



Salem  
Housing  
Authority

**MARCH 2026**

ISSUE #30

**Salem Housing Authority**  
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT REPORT



# OUR MISSION

Salem Housing Authority's mission is to assist low- and moderate-income families to achieve self-sufficiency through stable housing, economic opportunity, community investment, and coordination with social service providers.

Established in 1969 under provisions of Oregon state law, Salem Housing Authority serves approximately 9,000 Salem area residents within Salem/Keizer's Urban Growth Boundary with safe and affordable rental housing.

Salem Housing Authority is committed to building a stronger community through public housing, housing choice vouchers, affordable housing, and supportive services. We serve families, individuals, people with disabilities, and senior citizens.

# SHA GLOSSARY

**Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV):** SHA administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program providing subsidies to eligible participants to rent from private landlords. The Housing Choice Voucher Program may support up to a maximum of 3,310 households per month, or until all funding is expended.

**The Family Unification Program (FUP):** provides Vouchers to families experiencing barriers to finding stable housing, including: 1) parents reuniting with children returning from foster care; 2) parents that need to provide a stable living environment to avoid having their children removed from their home; and 3) youth 18 to 21 years of age who have recently left the foster care system and need to return to their parent's home.

**Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing Programs (VASH):** SHA administers VASH Vouchers in partnership with the Veterans Administration (VA). The VA screens and refers eligible veterans to SHA. The VASH tenant-based program provides vouchers to at-risk homeless veterans.

**Mainstream Vouchers:** SHA administers Section 8 Mainstream Vouchers, which support families that include at least one non-elderly, disabled adult (age 18-61 at the time of admission to the program). These Vouchers are targeted for families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

**Emergency Housing Vouchers:** SHA was awarded 34 Vouchers through the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, which was funded as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These vouchers assist individuals and families who are homeless, or at-risk of being homeless, or were recently homeless or have a high risk of housing instability. Eligible families are referred directly from the Continuum of Care to SHA. EHV's include special administrative fees to help remove barriers to housing for participating families, including assistance with application fees, deposits, and utility arrears.

# SHA GLOSSARY

**Project-Based Voucher (PBV):** Is a housing program where rental assistance is attached to a specific housing unit rather than the tenant. The tenant receives assistance as long as they are living in the unit.

**Occupancy Rate:** Is the number of units vacant divided by the total number of units.

**Properties:** Salem Housing Authority owns and manages a portfolio of 789 units and has 1,181 units in partnership with other developers.

**Vacant Unit:** Is a unit that is rent-ready, or is still in progress for repairs and maintenance.

**Renovations:** Remodel.

**Disposition:** The sale of a unit.

**Annual/Biennial Inspections:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires the Public Housing Authority to inspect each unit under lease at least annually or biennially, depending on policy, to confirm that the unit still meets housing quality standards. The inspection may be conducted in conjunction with the family's annual reexamination or separately.

**Initial Inspections:** The PHA conducts initial inspections in response to a request from the family to approve a unit for participation in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

**Fair Housing:** The laws that govern what SHA is allowed to do as a landlord.

**Public Housing:** A low-income housing project (property) that is subsidized by public funds.

# SHA GLOSSARY

**Resident Advisory Board Member:** The Resident Advisory Board (RAB) represents the residents of the Public Housing and Voucher Program participants assisted by the Public Housing Authority (PHA).

Being a member of the Resident Advisory Board plays a significant role in the planning process, development, and future modifications of the PHA Plan. Salem Housing Authority's goal is to collaborate and make sure we are getting input from our residents and providing the best practices available to our residents.

**Individual Development Account (IDA):** It helps you save more toward some of the most important investments you'll make in your life. Families or individuals with limited financial resources may be eligible to receive matching funds toward an approved purchase.

Visit <https://casaoforegon.org/learn-about-idas/> to learn more.

**Voucher:** A subsidy. Can be either Housing Choice (individual) or Project-Based.

**Subsidy:** Monetary assistance either by HUD, Section 8, or other programs.

\***HUD** stands for **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**. It is an executive branch agency responsible for national housing policy and community development. HUD administers programs that provide **housing assistance**, ensure **fair housing opportunities**, and **support homeownership programs**.

