 15

### 2016 Homebuyer Education Classes (Current FSS Clients Only)

March 26, June 25, September 17 &  
December 3

### 2016 Resident Advisory Board Meetings

February 26, May 27, August 19 &  
November 8

### 2016 Program Coordinating Committee Meetings

January 29, April 29, July 29 &  
October 28

## SEE WHAT'S INSIDE!



**HUD 40% Rule Applies  
Only When Requesting  
to Lease a Unit**



**TRIO Gives Free Support  
Services to College  
Students**



**Creating Quality Homes  
for Quality People**



**Increasing Accessible  
Housing for People With  
Disabilities**

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## DHS Offers Winter Heating Bill Assistance

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) assists households that meet certain income limits with winter heating bills through its Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Apply by visiting your local county DHS office or by calling (866) 411-1877. The application period begins December 8 and ends when funding runs out.

## Water Heater Safety Tips Can Save Lives

**W**ater heater safety is an important factor for landlords and tenants. Water heaters can explode and cause significant damage, injury, or death if certain safety devices are not installed. A TPR valve is installed to discharge water if the temperature or pressure becomes too high.

Scalding is a serious concern with any water heater since human skin burns quickly at high temperature (140° F), but also at lower temperatures (120° F) if the exposure times are sufficient.

Older people and children often receive the most serious scalds due to disabilities or slow reaction times. The most commonly used water heaters are gas/propane fired, electric, boiler system, and tankless.

Water heaters will fail Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections for gas leakage, water leakage, seriously cracked or broken vent pipes on gas-fired water heaters, and if combustible materials, either liquids or solids, are piled up against the heater.

Water heaters can also fail for the following: absence of a TPR valve, a missing discharge line, a discharge line smaller than 3/4 of an inch, a discharge line that doesn't extend down to the required length, and a discharge line threaded on the end or rising at an angle and not operating properly.

Learn more about HQS requirements at <http://tinyurl.com/Sec8Resources> and click on the Briefing Book, Housing Quality Standards, and Administrative Plan links.

