

# Lafayette Leader

WINTER 2020



► FALL RECAP  
MEET YOUR STAFF  
RESIDENT NEWS

► SPRING CLEANING  
FREE TAX PREP  
CENSUS 2020



**LaFayette**  
Housing Authority  
Managed by Auburn HA

**AUBURNHOUSINGAUTH.ORG**



# From the CEO

**SHARON N. TOLBERT**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

It is my desire that you found the first edition of The LaFayette Leader Fall 2019 newsletter to be a useful tool to communicate upcoming events, news and more with our residents, community partners and the public at large! The Winter 2020 edition reflects on events from the previous quarter and upcoming events.

We were busy during the last quarter but a lot was accomplished. In November 2019, the FYE2019 audit was completed for the LaFayette Housing Authority (LHA). Under the management of the Auburn Housing Authority (AHA), I am pleased to say there were no findings or concerns. In addition, LHA received a "High Performer" rating for its FYE2019 performance. It takes hard work and dedicated employees to continue to perform at this level. I want to express my sincere gratitude to all employees for your commitment and dedication to the success of the LHA.

I also want to thank the Board of Commissioners for your dedication to the LHA and entrusting me to serve as the CEO. Thank you for your time, support and commitment to the LHA organization! I truly appreciate your service to the LHA and the LaFayette community.

To all of our community partners, thank you for partnering with LHA as we strive to fulfill our mission to provide safe, decent, and sanitary housing conditions for individuals and families. Our objective is to provide personal, economic, and social upward mobility by offering individuals and families the opportunity to make the transition from subsidized to non-subsidized housing.

I look forward to another great quarter! For more information, please visit our website at [www.auburnhousingauth.org](http://www.auburnhousingauth.org) and sign up for "News and More" to receive email and text notifications. You may also follow AHA on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn!

*Sharon N. Tolbert*

# COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

LHA is governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners, representing a cross section of the community and appointed by the Mayor of the City of LaFayette. One member must be a resident of an LHA property or program.

The Commissioners are responsible for overseeing the fiscal management of the agency and approving policies.

## BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held at noon on the third Wednesday in March, June, September and December. The meeting is held at the LHA's Administrative Office located at 301 First Avenue S.W. The meeting date is subject to change.

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Peggy King, Chairperson  
Elton Holloway, Vice Chairperson  
Angelia Davis, Commissioner  
Mary Owens-Lyerly, Commissioner  
Amanda Toles, Resident Commissioner



# HUMAN RESOURCES & NEWS

## ➔ New Employees



DeWana (Shay) Blackmon, HCV Receptionist/Clerk



### MULTIFAMILY HOUSING DEPARTMENT (LHA SITE)

From left to right: Mark Ellis (Regional Maintenance Mgr.), Kelvin Whitlow (Maintenance Mechanic), Carrie Smith (Regional Property Mgr.), Shannon Walters (Interim Regional Property Mgr.), Matt Robinson (Asst. Maintenance Mechanic), and AJ Harris (Director of Property Operations)

## ➔ Recognitions

**Sandra Sanders and Kelvin Whitlow were recognized during AHA' Annual Christmas in December 2019 for their loyal and dedicated service.**



Sandra Sanders  
25 years of service



Kelvin Whitlow  
5 years of service



### HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER DEPARTMENT

From left to right: Star Snipe (HCV Director), Natasha Hall (HCV Caseworker), Laura Squiers (HCV Caseworker)

## ➔ Here to Serve You



**Sharon Tolbert**  
CEO



**Sandra Sanders**  
Executive Admin. Asst/  
Human Resources



**Charlotte Mattox**  
Resident Services



### FINANCE DEPARTMENT

From left to right: Wendy Cochran (Finance Director), Sylvia Impson (Purchasing Clerk), Richetta Stephens (Procurement Specialist)

# Census 2020

The results of the 2020 Census will help determine each state's representation in Congress, as well as how certain funds are spent for schools, hospitals, roads, and more. This is your chance to play a part in history and help ensure that everyone in your community is counted!

## CENSUS 101: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The 2020 Census is closer than you think!  
Here's a quick refresher of what it is and why it's essential that everyone is counted.

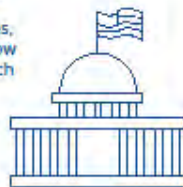
### Everyone counts.

The census counts every person living in the United States once, only once, and in the right place.



### It's about fair representation.

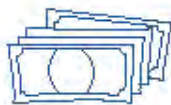
Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.



### It's in the Constitution.

The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. The first census was in 1790.

### It's about \$675 billion.



The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants, and support to states, counties, and communities are based on census data.

That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs.



### It's about redistricting.

After each decade's census, state officials redraw the boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.

### Taking part is your civic duty.

Completing the census is mandatory: it's a way to participate in our democracy and say "I COUNT!"



## Be A CENSUS TAKER!

Are you looking for the perfect opportunity to earn some extra income while helping your community? This is your chance to play a part in history and help ensure that everyone in your community is counted!

To be eligible for a 2020 Census job, you must:

-Be at least 18 years old.

-Be a U.S. citizen.

-Commit to completing the training.

