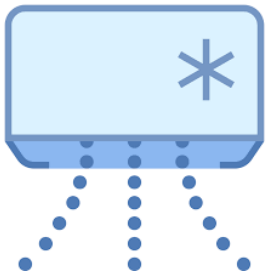
*Issue 3* *April-June 2019*

## Landlord Highlight: Samantha Creed

Samantha Creed has been a property manager at Community Housing Partners since 2012. She works tirelessly to help those in need of affordable housing, saying "The most rewarding part of my job is helping others. There is nothing like seeing the smile on a family's face the first time they see their home." Samantha goes above and beyond the requirements of her job in order to help community organizations like the Women's Resource Center in finding housing for families who are overcoming significant obstacles. She gives prompt, personal attention to her clients. She says, "My favorite thing to do is work. I know you're saying 'Wow, really?' but I really do love my job." In addition to her service to the New River Valley community, Samantha loves the beach and enjoys mud truck racing on the weekends! Thank you, Samantha, for everything you do!

## Renter Tips: Keeping Cool!



Renters who do not have air conditioning may be eligible for the Cooling Assistance Program through the Virginia Department of Social Services. The Cooling Assistance Program helps with cooling equipment repairs or purchases or with payment of electric bills in order to operate air conditioning. In order to receive assistance, renters must be below median income for their family size and locality, and have a person who is disabled, elderly, or under age 6 living in the home. The Cooling Assistance Program is available June 15 through August 15.

For more information or to apply, tenants can go to their local Department of Social Services, call 855-635-4370, or apply online at: https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/.

## Renters Education Workshops

Free workshop for landlords and renters. Refreshments & door prize! Call 540-633-5133 for more info or to register.

**RADFORD: NRCA, 1093 E. Main Street**
Tuesday, April 30- 3:00 PM

**FLOYD: NRCA, 120 Epperly Mill Road**
Tuesday, April 30 -3:00 pm
Thursday, May 9 -2:00 pm
Thursday, May 30 -2:00 pm

**GILES: Community Ctr, 1410 Wenonah Ave, Pearisburg**
Friday, May 10- 11:30 AM
Friday, May 24- 11:30 AM
Friday, June 7- 11:30 AM
Friday, June 28- 11:30 AM

**PULASKI: Pulaski Library, 60 3rd St NW, Pulaski**
Friday, April 26 -11:00 am
Tuesday, May 7 -11:00 am
Tuesday, May 14 -5:00 pm
Monday, June 3 -11:00 am
Thursday, June 13 -5:00 pm

http://newrivercommunityaction.org/renter-education/

## Resources

**New River Valley Housing Partnership Rehousing Resources:**
http://www.nrvhp.com/

**Housing & Domestic Violence:**
Women's Resource Center, 540-639-1123
http://www.wrcnrv.org

**Homelessness Prevention:**
New River Community Action, 540-633-5133
http://newrivercommunityaction.org/

# Changes to Virginia Residential Landlord-Tenant Act

On July 1, 2019, there will be several changes to the Virginia Landlord-Tenant Act. Information for Landlords:

**Right of Redemption:** Currently, tenants have until the court date to pay rent arrears and continue to use the property. Under the new law, tenants can pay the arrears via money order, cashier's check, or certified check up to two business days before the scheduled eviction.
*Many local landlords already accept payment up to the writ of possession.*

**Writs of Possession:** Currently, once the court has ruled in favor of a landlord, the landlord may file a writ of possession to evict a tenant within one year from the date of judgment. Effective July 1, the writ of possession will become a writ of eviction and may only be issued within 180 days of the judgment. In addition, if the sheriff fails to execute the writ of eviction within 30 days, then the writ will be void. Lastly, a writ will not be issued when a landlord has entered a new lease agreement with the tenant following entry of the judgment.

**Summons for Unlawful Detainer (UD):** Virginia code specifies that an unlawful detainer case be heard 21 days or as soon as possible after filing. As of July 1, new law states that cases be heard 21 days from filing but no later than 30 days. The new law requires that landlords amend the UD to include all amounts due through the court date. The court may dismiss a subsequent UD filed for rent that could have been included in the first UD action. The new code also requires that landlords give the court a copy of the termination notice issued to the tenant.

**Lease Terms:** Current law requires that if there is no written lease agreement between a landlord and tenant, then the tenant is required to pay rent equal to the fair market value of the property. When new laws go into effect July 1, the Virginia Residential Landlord Tenant Act (VRLTA) will require a landlord to offer tenants a written lease agreement. However, when no written lease is given, the new law states that the term is 12 months and rent will be paid in 12 equal payments of the fair market value. In addition, a late fee will be owed if rent is not paid by the 5th of the month, and the landlord may collect a security deposit.

Further information may be found through Virginia Legal Aid: https://www.valegalaid.org/resource/7-new-laws-that-are-more-fair-favorable-friendly-to-tenants-pdf-document?ref=see6N

Relevant section of the Code of Virginia: https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodepopularnames/virginia-residential-landlord-and-tenant-act/