

Safe Military Housing Initiative

www.safemilitaryhousinginitiative.org

Overview

- 1) Background
- 2) Concerns with military family housing
- 3) Potential solutions

Background

- This slideshow summarizes concerns and potential solutions addressing recent and ongoing complaints from military families as documented by news agencies, government reports, and stories shared directly from military families who reside in housing managed by private companies under the DOD's Military Housing Privatization Initiative
- It's our belief that to effectively address the concerns and potential solutions highlighted in these slides will require the collaborative strengths of multiple parties, including government entities, elected officials, volunteers, and both non-profit and for-profit organizations
- While the content of these slides was coordinated with other organizations in addition to the authors, due to time constraints, we were unable to receive formal endorsement by these organizations

Concerns

1) Habitability

- Mold growth/water intrusion
- Rodent and bug infestations
- Inadequate heating/cooling
- Drinking water contamination
- Lead paint/potential asbestos

2) Move Out Practices

- Unwarranted charges for normal wear and tear
- Charges for repairs that are never made
- Transfer fee charges for moving from one home to another

3) Lack of Due Process & Unclear Legal Recourse

- Tenant families have very little effective due process
- Complaints that local attorneys cannot enforce local landlord-tenant laws because the housing is located on federal property

Concerns *(cont.)*

4) Residential Energy Conservation Program (RECP)

- Excessive electrical billing charges
- Inadequate, outdated, or inefficient HVAC and appliances, poor construction and/or insulation

5) Inadequate Response Times or Inadequate Responses

- Complaints of not responding in a timely manner
- Complaints of not adequately addressing issues
- Complaints of unlicensed mold remediation and HVAC contractors
- Complaints of work orders closing out without work being properly completed
- Complaints of not following proper EPA recommendations for remediation efforts

6) Unequal Treatment based on rank or military versus civilian status

Concerns *(cont.)*

7) Apprehension by military tenants to address issues via the chain of command

- Complaints about perceived intimidation tactics by landlords/PPVs who contact command leadership when families address their housing issues

8) Lack of choice for ADA compliant housing

- Lack of choice due to PCS time constraints and the availability of affordable off-base options
- Complaints about ADA compliant on-base housing with habitability issues...leaving families to choose between accessibility and habitability

9) Landlords/PPVs hold all the cards

- 50 year lease agreements
- High turnover of military family tenants
- Complaints that PPVs merely outlast the military family tenants
- Military family tenants lack reasonable access to enforcement mechanisms for landlord-tenant habitability laws

Concerns *(cont.)*

10) Lack of oversight by service branches of PPV contractors

- Based on conversations with military/family support organizations involved with military housing dating back to the 1990's...one longstanding concern was the potential for service branches to relinquish their oversight responsibilities with the PPV companies they contract with
- These housing concerns are not solely the responsibility of the PPV contractors, nor are they solely a problem for Congress to solve, but there is also shared responsibility by the DOD service branches to equally advocate and represent both the PPVs and their military family tenants

Potential Solutions – *Creating Transparency*

- 1) Facilitate the ongoing GAO investigation into these concerns to ensure complete, thorough, and unbiased results
 - Including review of current policies, contracts, and procedures for awarding incentives/bonuses to PPVs
- 2) Require ongoing public oversight and reporting of PPV business practices, including fees, penalties, deposits, move out charges and RECP charges
- 3) Require PPVs to itemize and report move out charges and RECP charges *per home*
- 4) Regularly inform military family tenants of the ongoing progress toward addressing these current concerns **and** any future habitability complaints and subsequent remediation efforts
- 5) Provide clear and explicit disclosure of current and historical environmental hazards on the installation, particularly in family housing
 - Including retroactive notification for families who previously lived in housing now identified with habitability issues
- 6) Create a single standardized rental lease agreement DOD wide with industry standard landlord-tenant language

Potential Solutions – *Creating Accountability*

- 7) Properly address and remediate existing housing complaints by military family tenants
 - Including how the DOD/Tricare will address health issues related to habitability and other potential long term impacts (health care, insurability, etc.)
- 8) Facilitate proper legal recourse and due process by making necessary changes to federal and/or state law to remove protections for landlords/PPVs due to military housing being located on federal property
- 9) Allow military families to halt their BAH and place in escrow until suitable repairs or remediation are adequately addressed as determined by an outside contractor
 - Would require processes for approving determination
 - Would require processes for escrowing the BAH and releasing the BAH

Potential Solutions Scorecard

| Potential Solutions | Creates transparency about PPV performance | Improves accountability to military family tenants | Provides long-term, ongoing impact | Requires little to no additional funds | Does not require legislative or DOD policy changes | Requires little to no setup or process creation | Can be implemented quickly |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1) Facilitate the ongoing GAO investigation into these concerns | Green | Red | Yellow | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow |
| 2) Require ongoing public oversight and reporting of PPV business practices, including fees, penalties, deposits, move out and RECP charges | Green | Yellow | Green | Yellow | Red | Red | Red |
| 3) Require PPVs to itemize and report move out charges and RECP charges <i>per home</i> | Green | Yellow | Green | Green | Red | Yellow | Red |
| 4) Regularly inform military family tenants of the ongoing progress toward addressing these current concerns and any future habitability complaints and remediation efforts | Green | Yellow | Green | Green | Yellow | Green | Red |
| 5) Provide explicit disclosure of current and historical environmental hazards on the installation | Red | Red | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Red |
| 6) Create a single standardized rental lease agreement DOD wide | Red | Yellow | Green | Green | Yellow | Yellow | Red |
| 7) Remediate existing housing complaints by military family tenants | Red | Green | Red | Yellow | Green | Yellow | Yellow |
| 8) Facilitate proper legal recourse and due process by changing federal and/or state law to remove PPV protections due to military housing being located on federal property | Yellow | Green | Green | Green | Red | Green | Red |
| 9) Allow military families to halt their BAH and place in escrow until suitable repairs or remediation are addressed | Yellow | Green | Green | Yellow | Red | Red | Red |

Potential Solutions Scorecard

| Potential Solutions | Creates transparency about PPV | Improves accountability to military | Provides long-term, ongoing | Requires little to no additional | Does not require legislative or DOD | Requires little to no setup or | Can be implemented |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Facilitate investment | | | | | | | |
| 2) Require reporting including out of area | | | | | | | |
| 3) Require removal of home | | | | | | | |
| 4) Require address of the any future remediation | | | | | | | |
| 5) Provide and halt the in | | | | | | | |
| 6) Create lease | | | | | | | |
| 7) Require by military | | | | | | | |
| 8) Facilitate process law to military property | | | | | | | |
| 9) Allow military families to halt their BAH and place in escrow until suitable repairs or remediation are addressed | | | | | | | |

NOTE:

- This scorecard uses colors to indicate the following
 - **Green = positive/easy**
 - **Red = negative/difficult**
 - **Yellow = somewhere in between**
- This scorecard is an early draft based on the opinions of the authors of these slides and will require further input from other organizations and agencies for true accuracy
- We don't intend for these potential solutions to be competitive with one another, but instead we believe it will take a combination of many of these solutions to ultimately prove successful