

# A Better Benning 2021

## Housing 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter

	What is the Problem?	Housing	Status
1	<p>Privatized Housing Transparency &amp; Accountability for On-Post Residents <b>(A Better Benning Issue)</b></p> <p>Housing maintenance and management's closed-loop system has led to poor customer service, lack of quality control, and zero third-party oversight, and accountability. Despite current initiatives, and partnerships, the system remains broken and ineffective. Tenants continue to be frustrated with the quality of maintenance, inability to track work orders in real time, timely and appropriate resolution procedures. The current close-loop system has a direct and immediate impact negative impact on quality of life, retention and morale for Soldiers and family members residing on post.</p>	<p>The Villages of Benning has Active Building, our database for all residents to enter their work orders and to track them from beginning to end. All residents are sent the link to sign up for this when they move in. We also try and get residents to sign up for this quarterly.</p> <p>Active Building is our work order database which allows for all work orders to be tracked and reviewed by the resident at any time. Routine work orders can also be entered using this system. Urgent and Emergency work orders need to be called in directly to our maintenance hotline.</p> <p>We have the 3 Pillars of Housing Advocacy in place with our RCI and Garrison partners. The first of these is to follow up directly with the Villages of Benning as stated below:</p> <p>The Villages of Benning has its own Resident Resolution Process. See attached. This process starts with the 24 hour maintenance hotline. If the resident is not satisfied they can request to review their work orders with the Village Manager and Supervisor. If their issue is still not resolved, they can contact our Resident Engagement Manager. If they require further assistance, they can contact the Villages of Benning Leadership, the Assistant Community Director and the Community Director.</p> <p>Our RCI partners and the Garrison provide oversight to the Villages of Benning. If residents are still not satisfied with the results of the Villages of Benning Resident Resolution Process, they can then request our RCI partners to review the work orders with them.</p> <p>If they are still not satisfied, they can request their work orders be reviewed with their COC, then after this and the Garrison Commander and CSM.</p>	Ongoing
2	<p>Maintenance Operating Procedures and The Housing - Installation Relationship</p> <p>Currently the Fort Benning Community suffers from long wait time, faulty workmanship, and a lack of transparency regarding maintenance and repairs for on-post housing. This issue is compounded by a lack of Soldier/family advocacy,</p>	<p>See our responses below to each of the recommendations:</p> <p>In regards to being behind on work orders, we are in the process of establishing a plan to get these caught up.</p>	Closed

