

PART I: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

4-I.A. OVERVIEW

This part describes the PHA policies for making applications available, accepting applications making preliminary determinations of eligibility, and the placement of applicants on the waiting list. This part also describes the PHA's obligation to ensure the accessibility of the application process to elderly persons, people with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency (LEP).

4-I.B. APPLYING FOR ASSISTANCE [HCV GB, pp. 4-11 – 4-16, Notice PIH 2009-36]

Any family that wishes to receive HCV assistance must apply for admission to the program. HUD permits the PHA to determine the format and content of HCV applications, as well how such applications will be made available to interested families and how applications will be accepted by the PHA. The PHA must include Form HUD-92006, Supplement to Application for Federally Assisted Housing, as part of the PHA's application.

PHA Policy

Depending upon the length of time that applicants may need to wait to receive assistance, the PHA may use a one- or two-step application process.

A one-step process will be used when it is expected that a family will be selected from the waiting list within 60 days of the date of application. At application, the family must provide all of the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance.

A two-step process will be used when it is expected that a family will not be selected from the waiting list for at least 60 days from the date of application. Under the two-step application process, the PHA initially will require families to provide only the information needed to make an initial assessment of the family's eligibility, and to determine the family's placement on the waiting list. The family will be required to provide all of the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance when the family is selected from the waiting list.

~~Waitlist a~~Applications will only be received through the online waitlist application process unless there is a request for a reasonable accommodation to apply with a hard copy or for targeted preferences. the household is applying through the special waitlists for homeless households or RAD-PBV or other PBV eligible tenants. An exception will be made in cases of the need for a reasonable accommodation. Applications must be complete in order to be accepted by the PHA for processing. If an application is incomplete, the PHA will notify the family of the additional information required.

4-I.C. ACCESSIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Elderly and Disabled Populations [24 CFR 8 and HCV GB, pp. 4-11 – 4-13]

The PHA must take steps to ensure that the application process is accessible to those people who might have difficulty complying with the normal, standard PHA application process. This could include people with disabilities, certain elderly individuals, as well as persons with limited

English proficiency (LEP). The PHA must provide reasonable accommodation to the needs of individuals with disabilities. The application-taking facility and the application process must be fully accessible, or the PHA must provide an alternate approach that provides full access to the application process. Chapter 2 provides a full discussion of the PHA's policies related to providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

Limited English Proficiency

PHAs are required to take reasonable steps to ensure equal access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency [24 CFR 1]. Chapter 2 provides a full discussion on the PHA's policies related to ensuring access to people with limited English proficiency (LEP).

4-I.D. PLACEMENT ON THE WAITING LIST

The PHA must review each complete application received and make a preliminary assessment of the family's eligibility. The PHA must accept applications from families for whom the list is open unless there is good cause for not accepting the application (such as denial of assistance) for the grounds stated in the regulations [24 CFR 982.206(b)(2)]. Where the family is determined to be ineligible, the PHA must notify the family in writing [24 CFR 982.201(f)]. Where the family is not determined to be ineligible, the family will be placed on a waiting list of applicants.

No applicant has a right or entitlement to be listed on the waiting list, or to any particular position on the waiting list [24 CFR 982.202(c)].

Ineligible for Placement on the Waiting List

PHA Policy

If the PHA can determine from the information provided that a family is ineligible, the family will not be placed on the waiting list. Where a family is determined to be ineligible, the PHA will send written notification of the ineligibility determination within 10 business days of receiving a complete application. The notice will specify the reasons for ineligibility, and will inform the family of its right to request an informal review and explain the process for doing so (see Chapter 16).

