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News Release



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ANCHORAGE RECEIVES HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR INDIVIDUALS COMING OUT OF PRISON

Model shows stability in housing reduces recidivism

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, Oct. 26, 2015 – Leaders of the State of Alaska’s Department of Corrections (DOC) and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) expanding AHFC’s Tenant Based Rental Assistance program to individuals coming out of a correctional institution.

DOC Commissioner Ron Taylor and AHFC CEO/Executive Director Bryan Butcher signed the agreement committing 20 housing vouchers to Anchorage Thursday, Oct. 22. The model follows AHFC’s Housing Choice Voucher protocol where landlords receive payment directly from AHFC for housing individuals or families with a voucher. Under the TBRA program, tenants are eligible to receive up to two years of rental assistance. Individuals must meet certain criteria and be referred to the program by their parole or probation officer and be under their supervision. Funds for the program expansion are made available through federal monies as part of AHFC’s Moving to Work block grant. AHFC is one of only 39 public housing agencies across the country with this distinction and it requires innovation in the delivery of affordable housing.

The MOA for Anchorage follows successful implementation of the program in 11 other communities statewide. As of August 2015, DOC and AHFC were assisting 64 families, including 43 children. Eighty

percent of households made 30 percent or less of the Area Median Income, with average family income being \$12,810. All participants had some source of income. The average rent for participants is \$319, with the average housing assistance payment from AHFC to landlord around \$650.

“Expansion to Anchorage fulfills an objective of AHFC to provide safe, quality and affordable housing to a population of vulnerable Alaskans who may just need a hand up. Media coverage has shown Alaskans that we’re on an unsustainable path when it comes to our budget and we need to continue to innovate. Use of HUD [Housing & Urban Development] dollars is a wise investment in the future of Alaskans who made a mistake and need a second chance to getting on the right path; the presence and counsel of DOC insures a commitment to that end,” says Butcher.

DOC Commissioner Ron Taylor added, “Following incarceration, many returning citizens join the growing number of individuals in the general population struggling to obtain safe, affordable, and supportive housing. Our partnership with AHFC has already yielded incredible results with the Tenant Based Rental Assistance, as we have been able to prove that individuals released from prison who have a connection to stable housing are less likely to be re-incarcerated. “

Exclusions for individuals subject to a lifetime registration requirement on the state sex offender registry, with a history of manufacturing methamphetamines in a public housing setting, or owes AHFC money are ineligible to participate. More information about program implementation is available at AHFC’s website: <http://bit.ly/1MJ32he>

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) is a public corporation with a long history of providing Alaskans access to safe, quality and affordable housing through home financing programs, energy efficiency and weatherization programs, public housing and more. Since 1986, AHFC has contributed \$1.9 billion to the State of Alaska’s General Fund.

The Alaska Department of Corrections provides secure confinement, reformative programs, and a process of supervised community reintegration to enhance the safety of Alaska’s communities.

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