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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NYCHA Finalizes Fees and Charges Following Review of Comments

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) today notified residents at its 344 developments that it is implementing a final schedule of proposed fees and charges that will offer substantial discounts to 82% of residents; elderly, disabled as well as residents who pay less than ceiling rent. The new fees and charges are based on an intensive review of 10,000 comments from residents.

The 20% discounts are a significant change from the originally proposed 10% parking fee discount only for seniors and the disabled and no discount for the appliance surcharge fee.

Responding to diminished federal funding and a growth in non-discretionary expenses, particularly utility costs, NYCHA will increase the appliance surcharge fee for the use of heavy-duty appliances installed by residents – specifically, air conditioners, freezers, dishwashers – and assess a new fee for washing machines. This modest increase, the first in more than a decade, will only partially offset the rising costs of utilities associated with the use of these appliances. In addition, fees for parking on NYCHA property will also increase from \$5 per year to \$75 per year, or \$6.25 per month. For all of these fees there will be a 20% discount for seniors, the disabled and residents who pay less than the ceiling rent.

“The discount ensures that NYCHA is protecting its most vulnerable residents from any undue financial burden. The overall increase in fees balances the needs of the residents with our commitment to preserve public housing” NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez stated.

Details of the revised plan will be distributed in a letter to residents in 179,315 NYCHA apartments.

It is expected that the fees and charges will allow NYCHA to generate approximately \$8 million in new revenue towards closing the budget gap. As a result of the discounts, NYCHA will realize approximately \$4 million less than originally planned.

“We must continue to reduce expenses and generate revenue to close an operating budget gap of \$168 million in 2006,” Douglas Apple, General Manager of the Authority today told members of the Council’s Committee on Housing and Buildings, Sub-Committee on Public Housing.

During the 30-day comment period, Chairman Hernandez and senior staff met with elected officials and NYCHA staff attended numerous tenant association and town hall meetings. The meetings allowed NYCHA to solicit input from residents, elected officials and stakeholders with an interest in public housing.

There are also new effective dates for the new fees and charges. The parking fees will go into effect on May 1. The appliance surcharge fee and charges for damaged items will be implemented starting June 1.

Information about the fees will be provided directly to all households and also be posted on the NYCHA website, in multiple languages, and published in the NYCHA Journal. Staff at developments will also be available to further explain or clarify the different fees and charges.

Charges for resident caused damages, last increased in 1994, are also being increased to reflect current costs. The policy to charge for replacing or repairing items that have been damaged by residents has been in place for more than 30 years and they are authorized by the NYCHA lease agreement. There will continue to be no charge for routine maintenance and service in NYCHA apartments.