-Be available to work flexible hours, which can include days, evenings, and/or weekends.

Interested in learning more or applying?

Visit

[2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs)





## EMPLOYEE CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON GALLERY

Our employees, Board of Commissioners, Resident Advisory Board, and guests came together prior to the holidays to enjoy good food, express appreciation, and engage in a lot of laughs!

See full album on our Facebook pages and at [www.auburnhousingauth.org](http://www.auburnhousingauth.org)





# Senior Holiday Luncheon



We had a great time at our Senior Citizen's Holiday Luncheon. Our residents and staff enjoyed delicious food and great conversation!

See full album on our Facebook pages and at [www.auburnhousingauth.org](http://www.auburnhousingauth.org)







## Scholarship Opportunities

The **2020 HAI Group Resident Scholarship Program** is open for submissions! This year, 20 people will win scholarships valued at \$6,000 each! Residents submit your completed entry form by Thursday, April 30, 2020. Completed entries will be placed into a drawing to be held on or about Monday, May 4, 2020.

Applications are being accepted for **The Alabama Housing Authorities Education and Enrichment Fund (AHAEEF) Scholarship**. Applicants must be a Public Housing/Section 8 resident (includes RAD PBV/PBRA). Application deadline March 23, 2020.

The **2020-2021 Hispanic Scholarship Fund Scholarship** application is now open! High school seniors of Hispanic heritage can earn \$500 to \$5,000.

Visit [www.auburnhousingauth.org/scholarships](http://www.auburnhousingauth.org/scholarships) for more information or to apply!

## FREE Tax Prep

SaveFirst has partnered with Auburn University to offer tax preparation services now through March 5 at the Boykin Community Center. Tax preparation by IRS certified volunteers is free for households earning up to \$56,000. To take advantage of the services, taxpayers can make an appointment by calling

**1-888-99-TAX-AL** or

visiting

[impactamerica.com/freetaxprep](http://impactamerica.com/freetaxprep).

The Boykin Community Center is located at 400 Boykin St., Auburn, AL



Does your household earn less than \$56,000 annually? If so, you qualify to have your taxes prepared and filed for FREE!

Stop by the Goodwill Career Center and let them help you maximize your tax return.

For more information visit [goodwillsr.org/VITA/](http://goodwillsr.org/VITA/)

# VITA

Free Tax Preparation





# Property Management

## Lafayette Housing Authority



### 5 Ways to Rebound from Holiday Spending

- ✓ First, keep in mind that you are not alone.
- ✓ Second, take an honest assessment of the damage and talk to a trusted family member, friend or debt counselor about your concern.
- ✓ Third, if you are able, return any gifts you have bought or received for a re-fund or, at least, a store credit to be used at a better time.
- ✓ Fourth, immediately figure out a debt repayment plan, develop a budget for the coming months and stick to it. Confide in a trusted family member or friend who can hold you accountable.
- ✓ Fifth, don't be too proud to ask for help emotionally or financially if you're so tapped out you're having trouble making ends meet. Although nobody should enable an over spender, you might find support if you are serious about owning up and breaking the cycle. This includes calling the credit card companies to negotiate a more favorable debt repayment plan, making serious changes to your habits and maybe selling things or dipping into savings.

## Spring Cleaning Reminders

We are getting ready to go through our annual HQS (Housing Quality Standard) Inspections and the more we can remind tenants to clean up, call us if they have items that need to be repaired, items not working in their apartment, the better.

It is the responsibility of the family to give the inspector access to the unit. If the Head of Household (HOH) is not present, the HOH may designate someone else to be present to give the inspector access. However, the designated person must be 18 (yrs.) or older.

For any family caused deficiencies discovered the family is responsible to have those deficiencies fixed. Failing to give the inspector access to the unit or failure to fix family caused deficiencies are violations of the family obligations for TBV and responsibilities for PBV.

## SPRING CLEANING Checklist

### KITCHEN

- Clean out refrigerator
- Wipe down all appliances
- Wipe down counters/cabinets
- Sweep & mop the floors
- Clean out the pantry

### LIVING AREAS

- Remove all clutter
- Dust all surfaces
- Clean windows/blinds
- Vacuum/mop all floors
- Change filters in air vents

### BATHROOMS

- Wash rugs/shower curtain
- Clean shower & toilet
- Mop floors
- Wipe down counters/mirrors
- Restock paper products

### BEDROOMS

- Change sheets/flip mattress
- Change Filters in air vents
- Dust all flat surfaces
- Wash rugs/curtains
- Vacuum/Mop floors

GET OUTSIDE & ENJOY THE SUN!



# Bed Bugs and Prevention

“BED BUGS ARE HARDY INSECTS: THEY ARE ABLE TO SURVIVE WITHOUT FEEDING FOR A YEAR”.

When fighting, it is good to know your enemy. Bed bugs are reddish-brown, flattened, oval and wingless. They feed exclusively on warm-blooded animals—like humans. Bed bugs are hardy insects: They are able to survive without feeding for a year. In humans, bed bug bites may cause skin rashes, psychological effects and allergic symptoms.

