

SAULT STE. MARIE HOUSING COMMISSION

May 2025 Newsletter



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IMPORTANT UPDATES

We've made some updates to our policies that will go into effect **June 1st**, and we want to make sure everyone is aware of the changes.

Please be sure to review the full details on the last page of this newsletter. All residents will be required to sign these updates, so we encourage you to read through the changes carefully.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact our office at 906-635-5841.

Thank you for your continued cooperation!

CARDEN CIRCUS

The Carden International Circus is returning to town on May 13th at 6:00pm at the Pullar Stadium, located at 435 E. Portage Avenue. This event features a variety of attractions including elephant, camel, and horse rides, exciting inflatables, and face painting! There's entertainment for all ages, making it a perfect outing for the whole family. Children under the age of two (2) can attend for FREE. General admission for adults is \$20.00, and each adult ticket includes a complimentary child ticket upon purchase.

MAY BURGER MONTH

Celebrate National Burger Month this May with juicy burgers, mouth-watering toppings, and specials at the following participating restaurants:

- The Wicked Sister
- The Palace Mexican Restaurant
- Moloney's Alley
- Goetz's Lockview Restaurant
- Smitty's Sundown Lounge
- Back Bay Grill & Games
- The Cozy Corners
- Zorba's Greek Restaurant
- Clyde's Drive-In Soo
- Double D Sports Bar & Grill
- Soo Brewing Company

Grab your official Burger Month Passport at any of these locations, collect stamps at each stop, and return your completed passport to BRIDGE FM at 1500 Ashmun Street for a chance to win fantastic prizes! This event runs all month long, from May 1st to May 31st.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

No-Cost Health & Security Workshop for Seniors

The Community Action Agency Avery Square will be hosting a no-cost workshop from 10a - 11am on Tuesday, May 6th. The workshop will cover fraud prevention, identity theft protection, and Medicare basics. Enjoy coffee, donuts, connect with others, and gain valuable tools to protect yourself and your health.

Ladies Night Out!

Enjoy exclusive sales, free samples, adult beverages, and live acoustic music on Friday, May 16th from 4:00pm to 8:30pm at 125 West Portage Ave. Plus, get your Shop Downtown card punched for a chance to win a \$500 gift basket! The first 50 customers will receive a FREE GIFT with purchase. Don't miss out on this exciting evening!

3rd Annual Spirit Walk

The 3rd Annual Spirit Walk: For Safe Communities will take place on May 31st from 11am - 2:30pm at the BMIC Farmers Market Pavilion on 11644 W. Plantation Road in Brimley, MI. The event begins with an opening ceremony and walk, followed by free food, prizes, and a fun pie-in-the-face challenge with local police. A shuttle will be available to return you to your vehicle. Join us as we raise awareness and take a stand against sexual assault and abuse.



FOOD PANTRIES

Feeding America: Upper Peninsula

- Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 4:00pm. Located at the Big Bear Arena (Chi Mukwa) on 2 Ice Circle, Sault Ste. Marie, MI.

The Salvation Army

132 W. Spruce St: 906-632-6521

- Pantry: by appointment only.
- Community Kitchen: Mon-Fri (12pm-12:30pm)
- Bread Rack: Mon/Wed/Fri (10am-12pm) and Tues/Thur (10am-12pm & 12:30pm-3:30pm)

First Church of Christ

300 W. Spruce St: 906-632-6511

- Mon-Wed (9am-11am)

First United Presbyterian Church

555 Bingham Ave: 906-632-7771

- 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month (3:30pm-5pm)

St Joseph's Catholic Church

1101 Minneapolis St: 906-632-9625

- Every Tuesday (2pm-3pm)

CLM Community Action Agency

524 Ashmun St: 906-632-3363

- Mon-Fri (9am-4pm)



SPRING CLEAN-UP: DUMPSTERS



The Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission will provide dumpsters for residents on Andary Avenue and Kimball Street beginning **the week of May 12th**. This is a great opportunity to clean out your basement, get rid of unwanted items, or tidy up your yard!

However, please remember that the following items are **not allowed** in the dumpsters:

- ⊘ Tires, automotive parts, large appliances or furniture, hazardous waste or fluids, paint or gasoline cans, electronics and florescent lights.
- ⊘ Yard waste such as twigs, grass clippings, and leaves. You can dispose of these items at the City Compost Yard located on 1244 East Easterday Avenue.

These dumpsters are for residents only. If we find that non-residents are using them or that prohibited items are being dumped, this service will not be offered again in the future.

UPCOMING SSMHC PROJECTS



The Sault Ste. Marie Housing Commission has some upcoming projects scheduled this Spring and Summer 2025. If you are interested in exploring job opportunities in construction, please contact the following contractors to inquire about available positions:

- Norris Contracting, Inc. - **(906)632-1200**
- Bonacci Contracting, Inc. - **(906)632-1425**
- Kaysner Construction, Inc. - **(906)632-7663**

4-FORMS

Any changes in your household must be reported **within ten (10) business days of receiving notice.** This includes updates such as new employment, job loss, changes in pay, child support, a minor starting a job, unemployment benefits, changes in SSI/Social Security, pension or retirement earnings, household size, childcare expenses, cash assistance, etc.

Updates cannot be made via phone or email; you must complete the 4-forms. To avoid retroactive rent charges that can accumulate quickly, complete and submit these forms as soon as possible.

ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION & INSPECTIONS

When you receive notice that it is time for your Annual Recertification, you may wonder why it's scheduled three months before your original move-in date. We start this process early to ensure we can complete the necessary verifications and file processing before your annual move-in date.

