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## DUKES COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

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### RENTAL ASSISTANCE

#### **Program Summary**

Rental Assistance is funded through Community Preservation Act funds from all six island towns and is administered by the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority. The program offers homeowners a range of support in exchange for year-round rental agreements. Island residents making less than 80% of median income for the area (\$94,600 for a household of four) are eligible for rental assistance and pay no more than 30% of their gross income towards rent.

#### **Monthly Rent**

The federally provided 80% Rents for Dukes County based Median Income figures are used in determining the contract rents. The tenant's portion of the rent, a minimum of 50%, is determined by Housing Authority household income certification and is paid directly to the property owners; the balance of the rent in the form of Rental Assistance is paid to the property owners by the Housing Authority. Rent is paid on the first of each month. Contract rents are determined annually at least thirty days prior to the anniversary date of the lease by the property owner and the Housing Authority.

#### **Security Deposit**

Property owners may require that the tenant pay a security deposit up to the amount of one month's contract rent. Security deposits must be held in an interest-bearing account accordance with MGL 186. Tenants are responsible for paying any security deposit and the Housing Authority is not able to subsidize this cost except in extreme circumstances and only as grant funding is available.

#### **Tenant Screening & Selection**

The Housing Authority can pre-screen eligible tenants for the property owners' selection by processing criminal background checks, income and bank account verification and personal and landlord references. Tenant screening for suitability and final selection are the property owner's responsibility and the Housing Authority encourages owners to follow the process used to screen potential tenants in the private rental market.

#### **Unit Inspection**

An inspection by the Housing Authority is scheduled prior to enactment of a new tenant/landlord lease-up and upon annual renewal as agreed to by all parties. The landlord is responsible for satisfying any applicable town requirements for apartment rental.

#### **Documents**

A lease is signed between the property owner and the tenant, and a housing assistance contract is signed between the property owner and the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority provides a Rental Assistance addendum to be used by the property owner with copies of all lease materials kept on file by the Housing Authority. All agreements are subject to the availability of funding as reviewed within each town's committee process and voted on at Annual Town Meetings.

#### **Program Representatives**

The Housing Authority prepares the Rental Assistance contract documents and remains the Landlord's and Tenant's contact for as long as the tenancy is in effect. Annual administrative fees of \$500 per new subsidy and \$250 per existing subsidy assist with the costs of document preparation, apartment inspection, tenant certification and program administration.

*The mission of the DCRHA is to assist the 6 towns of Martha's Vineyard with increasing the year-round housing opportunities for residents with low and moderate incomes.*