~~Eligible-Selected~~ for Placement on the Waiting List

PHA Policy

~~The PHA will follow the process in Section 4.III. A to select applicants to be placed on the waitlist.~~

~~The PHA will send written notification ~~of~~ to all applicants to inform the applicant if they were selected to be on the waitlist or if they were not selected to be on the waitlist. the preliminary eligibility determination within 10 business 30 days of receiving a complete closing application closing the waiting list.-~~

Placement on the waiting list does not indicate that the family is, in fact, eligible for assistance. A final determination of eligibility will be made when the family is selected from the waiting list.

~~Applicants will be placed on the waiting list according to any preference(s) for which they qualify, and the date and time their complete application is received by the PHA.~~

~~Other applicants will be placed on the waiting list based on lottery selection. AAHC will limit the number of applicants to be placed on the waiting list to the estimated number of applicants necessary to fill anticipated openings for one year~~

PART II: MANAGING THE WAITING LIST

4-II.A. OVERVIEW

The PHA must have policies regarding various aspects of organizing and managing the waiting list of applicant families. This includes opening the list to new applicants, closing the list to new applicants, notifying the public of waiting list openings and closings, updating waiting list information, purging the list of families that are no longer interested in or eligible for assistance, as well as conducting outreach to ensure a sufficient number of applicants.

In addition, HUD imposes requirements on how a PHA may structure its waiting list and how families must be treated if they apply for assistance from a PHA that administers more than one assisted housing program.

4-II.B. ORGANIZATION OF THE WAITING LIST [24 CFR 982.204 and 205]

The PHA's HCV waiting list must be organized in such a manner to allow the PHA to accurately identify and select families for assistance in the proper order, according to the admissions policies described in this plan.

The waiting list must contain the following information for each applicant listed:

1. Applicant name;
2. Family unit size;
3. Date and time of application;
4. Qualification for any local preference;
5. Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household.

HUD requires the PHA to maintain a single waiting list for the HCV program unless it serves more than one county or municipality. Such PHAs are permitted, but not required, to maintain a separate waiting list for each county or municipality served.

PHA Policy

The PHA will maintain a single waiting list for the HCV program.

HUD directs that a family that applies for assistance from the HCV program must be offered the opportunity to be placed on the waiting list for any public housing, project-based voucher or moderate rehabilitation program the PHA operates if 1) the other programs' waiting lists are open, and 2) the family is qualified for the other programs.

HUD permits, but does not require, that PHAs maintain a single merged waiting list for their public housing, Section 8, and other subsidized housing programs.

A family's decision to apply for, receive, or refuse other housing assistance must not affect the family's placement on the HCV waiting list, or any preferences for which the family may qualify.

PHA Policy

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The PHA will not merge the HCV waiting list with the waiting list for any other program the PHA operates.

The AAHC will maintain ~~at least 6~~ the following waitlists:

- 1) Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) tenant based waitlist which will not be merged with any other waitlist. Within the Housing Choice Voucher waitlist, the PHA will track targeted funding and preferences for:

 - A) Non-Elderly Disabled
 - B) Non-Elderly Disabled Mainstream
 - C) Family Unification Program
 - D) VASH
 - E) Homeless/Involuntarily Displaced
 - F) Existing PBV, VASH and RAD PBV tenants that are eligible for an HCV. The AAHC must offer any family in a PBV or RAD PBV unit that terminates its tenancy any time after the first year of occupancy the opportunity for continued tenant based assistance with an HCV if HCV's are available. The VA may periodically determine that a VASH tenant no longer needs VA supportive services and may request an HCV to open up a VASH voucher for another homeless veteran.
 - ~~A separate waitlist will be established for this purpose that includes all 3 of these programs, and it will be maintained in date and time order.~~

- 2) Project-based voucher waitlist for each PBV property not owned by the AAHC that has requested a separate waitlist
- 3) Public Housing/Project Based Voucher waitlist for the AAHC's RAD and any other AAHC project-based vouchers (including public housing units that will be converting to PBV under RAD)
 - This waitlist is currently administered through the ACOP and once the AAHC no longer has any public housing units, it will become the PBV waitlist administered through the Administrative Plan
 - ~~The PHA will maintain an open waitlist for those meeting the homeless/involuntarily displaced preference.~~
 - ~~The PHA will maintain an open waitlist for VASH eligible tenants~~

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4-II.C. OPENING AND CLOSING THE WAITING LIST [24 CFR 982.206]

Closing the Waiting List

A PHA is permitted to close the waiting list if it has an adequate pool of families to use its available HCV assistance. Alternatively, the PHA may elect to continue to accept applications only from certain categories of families that meet particular preferences or funding criteria.

