

**The Housing Authority of Gloucester County (HAGC) will hold a public hearing to take comment regarding a significant amendment to HAGC's 2017 Annual Plan. The proposed amendment would establish a new local preference in admission to HAGC's public housing program. The hearing will take place on December 28, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. at 100 Pop Moylan Blvd, Deptford NJ 08096.**

Details regarding the amendment are available at [www.hagc.org](http://www.hagc.org).

### **Proposed Significant Amendment to the Housing Authority of Gloucester County's 2017 Annual Plan**

In accordance with 24 CFR 960.206, a PHA may adopt a system of Local Preference for selection of families admitted into the PHA's public housing program. The system of selection preference must be based on local housing needs and priorities determined by the PHA. Guidance from HUD, PIH 2012-34, further instructs PHAs to consider the jurisdiction's Consolidated Plan in developing a system of local preferences. Based on the growing need for affordable, age appropriate housing among Gloucester County's elderly and near-elderly disabled population, HAGC seeks to modify the current system of local preferences for public housing buildings, Carino Park Apartments and Deptford Park Apartments. Specifically, HAGC seeks to include a Local Preference for elderly and near-elderly disabled applicants.

An elderly household is defined as one whose head, co-head, or spouse is 62 years of age or older. A near-elderly disabled household is defined as one whose head, co-head, or spouse is between the ages of 50 and 62 years and the head, co-head, or spouse is disabled.

The 2015-2019 Gloucester County New Jersey Consolidated Plan identifies the elderly population as a growing population in need of affordable housing. Specifically, according to the Plan: With respect to renter occupied households, 2,066 elderly households were cost burdened by paying greater than 30% of income for shelter and 1,201 were cost burdened by paying greater than 50% of income for shelter. With respect to owner occupied households, 6,772 elderly households were cost burdened by paying greater than 30% of income and 3,590 were cost burdened by paying 50% of income for shelter.

As reflected in HAGC 2017 Annual Plan, the Resident Advisory Board supported designating Carino and Deptford Park for the elderly and near-elderly and disabled populations. The Resident Advisory Board agreed that the design, related facilities and services of both buildings are well suited to the needs of the elderly and near-elderly disabled population. Both Carino and Deptford were previously designed as housing for the elderly and near-elderly disabled populations by HUD.

Both buildings have elevators, onsite security staff and a Superintendent residing in the building. Carino and Deptford are monitored by surveillance cameras to ensure the safety of occupants

including monitoring of the front entrance, rear entrance, hallways, community room, and parking lots. All units located in Carino and Deptford contain call cords to be used by occupants in the event of an emergency. The parking lots contain a greater amount of handicap parking spaces than what is required by law. Further, both buildings are supported by a ROSS/ Resident Relations Coordinator employed full time by HAGC. The ROSS/ Resident Relations Coordinator addresses health, safety, and disability concerns of the residents and plans age appropriate social activities to enhance quality of life and promote independence and aging in place. The ROSS/ Resident Relations Coordinator also serves HAGC's other affordable housing buildings. HAGC also maintains a congregate program with a full time Congregate Coordinator and a team of aides which serve the building occupants, for a fee, by cleaning individual units, performing laundry services and cooking meals. Carino and Deptford each have an individual aide assigned to the building. The Congregate Coordinator travels between HAGC's affordable housing buildings including, Carino Park and Deptford Park, to oversee the implementation of services and address the needs of the clients with social service agencies and family members. Additionally, an assisted living program licensed by the Department of Health and Senior Services, DPSP Healthcare, LLC (DPSP), has office space in both public housing buildings. DPSP provides Assisted Living and Personal Care services to eligible residents in hi/her own apartment. The purpose of Assisted Living is to help residents "age in place" rather than be displaced to a nursing home or other institutional facility. DPSP offers assistance with personal care, meal prep, accessing transportation, nursing care and supervision, and supervision of assistance with self-administration of medications.

In connection with HAGC's Emergency Preparedness Policy, HAGC also maintains a special needs registry where occupants of Carino and Deptford voluntarily notify HAGC of their needs for assistance from local authorities to evacuate the building. HAGC is also working to implement a "buddy system" in Carino and Deptford whereby residents are voluntarily paired with other residents to perform daily well-being checks. These special features and programs offer greater protections to the elderly and the near-elderly disabled population and serve the special needs of the populations.

At the time of application, an applicant's entitlement to a Local Preference may be made on the following basis: An applicant's certification that they qualify for a preference will be accepted without verification at the initial application. When the family is selected from the waiting list for the final determination of eligibility, the preference will be verified. To qualify for the preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of the initial application or at the time of certification. If the preference verification indicates that an applicant does not qualify for the preference, the applicant will be returned to the waiting list without the Local Preference, and given an opportunity for a meeting in accordance with 24 CFR 5.410(g)

HAGC will continue to maintain the existing residency Local Preference in addition to the elderly and near-elderly and disabled preference.