**Housing Assistance Payments** (also called "**HAP**") are made monthly directly to property owners on behalf of leased Voucher participants.

# SHA GLOSSARY

- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC):**

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program provides tax credits for developers to:

- construct,
- rehabilitate, or
- acquire and rehabilitate qualified low-income rental housing.

These development projects include multifamily and single-family rental housing units. Eligible applicants include for-profit, nonprofit, and housing authority developers. OHCS reserves and allocates credits to eligible properties through the Oregon Centralized Application process.

## **Background**

LIHTC is a federal program used to finance the construction, acquisition, and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for families and individuals with low incomes. The program was created in 1986 by the Tax Reform Act and made permanent in 1993.

LIHTC gives investors a dollar-for-dollar reduction in federal tax liability in exchange for investing in affordable rental housing. Investor's equity subsidizes the development, allowing units to rent below-market rates. In return, investors are eligible to receive tax credits paid in annual allotments over ten years. Financed projects must ensure tenant income eligibility requirements and restricted rents for 30-60 years after project completion. This means owners must keep rents below market rates and available to low-income tenants.

OHCS is the housing finance agency that allocates LIHTC for affordable housing developments.



## SHA AWARDS

On February 19th, SHA held its annual training and awards presentation. It opened up with an all staff lunch buffet, providing an opportunity for everyone to relax, connect with coworkers, and enjoy a meal together.

The group transitioned into a learning session aimed at providing insight into the organization's past, present, and future. Nicole Utz, Director of Salem Housing Authority, started by sharing the history of SHA, highlighting the organization's journey, its growth over the years, and the mission that continues to guide its work today. Following this historical overview, Jessica Blakely, Deputy Director of the Salem Housing Authority, presented a budget summary, walked staff through key elements of the agency's financial framework, and answered attendees' questions. She also provided updates on major projects planned for 2026–2027, giving employees a glimpse of the initiatives and improvements on the horizon.

The focus shifted to connection and collaboration through a team-building activity. Staff participated in a short activity designed to strengthen relationships, encourage teamwork, and add a bit of fun to the day.

The organization took time to celebrate its employees during the Employee Recognition segment. Immediate supervisors presented awards to their team members, offering heartfelt words of appreciation for the dedication and service each individual has given to SHA.



Several Tenure Awards were presented to honor employees who have reached significant milestones in their careers with the organization. Nina recognized Betty Jordan for five years of service, Lynette honored Karen Estep for twenty years, and Nicole celebrated Nina Norfleet for an incredible twenty-five years of commitment to the agency.

Newer employees were also acknowledged when first-year nameplates were distributed to recognize those who had recently completed their first year with SHA. Recipients included Jaime Lozano, Jenny Vargas, Justin West, Brandy Harlan, Christian Zamarron, Melanie Martin, Jane Kasharina, Meghan Diehm, Caren Scrivner, Jennifer Sanchez Hernandez, and Lonni Nicoll.

The ceremony continued with the presentation of Challenge Coins, recognizing individuals who demonstrated exceptional dedication and service. Lynette presented a coin to Vee Miller, Tom honored Dee Dee Jacks, and Isaac recognized Travis Shands. Nina presented a coin to Anna Brase and Nicole presented to Jaime Lozano. Nicole and Nina presented a coin to recognize Brandon Oakes and Andrea Harris for their contributions in Emergency Response, and Jessica recognized Isaac Beke with a Challenge Coin award.

Another meaningful moment came with the presentation of the Virginia “Ginger” Melton Kindness Award, which Nicole awarded to Jamie Baldwin in recognition of the compassion and kindness she consistently brings to her work and colleagues.

In closing remarks from Nicole. She provided a brief overview of the organizational structure moving forward, as well as upcoming plans regarding the utilization of the SAIF building beginning in July. Her remarks helped connect the day’s reflections on the past with the agency’s direction for the future, bringing the event to a thoughtful close.

