



Troy Housing Authority
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NEIGHBORHOODS

www.troyhousing.org

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Reminder:

Cars parked on Troy Housing Authority property must be registered with the management office. In addition to this, all cars must be properly registered with New York State and inspected. Any car found to be in violation of these rules can be ticketed and towed at the owners expense.

Unregistered and uninspected cars are a danger to our community.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Listening Tour Thank You

Rev. George William Whitfield, Vice Chair, of our Board of Commissioners and Chair of our Quality of Life Committee submitted this special column to NEIGHBORHOODS.

Let me begin by saying Thank You to all the residents that participated in the Listening Tours held in 2018. We announced the tour in the beginning of 2018 with a flyer that said: "Your Voice Counts: Come Tell Us What You Think About The Troy Housing Authority." Throughout the year we held meetings all over the city, in the daytime and in the evening, to assure that anyone that wanted to attend could attend.

In the beginning we had no idea what to expect and I was pleasantly surprised by the amount of people that took time from their busy days (and evenings) to come and talk with us. We heard what residents like about living in Troy Housing Authority apartments, we received many suggestions for improvements, and we heard some concerns and complaints. We hope that everyone who attended felt heard during the process.

Members of the Quality of Life Committee, and at times other Board Members, attended each meeting and listened to what everyone had to say. We welcomed all comments and suggestions, both positive and negative.

Administrative Staff sat in to answer any questions on the spot and to take notes for future follow up. Suggestions, concerns and complaints that could be addressed were then addressed in a timely manner, and for those that could not be addressed we received an explanation from administration.

For me personally, and for other members of the Board of Commissioners, this was a most worthwhile experience. We got to meet many of the residents whom we are here to serve and we got to see how responsive the staff of the Troy Housing Authority are to us and to you, our residents. I sincerely hope that everyone who attended also found this to be a worthwhile experience.

As I continue in my role as Vice Chair of the Board of Commissioners and Chair of the Facilities and Quality of Life Committee I am committed to remaining available to you, our tenants. Commissioners at the Troy Housing Authority don't have an office but you can leave a message for me or any Commissioner at **518-273-3600 ext. 212** or you can email me personally at gwhitfield@troyhousing.org.

I want to close by again saying Thank You to everyone who participated in our Listening Tour and Thank You all for the opportunity to serve you as a Commissioner of the Troy Housing Authority.

2019 Meeting Schedule Of The Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners is the governing board of the Troy Housing Authority. The Board establishes the strategic vision for the Housing Authority and sets all the policies of the organization in accordance with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Board of Commissioners hold regular meetings every six weeks, usually on Thursdays at 4:30PM unless otherwise noted. At the start of each meeting anyone interested may offer comment on any agenda item. Later in the meeting comments are taken on any topic.

2019 Remaining Meetings:

- April 4, 2019 - Taylor Apartments
- May 16, 2019 - Griswold Heights
- June 27, 2019 - Kennedy Towers
- August 8, 2019 - Fallon Apartments
- September 19, 2019 - Conway Court
- October 24, 2019 - Corliss Park
- December 12, 2019 - Martin Luther King Apartments

Agendas for meetings are posted a few days in advance at each Troy Housing Authority location and on our website and Facebook page.

From the desk of the Executive Director Deborah A. Witkowski



I would like to use my column in this issue of Neighborhoods to share exciting information about something that will be happening at the Troy Housing Authority. As a local Housing Authority we have a responsibility to assure our services and resources are accessible to everyone in our community. This includes making sure that we have apartments that can meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Presently, all the apartments we manage at Kennedy Towers are accessible for a person in a wheelchair, and several are at Kane Apartments, Conway Court, Taylor Apartments, Guenette Apartments and Martin Luther King Apartments. We also have some apartments at several sites that are equipped so that a person with hearing or vision difficulty could live there.

Despite this, we know we need to do more. Presently, we are working to create apartments at every site that are accessible for persons in wheelchairs and properly equipped so that a persons with hearing or vision difficulty could live there.

We are working with architects to figure out the best apartments at each site to change so that they can meet the needs of persons in wheelchairs and persons with hearing or vision difficulties. In the end, at each site we expect to have 5% of our apartments accessible for persons in wheelchairs and 2% of our apartments equipped so that a persons with hearing or vision difficulty could live there. This will mean that some tenants will need to move to different apartments if the apartments they are in are best suited for this work.

This process will take some time and we are likely to only work on a few sites at a time. Once the apartments are selected the architect will work on the designs and we will then have to select a contractor to do the work. Your site manager will let you know if your apartment is selected and what your options are regarding moving to a different apartment. You will continue to receive the same rental assistance in your new apartment.

We hope that everyone will cooperate with us throughout this process so that we can better serve persons with disabilities by having apartments available that can meet their needs.

Deborah A. Witkowski

Executive Director

Being Smoke Free Makes Us All Healthier

Ever since January 1, 2016 the Troy Housing Authority has designated all of our buildings smoke-free. This means smoking is not allowed anywhere in our buildings, including apartments, or within 25 feet of our buildings or play areas. This was done to ensure the quality of air and the safety of our residents, and in compliance with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Note that smokers are free to enjoy their home but must smoke outside and at least 25 feet away from our buildings and play areas.

