



Affordable Housing in Ames

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 26.1 percent of Ames residents are below the poverty level but the cost of housing in Ames is 104.5 percent that of the national average. A two-bedroom apartment rents for approximately \$790/month, making it very expensive for those earning minimum wage (\$7.25/hour). Affordable housing in Ames is not easy to find for low income residents; many feel there is competition with Iowa State students for low-cost housing. One possibility for housing is Section 8; however, the current waiting list for those applying for Section 8 makes that difficult.

According to Wikipedia, Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937, often simply known as **Section 8**, “authorizes the payment of rental housing assistance to private landlords. It operates through several programs, the largest of which, the Housing Choice Voucher program, pays a large portion of the rents and utilities of about 2.1 million households. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development manages the Section 8 programs.”

In Story County, Section 8 is administered by the Central Iowa Regional Housing Authority (CIRHA), located in Grimes, Iowa. The staff at CIRHA receives 20-30 applications per day, and residents on the waiting list will wait at least one year and others may wait five years. According to information on the CIRHA website (www.cirhahome.org), once a family reaches the top of the waiting list, the family will be invited to an enrollment meeting. At the enrollment the family will complete paperwork to be certified for eligibility based on the family income and criminal history. *(The public housing law permits public housing agencies and providers of Section 8 and other federally assisted housing to deny housing to households if a member has certain kinds of criminal records. Individuals who have engaged in (1) any drug-related criminal activity; (2) any violent criminal activity; or (3) any other criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises may be denied public housing.)* CIRHA will then verify the information provided at the enrollment meeting to determine if the applicant is eligible. If eligible, the family will be invited to a briefing meeting where the family will receive a Housing Choice Voucher for rental assistance. Families are responsible for locating a unit that is eligible for the program, but they are given a list of landlords to contact. The family will pay rent to the landlord based on between 30 to 40 percent of the family’s gross monthly adjusted income. CIRHA will form a contract with the landlord to pay the difference directly to the landlord on behalf of the family.

Social Justice Contacts

ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

1-800-842-2243

STC Contact: Cynthia Shriver 292-6584

AMOS

Kathy Wipf 232-6232

APPALACHIA WAREHOUSE

2019 Pullman Street, Ames

STC Contact: Lynn Franco 232-0898

BIRTHRIGHT OF AMES

108 Hayward Ave., Suite 202, Ames

515-292-8414

STC Contact: Kathy Ridnour 232-1697

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAS

STC Contact: Sharon Jenkins 233-2570

EMERGENCY RESIDENCE PROJECT

Jamie Hamilton 233-2499

FOOD AT FIRST

516 Kellogg Ave., Ames

515-344-4357

STC Contact: Doreen Berg 956-3414

GOOD NEIGHBOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, INC.

3206 S. Duff, Ames

515-296-1449

STC Contact: Doreen Berg 956-3414

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF CENTRAL IOWA

515-232-8815

STC Contact: Alan Christy 231-8099

MEALS ON WHEELS

(Homeward)

1114 S. Duff, Ames

STC Contact: Cathy Kaspar 233-0517

OPERATION RICE BOWL

STC Contact: Cynthia Shriver 292-6584

PRISON MINISTRY

STC Contact: Ron Smith 382-5654

SAINT CECILIA SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

STC Contact: Mary Ross 232-5080

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

STC Garland Dahlke (515) 460-0403

The Social Justice Committee meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Sunroom. Everyone is welcome to attend.



...and you welcomed me

The Matthew 25 House is a local social justice outreach program for men who are now in the Story County Jail, the Curt Forbes Center or an Iowa Prison. It helps integrate them into a local church and the Ames Community. That local church commits to mentoring, supporting and befriending the resident for one year. All residents are screened and selected by the board and are required to work and pay a fixed monthly amount to cover rent, food and utilities. The Matthew 25 House is located at 330 South 2nd Street in Ames. It is completely supported through the generosity of local people, churches (including St. Cecilia) and businesses.

The second annual Bike 25 for the Matthew 25 House will be held on Saturday, August 25. Registration will begin at 9AM with the ride commencing at 10AM at the Story County Department of Human Services building (126 S. Kellogg, Ames, Iowa). For the \$25 cost, you will receive a t-shirt, a ride map and lunch. The 25-mile ride (alternate route is 15 miles) ends a couple of blocks away at the Matthew 25 House where the men of the house will serve all riders

a lunch. The home will be open for those who would like to take a tour. For more information, contact

R.J. Vidimos at

vidimosiowa@mchsi.com

or Terry Herrman at

therman@isunet.net