# CLIENT SERVICES

## **Client Services:** New Name, Same Exceptional Service

We are pleased to announce that SHA has unified several divisions into a single, client-focused division: Client Services. This new division encompasses Front Desk Office Staff, Resident Services, and the Landlord Navigator.

By merging these divisions, we enhance our ability to collaborate and provide comprehensive support to our clients and help them engage with us in meaningful ways. Citizens can continue to expect the same high standard of customer service they have come to rely on. The following is a brief summary of the division's responsibilities.

### **Customer Service**

#### **As of February 28th, 2026, Salem Housing Authority Front Desk provided the following service:**

The Front Desk role at the Salem Housing Authority (SHA) typically involves a variety of responsibilities aimed at providing excellent customer service and facilitating effective operations within the organization.

Front Desk Activities	Total
US Mail processed	72
Drop Box Items processed	516
Clients seen in-person	666
Voicemail returned	231
Email responses	158

#### **Key duties may include:**

- Greeting visitors, residents, and clients in a friendly and professional manner, while addressing inquiries and providing information about SHA's services and programs.
- Answer phone calls and respond to emails, directing inquiries to the appropriate staff or departments, and ensuring timely responses.
- Ensure that messages between residents, staff, and external partners are conveyed accurately and promptly.
- Address resident concerns or issues as they arise, directing them to the appropriate resources for resolution.

Overall, this role is crucial for creating a welcoming environment at SHA and offering support to both residents and visitors.

# CLIENT SERVICES



## Resident Services

Resident Services at the Salem Housing Authority (SHA) typically focuses on enhancing the quality of life for residents living in public housing and affordable housing communities. Their responsibilities may include:

- Aids residents in accessing various support services, such as healthcare, education, job training, and financial literacy programs.
- Offers support and intervention for residents facing challenges, such as financial difficulties, housing instability, or personal crises.
- Acts as a liaison between residents and other agencies or organizations to advocate for their needs and rights.
- Collaborating with local agencies, nonprofits, and community organizations to provide residents with access to essential resources and services.

Overall, Resident Services aim to create a supportive environment that fosters self-sufficiency, community engagement, and improved quality of life for residents within SHA's housing programs.



# CLIENT SERVICES

## Landlord Navigator

The Landlord Navigator is a specialized role designed to assist clients who have obtained a housing voucher, helping them to effectively utilize it. The responsibilities of this position may include:

- Building connections with landlords and educating them on the benefits of working with clients who receive assistance.
- Supporting clients with paperwork, searching for rental units, and overcoming barriers to housing by providing education and connecting them with available resources.
- Finding solutions to bridge the gap between receiving a voucher and securing housing.

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

## Voucher Lease Up

As of February 28th, 2026, the following Salem Housing Authority Vouchers were under lease:

Vouchers	Total Allotment	Total Leased	Housing Assistance Payments
Housing Choice Vouchers	2,819	2,707	\$2,759,357
Family Unification Program (FUP)	119	97	\$120,297
Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)	138	128	\$104,361
Mainstream Vouchers	192	135	\$128,022
Emergency Housing Vouchers	34	23	\$20,779

*SHA leases up to the maximum amount of money available, not by the allotment number.*



**3,302**  
Total  
Allotment



**3,090**  
Total Leased



**\$3,132,816**  
Housing Assistance  
Payments

## Housing Choice Voucher Program Updates from our HCV Operations Manager

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

*February brought both significant challenges and meaningful successes for our team. One of the most notable challenges was operating short-staffed due to the absence of a critical team member. While this situation created an increased workload and required team members to take on additional responsibilities, it also highlighted the strength, resilience, and collaboration of the team.*

*Staff effectively managed increased responsibilities while maintaining strong customer service. Challenges included keeping up with documentation, adapting to new and evolving procedures, and managing spikes in workload, such as high volumes of move requests, landlord packets, inspections, and client inquiries regarding housing resources. Team members also navigated new processes related to rent reasonableness, inspections, and updates to our digital workflow while learning additional responsibilities within our systems.*

