

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

www.ci.norfolk.ne.us

November 4, 2015

“More than \$800,000 of HUD Funds to Norfolk”

The Norfolk Housing Agency, consisting of six staff members, may be small in numbers but is responsible for over \$800,000 of federal money that is injected into the Norfolk area economy each year. An increase is expected in 2016 in the amount of money that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will give the Norfolk Housing Agency towards housing assistance in Norfolk.



“HUD forecasts two years out how much funding they will provide for a community based on the funding spent in prior years. Since our staff went above and beyond utilizing funding to help eligible families find available housing, HUD will provide us with more funding in the future,” said Gary Hilkemann, the Director of the Norfolk Housing Agency.

HUD gives housing agencies housing choice vouchers to distribute to very low income families, the elderly and the disabled so they can more likely afford safe, decent and sanitary housing in the private market. The resident who qualifies for a voucher is

responsible for finding a housing unit from a landlord who is a participant or willing to be a participant in the HUD program. There is currently a waiting list in Norfolk for rental subsidies.

Once the lease is signed a housing subsidy is paid directly to the landlord on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program which, in the Norfolk area, averages about \$307 monthly cost per unit. Sometimes the vouchers will pay towards a participant’s utility bill, depending on their income.

Currently, available HUD funds for the Norfolk area for the year total \$829,238 or up to 254 vouchers to assist families. Right now there are from 230-242 vouchers being used by eligible families in the community. Any landlord is eligible to participate in the program. The Agency must use 90-110% of fair market rental rates for Madison County to calculate the rental subsidy for the families.

“Our staff works hard to help citizens find housing. They watch for apartment and home vacancies and make tenants aware of landlords with available units,” Hilkemann said.

Hilkemann said the boundaries of eligible homes has recently extended to Woodland Park, Hadar and Battle Creek which makes it more likely that eligible families in the area will be able to find safe housing and use the funding they qualify for.

For more information about the HUD Housing Assistance Program, contact the Norfolk Housing Agency Office at 402-844-2080.