We recognize that this policy may result in some residents choosing to quit smoking. Check in the site office for information that may be available for programs like The Butt Stops Here©. The NYS Smokers' Quitline may also offer resources to help you quit smoking. They can be accessed by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) or on line at www.nysmokefree.com.

To assure that our buildings remain smoke free there are consequences for not following our policies. For offenses in one's apartment there is an additional \$250.00 security deposit for each verified smoking incident. Violations within an apartment on 2 or more occasions is considered a material breach of the lease and is grounds for termination of the lease (eviction).

For offenses on other parts of the property a warning letter will be issued for the first offense; a \$10.00 service charge will be assessed for a second offense; a \$20.00 service charge will be assessed for a third offense and eviction proceedings will commence with a fourth offense.

Being smoke-free means that everyone who lives in our apartments, visits our buildings or works for Troy Housing Authority is breathing cleaner, safer and healthier air.

Anyone wishing to report an incident of smoking may turn this short form into any site office

Person Observed Smoking (name and address, if known): _____

Date Seen Smoking: _____ Time Seen Smoking: _____ Where: _____

Comments: _____

Name and Address of Person Making Report: _____

Phone Number: _____ Signature: _____

Apply For A Scholarship

ACT NOW!!!! Entries must be submitted online by 5PM EST on Tuesday, April 30, 2019.
Visit www.housingcenter.com/scholarships or contact scholarship@housingcenter.com.

Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAI) Resident Scholarship Program has been providing scholarships nationally to residents of public housing and housing choice voucher participants since 2003.

This year HAI will select 20 students to receive a scholarship worth \$6,000 to help them continue their education. Students may enter, and win, scholarships for up to four consecutive years. Once you receive a scholarship you can continue to apply in future years even if your housing situation changes and you move out of a housing authority assisted apartment.

Stop by one of our site offices if you need assistance accessing the Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAI) Resident Scholarship Program website.

Good luck to all who are continuing their education, especially those who apply for this scholarship.

\$



\$

ELIGIBILITY - Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Enrollment: Is or will be enrolled in the fall 2019-20 academic year in an accredited or licensed technical school or accredited two- or four-year college or university in the United States.

Residency: Resides in a housing authority apartment or in an apartment assisted with a housing choice voucher (HCV) from a housing authority that is insured by the Housing Authority Insurance (HAI) Group. Troy Housing Authority is insured by this group.

Citizenship: Must be a United States citizen.

Other: Must follow all the other rules outlined in the official rules (found at www.housingcenter.com/scholarships).

Playground Safety Contest

MAKE YOUR PLAYGROUND SAFE AND CLEAN—BE A DANGER DETECTIVE
ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SITE OFFICES BY APRIL 1, 2019

To celebrate National Playground Safety Week, April 22-26, 2019, the Housing Authority Insurance Group (HAI) is holding its annual Playground Safety Poster and Essay Contest.

Troy Housing Authority is encouraging children in our apartments to participate.

The Troy Housing Authority will award 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Prizes (\$25, \$15 and \$10) for Posters and Essays in the following age categories: 8 and Under, 9-11 and 12-14 year olds.

All 1st Place winners will be sent to the National Competition to compete for more prizes (a gift certificate from either Walmart or Barnes & Noble - \$100 for 1st place, \$40 2nd place, and \$25 for 3rd place).



Each poster or essay should reflect the theme: **MAKE YOUR PLAYGROUND SAFE AND CLEAN—BE A DANGER DETECTIVE.**

All entries must have the participants full name, age and address written on the back clearly and legibly.

Posters should be 22 inches by 28 inches or smaller.

Local winners will be announced during Playground Safety Week at a celebration honoring all participants.

For more information contact your Tenant Association or Site Manager.

Good luck to all who participate in this contest and think about how to have a safe and happy summer.



Troy Housing Authority
One Eddy's Lane
Troy, NY 12180



Connect with THA



**Troy Housing Authority on Facebook
and at troyhousing.org
For latest news and information**

Deborah A. Witkowski, Executive Director

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Susan J.W. Steele, Chair

Rev. George William Whitfield, Vice Chair

Debora Jackson

Steven Sanders

Leonard Watkins, Tenant Commissioner

Walter Howard, Tenant Commissioner

Un trabajador social de intérpretes en español esta disponible en la vivienda de troy para ayudar a los inquilinos y solicitantes que hablan español. Hágale saber al personal si necesita esta ayuda.

(A Spanish Interpreter Caseworker is available at Troy Housing Authority to assist Spanish speaking tenants and applicants. Let staff know if you need this assistance).

A New Way To Pay At The Troy Housing Authority

The Troy Housing Authority is very pleased to now be offering the option of accepting payments for rent, maintenance and other tenant charges with EBT, Credit and Debit Cards.

Each of our property locations that accept tenant payments now have an EBT/Credit/Debit Card Terminal installed. Presently we can only process EBT, Credit and Debit Card payments for those card holders who personally present their card to one of our staff accepting payment. We are looking into other enhancements in the future, including accepting credit card payments over the telephone or through a website.

The ability to use your EBT, Credit and Debit Card works similarly to making a payment at one of our offices using a check or money order, except you will no longer incur the inconvenience and expense of obtaining a money order. There will be no processing fee for using a credit and debit card to pay your rent, maintenance and other tenant charges at the Troy Housing Authority.

We hope that you find this new option helpful. If you have any questions you may check with your site office during normal office hours.

