

# PORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY

# NEWSLETTER



## Here's what you'll find in this issue:

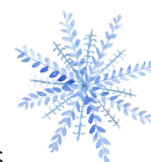
- Winter Calendar
- HEAP! Have you signed up?
- Join the Resident Advisory Board
- TAX Season is coming, CA\$H provides free tax preparation
- Join your Neighborhood Resident Committee
- FSS: Extra Savings for Working PHA Residents
- Service Coordinators: How they can support your success
- Food Security Survey
- PHADA Scholarship
- News from your local Study Center
- Winter Break Meals for kids
- Community Meetings
- Job Opportunities

## Winter Message

In Maine, each season brings its own rhythm. As winter settles in, kids play indoors, we savor hearty stews and soups, and our front doors fill up with coats, scarves, and boots. And of course, the holidays are here! However you celebrate, all of us at PHA hope this season brings you cherished moments with family, cozy winter days, and warm nights.

In this issue, we've gathered information to help you navigate winter and prepare for tax season, which is just around the corner. Plus, there are opportunities for you to get involved—your voice matters to us!

Teyonda Hall, Director of Resident Services



## PHA Notifications:

Stay in the know about emergencies, office closures, events, scholarships, opportunities and other critical messages. Use the QR code to sign up.



December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
FAFSA Applications available1	2Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	3	4East Bayside mobile food pantry	5	6	7
8	9Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	10	Riverton Food Share 10-11am11	Washington Gardens mobile food pantry12	13	14
15	16Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	17	18	19	20	21
22	23Christmas Eve Office Closes Early	24Christmas Day Office Closed	25	26	27	28
School Break for Portland Public Schools December 23rd to 31st						
29	30Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	31	Sagamore Food share, 21 Popham Street Riverton Food Share, 53 Riverton Drive East Bayside Mobile Pantry, 81 East Oxford Street Washington Gardens Mobile Pantry, End of Pembroke Street			

January 2025

Keep an eye out for CA\$H tax preparation support near you this winter			1New Year's Day Office Closed	2East Bayside mobile food pantry Back to School	3PHADA Scholarship due to PHA	4
5	6Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	7	8Riverton Food Share 10-11am	9Washington Gardens mobile food pantry	10	11
12	13Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	14	15Riverton Park Study Center FAFSA night 5:30-6:30	16	17	18
19	20MLK Day Office Closed	21Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	22Riverton Food Share 10-11am	23	24	25
26Kennedy Park Study Center FAFSA night 4:00-6:30	27Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	28	29	30	31	

February 2025

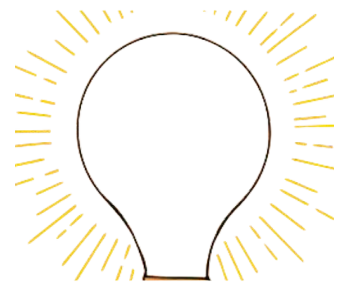
Keep an eye out in February for the PHA Scholarship application (Due May 15th)						1
2	3Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	4	5East Bayside mobile food pantry	6	7	8
9	10Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	11	Riverton Food Share 10-11am12	Washington Gardens mobile food pantry13	14	15
16Presidents' Day Office Closed	17Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	18	19	20	21	22
School Break for Portland Public Schools February 17th to 21st						
23	24Sagamore Food Share 9-10am	25	Riverton Food Share 10-11am26	27	28	



## HEAP! An Important Application To Do

Did you know that applying for HEAP can open doors to other vital assistance programs? HEAP is a “gateway” application, meaning that by applying, you may also become eligible for programs like SNAP and electricity assistance to help lower your monthly bills or qualify for repayment support. For example, without a HEAP application, your SNAP benefits could be reduced to just \$21 per month.

Here’s what you need to know: HEAP only accepts applications by appointment (phone or in person) or online, from the end of July through the last working day of May each year. This year’s deadline is Friday, May 30, 2025, so be sure to schedule your appointment or apply online before then to secure the benefits you need.



**For More Information or to sign up contact The Opportunity Alliance**  
**Phone: (207) 553-5900.**  
**[energyassistance@opportunityalliance.org](mailto:energyassistance@opportunityalliance.org)**



## JOIN THE RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Portland Housing Authority invites residents to share their experiences and support our community. We're looking for people of all ages and backgrounds—whether you live in PHA housing or have a voucher—to help us improve, generate resident-centered ideas, and plan events.