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<p>and Soldier/family resources and knowledge on the part of the installation. On the issue with housing, Soldiers and family are having work orders "lost" in the system, required repairs are not addressed promptly, with non-existent work quality control from the installation, and Soldiers are not being properly armed with the legal knowledge and resources to properly combat housing issues. Additionally, information is failing to reach spouses, and there is no "liaison" or advocate for the SM and their family to support them and uphold standards expected of on-post housing. These issues detour Soldiers and family from living on post and drive down the quality of life for those that do. Initiatives to improve the current situation has been hampered by antiquated or non-existent digital infrastructure and a lack of dynamic plan to address both sides of the issue.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. At the time a resident calls in a work order, if it is a routine work order, we are advising the time frame. At present, we are expecting a 60 - 70 day time frame.</li><li>2. For all routine service requests, we have each of the Village Offices calling residents to advise them of the expectation of the time frame for this, along with a follow up call a few weeks after.</li></ol> <p>In regards to quality of workmanship, we have instituted internal maintenance training classes twice a month. We have also partnered with Columbus Tech to be able to have 14 of our maintenance staff to go through the CAMT Course, Certified Apartment Maintenance Technician. This class is 270 hours of hands on training in plumbing, electrical, drywall, etc. This class starts the first week in May and runs through September.</p> <p>In regards to work orders getting lost in the system, no work orders can be deleted from our system, as no one on site has the "user rights" to delete a work order.</p> <p>In regards to quality control, the following is done:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To ensure the work is done to your satisfaction, when the work order is complete, we ask that the resident sign their name.</li><li>2. Each Village Office calls back 20% of the completed work orders for quality control to measure the resident satisfaction. If additional work is needed, the office will send a maintenance technician back out to redo whatever is needed.</li><li>3. Each completed work order generates a Delighted Survey for all residents to complete to record their satisfaction. If a survey is received showing dissatisfaction, the Village Office calls the resident to follow up. If additional work is needed, the office will send a maintenance technician back out to redo whatever is needed.</li><li>4. Our RCI Partners all call back 100% of urgent and emergency work orders to measure resident satisfaction. If additional work is needed, the office will send a maintenance technician back out to redo whatever is needed.</li></ol>	
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		<p>1. On post residents should be allowed to fix maintenance issues by directly contacting an off-post vendor/contractor (from pre-approved list). All work orders need to be completed by Villages of Benning personnel. All vendor work needs to be coordinated, supervised and inspected through the Villages of Benning staff.</p> <p>2. Digital Infrastructure Improved</p> <p>a) Work orders should have confirmation #'s / Progress tracker (Think Domino's Pizza Tracker). Work orders for all residents can be tracked by utilizing our Active Building database. This database lists all work orders for the resident and updated notes as to the status of the work order.</p> <p>c) Clear / easily accessible check list of resident vs. housing responsibilities. These are outlined in both the lease and the RRG (Resident Responsibility Guide). Note this will</p> <p>d) Create ability to schedule maintenance online/thru app. Work orders can be scheduled through Active Building, by calling the 24 hour Maintenance Hotline or by contacting their respective Community Management Office.</p> <p>Installation 1. New incomer brief format. Separate spouse only brief. Maximize info distribution. The Villages of Benning has a separate Newcomer Brief. We changed this to virtual when COVID first hit, and continue to hold this bi-monthly. We do need assistance in getting the word out.</p> <p>2. JAG "class" on housing rights for on post resident (available on-line, taught at both newcomer briefs).</p> <p>3. Establish soldier/family liaison/advocate (actual job, not additional duty) to support on post residents.</p> <p>4. Create digital infrastructure to maximize proliferation of info.</p>	
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3	<p>Bulk trash pickup</p> <p>Bulk trash is now only once a month. What is all our BAH going towards?</p>	<p>BAH is allotted for rent and utilities. Community amenities are provided by The Villages of Benning.</p> <p>The Villages of Benning is looking into the feasibility of bringing back bulk trash twice a month. We also met with MWR and are in the process of identifying other options to dispose of bulk trash.</p>	Closed
4	<p>Blue Recycling containers</p> <p>We have blue recycling containers for no reason. Recycling does not get picked up. Cannot use blue containers for anything.</p>	<p>Recycling is a base program. The Villages of Benning met with John Strange and MWR to assist with clarifying what can be recycled and where. We will assist in getting the word out to our residents.</p>	Closed
5	<p>Comprehensive recycling and accessibility</p> <p>Recently arrived at Benning to see our blue bins are unused and the recycling program relies on residents to drive items to recycling trailers on post. I take my recycling, weekly, to these trailers but there is still no option for glass or batteries. I know neighbors that don't participate as they don't believe the Army/GA recycles the items in the trailers. When so many products for purchase in PX and Commissary are packaged in recyclable material there should be better options for disposal and reuse.</p>	<p>Recycling is actually a base program. The Villages of Benning met with John Strange and MWR to assist with clarifying what can be recycled and where. We will assist in getting the word out to our residents.</p>	Ongoing
6	<p>Full BAH taken away for housing</p> <p>I pay more for the same house just because I am a higher rank than some of our neighbors. Husband and wife, with no kids, gets the same house as we do with 2 adults and 2 kids. They pay E6 BAH and I pay all my E7 BAH. Why do I pay more BAH for the same house and services?</p>	<p>BAH is a stipend that is provided for Military Members to pay for the cost of their housing, both off and on post. If you live on post, the rent shall be adjusted by the same amount as such senior service member's BAH is or changes at any time during the term of the Lease Agreement.</p> <p>The Full BAH areas are designated by rank band. Full BAH areas for E6 - E8 are available. The differences between the rates are as follows: E6 with dependent \$1554. E7 with dependent \$1569. E8 with dependent \$1605.</p>	Closed

