



10400 Detrick Avenue
 Kensington, MD 20895-2484
 (240) 627-9425



LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

June 25, 2021
3:00 p.m. – via Zoom

Approval of Minutes:

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Action Items:

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2. Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan: Revisions to HOC’s Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program to add Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Related Waivers to the Plan in Accordance with HUD Notice PIH 2021-14	33

Minutes

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

10400 Detrick Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895
(240) 627-9425

Legislative and Regulatory Committee Minutes

March 15, 2021

For the official record of the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, an open meeting of the Legislative and Regulatory Committee was conducted via an online platform and teleconference on Monday, March 15, 2021, with moderator functions occurring at 10400 Detrick Avenue, Kensington, Maryland beginning at 4:01 p.m. There was a livestream of the meeting held on YouTube, available for viewing here: <https://youtu.be/HVMW7oaOjuo>. Those in attendance were:

Present

Frances Kelleher, Chair – Legislative and Regulatory Committee
Linda Croom – Commissioner

Absent

Pamela Byrd - Commissioner

Also Attending

Stacy Spann, Executive Director
Aisha Memon, General Counsel
Lynn Hayes
Renee Harris
Elliot Rule
Charnita Jackson

Kayrine Brown, Deputy Exec. Dir.
Christina Autin, Director - LPA
Darcel Cox
Nicolas Deandreis
Billy Buttrey

Patrice Birdsong, Spec. Asst. to Commission

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 25, 2021 Legislative and Regulatory Committee were approved as submitted with a motion by Commissioner Croom and seconded by Chair Kelleher Croom. Affirmative votes were cast by Commissioners Kelleher and Croom. Commissioner Byrd was necessarily absent and did not participate in the vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Administrative Plan: Authorization to Process Requests for Tenancy Approvals (RFTA) and Lead Based Paint Unit Requirements

Renee Harris, Program Coordinator of the Inspections Department, provided a presentation requesting the Legislative and Regulatory Committee to recommend to the full Commission authorization of the Executive Director to change and/or update the current Administrative Plan to include the Lead Based Paint Certification changes.

This item was a last minute agenda item. There was no formal action taken by the Legislative and Regulatory Committee. Ms. Harris indicated that the packet presented will be presented to the HOC Board at its April 7, 2021 meeting.

2. Public Housing Agency Plan: Authorization to Submit HOC's Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Public Housing Agency Plan

Elliot Rule, Management and Compliance Analyst of the Compliance Department, provided a presentation requesting the Legislative and Regulatory Committee to recommend to the full Commission authorization of the Executive Director or his designee to submit the Fiscal Year 2022 Annual PHA Plan to HUD on or before April 17, 2021. Mr. Rule explained that the PHA Plan was discussed with the Resident Advisory Board (RAB), and that they would be submitting their letter of endorsement which will be submitted with the PHA Plan. To date there had been no public comments. A Public Hearing is scheduled to be held on April 7, 2021.

Commissioner Kelleher congratulated the staff on their work that affords the residents to live in new places. She had questions about tenants right to return and relocation to properties. Mr. Rule indicated that he would follow up.

Commissioner Croom asked about the lead-based paint certification being added to the Plan. Executive Director Stacy Spann and Mr. Rule addressed her question and indicated that it is separate from the Administrative Plan update.

A motion was made by Commissioner Croom and seconded by Commissioner Kelleher to forward to the full Commission for approval. Affirmative votes were cast by Commissioners Kelleher and Croom. Commissioner Byrd was necessarily absent and did not participate in the vote.

Commissioners Kelleher thanked the staff and a motion was made by Commissioner Croom and seconded by Commissioner Kelleher to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Byrd was necessarily absent and did not participate in the vote. The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting is May 17, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy L. Spann
Secretary-Treasurer

/pmb

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

10400 Detrick Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895
(240) 627-9425

Legislative and Regulatory Committee Minutes

April 28, 2021

For the official record of the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, an open special session of the Legislative and Regulatory Committee was conducted via an online platform and teleconference on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, with moderator functions occurring at 10400 Detrick Avenue, Kensington, Maryland beginning at 4:01 p.m. There was a livestream of the meeting held on YouTube, available for viewing [here](#). Those in attendance were:

Present

Frances Kelleher, Chair – Legislative and Regulatory Committee
Linda Croom – Commissioner

Absent

Pamela Byrd - Commissioner

Also Attending

Stacy Spann, Executive Director
Eamon Lorincz, Deputy General Counsel
Lynn Hayes
Heather Grendze
Patrick Mattingly
Rita Harris

