# Installation Housing Office Plain Language Briefing

## USAG White Sands

As of 20 April 2020

# Welcome to the Garrison Housing Office

- The White Sands Housing staff are employed by the Army to assist Service Members and their Families with housing matters and advocate on their behalf with community partners/agencies both on and off the installation
- The Housing Service Office (HSO) provides referral services and tenant/landlord dispute services
- The Installation Housing Office provides oversight of the privatized company managing on post housing and provides tenant/landlord dispute services
- The garrison Housing Manager manages the Installation Housing Office and reports directly to the Director, Public Works and garrison leadership

**Garrison Leadership**
Garrison Commander: M. Ryan Howell
Garrison Command Sergeants Major: Robert L. Parker, Jr.
Deputy Garrison Commander: Timothy M. Andersen
Garrison Director of Public Works: Jose Gallegos
Garrison Housing Manager: Angelo Rotger, Calvin Alexander and Susan Smith

# Privatized Housing Contacts

- White Sands Homes (whitesandshomes.com) is the privatized family housing community for this installation
- White Sands Homes is managed and operated by Balfour Beatty Communities, sometimes referred to as the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) company
- As the privatized housing landlord, they manage all day-to-day community operations including addressing any resident concerns, delivering prompt and professional maintenance and repair services, and handling any rent/billing issues

White Sands Homes Contacts: Balfour Beatty Communities

Community Manager, 575-674-2463

Facility Manager, 575-674-2463

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

**Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights**

The Department of Defense is fully committed to ensuring our Nation's most valued resource—its military service members and their families—have access to safe, quality, and well-maintained homes and communities on DoD installations.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 set out eighteen rights of military service members and their families (Tenants) residing in privatized housing. The Department of Defense commits to ensuring that privatized housing Tenants receive quality housing and fair treatment from the Military Housing Privatization Initiative project owners (MHPI companies) that operate and maintain privatized housing.

It is paramount that residents receive the full benefit of each right. The Department of Defense, through each of its Military Departments, will work diligently and expeditiously to develop the processes and procedures needed to implement these rights and make Tenants aware of them. However, many of the rights set forth by Congress pertain to legal matters that do not lend themselves to unilateral action by the Department. To the extent it is not already the case, the Military Departments commit to working with the MHPI companies to incorporate these rights and procedures into appropriate project legal documents. In some cases, more work is required before the benefits of these rights are fully available to tenants.

The Department commits to providing the full benefit of the following 15 rights by May 1, 2020.

1. The right to reside in a housing unit and a community that meets applicable health and environmental standards.
2. The right to reside in a housing unit that has working fixtures, appliances, and utilities and to reside in a community with well-maintained common areas and amenity spaces.
3. The right to a written lease with clearly defined rental terms to establish tenancy in a housing unit, including any addendums and other regulations imposed by the Landlord regarding occupancy of the housing unit and use of common areas.
4. The right to a plain-language briefing, before signing a lease and 30 days after move-in, by the installation housing office on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit, including information regarding the existence of any additional fees authorized by the lease, any utilities payments, the procedures for submitting and tracking work orders, the identity of the military tenant advocate, and the dispute resolution process.
5. The right to have sufficient time and opportunity to prepare and be present for move-in and move-out inspections, including an opportunity to obtain and complete necessary paperwork.
6. The right to report inadequate housing standards or deficits in habitability of the housing unit to the Landlord, the chain of command, and housing management office without fear of reprisal or retaliation, including reprisal or retaliation in the following forms: (A) unlawful recovery of, or attempt to recover, possession of the housing unit; (B) unlawfully increasing the rent, decreasing services, or increasing the obligations of a Tenant; (C) interference with a Tenant's right to privacy; (D) harassment of a Tenant; (E) refusal to honor the terms of the lease; or (F) interference with the career of a Tenant.
7. The right of access to a Military Tenant Advocate or a military legal assistance attorney, through the housing management office of the installation of the Department at which the housing unit is located to assist in the preparation of requests to initiate dispute resolution.
8. The right to receive property management services provided by a Landlord that meet or exceed industry standards and that are performed by professionally and appropriately trained, responsive and courteous customer service and maintenance staff.
9. The right to have multiple, convenient methods to communicate directly with the Landlord maintenance staff, and to receive consistently honest, accurate, straightforward, and responsive communications.
10. The right to have access to an electronic work order system through which a Tenant may request maintenance or repairs of a housing unit and track the progress of the work.
11. With respect to maintenance and repairs to a housing unit, the right to the following: (A) prompt and professional maintenance and repair; (B) to be informed of the required time frame for maintenance or repairs when a maintenance request is submitted; and (C) in the case of maintenance or repairs necessary to ensure habitability of a housing unit, to prompt relocation into suitable lodging or other housing at no cost to the Tenant until the maintenance or repairs are completed.
12. The right to receive advice from military legal assistance on procedures involving mechanisms for resolving disputes with the property management company or property manager to include mediation, arbitration, and filing claims against a Landlord.
13. The right to have reasonable, advance notice of any entrance by a Landlord, installation housing staff, or chain of command into the housing unit, except in the case of an emergency or abandonment of the housing unit.
14. The right to not pay non-refundable fees or have application of rent credits arbitrarily held.
15. The right to expect common documents, forms, and processes for housing units will be the same for all installations of the Department, to the maximum extent applicable without violating local, State, and Federal regulations.

