



## **Berger Rental Communities Philanthropic Strategy: *Hope & Door***

Berger Rental Communities (BRC) is committed to giving back and helping our surrounding communities. Any family with a child sleeping outdoors because they lack a home is unacceptable. BRC's philanthropic mission is to end family homelessness in areas specifically surrounding its apartment communities. This philanthropic program is called "Hope & Door." The mission of Hope & Door is to provide newly homeless families, or families approaching homelessness, an opportunity for one year of stable housing. The goal is that, with this program's support, the family will become established, self-sustaining residents. Each year, BRC will donate four apartments (one in each region) to be used to house families that qualify for Hope & Door.

Hope & Door is intended to greatly reduce the "normal" financial burden of housing, so that individuals participating in the program will have time to reposition themselves financially and in the workforce. Candidates should be genuine and hard-working.

### **Criteria:**

- the candidate must be a family with children under the age of 18.
- The number of occupant restrictions as set forth by the specific apartment community standards determines the permitted number of residents in the apartment to be a maximum of four and a minimum of two.
- Families shall have a history of being responsible renters, who have become homeless, or are approaching homelessness, due to no fault of their own. This includes the individual's loss of employment due to lay-offs, hours were cut back, or they were dramatically or negatively impacted financially by a one-time, life-altering event such as illness/hospitalization, death in the family, military service, etc.
- A candidate's job loss must have occurred within the past 18 months and they must have been employed for at least 12 months prior to the loss.
- The candidates must undergo and meet BRC's criminal background screening requirement, however they will not be subject to a credit evaluation. They shall not have habitual evictions and/or collection accounts.
- The candidates will ideally have an income source or have the strong prospect of obtaining an income source in the next few months. Unemployment compensation is an acceptable form of income.
- A valid driver's license is required.

### **Important Guidelines:**

- The intent of the program is to provide families with a conditional 12-month rental credit. The credit will be granted on a month-to-month basis based on the condition that the families do not violate the terms and conditions of the rental agreement, that the individuals do not engage in inappropriate behavior or disturb the peaceful enjoyment of the apartment home of any other individuals residing at the community, that the individuals don't engage in any illegal activities, that the individuals maintain their apartment in a good state and that the individuals meet the standard of conduct of other residents that reside at the community.
- The lease will be a month-to-month agreement with no rent due each month, up to a 12-month term. The candidate will be the lease signer with BRC, while the other third party is not authorized to sign the lease in any circumstance.
- The candidate is expected to pay all utilities associated with the unit.
- Section 8 housing will not be an accepted program following the 12-month rental credit allowance.
- The apartment home will not be furnished, however BRC can provide referrals for families to obtain furniture.

### **Criminal Background Screening Points:**

- No application will be denied due to a simple possession conviction regardless of the age of conviction
- Any conviction for possession with the intent to distribute must be a minimum of 3 years old to be approved
- Any Breaking and Entering conviction of Larceny conviction must be a minimum of 5 years old to be approved
- Any non-violent conviction and is not drug related must be a minimum of 5 years old to be approved
- Any violent conviction must be a minimum of 7 years old to be approved
- Any crime that resulted in loss of life must be 10 years old to be approved
- No sex offender will ever be considered for approval regardless of the age of the conviction
- In order for any application to be considered for approval under #'s 2-6 above, the applicant must not have any additional recent convictions.