Kayrine Brown, Deputy Exec. Dir.
Christina Autin, Director - LPA
Darcel Cox
Nicolas Deandreis
Bonnie Hodge

Patrice Birdsong, Spec. Asst. to Commission

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Project-Based Vouchers:** Authorization to Issue 100 Project-Based Vouchers in Response to RFP #2232

Lynn Hayes, Director of Housing Resources, provided a presentation requesting the Legislative and Regulatory Committee to recommend to the full Commission to award 100 Project-Based Vouchers (“PBV”) and authorize the Executive Director, or his designee, to execute Housing Assistance Payments (“HAP”) Contracts for the vouchers. Ms. Hayes informed the Committee that a panel consisting of Patrick Mattingly, Director of Human Resources, Eamon Lorincz, Deputy General Counsel, and herself convened to review the RFPs.

There was detailed discussion among the Committee. A motion was made by Commissioner Croom and seconded by Commissioner Kelleher to forward to the full Commission. Affirmative votes were cast by Commissioners Kelleher and Croom.

Commissioners Kelleher thanked the staff and the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy L. Spann
Secretary-Treasurer

/pmb

Deliberation and/or Action

MEMORANDUM

TO: Housing Opportunities Commission

VIA: Stacy L. Spann, Executive Director

FROM: Staff: Lynn Hayes Division: Housing Resources Ext. 9622
 Bonnie Hodge Housing Resources Ext. 9525
 Fred Swan Resident Services Ext. 9732

RE: Review Staff Recommendation to Adopt a New Policy for the administration of 118 Emergency Housing Vouchers in response to HUD PIH Notice 2021

DATE: June 25, 2021

STATUS: Consent _____ Deliberation x Status Report _____ Future Action _____

OVERALL GOAL & OBJECTIVE:

To authorize the Executive Director, or his designee, to adopt a new Emergency Housing Voucher (“EHV”) Policy for the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

BACKGROUND:

President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (“ARP”) into law on March 11, 2021 in response to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ARP appropriates 5 billion dollars for new and renewal Emergency Housing Vouchers (“EHVs”), to facilitate expedited leasing for families at high risk of exposure to the corona virus.

HOC was awarded 118 EHV’s based on HUD’s assessment of the number of homeless persons in Montgomery County, and HOC’s operational capacity to quickly lease the EHV families. To qualify for an EHV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility categories:

- Homeless,
- At risk of homelessness,
- Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, or
- Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family’s homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

Date Prepared – June 21, 2021

Eligible EHV families are not selected from the HOC waitlist. Rather they are referred to HOC from the Continuum of Care (“CoC”), the local planning body responsible for coordinating the full range of homeless services for a specific geographic region. The Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) is the designated CoC for Montgomery County. HOC may also accept direct referrals from Victim Service Providers (“VSPs”), if the CoC is unable to identify families that may be eligible for EHV because they are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.

HOC must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the CoC or VSP by July 31, 2021 to establish a partnership for the administration of the EHV. The CoC or VSP is responsible for verifying that the referred applicant meets one of the four aforementioned eligibility categories.

To expedite and facilitate EHV leasing, HUD has modified the traditional voucher program requirements and established alternative requirements that apply only to the administration of the EHV. The following mandatory alternative requirements apply only to the EHV Program:

- HOC must accept direct referrals from the CoC and/or VSP,
- HOC must maintain a separate waitlist for EHV referrals at initial leasing and turnover,
- The residency preference is waived,
- HOC must provide Housing Search Assistance,
- HOC/CoC must provide services as outlined in the Administrative Plan and executed MOU,
- Income targeting requirements are not applicable; HOC can serve a variety of income levels including low-income families (80% AMI),
- The initial voucher term must be 120 days,
- HOC must add additional family members to the EHV household composition other than the birth or court-awarded custody of a child, for families under a HAP contract,
- The initial lease term may be less than 12 months regardless of whether the shorter term is a prevailing market practice, and
- EHV families may exercise their portability right immediately; the 12-month stay period is waived for families who do not have the legal domicile at the time of the EHV application.

HOC cannot deny admission to the EHV Program for any of the following reasons:

- If any member of the family has been evicted or terminated from federally assisted housing,
- The family owes rent or other amounts owed to a Public Housing Authority (“PHA”) in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing assistance,
- The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a Housing Assistance Payment (“HAP”) Contract for rent, damages to the unit or other amounts owed by the family under the lease,

Date Prepared – June 21, 2021

- The family breached an agreement with the PHA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA,
- The family would otherwise be prohibited admission under alcohol abuse standards established by the PHA, and
- The PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in drug-related criminal activity, during a reasonable time before the admission.

