

An electronic news service of the Housing Services Department – February 2011

COMING SOON TO A COMPUTER NEAR YOU!



The PA Affordable Apartment Locator has been a great tool, but PAHousingSearch.com will be even better! PHFA, with assistance from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, the Pennsylvania Office of Long-Term Living, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development, is making this FREE service available to landlords and property owners of affordable housing to list their properties. In addition to all the technical features that the Apartment Locator had, PAHousingSearch.com will feature a fully operational bi-lingual call center, outreach and quality control functions handled by SocialServe.com, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit and national provider of affordable housing locator services.

If your properties were already listed on the Apartment Locator, then you have a head start! PHFA is working with SocialServe to transfer data from the Apartment Locator to the new PAHousingSearch.com website. That transfer will take place on February 4th and thereafter, all updates to your vacancy information will be handled directly by SocialServe. You will receive an email or phone call from SocialServe.com to help you through the process.

If you haven't taken advantage of the Apartment Locator, then visit www.PAHousingSearch.com or call 1.877.428.8844 (toll free) to sign up for a free account to begin listing your properties.

Either way, make sure YOUR properties are listed when the website goes live on March 1st! Don't miss this chance to be part of the newest development in affordable housing in Pennsylvania.

For more information, contact Socialserve.com • 1.877.428.8844 • info@socialserve.com

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Demos will be available at the Commonwealth Housing Forum May 5th and 6th and the PHFA Housing Services Conference June 21-23 in State College.

PHFA Information and Trainings

Save the Dates: Regional Housing Services Forums

Central PA Regional Forum, February 25, at Hershey Plaza, Dauphin County, 10:00AM-3:00 PM. Topics include: Getting Residents Ready for Electronic Payments, What is the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program? To register Email mmcgraw@phfa.org.

- **Eastern PA Regional Forum, March 11**, at Sencit Townhouse, Berks County. For details email Alicia Spencer at aspencer@phfa.org.
- **SW Regional Housing Forum, March 11** at McKeesport Towers, McKeesport, 10:00 AM-3:30 PM. Contact Steve Chopek at schopek@phfa.org.
- **Central PA Regional Forum, March 24**, Country Cupboard Restaurant, Lewisburg, 10:00AM – 3:00 PM. Contact mmcgraw@phfa.org to register or for details.
- **Western PA Regional Forum, April 6**, from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM at Mountview Manor, Cresson, Cambria County. Contact Steve Chopek at schopek@phfa.org.
- **NW Regional Forum, April 15**, from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM at Grandview Manor in Erie. Contact Steve Chopek at schopek@phfa.org for details.

PHFA Funded PennHOMES & Tax Credit Properties; 2010 Supportive Service Reports Due

Annual Supportive Service reports can be found on PHFA's website (www.PHFA.org) in the [Property Operations Manual for PennHOMES and Tax Credit Properties](#) under section 4 (Annual Reporting Requirements) [PennHOMES Annual Supportive Services Report](#) Not sure if you need to report, have supportive service questions or concerns? Contact your Regional Housing Services Representative [Housing Services Regional Map](#).

2011 Housing Services Conference Call for Marketplace Vendors

Reserve your spot to market your product or service to developers, housing management staff and service providers in State College on June 21. Deadline for application is April 1. Use the RFP posted at: www.phfa.org/forms/conferences/housing_services/2011_call_fr_vendors.pdf.

Feb 15 Deadline for Application to Participate in the Common Thread Quilt Project

Conference planning for 2011 is underway and we are planning on a great event that will highlight the talents and efforts of our properties throughout the state by engaging your residents in the creation of quilt squares. We'll combine all of the squares and exhibit the completed quilt at the 2011 Conference in State College, June 21-23, 2011. Get the details and let us know that you're going to participate at: www.phfa.org/forms/conferences/housing_services/2011_common_quilt_project.pdf.

2011 PHFA Commonwealth Housing Forum

The 2011 PHFA Commonwealth Housing Forum, *Rebuilding the Dream*, is scheduled for May 5 and 6 at the Hilton Harrisburg. Watch for more information in your next issue of Quick Connections or at www.phfa.org.

Park Spring Apartments Wins 2010 NAHMA Communities of Quality Award

Park Spring Apartments, an Interstate Realty Management property has been selected as a 1st Place Award Winner in the Exemplary Family Development Property category of the 2010 NAHMA Communities of Quality Awards. Details are at: <http://www.nahma.org/content/coq.html>.

Other Trainings and Conferences

Mar 15-17 Quadel AHM Workshop in Pittsburgh

AHM training will cover the skills required to earn a superior annual Management and Occupancy Review (MOR) rating. For details: www.quadel.com or 1.800.987.2581.

