

FRAUD ALERT

HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) has alerted all housing authorities of the concern of possible fraud in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. The alert concerns landlords in the Housing Choice Voucher program who are requiring participants to pay rent in excess of the amount authorized by the housing authority. This is known as side payments. The notice advises that the OIG will cooperate with efforts to bring offending landlords to justice and to remedy their wrongs.

Pursuant to the False Claims Act, 31 USC 3729 et seq, persons who submit to HUD or a HUD intermediary (housing authority) claims that are false, fictitious or fraudulent are liable for an assessment equal to three times the amount of the claim, plus a penalty of between \$5,500 and \$11,000 per claim. The United States may take the position that the entire amount of its HAP, not merely the amount of the excess payment by the tenant, is the claim that should be tripled where landlords make false certifications concerning excess rent charged.

Glendale Housing is reminding all landlords who participate in our Section 8 program that there is a prohibition against requiring participants to pay rents above the amount authorized by the housing authority and there may be potential penalties imposed for any violations. Glendale Housing will also remind our program families that they should not pay any additional rent payments above the amount authorized by Glendale Housing, and to report a landlord that is requesting any such payments.