
News Release

Contact:

Stacy Schubert
AHFC Government Relations & Public Affairs Director
(907) 301-4556
sschubert@ahfc.us

Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to receive housing from Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

Anchorage, Alaska, Nov. 1, 2012 – A new program designed to meet housing needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault has been established in a partnership between Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) and the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA). The Empowering Choice Housing Program (ECHP) is a referral based transition housing assistance program designed to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

“I appreciate the many who have worked hard to bring housing to vulnerable Alaskans,” Governor Parnell said. “Alaska’s goal is to eradicate the epidemic levels of domestic violence and sexual assault within a decade. We intend to foster freedom from fear that will pay dividends for future generations. This new housing alternative will help victims break free from abuse and help to replace despair with hope.”

The program is made possible thanks to a \$1.328 million appropriation included in Governor Sean Parnell’s FY13 budget plus a \$1 million contribution from AHFC’s federal Moving to Work voucher allocation. The program was created with input from ANDVSA and CDVSA and required approval from AHFC’s board of directors and the federal Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) office. It is expected to serve up to 250 families.

“I applaud legislators for their wisdom in supporting this program that serves an important piece of the Governor’s *Choose Respect* initiative,” says Dan Fauske, AHFC CEO/Executive Director. “I also congratulate our public housing division who worked closely with the domestic violence and sexual assault support community for remarkably quick implementation.”

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ECHP will operate similarly to AHFC's Housing Choice Voucher Program that exists in 12 communities, except the ECHP is time-limited and participants must receive a referral from their local DVSA program. Participants will be eligible to receive assistance for up to 36 months, and vouchers will be allocated to each community based on a review of historical data about the number of domestic violence vouchers issued and the total population. Allocations will be reviewed and reconsidered annually. Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault seeking this assistance should contact their local support agency.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the partner agencies can be found on AHFC's website at http://www.ahfc.us/iceimages/rental/empowering_choice_housing_mou.pdf.

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.

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