*There were also several individual successes that showcased the impact of the team's work. Staff received positive feedback from clients about their communication and support throughout the voucher process. In one notable case, a client facing eviction due to past-due balances was able to retain housing assistance after staff helped connect them with resources and worked collaboratively with the landlord to resolve the situation. In another instance, flexibility and understanding allowed an inspection to be rescheduled for a tenant facing unexpected circumstances, ensuring that the family remained in compliance with their obligations.*

*I am incredibly proud of this team. Their adaptability and commitment to serving our community have been evident throughout this demanding month. Even in the face of staffing challenges and procedural changes, they continually demonstrated patience, kindness, and dedication to the families we serve. Their willingness to step up, support one another, and keep moving forward is a true reflection of the strength of this team. I am honored to lead them!*

## Inspection

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

### Inspection Activity

As of February 28, 2026, the Salem Housing Authority has issued the following Inspection Report:

Initial Inspections Status Report	Total
Passed	56
Of the passed inspections, number that passed the first time	0
Of the passed inspections, number that passed reinspection	33
Failed - still waiting repairs	0
Scheduled/waiting to schedule	0

Annual/Biennial Inspections Status Report	Total
Passed	99
Passed on the first attempt	0
Passed on reinspection's	0
Failed - Waiting on repairs	73

## Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Family Self Sufficiency Data Metric	February
Total Active Contracts Beginning of the Month	144
FSS Clients with Escrow	62
Escrow Paid Out (Graduates)	\$38,383.77
Exits (Voluntary or Involuntary Termed)	2
New Enrollments	1
Monthly Client Engagement	48

### Success Story:

“I attended the FSS Mixer, just as I had mentioned earlier. It was a fantastic experience filled with engaging conversations and creative energy. I had a great time mingling with others until around 3:30 PM. After that, I left for a bit and returned with my kiddo, who was eager to join in on the fun. He wanted to make a vision board to express his dreams and goals, and we also picked out a book together. It turned into a wonderful bonding experience for us.

There were five other attendees at the meeting, and while I can't recall her exact title, one of the participants was a representative from Goodwill. She shared valuable insights about the vocational services offered by the organization, highlighting various programs designed to assist individuals in gaining job skills and finding employment. As she spoke, the group engaged in an enthusiastic discussion, exchanging ideas about their aspirations and what they hoped to include on their vision boards. Each person contributed their thoughts, creating a collaborative atmosphere filled with inspiration and support for one another's goals.”

*From a client who attended the FSS Mixer*

## Property Management Updates

# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Property Name	# of Units	Vacant Unit Status	Occupied
Brush College Village	21	None	21
Englewood East Apartments	50	None	50
Englewood West Apartments	54	12 Vacant units (being kept offline ahead of upcoming renovations)	42
Glen Creek	29	4 Vacant Units	25
Livingston Village	26	None	26
Meadowlark Village	32	None	32
Northgate Village	28	1 Vacant Unit	27
Parkway East Apartments	46	None	46
Parkway West Apartments	79	1 Vacant Unit	78
Redwood Crossings	37	4 Vacant Units	33
Robert Lindsey Tower	62	4 Vacant Units	58
Sequoia Crossings	60	3 Vacant Units	57
Scattered Sites	77	11 Vacant units (all units offline for disposition)	66
Southfair Apartments	42	2 Vacant Units	40
Southview Terrace Apartments	60	14 vacant units (are offline for extensive remodels)	46
Yaquina Hall	51	1 Vacant Units	50