PHA Policy

~~The PHA will close the waiting list when the estimated waiting period for housing assistance for applicants on the list reaches 24 months for the most current applicants.~~

Where the PHA has particular preferences or funding criteria that require a specific category of family, the PHA may elect to continue to accept applications from these applicants while closing the waiting list to others.

Reopening the Waiting List

If the waiting list has been closed, it cannot be reopened until the PHA publishes a notice in local newspapers of general circulation, minority media, and other suitable media outlets. The notice must comply with HUD fair housing requirements and must specify who may apply, and where and when applications will be received.

PHA Policy

The PHA will announce the reopening of the waiting list at least 10 business days prior to the date applications will first be accepted. If the list is only being reopened for certain categories of families, this information will be contained in the notice.

The PHA will give public notice by publishing the relevant information in suitable media outlets, including local minority publications.

4-II.D. FAMILY OUTREACH [HCV GB, pp. 4-2 to 4-4]

The PHA must conduct outreach as necessary to ensure that the PHA has a sufficient number of applicants on the waiting list to use the HCV resources it has been allotted.

Because HUD requires the PHA to admit a specified percentage of extremely low-income families to the program (see Chapter 4, Part III), the PHA may need to conduct special outreach to ensure that an adequate number of such families apply for assistance [HCV GB, p. 4-20 to 4-21].

PHA outreach efforts must comply with fair housing requirements. This includes:

1. Analyzing the housing market area and the populations currently being served to identify underserved populations
2. Ensuring that outreach efforts are targeted to media outlets that reach eligible populations that are underrepresented in the program
3. Avoiding outreach efforts that prefer or exclude people who are members of a protected class

PHA outreach efforts must be designed to inform qualified families about the availability of assistance under the program. These efforts may include, as needed, any of the following activities:

4. Submitting press releases to local newspapers, including minority newspapers
5. Developing informational materials and flyers to distribute to other agencies
6. Providing application forms to other public and private agencies that serve the low income population
7. Developing partnerships with other organizations that serve similar populations, including agencies that provide services for persons with disabilities

PHA Policy

The PHA will monitor the characteristics of the population being served and the characteristics of the population as a whole in the PHA's jurisdiction. Targeted outreach efforts will be undertaken if a comparison suggests that certain populations are being underserved.

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4-II.E. REPORTING CHANGES IN FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

PHA Policy

While the family is on the waiting list, the family must immediately inform the PHA of changes in contact information, including current residence, mailing address, and phone number. The changes must be submitted in writing. Once the family can make changes online, the changes must be made electronically, except in cases of reasonable accommodation.

4-II.F. UPDATING THE WAITING LIST [24 CFR 982.204]

HUD requires the PHA to establish policies to use when removing applicant names from the waiting list.

Purging the Waiting List

The decision to withdraw an applicant family that includes a person with disabilities from the waiting list is subject to reasonable accommodation. If the applicant did not respond to a PHA request for information or updates, and the PHA determines that the family did not respond because of the family member's disability, the PHA must reinstate the applicant family to their former position on the waiting list [24 CFR 982.204(c)(2)].

PHA Policy

With electronic wait list processing, the PHA will not conduct purges of the waiting lists. Families selected for placement on the waiting list will be notified of their responsibility to update their information on an ongoing basis.