With respect to the remaining three rights—access to maintenance history, process for dispute resolution, and withholding of rent until disputes are resolved—the Department will continue to work with the MHPI companies and, as necessary, Congress to ensure the benefits of these rights are fully available. While the Department develops standardized, formal processes for these rights, service members and their families will be able to leverage the support available from their respective Military Departments to address and resolve relevant housing issues. Tenants seeking assistance should continue to engage their housing office, installation leadership, or chain of command.

Mark T. Esper
Secretary of Defense

Ryan D. McCarthy
Secretary of the Army

Thomas B. Modly
Acting Secretary of the Navy

Barbara M. Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force

** Copy is available upon request*

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

The Military Housing Privatization Initiative ***Tenant Bill of Rights*** requires the Garrison Housing Office provide a plain language brief to all residents of privatized housing prior to lease signing and again 30 days after move-in on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit

- You have the right to reside in a housing unit and a community that meets applicable health and environmental standards. (Right 1)
- You have the right to reside in a housing unit that has working fixtures, appliances, and utilities and to reside in a community with well-maintained common areas and amenity space. (Right 2)
- You have the right to a written lease with clearly defined rental terms to establish tenancy in a housing unit, including any addendums and other regulations imposed by the Landlord regarding occupancy of the housing unit and use of common areas. (Right 3)
- The right to a plain-language briefing, before signing a lease and 30 days after move-in, by the installation housing office on all rights and responsibilities associated with tenancy of the housing unit (Right 4)
- You have the right to have sufficient time and opportunity to prepare and be present for move-in and move-out inspections, including an opportunity to obtain and complete necessary paperwork. (Right 5)

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to report inadequate housing standards or deficits in habitability of the housing unit to the Landlord, the chain of command, and Installation housing office without fear of reprisal or realization, including (A) unlawful recovery of, or attempt to recover, possession of the housing unit; (B) unlawfully increasing the rent, decreasing services, or increasing the obligations of a tenant; (C) interference with a tenant's right to privacy; (D) harassment of a tenant; (E) refusal to honor the terms of the lease; (F) interference with the career of the tenant (Right 6)
- You have the right to access to a Military Tenant Advocate or a military legal assistance attorney, through the Installation housing office to assist in the preparation of requests to initiate dispute resolution (Right 7)
- The right to receive property management services provided by the Landlord that meet or exceed industry standards and that are performed by professionally and appropriately trained responsive and courteous customer service and maintenance staff. (Right 8)
    - The White Sands Installation Housing Office serves as your Military Tenant Advocate.
    - 575-678-4691, x6065, x7591 and x6133

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to receive advice from military legal assistance on procedures involving mechanisms for resolving disputes with the property management company or property manager in include mediation, arbitration, and filing claims against the Landlord. (Right 12)
  - SJA Office POC: 575-678-1263
- You have the right to have multiple, convenient methods to communicate directly with the privatized Landlord maintenance staff, and to receive consistent, honest, accurate, straightforward and responsive communications. (Right 9)
- You have the right to have access to an electronic work order system through which a tenant may request maintenance or repairs of a housing unit and track the progress of the work. (Right 10)
  - White Sands Homes
  - Maintenance Number: 575-674-1668
  - Office Address: 1000 Rock Island Avenue, White Sands Missile Range, NM
  - Website: www.whitesandshomes.com
  - Resident Portal App: RentCafe Resident App

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

- You have the right to the following: (A) prompt and professional maintenance and repair; (B) to be informed of the required time frame for maintenance and repairs when a maintenance request is submitted; and (C) in the case of maintenance or repairs necessary to ensure habitability of a housing unit, to prompt relocation into suitable lodging or other housing at no cost to the tenant until the maintenance or repairs are completed. (Right 11)

