



PIH

OFFICE OF PUBLIC & INDIAN HOUSING

July 18, 2024

Dear PHA Executive Directors:

As you are no doubt aware, scammers have long targeted the communities we serve, looking to exploit vulnerabilities for illicit purposes. When this happens, it puts our community members at risk and our programs and operations suffer damage to both reputation and trust.

Most recently, fliers have been circulating on social media advertising assistance with applying for Section 8 funding. The flyer and website 'www.govassistance[dot]org' are NOT legitimate. The scam aims to take advantage of Section 8 applicants to obtain their personal information to facilitate fraudulent activity.

There are multiple versions of the below advertisement on various websites including Facebook, Instagram, and Tik Tok, typically with slightly changed verbiage and dates.



Today we're asking for your help to highlight these scams and their methods and to help educate individuals and families about the proper process and channels of communication for your voucher program.

For example, you can share a version of this flyer clearly identifying it as a scam while encouraging community members to contact your PHA with questions about available applications and reminding them that they will never be charged to join a waiting list.

You can also share legitimate local housing search resources and best practices for cybersecurity including:

- If it seems too good to be true, it probably is,
- Never click on a hyperlink if you are unsure if it is legitimate or without verifying with a trusted source, and
- Never submit Social Security Numbers, bank / cred card information, or other personal details to a website found through an online search.

Individuals who fall victim to this or similar scams can file a complaint at the Internet Crime Compliant Center (IC3): <https://www.ic3.gov/>. Additionally, if someone reaches out to you about a scam involving HUD, please reach out to our Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT) at CIRT@hud.gov.

We hope you enjoy receiving these messages from HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing.

Public Housing Agency contact information is retrieved from HUD's Public Housing Information Center (PIC).

If your agency's contact information is out of date, please update PIC with the correct contact information.

We update our email lists from PIC twice a month, so you should see your change reflected after two weeks.

Thank you for furthering HUD's mission in the communities you serve.