

PHA Awarded More Funding to House Homeless Vets

(PHILADELPHIA-December 1, 2016) – The Philadelphia Housing Authority will soon be supporting homes for more veterans, including some at the converted former Edison High School, thanks to two awards from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

PHA is receiving two awards totaling 34 vouchers to help maintain an existing veterans facility, the Impact Services Hancock Manor, and to develop apartments for veterans in another building, the Edison 64. The financial support s to both developments amounts to almost \$245,000 per year.

“Veterans have made many sacrifices to keep this country safe,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “Many of them have literally been left out in the cold at times. It’s very fitting that we help the people who put themselves in harm’s way on our behalf.”

The Philadelphia Veteran’s Multi-Service Center (VMC), a partner in the Edison 64 Veteran’s Community development, requested 20 project based VASH vouchers. Edison 64 is based at the former Edison High School which is being rehabilitated for housing. The school lost 54 former students during the Vietnam War. Many of Philadelphia’s very low income residents attended Edison High School. The development will consist of 12 efficiency units and 54 one bedroom units. Twenty of those units will be designated for veterans using these HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers.

Hancock Manor is located at 174 W. Allegheny Avenue in North Philadelphia. It is an existing development that is operated by Impact Services Corporation as a program for homeless veterans with mental illness and substance abuse. In 2011, Impact completed a full renovation of the property using Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and converted 63 beds into 31 units of permanent housing for veterans. Impact can now use the PHA funding to convert 14 additional units to project based VASH voucher units to serve veterans with permanent housing as opposed to transitional housing.

The demand for Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) in Philadelphia is great. The agency’s HCV waiting list is closed, except for applicants who qualify for admission under HUD’s Special Purpose Voucher programs, including VASH, as well as applicants referred to PHA from external agencies that have an agreement with the housing authority.

HUD-VASH is an important part of the effort to provide critical housing and services to veterans experiencing homelessness and includes HUD’s Continuum of Care program as well as VA’s Supportive Services for Veteran Families. The program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Since 2008, HUD has allocated 728 HUD VASH Vouchers to PHA. The agency has housed 840 Homeless Veterans since the start of the program and 610 veterans are currently active voucher holders.