



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

PALOMA AGUIRRE
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: May 5, 2026

03

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF BIANCCA BERRY AS HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TENANT COMMISSIONER AND APPROVE EBONY WRIGHT AS AN ALTERNATE TENANT COMMISSIONER (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

The Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (County Housing Authority) Board of Commissioners consist of the five members of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and two tenant commissioners. The tenant commissioners, as voting members of the County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, provides a formal mechanism for participant involvement in interpreting and establishing policies and procedures of housing programs administered by the County Housing Authority.

Today's action requests the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approve the appointment of Bianca Berry to fill the general tenant commissioner vacancy for the current term that expires May 31, 2026, and start a new term commencing June 1, 2026. Today's action further requests that the Board approve the appointment of Ebony Wright as an alternate tenant commissioner for the general seat who will be available to assume this seat should it become vacant during the appointed term. The purpose of the appointment of alternate tenant commissioner is to minimize the impact of unexpected vacancies on the administration of the County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. This action is in accordance with the California Health and Safety Code section 34290 (B).

This item supports the County of San Diego's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities by ensuring the voice of the client is included in administrative policy setting for rental assistance programs. In addition, this item supports the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness and the Housing for All Vision, by ensuring low-income residents have access to suitable living environments and by enhancing quality of life through decent and affordable housing.

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**RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Appoint Bianca Berry to serve as Housing Authority of the County of San Diego General Tenant Commissioner for a two-year term commencing on June 1, 2026.
2. Appoint Ebony Wright to serve as an alternate General Tenant Commissioner who may be appointed at the discretion of the Director or Deputy Director of the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego for a two-year term commencing on June 1, 2026.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (County Housing Authority) administers various rental subsidy programs funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) intended to assist very low-income families, the elderly, veterans experiencing homelessness, and persons with disabilities, afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Federal regulations require that at least 75% of newly admitted households must have an income at or below 30% of area median income (AMI) and up to 25% of newly admitted households may have an income up to 50% AMI.

The County Housing Authority incorporates transparency and open government in development of policy and budget through presentations to the Resident Advisory Board and involvement of Tenant Commissioners. Resident Advisory Board meetings are held throughout the year and facilitate discussion regarding housing needs within the community. Tenant Commissioners serve on the County Housing Authority’s Board of Commissioners, as required by law, and the County Housing Authority is committed to continuing efforts to provide rental assistance and advancing equitable access and opportunity for households served in these programs to live in safe and affordable housing.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today’s proposed actions support the County of San Diego Sustainability Goal #1 of engaging the community in meaningful ways, Sustainability Goal #2 of providing just and equitable access, and Sustainability #4 of protecting the health and well-being of everyone in the region. Engaging in the public creates intentional, collaborative community engagement opportunities that strengthen healthy, safe, and thriving communities. The inclusion of tenant commissioners brings a lived experience lens to the governing body of the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego when approving program activities such as the Public Housing Agency Plan, the annual budget requests for funding, changes in program administration, and implementation of housing programs. These programs serve to remove barriers from low-income families seeking to live in areas of greater economic opportunity. Equitable access to housing reduces the demand on community services which may lessen the overall environmental impact on the region.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (County Housing Authority) Recommended Budget. If approved, this request will result in costs and revenue of \$50 per diem compensation for each County Housing Authority

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Board of Commissioners meeting attended by the tenant commissioners in FY 2026-27, in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 34274. This per-diem compensation will result in total costs of approximately \$300. The funding source is federal funds provided for the County Housing Authority's program administration. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

If approved, today's request will have a positive impact on the business community as it supports the governance of the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego and programs that provide monthly rental payments to more than 4,000 private landlords.

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The Housing Authority of the County of San Diego (County Housing Authority) Board of Commissioners consists of the five members of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) and two tenant commissioners. The tenant commissioners, as voting members of the County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, provide a formal mechanism for participant involvement in the interpretation of policies and procedures of housing programs administered by the County Housing Authority.

The County Housing Authority administers the Housing Choice Voucher (or Section 8) program, the Public Housing program, and several rental assistance programs for special needs populations throughout the unincorporated areas of the County of San Diego, and 13 of the 18 cities within San Diego County. Through its programs, the County Housing Authority provides direct rental assistance to approximately 23,500 low-income individuals each month. Participants in these programs include working families, veterans, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

The County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners is the governing body of the County Housing Authority. As the governing body, the County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners is responsible for approving program activities, such as the Public Housing Authority Plan, the annual budget, requests for funding, changes in program administration, and implementation of new housing programs. The California Health and Safety Code Section 34290(b) outlines the appointment of tenant commissioners as follows:

- Two tenant commissioners shall be appointed.
- Tenant commissioners must be participants in either the Section 8/ Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing programs.
- At least one of the tenants shall be over 62 years of age.

The two tenant commissioner seats have alternating two-year terms. One seat (designated as the general tenant commissioner seat) has a term through May 31, 2026, and the second seat (designated as the senior tenant commissioner seat) has a term that ends on May 31, 2027.

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To engage interested candidates to serve as tenant commissioner, the County Housing Authority issued a recruitment announcement via U.S. mail to 10,180 participants, and via email bulletin to 7,647 Public Housing residents and Section 8 participants. The announcement was also posted on site and on the County Housing Authority website. The application documents were made available in the County Housing Authority's threshold languages of English, Spanish and Arabic and language services were offered in the County's threshold languages, including Spanish, Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Tagalog.

The recruitment for the tenant commissioner vacancies resulted in 17 applications. The top 13 qualified applicants were offered an interview. 12 of the 13 applicants participated in the interview process and were evaluated based on relevant "lived experience", pertinent knowledge of community engagement and social programs, and interest in serving the community. All appointed tenant commissioners and alternate tenant commissioners will be required to participate in onboarding training within six months of appointment.

Regular Appointment of Bianca Berry

Based on the interview, further evaluation, and background review, the County Housing Authority is recommending Bianca Berry regular appointment as tenant commissioner. Today's action requests that the Board approve the appointment of Bianca Berry to serve a two-year term for the general tenant commissioner seat, commencing on June 1, 2026.

Alternate Appointment of Ebony Wright

Tenant Commissioners must be current participants of the County Housing Authority. Occasionally, tenant commissioners are not able to complete their term of service, and the process of recruiting and appointing tenant commissioners can take several months. Appointing an alternate helps to ensure there are no extended vacancies. An alternate would complete the required training and certifications and be certified for elective appointment until the expiration of the current term.

Today's action also requests that the Board approve Ebony Wright as an alternate General Tenant Commissioner, who may be appointed, at the discretion of the Director or Deputy Director of the County Housing Authority, to complete the term of the general tenant commissioner seat if left vacant on or before May 31, 2027. Today's item supports the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness by providing stability to the administration of the County Housing Authority's rental assistance and voucher programs.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's actions support the County of San Diego's 2026-2031 Strategic Plan Initiatives of Sustainability (Economy and Resiliency), Equity (Health and Economic Opportunity), Empower (Transparency and Accountability), Community (Engagement, Quality of Life, Communications, and Partnership), and Justice (Environmental). The inclusion of tenant commissioners on the Housing Authority of the County of San Diego Board of Commissioners adds accountability in

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support of the programs that provide affordable housing opportunities for all low-income individuals in the region.

Respectfully submitted,



FOR

EBONY SHELTON
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)
N/A