

BRTI/Homestart BHA Public Housing Rent Training September 2013

ROLEPLAY #1: In the management office at the Alice Taylor development (federal public housing)

MANAGER: Hi, Ms. Paul. I was told you wanted to see me today. We had scheduled you for a private conference because you are behind on your rent. I understand today would be a better day for you.

TENANT: Yes, Ms. Kelley. Thanks for doing this today. The thing is, I don't think I should be behind on rent, or at least not as much as you say, and I want a chance to pay what I owe.

MANAGER: Why don't you think you owe what's on the notice? Here, see, I have the ledger. *[Pulls out document and shares it with tenant.]* Did you make some payments that haven't shown up yet? How did you pay? Unless I've got something showing that you've made some other payments, my hands are tied.

TENANT *[Looks at ledger.]* No, I don't have any other payments.

MANAGER: I can only make a manager's agreement with you if you owe less than \$1,000. The ledger says you owe BHA over \$1,200.

TENANT: What's a manager's agreement?

MANAGER: That's a repayment agreement done outside of court. I can still do a repayment agreement with you for this amount, but it would have to be in court.

TENANT: But last month, I came in with my daughter and told the woman at the front desk that my daughter wasn't working any more.

MANAGER: *[Looks in file, and then says with mild annoyance]* I don't have anything in the file about that. Did you give her anything, or get a receipt?

TENANT: It was that young white woman, kind of short, dark hair, glasses, friendly. I've seen her before. No, I didn't give her anything, but she said she'd let you know, and that my daughter should bring in the letter from work saying they let her go. I think my daughter brought in the letter since then. I have a copy here somewhere *[fishes in bag]*. Here it is.

MANAGER: I know who you mean; she's not here anymore. She didn't tell me about this, and I don't have anything before today to show BHA knew about this.

TENANT: Why not? I did what I was supposed to do and my daughter brought in the letter. Are you saying you don't have it?

MANAGER: It might be in the office somewhere; it's not in the file. I'll make a copy of the letter now. Let's see--today's the 12th. I'll need to have your daughter fill out a no-income form, and sign some other papers so we know she's not getting unemployment or other benefits.

TENANT: No problem—I'll ask her to come right in. How quickly can you re-do my rent?

MANAGER: If she does this right away and it checks out, we can drop your rent down next month. It looks like it would go from \$600/mo to \$200/mo. But in the meantime, I'll have to move this to the next step.

TENANT: What do you mean by that? Can't I just pay this off?

MANAGER: You'll get a 14-day notice of lease termination for nonpayment of rent and after that you'll get court papers. Hopefully you can come up with the money before the case is in court. If not, there may be some programs that can help you if the case has to go to court. Thanks for coming in.

TENANT: OK, that's it?

MANAGER: Yes. Have a good day.

Points to Make Through Role Play

--Importance of a Good Paper Trail

--What Should/Does Happen with a Reported Income Loss

--Getting Verifications Before a Change Can be Made

--Effective Date of Rent Changes (Look at BHA Lease & Training Materials)

--Out of Court Versus In-Court Agreements; Steps in the Process

--Importance of Bringing Your Papers to the Private Conference