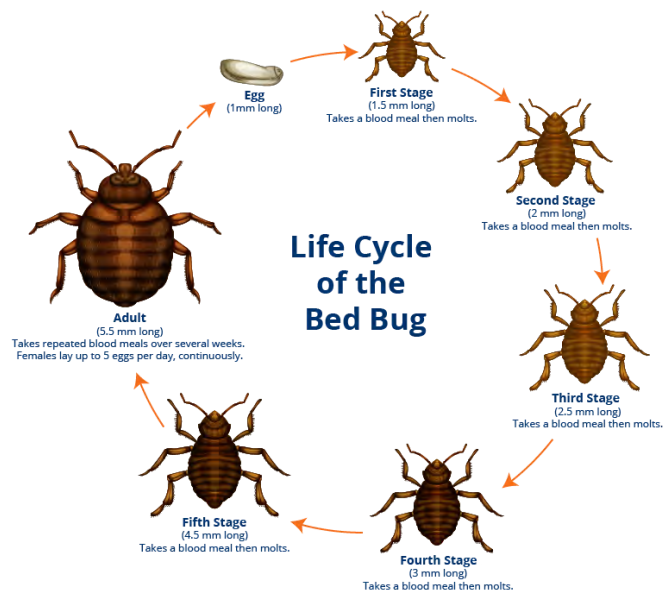
Rental premises may become infested with bed bugs in a variety of ways, including: entering the premises on pets, clothing, luggage, furniture, or wild animals such as rodents, bats or birds; arriving via duct work or other routes from nearby dwellings. “Bed bugs” earned their name thanks to their proclivity for living in mattresses, box springs and bed frames. For this reason, references to bed bugs are a common nighttime adage: “Sleep tight; don’t let the bed bugs bite!”

Nevertheless, bed bugs are not limited to bed-rooms and may live anywhere in a home, including furniture, curtains and wallpaper. Frustratingly, bed bugs are known to be elusive and nocturnal. They are best detected by their bites as well as fecal spots and blood smears on bed sheets.

## Landlord Terms

Lease terms can require tenants to report sightings of bedbugs. A quick response may help limit the infestation. The lease can also include requirements that tenants’ mattresses and box springs be synthetically encased—to help prevent bedbug infestation.

The lease can also specify that the tenant is obligated to allow entry to pest control exterminators and to cooperate fully in eradicating any pest infestations. Building maintenance staff can be trained to recognize bedbugs and signs of bedbug infestations. Early detection is best!



## Bedbug Treatments

Getting rid of bedbugs begins with cleaning up the places where bedbugs live. This should include the following:

Clean bedding, linens, curtains, and clothing in hot water and dry them on the highest dryer setting. Place stuffed animals, shoes, and other items that can't be washed in the dryer and run on high for 30 minutes.

Vacuum your bed and surrounding area frequently. After vacuuming, immediately place the vacuum cleaner bag in a plastic bag and place in garbage can outdoors.

Encase mattress and box springs with a tightly woven, zippered cover to keep bedbugs from entering or escaping. Bedbugs may live up to a year without feeding, so keep the cover on your mattress for at least a year to make sure all bugs in the mattress are dead.

Repair cracks in plaster and glue down peeling wallpaper to get rid of places bedbugs can hide. Get rid of clutter around the bed.

# RESIDENT INFO

## ➔ Rent Payment



Rent is due the 1st of each month, late after the 6th. If the last day to pay rent falls on a day the Authority is closed (weekend or holiday) then residents have the next business day to pay rent.

If rent is late 14 days, the resident may be in jeopardy of being evicted. Please pay your rent on time to eliminate late fees and possible eviction!

## ➔ Rental Insurance



Residents are encouraged to obtain rental insurance. Rental insurance helps to protect your belongings after a covered loss.

## ➔ Maintenance



An emergency work order will be completed and mitigated within twenty-four (24) hours. If a situation is determined to not be an emergency, the resident will be informed

that the request will be considered as "any other resident work order request". Normal work orders will be resolved within 3 business days. Examples of a work order emergency are:

- Broken exterior door lock
- Fire
- Loss of power – mechanical failure
- Broken water line
- Loose or falling ceiling
- No Heat (when the outside temperature is less than 35 degrees)

Please call to request a work order:

**Routine/Emergency Work Orders:**  
**(334) 864-8391**

**For Police and Fire Emergencies dial 911**

## ➔ Smoking Policy



Smoking is NOT permitted inside the unit. See the Smoke-Free Policy that's included as an addendum to your lease for more information.



## CONNECT WITH US...



Find us on Facebook @AuburnHousing

**AUBURNHOUSINGAUTH.ORG**

sign up for "News and More" to receive email and text notifications.

### LHA Public Hearing Notice

**A Public Hearing will be held on March 10, 2020 at 3:00 PM to receive public comments regarding the proposed Five-Year Plans and Annual Plan. The Hearing will be held at the Lafayette Housing Authority located at 301 1st Avenue, Lafayette, AL 36862.**



### LHA Staff Spring Cleaning

LHA staff will be out during March and April picking up trash around the properties.

You are invited to come out and meet LHA staff and assist in cleanup. Dates and times will be announced at a later date.