Apr 6 The RHC Housing Summit Harrisburg – Save the Date

The Regional Housing Coordinators are sponsoring a one day event focused on the housing needs of people with disabilities and older Pennsylvanians on April 6 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey

Hotel, Harrisburg. For information contact Mary@sdhp.org.

PA Behavioral Health & Aging Coalition Offers Various Training Opportunities

- “Understanding an Accessing Medicare Services for Mental Health Consumers”, “Working with Behavioral Health Issues in Older Adults”, “Understanding and Working with Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities” a free one day training will be held **February 14, at the DSG Annex Complex (Clothes Tree Building), Harrisburg.**
- Understanding Depression, Anxiety and Suicide Prevention in Older Adults” **March 23, Wilkes-Barre. April 6, Bryn Mawr. May 11, Kersey.** Cost is \$75 per session. Various dates and locations For information on all events, go to: www.olderpa.org or call 717.541.4219.
- “Understanding and Accessing Medicare Services for Mental Health Consumers”, Working with Behavioral Health Issues in Older Adults”, QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) A Suicide Prevention Training” a free one day training on **March 30, Mahanoy City, April 13, Pittsburgh, and May 23, Chambersburg.** Register online at www.olderpa.org/bhc.

PA Behavioral Health & Aging Integrative Case Conference Series

ICCS is a monthly video/audio conference series targeting ideas and solutions for working with older adults with behavioral health issues. The series serves as a forum to discuss complicated cases with cross-system needs. Calls are held from 12:30 PM-2:00 PM.

- **February 16, 2011**
- **March 16, 2011**
- **April 20, 2011**

Interested in participating? A [Case Review Form](#) is completed by anyone wishing to discuss their case or contact [Linda Shumaker](#) if you would like to participate or for more information.

Feb 17 Training for Volunteer Opportunity: PA Behavioral & Aging Coalition Fayette

Pennsylvania Behavioral Health & Aging Coalition is seeking volunteers age 60+ for the Aging Coalition Trainers (ACT) Program. The Program provides training for older adult volunteers to provide information to other older adults in group settings. Training will be held on February 17, in Fayette County. For more information contact Jill Parisi, at jill@olderpa.org

Mar 19-20 2011 Green Home and Building Expo-Bethlehem

Mark your calendar for a 2011 Green Home and Building Expo at March 19-20 at Northampton Community College in Bethlehem Township. For information: www.lvgreenbuilders.org.

Resources/News – General

Assistance with Taxes

With tax season quickly approaching, there are several programs offered to help low income individuals with filing income taxes.

- [IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) Program](#)- Offers free tax help to individuals with lower incomes. To locate the nearest VITA site, call 1.800.906.9887.
- **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program**- Provides free tax help to individuals 60 or older. Volunteers are trained and certified by the IRS to provide free tax counseling and assistance to older adults. For more information, call 1.800.829.1040.
- **Tax-Aide Counseling Program**- Offered through AARP trained and certified Tax-Aide volunteer counselors help people of low to middle income, with special attention to individuals 60 or older. To locate the nearest site, call 1.888.227.7669.

IRS Free File is Open

Everyone can use Free File, the free way to prepare and e-file federal taxes either through brand-name software or online fillable forms. Free File software is a product of a public-private partnership between the IRS and the Free File Alliance, LLC. IRS Free File is open at www.irs.gov/freefile .

IRS Provides Assistance for People with Disabilities

The Internal Revenue Service Alternative Media Center provided the following information on how to access accessible tax forms, instructions, and other tax publications. Click on the links below to

download these forms and publications:

- [Download Accessible Tax Publications \(Braille and Text Formats\)](#)
- [Download Accessible Talking Tax Forms](#)
- [Download Tax Instructions \(Large Print Format\)](#)
- [Download Tax Publications \(Large Print Format\)](#)
- [Download Accessible Tax Forms \(Braille and Text Formats\)](#)

The IRS also offers customer service assistance for persons who are deaf or who have hearing disabilities. People with TTY equipment may call 800.829.4059. Visit www.irs.gov and click on the word "accessibility" for information.

US Treasury Introduces MyAccountCard to Expedite Tax Refunds

The US Treasury has announced MyAccount Card Debit Card that combines fast, low-cost delivery of federal tax refunds with everyday money-saving conveniences and financial account protections for people who do not have bank accounts. You must have a valid Social Security number to sign up for MyAccountCard. [Sign Up Now! http://www.myaccountcard.gov/](http://www.myaccountcard.gov/).

Websites Help Consumers with Taxes & Financial Literacy

360 Degrees of Taxes is a national volunteer effort by Certified Public Accountants to help consumers understand their taxes. The [website](#) provides free resources. A [companion website](#) provides information to help people of all ages make sound financial decisions throughout every stage of life.

