

## **Murfreesboro Newcomer Kelly Lawton Joins Murfreesboro Housing Authority as Housing Choice Voucher Program Director**



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Like many others, Kelly Lawton recently moved to Murfreesboro. Originally from upstate New York, Lawton comes to our city by way of Missouri and Arizona. She has worked in the housing industry for more than 27 years.

Lawton’s first visit to Murfreesboro was a business trip, performing a routine audit with the Murfreesboro Housing Authority (MHA).

“It immediately just felt like home, being here,” Lawton says about her first visit. Soon after, an opening as the MHA’s Housing Choice Voucher Director drew Lawton here permanently.

Now, she leads a team of five MHA employees whose primary purpose is to help people in this area find affordable housing.

“We’re excited to have Kelly join the Murfreesboro Housing Authority’s management team,” said Thomas Rowe, MHA’s Chief Executive Officer. “We look forward to her contributions as she works to improve the Housing Choice Voucher Program, which helps residents of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County find affordable housing.”

The cost of housing in Murfreesboro and middle Tennessee shot up dramatically over the past several years.

“It’s harder than ever for people to find and afford a place to live,” Lawton says. “Our inventory is really low in Murfreesboro, so our team is working hard to recruit more landlords to join our program.”

The Murfreesboro Housing Authority receives funding from the United States Housing and Urban Development, and in turn, administers that funding to assist people with their rent.

“We want more landlords for our renters,” she said. “Our goal is to provide quality renters and a consistent source of funding for area landlords.

“I’m really hoping to make a difference here,” she says. “Homelessness is an epidemic and people have to scramble to find housing. We want to be a partner to help both individuals and families, and landlords.”

Kelly says she is always looking for ways to streamline the MHA’s processes and be more efficient.

“We have a lot to offer, and our door is open to work with property owners and citizens,” she said.