What to Expect:

- Attend 4-6 meetings per year (minimal time commitment)
- Be in and stay in good standing with PHA
- Receive a \$150 stipend for each meeting you attend (stipends are not income).
- Must be receiving 30% subsidy

If you're interested, please reach out to Teyonda Hall, Director of Resident Services, at [thall@porthouse.org](mailto:thall@porthouse.org) or 207-221-8003. We'd love to hear from you!

## FREE TAX PREP WITH THE CA\$H PROGRAM



**Need to get your taxes done in 2025 for FREE?**

**The CA\$H Program is here to help**

The United Way of Southern Maine's CA\$H program provides free tax preparation for households earning \$64,000 or less annually. Eligible individuals and families receive assistance from trained volunteers to maximize refunds and access essential tax credits. The program also offers resources for improving financial stability, including budgeting tips and savings plans. Don't miss this opportunity for free, reliable support to help you keep more of what you earn!

Want an appointment with the program?  
**Contact Teyonda Hall at 221-8003.**

# Portland Housing's Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)

PHA has been operating FSS, a savings program, for over a decade and we want to make it available to more people. But despite our efforts to promote it, we still hear that some residents have never heard of it. So, we'll be using these quarterly newsletters to share information and stories of our participants in hopes of spreading the word. Here's what everyone should know about FSS: If you are planning to increase your income, and you have a Section 8 Voucher or live in public housing, this is for you. The program connects you to the supports you need to accomplish your goals and helps you create cash savings. Read on to find out how one of our most recent graduates benefited from the program.

## **From Stuck to Homeownership: MD's Story**

MD's is an FSS success story! Born in Bangladesh, MD had always dreamed big. After earning his Master's in Engineering, he moved to the U.S. in 2009, seeking better opportunities. However, he realized he could not use his degree here or work in his field. Despite this setback, MD took on various jobs to support his family, but financial security still felt out of reach. Then, in 2019, MD learned about the FSS program, designed for those wanting financial independence. The program connects to community programs and teaches saving strategies and how to buy a home. MD joined with clear goals: save money, improve his financial management, and buy a home.

With support from his FSS Coach, who provided guidance, accountability, and encouragement, MD made progress. He built an escrow savings account, bought a reliable car, and prepared for the next big step. In October 2024, MD went under contract to purchase his very first home! Congratulations, MD!

For MD, the American Dream is now within reach, no longer just an aspiration. When asked about his thoughts on the FSS program, MD said, "I joined with a goal in mind. I wanted to save money, learn how to manage my finances better, and one day, I wanted to buy my own home. Calshir [FSS Coach] is wonderful! We set goals together, and she kept me accountable. They didn't just give me advice, they encouraged me, pushed me, and celebrated my successes. That support made all the difference."

We want to help you accomplish your goals! Join our next Virtual Info Session on December 18, 2024, at 5 PM.


Contact Calshir Richerson,  
Grants Program Manager:

**[cricherson@porthouse.org](mailto:cricherson@porthouse.org)**  
**or call 207-221-8069 to sign up.**



# Resident Services Coordinators: Who are they and how they can support you?

Resident Services Coordinators (RSCs) are here to help residents with a variety of issues, needs and goals. **Every PHA community has access to an RSC**, but you might not know it. We understand tenants may encounter any number of problems, and it's not always clear how to find solutions. That's where **your RSC is a resource to you**. Whether you're in need of consultation, help with community resources, have a health need, or need to address issue with property management, your RSC's role is to assist residents in overcoming challenges and ensuring a successful living experience within the Portland Housing Community. If you encounter any of the following issues, please don't hesitate to contact them:

- 
- Food
  - Clothing
  - Lease education
  - Property management issues
  - Financial challenges
  - Family services
  - Home health services
  - Mental health services
  - Work readiness
  - Challenges speaking with your neighbors

## Harbor Terrace and Solterra

Christie Gaydos  
207-221-8046

## Washington Gardens and Front Street

John Mills  
207-221-8054

## Franklin Towers and Bayside Anchor

Sheri Russell  
207-221-8041

## 100 State Street

Kim Munro  
207-773-1913

# Welcome Tania Kabambi, Resident Services Coordinator for public housing!

We are thrilled to introduce **\*\*Tania Kabambi\*\*** as the **new Resident Services Coordinator for Sagamore Village, Kennedy Park, and Riverton Park!** With an extensive background in working with diverse communities and a strong expertise in case management, Tania is here to support and empower residents.

