

Announcing HACC's New Debit Card Program!!

The **Housing Authority of the County of Cook (HACC)** is proud to announce it is rolling out a new program to provide landlords and tenants with their utility assistance (UAP) and housing assistance (HAP) payments. HACC's Debit Card initiative will provide program participants with a Debit Card, issued by Chase Bank, where the monthly program funds will be loaded automatically each month.

- Tenant Cardholders will use the Debit Card to make payments directly to the Utility Companies. This will help streamline the payment process for tenants, and help save unnecessary fees charged by banks or currency exchanges.
- Landlord Cardholders will be able to use the card to fit their needs, from drawing down the funds immediately, to using it as a Visa Debit Card (Please Note: transaction fees charged depending on amount of transactions on card use).

Some additional features of the Chase Direct Payment Card account include:

- No longer have to worry about mail delays and the possibility of replacing lost or stolen checks.
- Convenient, safe and secure.
- Helps to eliminate issues related to check fraud, identity theft, or loss of funds.
- Convenient Internet access to account information at www.myaccount.chase.com.
- The Chase Direct Payment Card will make access to utility benefits easier, safer and more convenient.
- Cardholders have 24-hour a day, 7-day a week telephone and web-based support in English and Spanish for balance inquiry, lost/stolen cards, investigation of transactions and other services.

No checking cashing fees, which can amount to saving over \$100 per year for some of our residents!!!



Questions Related to Electronic Payment Card Systems:

Q 1: What is the Electronic Payment Card?

A 1: The Electronic Payment Card is a debit card. For tenants, utility payments are transferred electronically into your card account from which you can access your money to pay your utility bills at any Point of Sale location that accepts payments for Utilities. In addition, the card will carry the Visa® logo, allowing you to use the card for utility payments wherever Visa® is accepted. Although the Electronic Payment Card carries the Visa® logo, it is NOT a credit card. For landlords, the debit card will receive the monthly HAP payment, and can be used anywhere that Visa Debit Cards are accepted. Landlords can use to pay their mortgage, draw down funds, or make other purchases.

Q 2: When will the program be rolled out?

A 2: The program will be rolled out this Fall, 2009, for all landlord and tenants who currently receive a HAP or UAP check.

Q 3: What fees will I have to pay for the Cook County Housing Authority Electronic payment Card?

A 3: There are no card activation fees or monthly maintenance fees for you to pay. As long as clients use the card for Utility Payments there will be no charge. For landlord cards, there is a onetime per month free withdrawal for funds. Payment fees will be charged if the card is utilized with multiple withdrawals / transactions. A fee schedule will be provided containing additional program information.

Q 4: Is this program voluntary or mandatory?

A 4: For tenants and landlords currently receiving a HAP or UAP check, **the program is mandatory.** HACC will no longer be issuing physical checks once this program is fully in effect. For all tenants / landlords who currently are enrolled on Direct Deposit, you will not be impacted by this program. For all tenants / landlords who currently are enrolled on Direct Deposit, you will not be impacted by this program. Landlords and tenants who wish to convert to Direct Deposit will be allowed to do so; please work with your Housing Choice Voucher Specialist who can assist with this process.

Q 5: My credit is bad. Will I still be eligible for the Electronic Debit Card?

A 5: **Yes.** While the Electronic Payment Card looks like a credit card, it is NOT a credit card, and your credit rating has no effect on your receiving your utility or HAP payments on the Electronic Payment Card.

Q 6: Will HACC provide me with any additional information / training on this change?

A 6: **Yes.** HACC will be providing all impacted individuals with additional information, including a webinar / group conference call, town hall sessions to answer questions. Chase Bank will be involved with the training and rollout, and we will make sure that everyone has a smooth, positive transition to the new program!

Q 7: Will I continue to receive a statement on my monthly payment?

A 7: **No.** This information will be available online through Chase Bank. We will make sure that each participant receives information and training materials on how to review account balances, access your information, etc. Participants are always able to call the Chase Customer Service center (24 / 7) for questions on their accounts. Additionally HACC customer service specialists are available to help you with any details on your program status, changes, etc.

More information will be sent soon related to this program; stay tuned!