



# Jordan Park Relocation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (January 2021)

## 1. Why is the Housing Authority of the City of St. Petersburg (SPHA) asking residents of Jordan Park to relocate?

The SPHA Board of Commissioners approved a Redevelopment Plan for Jordan Park at the November 6, 2020 Special Call Meeting. SPHA Staff and Board members carefully examined all options for the redevelopment of Jordan Park, and via approval of Resolution #2577, selected a plan for the rehabilitation of the 206 family apartments and the construction of a 60-unit senior midrise on the site of the thirty-one (31) “Historic Village” apartments. SPHA is working on the submission of an application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Special Application Center (SAC) using a method called “Section 18 disposition” requesting approval of the plan. Once HUD approves the plan, SPHA will begin the process of vacating the Jordan Park apartments in two (2) phases.

## 2. I got my voucher already and I want to move. Can I leave now and still receive my relocation benefits?

No. Any resident that moves from Jordan Park prior to HUD’s approval of the Section 18 disposition application and your receipt of the 90 Day Notice of eligibility **will not** be eligible for relocation benefits. If you wish to receive relocation benefits, **DO NOT** move from Jordan Park until you receive your 90 Day Notice in the mail from SPHA.

## 3. What will SPHA do to help the residents of Jordan Park relocate?

SPHA will begin officially surveying all Jordan Park residents regarding their relocation preferences during the week of January 11, 2021. Residents were provided with possible options in a survey taken by SPHA staff (questionnaire) in October 2020. During the week of January 11, 2021, residents will be asked to select the option each family wishes to use. Options include:

1. Request a Housing Choice Voucher: residents may choose to move locally or anywhere in the country where a recipient housing authority operates a voucher program.
2. Move temporarily within Jordan Park until a rehabilitated apartment is ready, and then move into the newly renovated Jordan Park apartment.
3. Transfer to another SPHA Public Housing property either temporarily or permanently.
4. Move voluntarily to live with family or another location of the resident's choice without a voucher temporarily while the renovations occur.

To ensure that you are eligible for relocation benefits, **do not move** until you receive written notice from SPHA.

#### **4. How will SPHA help residents to find another home?**

SPHA will offer one-on-one counseling and relocation assistance to help residents find a new home, either in the area or in anywhere else in the country where a local Public Housing Authority operates a voucher program.

#### **5. Will I have to move away from St. Petersburg?**

No. There is adequate housing in or near St. Petersburg for Jordan Park residents to move. While the demand for affordable housing in St. Petersburg is extremely high, SPHA recently increased its payment standards in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. This allows for payment of higher voucher amounts in "areas of opportunity," Families will have the option to live anywhere in the country, including available units in St. Petersburg and surrounding cities with a housing authority operating a voucher program.

#### **6. When will Jordan Park residents be required to move? Will they be evicted?**

SPHA's Relocation Team will work with every family to find a new home. The relocation process for families will begin when SPHA receives approval from HUD for the Section 18 Disposition application. Eligible families will receive a Notice of Eligibility & 90-Day Notice to Move by certified mail. Residents who choose to move using a SPHA Housing Choice Voucher will have 60 to 90 days to locate suitable housing. Residents who want to leave St. Petersburg must complete a Request for Portability form. The SPHA Relocation Team will also assist residents who require reasonable accommodations for their housing search. All families should be moved from Phase One of Jordan Park within 3 to 6 months of approval of the Section 18 Disposition application, anticipated by the summer of 2021.

## **7. Will there be counseling provided to families who may have no experience renting from a private landlord or living in private rental property?**

Absolutely. SPHA will be working closely with housing counselors and relocation specialists to help ease the transition from public housing to SPHA-assisted private rental housing to make certain residents understand the terms of their new lease agreements.

## **8. Will residents be offered housing counseling assistance to locate a new unit?**

Yes. Housing authority staff will be available for one-on-one meetings with residents to help them locate their next home.

## **9. What special consideration will be given to the special needs of elderly residents living in Jordan Park?**

We plan to do everything possible to assist elderly residents who may have lived in St. Petersburg their entire lives. We are meeting with each elderly resident, asking them to tell us what THEY choose. Once they make a choice of what housing situation works best for them, our relocation team will work with them to facilitate a smooth transition into their new home.

## **10. Does SPHA realize the relocation will have a significant impact on the larger community?**

We are keenly aware of the hardship this relocation will have on these households and indeed upon the very fabric of the surrounding community. SPHA is hoping to implement this process in a manner that will allow these residents to locate alternative housing prior to the start of a new school year for their children.

