

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY  
**NEWS RELEASE**



OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
AND COMMUNICATIONS

1133 North Capitol Street, N.E.  
Washington, DC 20002-7549  
Phone: (202) 535-1000  
DCHousing.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 9, 2020

Contact: Jose Sousa, (202) 460-6452

[jsousa@dchousing.org](mailto:jsousa@dchousing.org)

## **Executive Director Tyrone Garrett Pledges to Work with OAG to Address Issues Raised in Lawsuit; Launches Internal Investigation of Staff Response**

The District of Columbia Housing Authority is in receipt of today's filing from the Office of the Attorney General.

"The safety and security of all of our residents is of paramount importance to DCHA," said DCHA Executive Director Tyrone Garrett. "We pledge to work with OAG to rectify the issues raised within today's filing and we have initiated an internal investigation into the agency's response to OAG's recommendations."

DCHA operates to serve residents and we consistently seek interagency collaboration to implement measures to enhance safety and security for our residents. While we understand why the Office of the Attorney General has pursued this approach, we believe that the time and financial resources that will be expended to respond to this litigation would be best used to support the measures that this suit seeks to remedy.

The Office of the Attorney General's filing correctly indicates that there have been several unfortunate incidents of crime that have taken place at or near our properties. DCHA activates a resident-first, three-pronged approach to safety and security: resident engagement, property management, and community policing. The DCHA Resident Officer Program increases security for DCHA residents and deters criminal activity through officer visibility and presence in public housing communities using individual electric vehicles. As a condition of no cost occupancy within a DCHA unit, the police officers live on DCHA properties and work closely with DCHA management and public safety officials to respond to and deter crime in the communities. Both DCHA and MPD Officers participate in the program.

Since 2017, DCHA has spearheaded a comprehensive review of all of the units and properties in our inventory. This assessment included identifying the need for enhanced lighting and security cameras at several of our properties. Additionally, our Transformation Plan proposes significant upgrades in these same areas over the course of the next five to 10 years to move our systems into the next realm of technology necessary to deter criminal activity.

The filing indicates that the Attorney General's office failed to receive timely and complete cooperation on several of these matters during the course of their planning and discovery. If true, this is completely unacceptable behavior from DCHA staff. While personnel matters are confidential, DCHA wants to assure the public that the evolution of our agency is comprehensive and includes not only a roadmap for transformation of our portfolio but also our workforce. We are launching a thorough internal investigation into these alleged failures to respond by those entrusted with protecting our residents. DCHA holds all of its employees to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. Since these lapses were brought to the attention of our Executive Director, our team has been diligently refining the scope of efforts to address the changes suggested in the filing.

We are on the same team and look forward to our shared work that continues to serve District residents. DCHA is committed to continuing our partnership with the Office of the Attorney General and will move forward expeditiously towards a resolution.

#### **ABOUT THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY**

The District of Columbia Housing Authority is an independent government agency whose mission is to provide quality affordable housing to extremely low- through moderate-income households, foster sustainable communities, and cultivate opportunities for residents to improve their lives. One of the District's largest landlords, DCHA provides subsidized housing to approximately 50,000 residents.

###

For media inquiries please contact Jose C. Sousa, D.C. Housing Authority, at (202) 460-6452 or [jsousa@dchousing.org](mailto:jsousa@dchousing.org)