Removal from the Waiting List

PHA Policy

If at any time an applicant family is on the waiting list, the PHA determines that the family is not eligible for assistance (see Chapter 3), the family will be removed from the waiting list.

If a family is removed from the waiting list because the PHA has determined the family is not eligible for assistance, a notice will be sent to the family's address of record as well as to any alternate address provided on the initial application. The notice will state the reasons the family was removed from the waiting list and will inform the family how to request an informal review regarding the PHA's decision (see Chapter 16) [24 CFR 982.201(f)].

PART III: SELECTION FOR HCV ASSISTANCE

4-III.A. OVERVIEW

As vouchers become available, families on the waiting list must be selected for assistance in accordance with the policies described in this part.

The order in which families are selected from the waiting list depends on the selection method chosen by the PHA and is impacted in part by any selection preferences for which the family

qualifies. The availability of targeted funding also may affect the order in which families are selected from the waiting list.

The PHA must maintain a clear record of all information required to verify that the family is selected from the waiting list according to the PHA's selection policies [24 CFR 982.204(b) and 982.207(e)].

4-III.B. SELECTION AND HCV FUNDING SOURCES

Special Admissions [24 CFR 982.203]

HUD may award funding for specifically-named families living in specified types of units (e.g., a family that is displaced by demolition of public housing; a non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or 2 projects). In these cases, the PHA may admit such families whether or not they are on the waiting list, and, if they are on the waiting list, without considering the family's position on the waiting list. These families are considered non-waiting list selections. The PHA must maintain records showing that such families were admitted with special program funding.

Targeted Funding [24 CFR 982.204(e)]

HUD may award a PHA funding for a specified category of families on the waiting list. The PHA must use this funding only to assist the families within the specified category. In order to assist families within a targeted funding category, the PHA may skip families that do not qualify within the targeted funding category. Within this category of families, the order in which such families are assisted is determined according to the policies provided in Section 4-III.C.

PHA Policy

The PHA administers the following types of targeted funding:

VASH

Non Elderly Disabled Vouchers

Non-Elderly Disabled Mainstream Vouchers

Rental Assistance Demonstration ~~Vouchers~~Program

Continuum of Care

Family Unification Program

Regular HCV Funding

Regular HCV funding may be used to assist any eligible family on the waiting list. Families are selected from the waiting list according to the policies provided in Section 4-III.C.

4-III.C. SELECTION METHOD

PHAs must describe the method for selecting applicant families from the waiting list, including the system of admission preferences that the PHA will use [24 CFR 982.202(d)].

Local Preferences [24 CFR 982.207; HCV p. 4-16]

PHAs are permitted to establish local preferences, and to give priority to serving families that meet those criteria. HUD specifically authorizes and places restrictions on certain types of local preferences. HUD also permits the PHA to establish other local preferences, at its discretion. Any local preferences established must be consistent with the PHA plan and the consolidated plan, and must be based on local housing needs and priorities that can be documented by generally accepted data sources.

PHA Policy

The PHA will use the following local preferences:

1. The PHA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding.
2. The PHA will offer a preference to current AAHC families that include victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who have either been referred by a partnering service agency or consortia or is seeking an emergency transfer under VAWA from the PHA’s public housing program or other covered housing program operated by the PHA.

The PHA may work with the following partnering service agencies:

1. SafeHouse Center Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Project

The applicant must certify that the abuser will not reside with the applicant unless the PHA gives prior written approval.

The PHA will first assist families that have been terminated from the HCV program due to insufficient funding and then assist families that qualify for the VAWA preference.

2.3. Residency Preference:

Applicants living (renting, in a homeless shelter, or transitional housing), or working (or notified that they have been hired to work) ~~or attending a post-secondary educational facility within Washtenaw County at the time of application~~, shall be given a preference over those who are not living, working, attending a post-secondary educational facility in Washtenaw County.

The use of a residency preference will not have the purpose or effect of delaying or otherwise denying admission to the program based on the race, color, ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, or age of any member of an applicant family.