## Tania's availability in each community

**Mondays:** Riverton Park 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM

**Tuesdays:** Kennedy Park 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Wednesdays:** Sagamore Village 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

**Thursdays:** any neighborhood by appointment

**Tania Kabambi**  
**tkabambi@porthouse.org**  
**207-221-8068**



We are excited to have Tania on board and look forward to the positive impact she will have in the community. Please join us in welcoming Tania and feel free to reach out to her for any support or questions!



# Food Security Survey

**Complete to be entered to win a \$100 grocery card**

Portland Housing Authority is interested in understanding your food needs. Max Van Osdol, our new Ending Hunger Corps VISTA, has created a survey to help us gather information. The questions will ask about how you typically obtain food and your experiences with food resources. All responses are confidential and viewed only by Resident Services. Your responses will be used to better understand food access in your community and help PHA improve and expand existing food resources and partnerships to best meet needs.



Scan the QR Code with the camera of your smart phone to open the survey in your phone's web browser

Enter the link below into your browser or scan the QR code to the left with your smart phone camera to begin the survey:

**[tinyurl.com/eu85cy6u](https://tinyurl.com/eu85cy6u)**

Thank you for taking the time to help us better understand your needs in the community!

Gift Card Raffle will happen in early 2025.

If you have any questions, would like to take the survey over the phone, or with the help of an interpreter, please contact Max at **(207) 773-4753 Ext 8264**

## 2025 PHADA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



**Applications are due to PHA by January 3rd, 2025**

PHA reviews your application, chooses two applicants, gets the Executive Director reference, pays the application fee and sends your application to PHADA.

**Contact Emily to apply:**

Emily Mancini-Fitch  
efitch@porthouse.org  
call or text:  
(207) 221-8063

### Three Scholarships Will Be Awarded:

- Stephen J. Bollinger Memorial Scholarship \$7,000
- Civil Rights and Social Justice Scholarship\* \$5,000  
\*additional essay required
- Nan McKay Pathway to Achievement Scholarship \$5,000

#### ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

- ☐ STATUS – Applicant must be a **high school senior** and reside in a PHADA member agency owned or managed unit **throughout his/her entire senior year**. Public housing residents, Section 8 participants or other low-income housing residents are eligible, as long as the agency at which they reside is a PHADA member.
- ☐ MINIMUM GRADE POINT AVERAGE – Student **must have at least a "B" average** (or 3.0 GPA) on his/her school's applicable scale during his/her high school career, cumulatively, to be considered for the scholarship.

PHA is a PHADA member. If you have a voucher, check with your rent office to see if they are a member of PHADA.

# Sagamore Village Study Center

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024



Hello families!

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS FALL

Madeline and Nell are the new Study Center staff working with the students in the neighborhood. We are open for homework help, individual tutoring and mentoring. We are also open for crafts, games and snack each day after school. We've met a lot of the students in the neighborhood so far, but not



everyone! We encourage you to let your kids know that we are open and available as a safe place to hang out after school. All school ages are welcome to join us until 6 PM. From 6-7 we are open to middle and high school students only. Since we opened back up in September, we have had lots of fun getting to know the students in the neighborhood.

This past month we made some sculptures with air dry clay, did printmaking, and made lots of decorations for the Halloween Party. We celebrated some birthdays and had Friday movie nights with popcorn.



## OUR SCHEDULE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3:00 to 5:30 All Ages	3:00 to 5:30 All Ages	2:00 to 5:30 All Ages	3:00 to 5:30 All Ages	3:00 to 5:00 All Ages
5:30 to 6:00 Quiet Reading/ Study Time	5:30 to 6:00 Quiet Reading/ Study Time	5:30 to 6:00 Quiet Reading/ Study Time	5:30 to 6:00 Quiet Reading/ Study Time	
6:00 to 7:00 Teen Time	6:00 to 7:00 Teen Time		6:00 to 7:00 Teen Time	



# HALLOWEEN AT THE STUDY CENTER

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Halloween Party last month! We had face painting, played musical chairs, painted pumpkins, and made fresh apple cider with Foodscape! It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces in the study center.



## Coming This Winter

- **FAFSA applications open on December 1st** for the 2025-2026 academic year! Want help starting or completing your application? The Study Center is a resource for FAFSA and college application support. Computers are available during all study center hours as well as adult hours for use.
- **Beginners sewing and embroidery classes** will begin in December at the Study Center on Thursday nights during teen time (6-7PM).
- **Chess Club** will begin in December on Wednesdays at the Study Center. We will have a brief chess lesson followed by a series of games.
- Are you in middle or high school and interested in getting involved at the Study Center? Sign up to be a part of the **Teen Advisory Board**! Come in during teen time (6-7PM M/Tu/Th) to learn more and help us get this program started!