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		The Villages of Benning offers homes at Full BAH and homes in Flat Rate areas, so each family has the option of where on post they want to reside and how much they want to pay. Note wait times may vary in both full BAH and Flat Rate areas.	
7	<p>Dead plants in front yard</p> <p>We have half dead bushes in our front area we are responsible for. They were dead when we moved in. Housing tells us that if we remove them, we would have to pay to replace them when we move.</p>	<p>Yards are addressed at each Turn. If you moved in with dead plants, this was an oversight. Please contact your Village Office and we will have the dead plants removed and new ones installed.</p> <p>Once a resident takes possession of their home, the landscaping is their responsibility.</p> <p>Mainscape, our landscaper, will perform minor landscaping spruce ups for a nominal fee. If you wish to inquire about this, please contact your Village Office.</p>	Closed
8	<p>Please clean and fix my gutters. I submitted a work order almost 6 months ago. I've been told multiple times the WO is being forwarded to supervisors. I even received a personal call saying someone would come out to inspect, that was over 3 months ago. I'm convinced this is being written on a sticky note a lost every time I call for a status.</p>	<p>The Villages of Benning is still experiencing a backlog of work orders. We are working on a plan to get caught up.</p> <p>Gutter cleaning is performed as needed. Work orders can be submitted through Active Building, or by calling our 24-Hour Maintenance Hotline.</p> <p>For any water leaks, these are considered urgent/emergency work orders. Please immediately call using the 24-Hour Maintenance Hotline to report water leaks.</p>	Closed
9	<p>Housing continues to tape warnings on people's doors for their front mulch not being the correct color. They send emails telling people to remove all rocks from the front of the house when we didn't put the rocks there in the first place. All the while work orders are not being done and they are being lied about. I received an email saying our work order was completed but on the day it was said to be completed no one came to the house they just said they did.</p>	<p>All water issues and suspected mold issues are considered urgent/emergency work orders and should be addressed as such. If this is has not happened, please contact the 24 hour Maintenance Hotline and/or your Village Office and we will address immediately.</p> <p>In regards to quality of workmanship, we have instituted internal maintenance training classes twice a month. We have also partnered with Columbus Tech to be able to have our maintenance staff to go through the Certified Apartment Maintenance Technician. This class is 270 hours of hands on training in</p>	Closed

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		<p>plumbing, electrical, drywall, etc. This class starts the first week in May and runs through September.</p> <p>In regards to appliances, the Villages of Benning purchases new appliances when needed. If an appliance cannot be properly repaired, a new one is ordered. If an appliance is just old, these are assessed at the Turn and are replaced as needed by our In House Turn Team.</p>	
10	<p>We have reported mold over three times in our house along with other issues, all the Villages of Benning does is use paint to cover up the mold rather than actually fixing the issue. We have a crack in our ceiling, a dishwasher that won't work consistently, a broken light that was reported in December, and an outside water spout that will not work that was reported back in November.</p>	<p>All suspected mold issues are considered urgent/emergency work orders and should be addressed as such. If this is has not happened, please contact the 24 hour Maintenance Hotline and/or your Village Office and we will address immediately.</p> <p>The Villages of Benning is working on a plan to get caught up on work orders.</p>	Closed
11	<p>As a non-pet Family it would be so nice to have houses that were pet free houses. Resident's homes with pets are not monitored periodically, and in addition many residents don't even have their pets registered. A deep cleaning must be required and yard fixing in many cases too, at move out.</p>	<p>Families are required per the Housing and Garrison policy to register their pets prior to bringing a pet to the home. If you are aware of a family with an unregistered pet, please contact your management office to address. The Villages of Benning requires all families to return their home in the condition it was given to them in to include the yards. All homes undergo the BOM process after move out and require our stamp of approval and the Army "Pass" stamp of approval prior to moving a resident in.</p> <p>If you moved in and have an issue due to pets, please contact your Village Office and we will come out and inspect and have an additional cleaning performed until the home is to your satisfaction.</p>	Closed
12	<p>Housing In general. The way house calls are handled with little to no education on anything within the houses i.e Electrical, HVAC, water damage etc. Also, Playgrounds within neighborhoods they should absolutely be updated to newer ones as these older ones are dangerous with parts that are broken and even finding shards of glass in mulch or previous poles for the fencing still in ground.</p>	<p>All water issues and suspected mold issues are considered urgent/emergency work orders and should be addressed as such. If this is has not happened, please contact the 24 hour Maintenance Hotline and/or your Village Office and we will address immediately.</p> <p>In regards to quality of workmanship, we have instituted internal maintenance training classes twice a month. We have also partnered with Columbus Tech to be able to have our maintenance staff to go through the Certified Apartment Maintenance Technician. This class is 270 hours of hands on training in</p>	Closed

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13	<p>Enforcement of rules is lacking big time in Custer Village, landscaping (mulch color, weeds, etc), pets unleashed, pets in playgrounds, toddlers playing without supervision, etc. In addition most yards are dirt. The standard followed on main post would be appreciated in Custer.</p>	<p>All neighborhood Village Offices are performing property drives twice a week. If you have any neighborhood concerns, please contact your Village Office and we will discreetly address your concerns in the neighborhood.</p>	Closed