## **11. Did you coordinate with the school district/city/state?**

SPHA has had several meetings with local school district leaders, community leaders, City and leadership and will continue to engage these partners before and during implementation of any relocation activities.

## 12. Is there a limit to how much a relocation can cost?

The exact amount of relocation assistance to be provided to each household will be determined when we have a better estimate of where families will elect to move.

## 13. What will happen to the buildings at Jordan Park once residents have been moved?

The construction of the new 60-unit Senior Midrise and the substantial rehabilitation of Phase One of the 206 family apartments will begin immediately. Once Phase One has been completely rehabilitated, relocated residents who choose to return will be moved into their new apartments. Phase Two, the final rehab phase, will begin as soon as the apartments are vacated, using the same plan as we used in Phase One.

## 14. Why is it taking SPHA so long to complete this?

The need for a total rehabilitation of the family units is well acknowledged and urgent. However, the SPHA Board and staff must diligently examine all of the options for redevelopment to ensure the best possible outcome for its residents, and the sustainability of the apartments over time to ensure continued affordability for low-income residents in our community now and into the future. This decision was well vetted and the SPHA Board and staff are confident and excited that the right plan is now moving forward.

## 15. What police or other security will be provided to the residents as the buildings are slowly vacated and families are left isolated while waiting to relocate?

We plan to work with local law enforcement to ensure they are completely apprised of our relocation efforts to ensure policing and security where necessary.

## 16. What happens to families that owe back rent or are otherwise not current on their payments to the SPHA?

SPHA staff will work with residents of Jordan Park to locate community resources to help families relocate without debt to their new public housing authority or Section 8 unit. Families will **not** be eligible for a voucher if they any owe money to SPHA and the voucher **will be denied**. Families will be notified if they are not eligible for a voucher due to a debt owed to the public housing program. Families that are under a repayment agreement must pay off their entire balance to the public housing program before they can be issued a voucher; however, they will be eligible to transfer to

another available public housing unit as long as they are in good standing and have made their payments on time.

## 17. Will SPHA also pay for relocation expenses (security deposit, moving costs, and application fees)?

Yes. SPHA will pay the cost of up to three rental application fees for each affected resident household (up to a maximum of \$300); along with a maximum security deposit of up to one month's rent. SPHA will also pay the costs of fees related to reconnection of utilities, as long as the utilities were active in the name of the head of household.

Finally, SPHA will pay moving costs for Jordan Park families, in accordance with the Fixed Payment for Moving Expenses, as determined by the federal government.

**SPHA will make payments to vendors directly on behalf of the tenant. Residents will need to submit a request to their relocation specialist who will submit it to the Finance Department for processing.** Residents can choose one of the two moving options provided below:

1. **SPHA Move** – SPHA will contract with a professional moving company that will move residents to their new housing. Displaced residents may choose to have loading, moving, and unloading services provided by the SPHA-contracted mover plus receive a \$100 allowance. SPHA will provide packing supplies once a move has been scheduled. Residents in need of special accommodation should speak with their relocation counselor.
2. **Self-Move (Fixed Rate Moving Expense Allowance)** – Residents may choose to move themselves with no assistance from SPHA's contract mover. If displaced households choose a self-move, SPHA will provide packing supplies once the move has been scheduled. Persons selecting this option will be entitled to a fixed payment for moving expenses determined in accordance with the Fixed Residential Moving Cost Schedule approved by the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, as published on a periodic basis in the federal register. This schedule is based on rooms of furniture in the displaced dwelling unit; bathrooms, hallways, closets and kitchens are not included in determining the number of rooms. **The fixed payment disbursement will not be provided until the resident turns in the keys to their Jordan Park unit to SPHA management and a satisfactory unit inspection has been conducted.** An inspection of the unit will be conducted prior to any payment disbursement to residents.

## 18. How much money will residents receive for relocation costs?

Relocation costs will vary based upon the unit size of the resident family and the location to which they move. SPHA staff will work with each resident family to make sure that their needs are met in accordance with all federal and local requirements. **SPHA will make payments to vendors directly on behalf of the tenant. Residents will need to submit a request to their relocation specialist who will submit it to the Finance Department for processing.**

## 19. Will Jordan Park residents be required to pay for repairs to their current units?

Per the lease, residents will be responsible for any resident-caused damage, beyond normal wear and tear, for the remainder of their time in the unit. Residents that cause damage beyond normal wear and tear may not be eligible for a voucher. Repairs that are not related to resident-caused damage will be made at no cost to the residents.