Due Feb 6 The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging Survey

The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging is conducting a survey to gather input from a wide range of people on the website it is creating. The information provided will be used to help determine what content to include and how effective the Center is in reaching its intended audiences. The deadline for completing the survey is February 6.. To access the survey, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/lgbtagingcenter>. If you have any questions about the survey, please send an e-mail to: info@lgbtagingcenter.org.

Due by March 1 Nominations for Healthy Living Innovation Awards

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services is seeking nominations for its 2011 Healthy Living Innovation Awards. The program will recognize health promotion projects that have demonstrated a significant impact on the health status of a community. Projects must focus on healthy weight, physical activity, or nutrition. Nominations will be accepted from Jan. 18 to March 1. [Find out how to apply.](#)

Due Mar 1 Delaware Valley Smart Growth Alliance Applications for Project Recognition

The Delaware Valley Smart Growth Alliance(DVSGA)recognizes projects that will foster regional growth and redevelopment in a manner that achieves important economic, environmental and quality of life objectives. Applications are due by March 1. For information or to download an application: www.delawarevalleysmartgrowth.org.

Ending Feb 28 adultBasic Program

The adultBasic program is ending February 28. For more information on the expiration of the adultBasic program and other health insurance alternatives, call 1.800GOBASIC (1.800.462.2742), Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM- 7:00 PM or Saturday from 9:00 AM- 3:00 PM or go to http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/health_insurance/9189/adultbasic/592645.

Energy Pledge

For the past two years, the Department of Energy has been running a campaign to encourage individuals to take action to reduce their energy usage. Owners and managers are encouraged to start pledge campaigns at their properties. For information on starting your campaign: www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=globalwarming.showPledge.

First Time Recipients of Federal Benefits to Receive Payments Electronically

All federal benefit payments will be electronic by March 1, 2013. People who apply for federal benefits on or after May 1, 2011, will need to choose an electronic payment option. Details at <http://www.godirect.org/media/about/fact-sheet-direct-deposit-federal-benefits/>.

HUD Proposes New Rule to Ensure Access to Housing

HUD has proposed new regulations intended to ensure that its core housing programs are open to all eligible individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=LGBTPR.PDF>

PA Fair Care

PA Fair Care a health plan for uninsured adults with pre-existing conditions is available on a first come basis. To be eligible a person must be a U.S. citizen or lawful resident, a resident of PA, have a pre-existing health condition and be uninsured for previous six months. Details at www.PAFairCare.com or 888.767.7015 (TTY 888.767.7018.)

Title VIII. Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS Act)

The Act provides Americans with a new option to finance long-term services and care in the event of a disability. It is a self-funded and voluntary long-term care insurance choice. Workers will pay premiums in order to receive a daily cash benefit if they develop a disability. For information: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/health-care-meeting/proposal/titleviii>.

Resources/News - Senior Sites

Administration on Aging (AoA)

The Administration on Aging has resources to connect older persons, caregivers and professionals to important federal, national, and local programs. www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Elders_Families/index.aspx.

AoA Launches New Affordable Care Act Newsletter

The Administration on Aging (AoA) recently introduced *Affordable Care Act News*, a new electronic newsletter devoted to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the impact on the Aging Network. To have your name added to the mailing list, email aoainfo@aoa.gov.

AARP Nationwide Anti-Hunger Initiative

AARP and the AARP Foundation have launched a nationwide anti-hunger initiative aimed at seniors that include new online hunger resources as well as local SNAP outreach and assistance. For more information, click [here](#).

Due Feb 15-Applications for New Ventures in Leadership Program

February 15 is the deadline for submitting an application for the 2011-2012 class of New Ventures in Leadership Program (NVL). Sponsored by the American Society on Aging (ASA), NVL is a 12-month program that champions the leadership potential of professionals of color and their critical role in the field of aging. To access the application: www.asaging.org/nvl/index.cfm.

First Physical With Medicare Now Free

Starting this year, first-time enrollees in Medicare will be offered free physicals, courtesy of the new Affordable Care Act. The "Welcome to Medicare" benefit will be offered only during a person's first year of enrollment in Part B, and the doctor must agree to be paid directly by Medicare for the visit to be free. www.consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=648221.

PA SeniorLAW Helpline 1.877.727.7529

The Pennsylvania SeniorLAW Helpline is a toll-free, state-wide, legal information, advice and referral service for older Pennsylvanians (60 years and older). For info go to www.seniorlawcenter.org or contact Executive Director, Karen Buck at kbuck@seniorlawcenter.org.

PBS to Air Documentary *Over 90 and Loving It*

PBS will air the new documentary, *Over 90 and Loving It*, which features real stories of people in

their 90s and 100s, in early 2011. Check your local Public Broadcasting channel for airing times. To learn more about the documentary, including show times, please go to www.over90film.com/.

Resources/News - Family Sites

10 Ways to Protect Your Children from Cyberbullying

For tips on protecting your children and preventing cyberbullying go to:

www.familyinternet.about.com/od/computingsafetyprivacy/tp/stop_cyberbullies.htm?nl=1.