## MENTORING PROGRAM

**Sign up for mentoring  
at the Study Center!**

Students in the mentorship program will receive one-on-one support from AmeriCorps member and Study Center staff Nell. Receive individualized support on homework, life skills, and social emotional learning through weekly check-ins and specialized activities.

**Have thoughts, suggestions, or ideas for the study center? We want to know what you think!**

@SagamoreStudy on  
Instagram

sv.studycenter@porthouse.org  
mjones@porthouse.org

call or text (207) 221-8075



sign up by Monday 12/16

# WINTER BREAK LUNCH MENU



## LUNCHES BY SIGN UP ONLY



Chicken  
Nuggets



Hummus with  
Pita Chips or  
Veggies



Pasta with  
Tomato Sauce



Sunbutter and  
Jelly Sandwich



Chicken Wrap  
with Ranch



Turkey &  
Cheese  
Sandwich



Pizza!

Complete the form  
online, at

the Study Center, or with  
your Service Coordinator

<https://www.porthouse.org/Lunch>

### Winter 2024 School Break Meal Sign Up

For PHA children during the winter school break 12/23 – 12/30/24.  
**please complete this form or the online form once for each youth**

Name of youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please choose one option per day:**

Mon. 12/23	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Nuggets	<input type="checkbox"/> Hummus with Pita Chips or Veggies	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
Tue. 12/24	<input type="checkbox"/> pasta with tomato sauce	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun Butter and Jelly Sandwich	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
No lunch Wednesday, Christmas Day			
Thur. 12/26	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Wrap with Ranch	<input type="checkbox"/> Hummus with Pita Chips or Veggies	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
Fri. 12/27	<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey and Cheese sandwich	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun Butter and Jelly Sandwich	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
Mon. 12/30	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Nuggets	<input type="checkbox"/> Hummus with Pita Chips or Veggies	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
Tue. 12/31	<input type="checkbox"/> Pizza with Turkey Pepperoni	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheese Pizza	<input type="checkbox"/> No lunch
No lunch Wednesday, New Year's Day			

All meals will include a drink, fruit/veg, chip/cracker snack, and/or treat.

Suggestions for future lunches:

Call or text Emily (207) 221-8063 to change your order  
or to communicate dietary restrictions or accommodations.

Submit dietary restrictions through the google  
form or call/text Emily if you need an  
accommodation due to allergies or intolerances  
(207) 221-8063

Menu may change based on availability.

# Did you know your neighborhood has a resident committee?

**Get involved!**

*Are you a Portland Housing resident who wants to bring exciting activities and events to our community? Join our resident committee and help make it happen! By joining, you'll have the chance to share your ideas, plan events, and create the kind of community gatherings you'd love to see. It's a great way to get involved, meet neighbors, and make a positive impact. Whether you have big plans or just want to lend a hand, your voice matters. Join us and help shape the future of our community!*

If you're interested, please reach out to Teyonda Hall, Director of Resident Services, at **thall@porthouse.org** or **207-221-8003**.

## Job Openings

In an effort to connect residents to job opportunities, we feature local job postings from a variety of sectors. Here's a sample of what's available.

### **Goodwill NNE**

[www.goodwillnne.com](http://www.goodwillnne.com)

### **Direct Support Professional**

Schedule: Full Time

Freeport, ME 04032

Goodwill of Northern New England is looking for kind people to help the adults who live in our residential homes. Direct Support Professionals (DSP) care for people with developmental disabilities and/or brain injury.

### **New England Rehabilitation Hospital of Portland**

[www.encompasshealth.com](http://www.encompasshealth.com)

### **Certified Nursing Assistant**

Portland, ME 04102

From \$22.50 an hour - Full-time

### **Cera**

[www.eatcera.com](http://www.eatcera.com)

### **Customer Service / Front Expediter / Cashier / Online Order**

1 Monument Square, Portland, ME 04101

\$21 - \$23 an hour - Part-time, Full-time



**If you're looking for a job check out these resources for more opportunities:**

The Career Center  
<https://mainecareercenter.gov/>  
 \*click the "Job Seekers" tab

Workforce Solutions  
<https://workforcesolutionsme.org/>  
 \*Click "Job Seekers Services"

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