- Displaced Resident Policies
  - ASAIE&E Memorandum, SAIE, Feb 14, 2020, Army Residential Communities Initiative Company Minimum Standard Resident Displacement Guidelines
  - ASAIE&E Memorandum, SAIE, Jan 23, 2020, Subject: Procedures for Approving Privatized Housing Habitability after Remediation, Mitigation, Stabilization and abatement
  - IMCOM Memorandum, Headquarters Installation Management Command, IMPW-H, JAN 31 2020, subject: Procedures for Certifying Housing Habitability for Army Family Housing, Leased Housing, Unaccompanied Housing and Privatized Homes
  - IMCOM Memorandum, Headquarters Installation Management Command, IMPW-H, MAR 11 2020, subject: Command Guidance Army Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Company Minimum Standard Resident Displacement Guidelines

** Copy is available upon request*

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

- Contact White Sands Homes to report maintenance issues right away
  - Emergency, urgent, routine work orders
  - Trouble calls
  - Safety concerns
  - Resident compliance issues
- Emergency and urgent work orders should be called in immediately to: 575-674-1668
  - Routine work orders should be entered online through the Resident Portal
  - Access the Resident Portal online at whitesandshomes.com
  - Or download the www.RentCafe Resident app in the App Store or on Google Play

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

| Type of Work Order | Examples | Response Time<br>*Depending on Parts |
|---|---|---|
| Emergency<br>• Critical safety, life threatening issues<br>• Resident with a medical requirement for stable temp levels | Gas leaks, fire, power outage, sewage back-up, flood, only toilet inoperable | • Initial response within 30 minutes (during business hours) or 2 hours (after hours)<br>• Available 24/7/365 |
| Urgent<br>• Habitability issue | Broken window, garage door inoperable, kitchen sink back-up, light-fixtures not working, Refrigerator inoperable | • Initial response within 30 minutes (during business hours) or 2 hours (after hours) |
| Routine<br>• Convenience<br>• Unit care issues | Single burner inoperable, repair screens, light bulb replacement | • Work completed within 48 working hours |

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

**EMERGENCY/ URGENT WORK ORDERS**

Call in ***immediately*** to the maintenance team

**ROUTINE WORK ORDERS**

Promptly submit online via Resident Portal (access on our website or RentCafe Resident app)

Can upload photos

**TRACK STATUS/PROGRESS**

Through Resident Portal

**RESIDENT SIGN OFF**

Work orders remain open until resident signs off on completion

**COMPLETION**

Team calls resident to ensure satisfaction, check for questions or updates

Online satisfaction survey issued

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Bill of Rights

- The right to have reasonable advance notice of any entrance by the Landlord, Installation housing staff, or chain of command into the housing unit, expect in the case of an emergency or abandonment of the housing unit. (Right 13) 24 hours
  - Residents will be given 24 hours advance notice from White Sands Homes before entering a resident's home for a non-emergency situation.
- The right to not pay non-refundable fees or have application of rent credits arbitrarily withheld. (Right 14)
  - Military service members will not be charged fees including but not limited to, application fees, security deposits, pet deposits, transfer fees.
- The right to expect common documents, forms, and processes for housing units will be the same for all Army Installations, to the maximum extent applicable without violating local, state, or federal regulations. (Right 15)

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

**Military Housing Privatization Initiative**

**Tenant Responsibilities**

This document highlights important responsibilities of Military Service Members and their families (Tenants) residing in Privatized Housing.

1. **Prompt Reporting.** The responsibility to report in a timely manner any apparent environmental, safety, or health hazards of the home to the Landlord and any defective, broken, damaged, or malfunctioning building systems, fixtures, appliances, or other parts of the home, the common areas, or related facilities.
2. **Care for the Home.** The responsibility to maintain standard upkeep of the home as instructed by the housing management office.
3. **Personal Conduct.** The responsibility to conduct oneself as a Tenant in a manner that will not disturb neighbors, and to assume responsibility for one's actions and those of a family member or guest in the housing unit or common areas, including the responsibility not to engage in any inappropriate, unauthorized, or criminal activity in the home or common areas.
4. **Access by Landlord.** The responsibility to allow the Landlord reasonable access to the rental home in accordance with the terms of the tenant lease agreement to allow the Landlord to make necessary repairs in a timely manner.
5. **Rules and Guidelines.** The responsibility to read all lease-related materials provided by the Landlord and to comply with the terms of the lease agreement, lease addenda, and any associated rules and guidelines.