Student Aid on the Web

For info on student aid: www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp.

Do you Want to go to College? Philadelphia Area

The City of Philadelphia wants to become a city where anyone who wants a college degree can get the support needed. Free SAT prep classes!!! For more information: www.phillygoes2college.org/.

Resources/News - People with Disabilities

HUD Section 811 Reform Act Program Changes

For information: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/202811/sec811reformanalysis.pdf>.

People with Disabilities Dating Websites

If you would like to date someone with a disability, there are many disability dating sites available. Sites such as www.dateable.org, www.dating4disabled.com, www.datebility.com, www.datedisabled.com, www.lovebyrd.com, and www.whispers4u.com bring together people with disabilities interested in dating and relationships.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Success Stories

This is a publication that describes personal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) success stories and the history of the Rehabilitation Act. People with disabilities have the highest unemployment rate among people who want to work. For more info: www.disability.gov/employment/jobs_&_career_planning/vocational_rehabilitation.

DCoE Blog

[DCoE Blog](#) – The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) helps vets and their families with psychological health and traumatic brain injury issues.

Funding Opportunities

Due Feb 15 Open Meadows Foundation Grant

The Open Meadows Foundation supports projects led by and benefitting women and girls, particularly those from vulnerable communities, with grants of up to \$2,000. Applicants must be 501(c) (3) organizations or have an eligible fiscal sponsor. Details are at www.openmeadows.org/.

Due Feb 18 HUD's Homeless Families Demonstration Small Grant Research Program

HUD's Office of Policy Development & Research (PD&R) has funding available for [Homeless Families Demonstration Small Grant Research Program](#). Preliminary applications are due on February 18. [Click here](#) for details.

Due Feb 23 Date Extended ROSS Service Coordinator NOFA

The ROSS Service Coordinator NOFA announces the availability of funding to employ service coordinators in public housing authorities and tribes/tribally designated housing entities. The application deadline for the ROSS Service Coordinator program is extended to February 23 <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2011/pdf/2010-33302.pdf> and the NOFA can be found [here](#).

Due Feb 22 NOFA for HUD's Rural Innovation Fund

The Notice of Funding Availability for HUD's new Rural Innovation Fund has been posted at grants.gov. The deadline is February 22. Eligible applicants are local rural nonprofit organizations, community development corporations, federally recognized Indian tribes, state housing finance agencies, and state community and/or economic development agencies.

Due Feb 28 Met Life Foundation and Local Initiatives

MetLife Foundation and Local Initiatives Support Corporation are partnering to recognize, sustain, and share the work of innovative partnerships between community groups and police to promote neighborhood safety and revitalization. Lead partner in collaboration must be a 501(c) (3) organization. Details and application at <http://www.lisc.org/section/ourwork/national/safety/awards>.

Due Feb 28 Summary of Set-Aside Funding for Project-Basing HUD VASH Vouchers

HUD updated *PIH Notice 2010-40* to: extend the deadline to February 28th, 2011 and clarify the application process. The updated info is at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/10/pih2010-40.pdf>

Due Mar 1 Dr. Scholl Foundation Charitable Grants

The Dr. Scholl Foundation is accepting requests for applications. Grants are awarded in the following areas: social service agencies, environmental organizations and religious institutions; programs for children and developmentally disabled senior citizens; hospital and healthcare organizations; education; and civic and cultural institutions. Grant applications are due March 1. For more information, go to www.drschollfoundation.com.

Due Mar 11 VA-Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program NOFA

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the availability of funds for supportive services grants under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF Program). A Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) was published in the Federal Register on December 17, 2010. Applications for assistance under the SSVF Program must be received by the SSVF Program Office by 4 p.m. on March 11, in accordance with the requirements set forth in the NOFA and the application. [View the NOFA](#). Visit the [SSVF Program Web Site](#) for a copy of the application.

Due Mar 18 High School Invention Grants

The Lemelson Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are offering grants of up to \$10,000 to be awarded to teams comprised of high school students, teachers and mentors who invent technological solutions to real-world problems, particularly those that affect the world's poorest people. Please visit the [InvenTeams High School Inventions Grants site](#) for more information and the online application <http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/funding/MIT-new-inventions>.

Due Mar 24 Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing Notice

The Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is available [by visiting here](#). The application due date is March 24.

Due Mar 29 Assisted Living Conversion Program

[Click here](#) for The Assisted Living Conversion Program (ALCP) Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). The application due date is March 29.

College Access Challenge Grants: Including Adult Learners

The College Access Challenge Grant Program (CACG) offers resources that are used primarily to improve college access rates for middle and high school students. The program, however, can be used to improve college access and success for a much larger population: low-skilled adults. Go to: www.workingpoorfamilies.org/.

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