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Housing Authority of the City of Asheville Announces Organizational Changes to Strengthen Long-Term Sustainability and Mission Delivery

Asheville, N.C. — April 7, 2026 — The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (HACA) today announced a series of organizational changes designed to address financial challenges, strengthen operational efficiency, and refocus resources on its core mission of providing safe, quality, and affordable housing.

Effective April 6, HACA is implementing a reduction in force affecting 34 employees, including team members across multiple departments, as roles are consolidated and certain functions are restructured. The reduction in force is expected to reduce annual operating costs by approximately $1.6 million.

As part of this restructuring, HACA will transition away from its involvement in the Positive Opportunities Develop Success (PODS) afterschool and summer programming. While these programs have served HACA resident families in recent years, they are not part of HACA's core housing mission and have required significant financial support to sustain, with approximately $500,000 in annual operating costs, ongoing program losses, and no identified long-term funding source. A total of 22 positions impacted by the reduction in force are tied to the PODS program.

HACA recognizes the importance of afterschool support for residents and is working with community partners to identify alternative options for residents. The organization is committed to minimizing disruption and supporting families as they transition to other available programs and resources.

"We know this change may be difficult for families and staff, and we do not take that lightly," said Ella Santos, HACA's Chief Executive Officer. "At the same time, we have a responsibility to be good stewards of our resources. By focusing more directly on our core housing mission, we can strengthen our ability to serve residents both now and in the future."

In addition to the positions connected to the PODS program, the reduction in force includes a limited number of roles across maintenance, resident services, and administrative functions, where responsibilities will be consolidated to improve efficiency and accountability. HACA does not anticipate any disruption to resident services. Essential functions, including property management, maintenance response, and housing assistance, will continue without interruption.

These operational changes come as HACA works to address a projected $500,000 budget shortfall for the current fiscal year, after drawing down approximately 76% of its reserves over the past two years to maintain stability. Across the country, housing authorities are facing similar pressures, with nearly 80% operating under Housing Assistance Payment funding shortfalls as federal funding has not kept pace with rising costs.

In recent months, HACA has taken a number of meaningful steps to close the gap, including implementing a hiring freeze, strengthening the management of turnover of its housing units, and focusing on reducing vacancy rates. While these measures have helped improve efficiency, they have not been enough to fully address the organization's financial shortfall.

"We've worked hard to make thoughtful operational improvements. However, there's a limit to what those adjustments alone can solve," said Santos. "At a certain point, you have to take a broader look at how the organization is structured and how resources are allocated."

Employees impacted by these changes are being notified directly and are receiving information about available support. HACA is committed to handling this transition thoughtfully and with respect for those affected.

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About HACA

The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (HACA) is dedicated to providing safe, quality, and affordable housing for individuals and families throughout the Asheville community. Established in 1940, HACA owns and manages public housing communities and administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program, helping more than 1,300 households access stable housing. Guided by its mission, HACA is focused on strengthening its core housing operations, improving efficiency, and ensuring the responsible stewardship of public resources while continuing to serve the evolving needs of the Asheville community. For more information, visit HACA.org.