The notice will also include the dates when maintenance will enter your home for the annual inspection. You do not need to be present for this inspection. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our office.

WORK ORDERS

Any damages or work orders not reported when they occur and later discovered during an inspection are considered lease violations. As outlined in your lease, you must report these issues promptly. Be sure to notify us as soon as they arise to avoid any potential violations.

HOUSEKEEPING

When signing your lease for subsidized housing, you agreed to the specific requirements needed to keep your eligibility. Subsidized housing means that a portion of your rent is paid by the federal government, depending on your income. Although we understand there are many regulations associated with federally subsidized housing, these requirements are necessary in order to receive reduced rent. For instance, in Chippewa County, the fair market rent for a 3-bedroom unit is \$1,233/month.

Housekeeping is crucial and HUD has established standards for what is considered acceptable. These standards are outlined in your lease. When maintenance enters your home, they will assess and document its condition. If they find it below HUD standards, it will be reported, and you may receive notice of a follow-up housekeeping inspection. Sub-standard housekeeping will be a lease violation and you will be placed on biweekly housekeeping inspections. Three (3) violations within a calendar year could lead to the termination of your lease.

If you need assistance maintaining these standards, there are agencies and programs that may be able to help you. We strongly encourage you to inquire about eligibility for assistance. Any further questions, please contact our office and ask to speak with our Resource Manager, Jim.



REMINDERS!



- **Rent is DUE on May 1st.**
If rent is not paid by the end of day on May 5th, a \$10.00 late fee will be added to your account, along with an additional \$1.00 per day until payment is made.
- We do not accept cash payments. Acceptable forms of payment include a Personal Check, Cashier's Check, Money Order, or Online Payment.
- Our lobby doors are open to the public Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm. However, we are available for phone calls until 5:00pm.
- The office vestibule is open 24/7. You can pick up or drop off forms at any time.

Our office will be closed on Monday, May 26th for Memorial Day.



**SUBMIT YOUR RENTAL PAYMENT ONLINE
BY SCANNING THE QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE!**



STAFF DIRECTORY

Occupancy Specialist I - Senior Housing

jodi@saulthousing.com

Occupancy Specialist II - Family Housing

jeannine@saulthousing.com

Section 8/Resource Manager

jim@saulthousing.com

Accounts Payable/Receivable & Collections

allison@saulthousing.com

Administrative Assistant

melissa@saulthousing.com

Receptionist

chrissy@saulthousing.com

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Donn J. Riley, President

Jennifer Dunton, Vice-President

Jennifer LaBonte, Treasurer

Michael B. Winnick, Commissioner

Ancilla Lee, Resident Commissioner

Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at 12:00pm in our office, located on 608 Pine Street, Sault Ste. Marie, MI.

Meeting dates may be subject to change

OFFICE INFORMATION

P.O. Box 928 / 608 Pine St
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Phone: (906) 635-5841

Fax: (906) 635-9500

Website: www.saulthousing.com

Executive Director

Candy Seward-Farstad P.H.M.
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Deputy Director

Lauren Gamelin
lauren@saulthousing.com



Happy Spring!

I hope all is well with everyone! As always, things have been busy in our office. Over the past few months, we've been diligently updating our ACOP and policies in accordance with HUD's recent guidelines. We understand that these changes may be disruptive, and we want to reassure you that we are committed to working with all tenants to ensure clarity and understanding of the new policies.

- **Rent Due Date:** Rent is now due by the end of the day on the 5th of each month. The previous 3:00 p.m. deadline has been removed; however, late fees will still apply if rent is not paid by the end of the day on the 5th. This change will be reflected in a new Lease Addendum. Additionally, in compliance with HUD's latest ruling, PHAs must provide written notice to tenants facing eviction for non-payment of rent at least 30 days before initiating judicial eviction procedures. **Effective June 1st**, if rent remains unpaid by the end of the 5th day of the month, a 30-Day Notice of Intent to Cancel Lease (formerly a 14-Day Notice) will be issued. If payment is not received or arrangements are not made within the 30-day period, eviction proceedings will begin. The notice will only reflect past due rent.
- **Smoke-Free Policy:** Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)—including e-cigarettes, nicotine inhalers, and vaping devices—are now prohibited in public housing units, common areas, and outdoor spaces within 25 feet of housing and administrative buildings. The smoke-free policy continues to prohibit all tobacco products and any burning activities.
- **Pet Policy:** A \$25.00 pet waste removal fee will be charged per occurrence if pet waste is not removed in accordance with the policy. Pet owners are responsible for cleaning up after their animals and maintaining their homes and yards in a sanitary condition. Additionally, while tenants may have a visiting pet, it must be for short-term, day-only visits. Overnight stays or pet-sitting are not allowed.
- **Community Service Policy:** The Community Service Policy has been updated to include HUD's community service requirements and definitions.
- **HUD Update:** HUD has enacted the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA), which aims to provide more flexibility for tenants when reporting income, assets, and household changes. We are currently awaiting guidance from HUD on the implementation timeline and will update tenants as soon as more information is available.

These policy changes will take effect on June 1st. If you have any questions or need further clarification on any of the changes, please do not hesitate to contact our office. These updated policies are available for review and signature at the front desk and can also be accessed on our website at www.saulthousing.com.

To better accommodate tenants, we will also be on-site at Arlington Towne Apts. and Riverview Terrace on the following dates:

- **Arlington Towne Apts:** **Thursday, May 8, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.**
- **Riverview Terrace:** **Friday, May 9, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.**

Thank you,

Candy Seward-Farstad, PHM

Executive Director