

May 31, 2019

To: Press Release

From: Executive Director

RE: Marion Field Offices, Closings, Merger with Rutherford Field Office, and Timeline.

The Isothermal Planning and Development Commission (the Commission) manages a Public Housing Authority (the PHA) within Polk, Rutherford, McDowell and Cleveland Counties. The PHA manages the Housing Choice Voucher (the HCV) Program with 1408 Vouchers to serve citizens in the Region. The Commission serves these areas through the main offices in Rutherfordton and satellite offices in Shelby and Marion.

Recently, the Commission conducted an- Operational Assessment of the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Within this study, it was the conclusion of the report and the Board of Directors, that the Marion office, which serves the smallest number of families (**16%**), be merged with the Rutherford and Polk offices, in Rutherfordton, NC. As a result, the Commission, in working with the County of McDowell County, the Commissions host for this office space. The County has evaluated its space needs, specifically the office space currently being used by the PHA, and coupled with the Commissions concern for efficiency in delivering housing services for HCV constituents, and for other needs of the County, that currently needs, that we will be closing the Housing office in Marion.

The Commission we will be closing the Marion office effective July 1, 2019. The office and staff will become part of the Rutherford Field Offices at the Main Office Building at 111 West Court Street, Rutherfordton, NC. The Contact number for folks will be 828-287-2281. Further, the current staff of the Marion office will begin reporting to the Rutherford office and will also become part of the Rutherford/Polk/McDowell Housing Team.

The Commission and the PHA are working with the County, which has offered to house the Program in another space in McDowell County, to ensure that housing constituents needs, and other services provided by the Commission are available and accessible on a periodic and scheduled basis. In considering the best ways to serve our clients, landlords and citizens in McDowell County, the Commission and the County will be working to ensure several important objectives in serving the people of McDowell County. First, we will be Weighing the pros and cons of Recertifications being conducted by mail. Secondly, we are working to develop Bi-monthly briefing session held in the Marion/McDowell area in order to conduct eligibility reviews. Third, the Commission and the County will take into consideration, how to best Brief families and/or provide a "walk-in" day for clients in the area. Lastly, the Commission is Coordinating with McDowell County officials to determine where and When the new site(s) for McDowell County should be and gaining their input on operational hours to best serve folks. It is the Commissions intention to have these tasks and their outcomes to be completed by and ready for implementation by July 1, 2019. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact, Scott Dadson, Executive Director of the Commission at 828-287-2281.