



# GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION TO CLOSE  
SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER WAITING LIST**

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, June 23, 2004—The Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) today announced it will stop accepting new applicants to its federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program indefinitely effective August 1, 2004—the last day applications will be accepted is July 30. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Section 8 program provides a monthly rental subsidy to low-income working families, the elderly and the disabled.

The GRHC's decision to close its Section 8 waiting list is the result of a dramatic increase in the demand for the Section 8 subsidy and pending funding cuts to the program. The Commission's waiting list currently includes more than 7,700 families; this represents a 282 percent increase in the list size over the past five years. The GRHC currently administers 2,690 Section 8 vouchers and is serving families that applied to the program in May 2001. The GRHC anticipates a ten percent reduction in federal funds for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program in Federal Fiscal Year 2005.

“With the reduction in future Section 8 program funding and waiting times that could exceed five years for many applicants, the Housing Commission thought it best to divert staff efforts from maintaining an ever-expanding waiting list to maximizing the timeliness and efficiency with which available vouchers are administered,” noted Grand Rapids Housing Commission Executive Director Carlos A. Sanchez. “The fact that demand for housing assistance in our community far exceeds the resources at our

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disposal is unfortunate, but we will certainly continue to work with HUD and our community partners to narrow this gap and to meet the affordable-housing needs of Grand Rapids families.”

Sanchez said the Section 8 waiting list will remain closed indefinitely but emphasized that the Housing Commission will continue to accept and process applications for its subsidized-housing developments. The GRHC operates two family developments and four developments for senior citizens and the disabled. The wait to rent an apartment at these developments is significantly lower than the wait to receive Section 8. Information and application forms for GRHC housing developments are available at the agency’s web site, [www.grhousing.org](http://www.grhousing.org).

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**BACKGROUND:** Funded primarily through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission is an independently administered entity governed by a five-member board appointed by the City Commission. The Housing Commission currently makes affordable housing available to more than 3,600 West Michigan families through a diverse portfolio of housing programs.