

KATHLEEN R. BERK NAMED AS VSHA'S NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board of the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) announced today the appointment of Kathleen R. Berk for the position of Executive Director. Berk will assume her new role on June 1st. Richard M. Williams who joined the Housing Authority in July 1974 and has led the agency as Executive Director since 1984, will retire at the end of July. Berk, a native Vermonter, joined the Authority in 1988 and held a variety of positions serving as Director of Housing Program Administration since 1991.

"The VSHA Board of Commissioners are pleased to make this appointment as Berk has been a long-time dedicated housing professional and is well respected in the housing community." noted Caprice Hover, Chair of the VSHA Board of Commissioners.

Williams further noted "I too am pleased that Berk will take over the reins of the agency. Having worked with her throughout her tenure here at VSHA, she is the most capable and qualified individual for the job. I will miss the Authority and its good work, but I know I leave VSHA in good hands."



"VSHA has just recently completed a vision for the Agency for the next three years and I look forward to working with the Board and our staff to achieve that vision and continuing our mission -- to promote and expand the supply of affordable rental and homeownership opportunities on a statewide basis," Berk said.

As Director of Housing Program Administration, Berk was responsible for planning and development of new programs, grant writing and policy development. She is responsible for a staff of 32 professionals who collectively, successfully administer many diverse, complex housing programs throughout all of Vermont.

As an important member of the housing community in Vermont, Berk is committed to responding to the ever-changing needs of low-income Vermonters, working in partnership with Vermont's housing agencies and social service providers to develop effective long-term housing solutions – this important work is critical as we work together to assist Vermonters in the months ahead to recover from the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

VSHA, established in 1968, has the distinction of being the first statewide housing authority in the country. Founded by an act of the state Legislature, the Authority was given the charge to improve housing conditions and expand housing opportunities for families of very low and moderate income. Today VSHA serves over 8500 families and is active in every community in the state.

VSHA has an annual operating budget of more than \$66 million dollars and administers a host of federal rental assistance programs.

Most recently, VSHA successfully completed the administration of a \$25 million-dollar Rental Assistance Program funded by the Cares Relief Act and will be launching a new program – VT Emergency Rental Assistance Program (VERAP) on April 5th with a \$110 million dollars received under the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act and Emergency Rental Assistance Act.