## Success Stories of Property Management Coordinators

# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

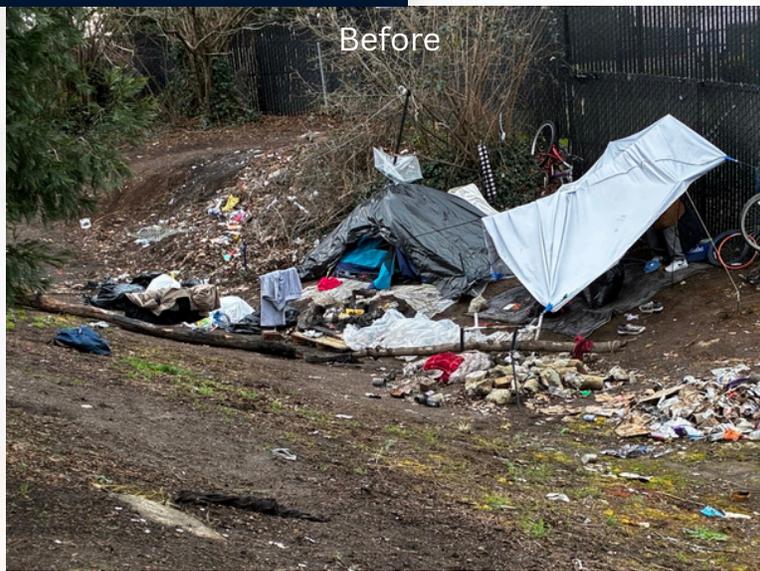
### Public Housing (Glen Creek & Scattered Sites), SHP 4 (Livingston/Northgate), & SHP 9 (Brush College/Meadowlark):

*I've reached out to Resident Services for help, and their support has made a real difference for many families! When someone connects with them in a friendly way and says, "I'm here to help," it has led to positive changes.*

*I've also worked with Resident Services to assist families who speak Spanish. They've been great at addressing the worries of our Spanish-speaking residents who struggled with language issues.*

*For instance, there's a tenant whose mother is seriously ill and needs to move out of state for better care. The daughter, who can't drive, has a job and also takes care of a family member with a disability. She needed to complete some forms and send them to our office. By having Resident Services come in to explain the forms and help get them submitted, we took a big weight off her shoulders. This made it easier for her during a stressful time, especially with her mother needing to move soon.*

*I've been working on tracking tenant accounts, and by talking to the families, they're now more open to setting up payment plans and are actively trying to pay off their debts. In the past, many were avoiding rent payments and staying hidden in their homes out of fear of being evicted.*



## SEQUOIA CROSSINGS

Property Management would like to highlight three tenants at Sequoia Crossing who took the initiative to clean up the vacant lot next to the property. They have given permission for their names to be mentioned, but requested not to have their pictures taken. Attached are photos of their incredible work!

### Summary:

On Saturday, February 28th, three tenants at Sequoia Crossing organized a trash clean-up in the vacant lot adjacent to the property. Joshua Berndt, Jessica Hickok, and Vanessa King dedicated five hours to cleaning the area. Jessica mentioned to property management that she was motivated to take action because she could see the trash from her apartment window and wanted to improve the view. Vanessa King regularly borrows a trash grabber and bucket from the Arches staff each week to pick up litter she spots on the property and in the surrounding area. Inspired by Vanessa's consistent efforts, Jessica decided to clean up the lot next door. The three of them worked together to accomplish this clean-up, resulting in a much nicer view from their apartment window.

These tenants have gone above and beyond to make Sequoia Crossing a welcoming home for themselves and their neighbors. Thank you, Joshua, Jessica, and Vanessa, for all your hard work and for being exemplary tenants!

### Redwood:

It has been just over two weeks since we welcomed our first resident of the Bridgeway pilot program at RWC. We moved three new residents in on February 18, 2026, and a fourth resident on February 25, 2026. The new residents have been a wonderful addition to the property. On-site supportive staff have shared that these individuals bring a sense of joy and gratitude that is contagious for both tenants and staff. I am looking forward to getting to know the new residents better and can't wait to welcome more!

# SUMMARY

## Summary

Salem Housing Authority is fully committed to strengthening our community through public housing, housing choice vouchers, affordable housing, and supportive services. We are here to support families, individuals, people with disabilities, and senior citizens.

**Help improve our Program Management Report and take our Survey!**

Your insights in our Program Management Report Survey will empower us to enhance the information you receive.

**<https://forms.office.com/g/TQCckDSerz>**