3.4. Disability Preference:

Households that include a person with a disability.

- ~~1.A.~~ A person with disabilities has one or more of the following:
- ~~2.B.~~ A disability as defined in section 223 of the Social Security Act.
- ~~3.C.~~ A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration, substantially impedes his or her

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ability to live independently, and is of such a nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.

4.D. A developmental disability as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities

5.E. Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. • Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition that arises from the etiologic agent for AIDS.

6.5. Homeless Preference:

Homeless households which meet one of the following criteria:

1.A. Households referred by the local continuum of Care Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (HARA), Housing Access of Washtenaw County

1.i. Homeless households that the AAHC has contracts with local service providers to provide services to these households.

2.ii. Under a joint grant, multiple service providers will provide supportive services for households with a persistent housing crises or homeless, who also are high utilizers of crisis health services

1. AAHC will ensure a total of 40 such families are housed through a combination of public housing, project-based vouchers managed by the AAHC and housing choice vouchers.

2.B. Tenants qualifying under the MSHDA's Medicaid Super Utilizer/Homeless Frequent Emergency Department Users with Care Needs will be referred through MSHDA's data match system using HMIS and Medicaid systems. Names of qualifying households will be provided quarterly to Avalon, as Lead Agency. Avalon will reach out to these households. All tenants filling units targeted to this population will come from this MSHDA-provided list.

3.C. Involuntary Displacement

1.i. In the case of a Federally declared disaster, the PHA reserves the right for its Executive Director to suspend its preference system for whatever duration the Executive Director feels is appropriate and to admit victims of the disaster to the program instead of those who would be normally admitted.

2.ii. Any other provisions of this policy can also be suspended during the emergency at the discretion of the Executive Director so long as the provision suspended does not violate a law. If regulatory waivers are necessary, they shall be promptly requested of the HUD Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

iii. The PHA reserves the right for its Executive Director to suspend its preference system for families that have been involuntarily displaced due to a fire, natural disaster, domestic violence or any other reason that are residents of AAHC ~~public housing or project-based voucher~~ programs.

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6. Non-Elderly Disabled Preference:

A. Households that include a person with a disability who is age 18 - 61 years old at the time of initial eligibility

B. Cannot be a single person household of an emancipated minor

C. Disability Definition:

a. Has a disability as defined under 42 USC 423 Soc Sec Disability Insurance

i. Has medically determined physical or mental impairment

b. OR UNDER HUD REGS

i. Has a physical, mental or emotional impairment that is

1. Long and indefinite duration

2. Substantially impedes ability to live independently

3. Ability to live independently could be improved by more suitable housing

c. OR has a developmental disability as defined in 42 USC 6001

i. Severe chronic disability due to physical and/or mental impairments

ii. Manifests before age 22

iii. Likely to continue indefinitely

iv. Substantial functional limitations in 3 or more major life activities

1. Self-care

2. Language

3. Learning

4. Mobility

5. Self-direction

6. Capacity for independent living

7. Economic self-deficiency

v. Needs lifelong or extended services, supports or assistance that is individually planned and directed

7. Family Unification Program

a. **FUP-Eligible Family** is defined as a family that the MDHHS has certified as a family for whom the lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in the imminent placement of the family's child, or children, in/out-of-home care, or in the delay of discharge of a child, or children, to the family from out-of-home care, and that the AAHC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV).

b. **FUP-Eligible Youth** is defined as a youth that the MDHHS has certified to be at least 18 years old, and not more than 24 years of age, and who has left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan described in section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act, and is homeless or is at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.

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Income Targeting Requirement [24 CFR 982.201(b)(2)]

HUD requires that extremely low-income (ELI) families make up at least 75 percent of the families admitted to the HCV program during the PHA's fiscal year. ELI families are those with annual incomes at or below the federal poverty level or 30 percent of the area median income, whichever number is higher. To ensure this requirement is met, a PHA may skip non-ELI families on the waiting list in order to select an ELI family.

