

Tampa Housing Authority Closes Waiting List

Posted on 15 December 2014. **BY LEON B. CREWS** Sentinel Staff Writer

The **Tampa Housing Authority** has been the lead provider of affordable housing in the Tampa Bay community for more than 75 years.



In just the last year, with the deployment of on-line applications, they have seen their waitlist grow from 9,000 to 22,000 individuals seeking affordable housing.

In 2006, the Section 8 waitlist was opened and in one day, more than 12,000 applications were received, indicating the dire need for affordable housing in the Tampa Bay community. That list has been closed for more than two years.

T.H.A. CEO, Jerome Ryans (pictured) said they are never going to be able to serve 22,000 people.

“It would be misleading to continue to take applications and the people have nowhere to go. I suspect there are people on both the Section 8 and public housing waiting lists. I also think other agencies have the same problem, and I really don’t see things getting better.

“We have people who have lost their jobs and homes, and there’s just not enough to go around.” Ryans said their commitment right now is for the people already living in public housing.

“It’s hard to determine how long people have been on the waiting list. I’m sure there are some who’ve been on the list for 5 years or more. At least, they are already on the list.

“If you’re already on the list, you will be taken care of. But, no more will be added.” Ryans said it’s a tough situation for public housing agencies all over the country.

“We need to focus our attention to the people already on the waiting list instead of adding more. I’ve actually seen people from other cities and states sleeping in their cars in our parking lot.”

Since the public housing waitlist has expanded to 22,000, Ryans said they will officially close that waitlist effective on December 31, 2014 until the list is reduced to a manageable level.

While the public housing waitlist will be closing at the end of this year, it is important to note that other housing options remain available through the housing authority’s portfolio, which includes Cedar Pointe, Osborne Landings, Belmont Heights Estate, Gardens at Southbay and Oaks at Riverview.

Interested applicants may apply at these locations by visiting the Tampa Housing Authority web page at www.thafl.com or by making a personal trip to the above listed properties to submit an application for non-public housing units at these sites.

Additionally, the Section 8 project based waitlist also remains open and provides another opportunity for citizens to apply for available housing assistance.

Inquiries regarding the status of applications may be directed to the Office of Public Housing/Central Intake at 813-341-9101, extension 2370 between the hours of 8:30am – 4:30pm.