**** Copy is available upon request***

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

- The Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights highlights 5 important responsibilities for Service Members and their Families while they reside in privatized family housing.
  1. The responsibility to report in a timely manner any apparent environmental, safety, or health hazards of the home to the Landlord and any defective, broken, damaged, or malfunctioning building systems, fixtures, appliances, or other parts of the home, the common areas, or related facilities.

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

2. The responsibility to maintain standard upkeep of the home as instructed by the housing management office.

Prevent pests:

- Promptly clean kitchen counters and dispose of food debris
- Keep food in air-tight containers
- Clear outside doorways and windows of leaves and dirt
- Report pest issues immediately for prompt service

Prevent damage to appliances and systems:

- Only flush toilet paper down toilets
- Keep fats, oils and grease out of drains
- Check and change your filters
- Clean and monitor major appliances
- Check and change batters for smoke/CO detectors
- Remove debris from dishes prior to placing in dishwasher

Prevent mildew, moisture, mold:

- Check your toilets and faucets for leaks
- Use exhaust fans in bathrooms and laundry rooms
- Report leaks and issues immediately
- Check drains and keep them clear
- Regularly clean all areas of the home

Report maintenance issues to White Sands Homes immediately!

# Privatized Housing – Tenant Responsibilities

3. The responsibility to conduct oneself as a Tenant In a manner that will not disturb neighbors, and to assume responsibility for one's actions and those of a family member or guest in the housing unit or common areas, including the responsibility not to engage in any inappropriate, unauthorized, or criminal activity in the home or common areas.
   - Residents are encouraged to report any issues or concerns regarding neighbor actions or community policies not being followed as outlined in the Resident Guide to the White Sands community management office at 575-674-2463 or whitesandsleasing@bbcgrp.com
   - The Resident Guide can be found in the Resident Portal under the "Community Info" tab
4. The responsibility to allow the Landlord reasonable access to the rental home in accordance with the terms of the tenant lease agreement to all the Landlord to make necessary repairs in a timely manner.
5. The responsibility to read all lease-related materials provided by the Landlord and to comply with the terms of the lease agreement, lease addenda, and any associated rules and guidelines.

# Garrison Housing Services Office (HSO)

The goal of the HSO is to implement and maintain a high-quality worldwide resource for relocation services that is innovative, comprehensive, and the first choice of information and support when Soldiers and families relocate.

- Non-discriminatory listings of adequate and affordable rental and for-sale housing
- Counseling/referral on eligible installation services (i.e. legal, education, Exceptional Family Member Program)
- Preliminary inquiries to validate housing discrimination complaints
- Liaison with community and government officials / organizations (on and off post)
- Housing data exchange with other DoD housing offices
- Liaisons with Army Community Services in support of the Housing Relocation Assistance Program
- Housing market area data for use in developing market analyses Rental negotiations and lease review

Housing HSO Services Office

# Garrison Housing Services Office (HSO)

- One-Stop, Full Service from Arrival to Departure for the Following:
  - Home buying counseling
  - Landlord-tenant dispute resolution
  - Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) data submission
  - Property inspections
    - ❑ NEW---Per FY20 NDAA: If tenant is not available for pre-assignment walkthrough inspection, Housing Office must attend on tenant's behalf
    - ❑ NEW---Per FY20 NDAA: The Housing Manager shall initiate contact with resident 15 day and 60 days after move in regarding the satisfaction of the resident.
  - Administrative assistance with utility company fees/deposits, connections, and billings
  - Informational briefings (in- and out-processing, entitlements),community outreach

# Furniture Safety & Additional Information

- Tenants are permitted to anchor any furniture, television, or large appliance to the wall of the unit for purposes of preventing such item from tipping over without incurring a penalty or obligation to repair the wall upon vacating the unit if the Landlord does not anchor the furniture for the tenant.

**The Mission of the Housing Office is to provide** :

- Assistance to the customers with all housing needs. Guidance and assistance to all incoming and departing personnel. Quality up-to-date information for customers pertaining to all aspects of military relocation. Alternatives for better SOLDIER choices. Mediating disputes, counseling customers, delivering education and providing local guidance on local housing needs.
- BBC has ample amenities: community center with fitness room, covered pavilion, dog park, playgrounds, skate park, splash park, tot lots and walking paths.

# White Sands Homes

- Three and four-bedroom floor plans available
- Pet-friendly
- Curbside trash/recycling pick-up
- Lawn care services
- Resident activities and events
- Ample amenities
  - Community center with fitness room and covered pavilion
  - Dog park
  - Playgrounds
  - Skate park
  - Splash park
  - Tot lots
  - Walking paths

# End of Brief