



# TAMPERING WITH SMOKE DETECTORS IS ILLEGAL!

October is here, and cooler days have arrived. We will soon be spending more time inside, making this a good time to remind you about very important lifesaving devices in your apartment – your smoke detectors.

Many years ago, SMHA replaced all apartment battery-operated smoke detectors with smoke detectors that are wired directly into the building's electrical system. These "hard-wired" smoke detectors have a secondary battery backup, so they can operate during a power failure.

Unfortunately, we are discovering many apartment smoke detectors have been tampered with by removing them from ceilings, removing batteries, and/or damaging them so they will not operate.

A tragic apartment building fire in Philadelphia killed 12 people last year, including 7 children, due in part to no working smoke detectors in the building. Due to horrifying outcomes like this, SMHA is taking a more serious approach when smoke detectors are tampered with by residents.

Not only is it a serious lease violation to tamper with your smoke detectors, but it is also unlawful to do so according to the New York State Fire Code, and New York State criminal law. When there is tampering of smoke detectors or other fire alarm or detection equipment on SMHA property, and tenants continue to tamper with equipment after warnings are issued, SMHA will pursue criminal charges against the responsible tenants, and pursue eviction.

It is our goal to keep people safe, and we ask that you do your part by leaving smoke detectors alone. If you think your smoke detector is not functioning properly, immediately report this to our maintenance hotline on 518-372-5896.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Richard Homenick  
Executive Director

## IMPORTANT NEWS INSIDE!

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Meet Our New Tenant Investigator - FSS Is Giving Tenants Big Money!!! -

**JOIN THE SMHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

# 2024 Tenant Commissioner Election

Our next Tenant Commissioner Election will be held on **Tuesday, March 26, 2024**.

SMHA residents elect two Tenant Commissioner Representatives every two years to represent residents of Public Housing and Section 8 Tenant Based Housing Choice Voucher Programs

The SMHA Board of Commissioners oversees and helps to establish policies and procedures at the Authority. As a Tenant Commissioner, you must attend the monthly meetings that are held on the last Tuesday of each month at 4pm.

Packets with more information about how to become a candidate for the Tenant Commissioner representative will be available on December 27, 2023. Contact Katie Gregory at 518-386-7053, or [kgregory@smha1.org](mailto:kgregory@smha1.org) or visit our website for more information.

## **ATTENTION DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS:**

**Tenants who call Ten Eyck, Schonewe Village, and Lincoln Heights home make up the membership of the Downtown Resident Council.**

The Downtown Resident Council will hold an election for the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Sergeant-At-Arms on Thursday, December 21, 2023 in the Golub Community Room, 375 Broadway, Schenectady NY 12305.

Any Downtown Resident is eligible to be nominated for the above mentioned offices. A nomination meeting will be held on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 4PM in the Golub Community Room. Those nominated will be added to a ballot of the December 21, 2023 Election.

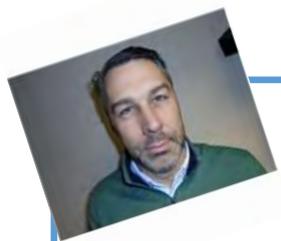
**Those elected will serve a two year term starting on January 1, 2024**

The Downtown Resident Council was created to assist in improving the quality of life, resident satisfaction and participate in self-help initiatives to enable all residents to create a positive living environment for families living on the Downtown site and surrounding community.

Come out and let your voice be heard!

For questions or inquiries, please feel free to contact SMHA Director of Development Operations Mike Jackson at

(518) 386-7051 or by email at [MJackson@SMHA1.org](mailto:MJackson@SMHA1.org)



In December 2022, SMHA Welcomed a new Tenant Investigator, Tom Mattice. Tom is replacing Steve Prokrym who retired after many years of service. Tom is a lifelong area resident and a 20-year veteran from Schenectady Police Department where he finished his career as a Detective. During his police career, he spent most of his career in Community Policing. He plans to continue that cooperative effort with our residents. **Tom can be reached at 518-386-7015 or Thomasm@smha1.org.**

## SMHA TENANTS EARNING BIG MONEY WITH FSS!

SMHA's Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program has paid out over \$100,000 to tenants in the last 24 Months, join today to get your share! Our FSS team will help you reach your financial, career, and life goals at absolutely NO COST to our tenants. SMHA Tenants can join and receive:

1. **Financial incentive** for participants to increase their earnings in the form of an escrow savings account that increases as participants' earnings increase. The escrow account helps participants build savings that they can use to improve their quality of life and advance their personal goals.
2. **Case management or coaching** to help participants access services they may need to overcome barriers to employment, strengthen their financial capability, and address other challenges holding them back from achieving their goals.

Participants enter into a five-year contract with SMHA that identifies their educational, personal and professional goals. FSS participants will work with the FSS Coordinator to set and achieve goals to become economically self-sufficient.

### Meet the Coordinators:

**Michelle Clark -SMHA's FSS Coordinator for Public Housing.** If you live in our Public Housing apartments, contact

Michelle at (518)386-7054 Email: [michellec@smha1.org](mailto:michellec@smha1.org)

**Genell Brown-SMHA's FSS Coordinator for Section 8.** If you are a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) holder, contact

Genell at (518) 379-0936 Email: [Genellb@smha1.org](mailto:Genellb@smha1.org)



# How to Pay Rent:

SMHA Offices are now open, but you still have three convenient ways to pay your rent:

- Mail a check or money order to: SMHA (Rent Office), 375 Broadway, Schenectady, NY 12305
- Use the drop-box at the 375 Broadway Office Entrance. No need to enter the building. The slot is outside the building to the left of the entrance door. Monitored by Camera, the drop-box is accessible 24 hours a day for your convenience.
- \* You can pay your rent online easily by visiting: [www.SMHA1.org](http://www.SMHA1.org). Under the Public Housing tab, click on the “Pay My Rent” link and register to create an account.



## **IMPORTANT SMHA PHONE NUMBERS:**

**Main Office:** 518-386-7000

**Maintenance HOTLINE:** 372-5896

**Rent Office:** 386-7036

### **To Contact Your Project Manager/Occupancy Specialist:**

**EASTSIDE (Steinmetz, MacGathans, Maryvale):**

386- 7004/ 386-7035

**DOWNTOWN (Ten Eyck, Schonowee, Lincoln):**

386-7003/ 386-7008

### **Senior Citizens Referrals/Assistance:**

386-7027

**Tenant Investigator**

386-7015

Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority

375 Broadway

Schenectady, NY 12305



<https://www.facebook.com/SchenectadyHousing>