Low-income families admitted to the program that are "continuously assisted" under the 1937 Housing Act [24 CFR 982.4(b)], as well as low-income or moderate-income families admitted to the program that are displaced as a result of the prepayment of the mortgage or voluntary termination of an insurance contract on eligible low-income housing, are not counted for income targeting purposes [24 CFR 982.201(b)(2)(v)].

PHA Policy

The PHA will monitor progress in meeting the income targeting requirement throughout the fiscal year. Extremely low-income families will be selected ahead of other eligible families on an as-needed basis to ensure the income targeting requirement is met.

Order of Selection

The PHA system of preferences may select families based on local preferences according to the date and time of application, or by a random selection process (lottery) [24 CFR 982.207(c)]. If a PHA does not have enough funding to assist the family at the top of the waiting list, it is not permitted to skip down the waiting list to a family that it can afford to subsidize when there are not sufficient funds to subsidize the family at the top of the waiting list [24 CFR 982.204(d) and (e)].

PHA Policy

The preference of residency will be worth 2 points and the preference of disabled household member will be worth 1 point in order to determine the regular housing choice voucher waitlist.

The AAHC will rank all applicants based on preferences. The AAHC will randomly select ~~500~~ **a sufficient number of** applicants from all applicants with 3 points.

~~As an example, if the PHA determined in advance to pull 500 applicants, if~~ there are fewer than 500 applicants with 3 points, the AAHC will randomly select additional applicants with 2 points so that the total number of selected applicants is 500. If there are fewer than 500 applicants with 2 or 3 points, the AAHC will randomly select additional applicants with 1 or less points so that the total number of selected applicants is 500.

The preference for homeless or involuntarily displaced will not be given a point value because ~~the waiting list will remain open for~~ the homeless/displaced ~~waitlist preference~~. ~~is an open waitlist will remain open.~~ This enables homeless households to be referred directly from the local HARA or be referred at the discretion of the Executive Director if the household has been involuntarily displaced.

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Families will be selected from the waiting lists based on the targeted funding or selection preference(s) for which they qualify.

Documentation will be maintained by the PHA as to whether families on the list qualify for and are interested in targeted funding for tenant-based vouchers or project-based vouchers or unit-specific features for project-based vouchers. If a higher placed family on the waiting list is not qualified or not interested in targeted funding or unit-specific features, there will be a notation maintained on the applicant's record, so that the PHA does not have to ask higher placed families each time targeted selections are made.

PHA Policy

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Turnover Vouchers

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As HCV vouchers become available, the AAHC will first fill those voucher slots from voucher tenants who had vouchers terminated due to insufficient funds. Next, the slots will be filled from any commitments ~~for targeted funding to homeless households through the Homeless preference.~~ Finally, the AAHC will pull an equal number of waitlist applicants from the HCV waitlist and the waitlist for PBV/RAD PBV/VASH/FUP Youth tenants that are eligible for and requested an HCV.

- The PHA may not select more than three-quarters of its turnover vouchers in any single year to the residents of Covered Projects under the RAD PBV program.

The VASH voucher waitlist is administered separately by the VA and VASH vouchers will be provided as VASH vouchers become available.

4-III.D. NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION

When a family has been selected from the waiting list, the PHA must notify the family [24 CFR 982.554(a)].

PHA Policy

The PHA will notify the family by first class mail when it is selected from the waiting list. The notice will inform the family of the following:

Date, time, and location of the scheduled application interview, including any procedures for rescheduling the interview

Who is required to attend the interview

All documents that must be provided at the interview, including information about what constitutes acceptable documentation

If a notification letter is returned to the PHA with no forwarding address, the family will be removed from the waiting list. A notice of denial (see Chapter 3) will be sent to the family's address of record, as well as to any known alternate address.