HOC adopted COVID-19 related waivers under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act on February 10, 2021 pursuant to HUD PIH Notice 2020-13. Staff recommends extending these waivers through December 30, 2021 pursuant to HUD PIH Notice 2021-14 for the administration of the EHV Program.

Additionally, HOC may elect to adopt the following discretionary policies in the administration of the EHV program:

- Establish permissive prohibitions of admission for EHV applicants as outlined in the attached Administrative Plan,
- Use EHV’s to facilitate an emergency transfer in accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”) Emergency Transfer Plan,
- Pre-inspect available units to create a pool of eligible units the EHV families may be interested in leasing,
- Waive the initial certification exam and accept income calculations and verifications from third-party providers or from an examination that HOC conducted for another subsidized housing program within the last six months if the family does not have a change of income,
- Waive third-party income verifications and accept self-certification as the highest form of income verification at program admission,
- Accept third-party income verifications that are not dated within 60 days of HOC’s request,
- Establish local preferences that take into consideration the comparative health risks that COVID-19 poses to the subgroup of families eligible for EHV’s, in coordination with the CoC,
- Establish separate, higher EHV payment standards to increase the potential pool of available units (90% - 120% FMR), and
- Apply the increased voucher payment standard at an interim exam, instead of the next re-exam date subsequent to the increased rate.

Staff propose that HOC adopt the first 6 discretionary policies listed above and defined in the attached HOC Administrative Plan. Additionally, staff recommends that the LRC endorse the proposed EHV policy to house as many vulnerable households, as quickly as possible, to reduce the rapid transmission and exposure to the coronavirus disease. EHV’s may not be re-issued

Date Prepared – June 21, 2021

after September 30, 2023. This provision does not impact existing families and their continued assistance.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

Does the LRC wish to recommend to the Commission authorization for the Executive Director, or his designee, to adopt a new Emergency Housing Voucher (“EHV”) Policy for the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County?

PRINCIPALS:

Housing Resources Division
Resident Services Division

BUDGET IMPACT:

HOC will receive \$47,200 for preliminary set-up fees, \$413,00 for service fees, \$169,824 for administrative fees and \$1,745,268 for Housing Assistance Payments (“HAP”). The administrative fees and HAP payments will be renewed annually, based on the actual number of leased households. The preliminary and service fees are allocated only at the initial program start.

TIME FRAME:

For discussion by the Legislative and Regulatory Committee at its meeting on June 25, 2021. For Commission action on July 7, 2021.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION & COMMISSION ACTION NEEDED:

Staff recommends that the LRC recommend to the Commission authorization for the Executive Director, or his designee, to adopt a new Emergency Housing Voucher (“EHV”) Policy for the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

Chapter 4

ESTABLISHING PREFERENCES AND MAINTAINING THE WAIT

LIST [24 CFR Part 5, Subpart D; 982.54(d)(1); 982.204, 982.205, 982.206]

INTRODUCTION

It is HOC's objective to ensure that families are placed in the proper order on the wait list and selected from the wait list for admission in accordance with the policies in this Administrative Plan.

This chapter explains how HOC will administer its consolidated wait list for all of its housing programs, including the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists, hereinafter referred to as the consolidated list or master list. The tenant-based wait list has five local preferences that HOC adopted to meet local housing needs, define the eligibility criteria for the preferences, and explain HOC's system of applying them. The wait list for housing subsidized with project-based vouchers is maintained as a sub list within the consolidated list. Any family selected to be housed utilizing a project-based voucher is only eligible for a specific bedroom sized unit based on their family size.

By maintaining an accurate wait list, HOC is able to perform the activities which ensure that an adequate pool of qualified applicants is available, so that program funds are used in a timely manner. Each family on the tenant-based wait list may also have its name on the project-based wait list.

A. MANAGING THE WAIT LIST

Opening and Maintaining the Wait List

Opening of the wait list will be announced with a public notice stating that applications for public housing, Housing Choice Voucher and all other wait lists maintained by the **Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC)** will again be accepted. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media, including social media. The public notice will state any limitations on who may apply. Wait lists for all sub-jurisdictions and Countywide will be opened and closed at the same time.

The notice will state that applicants already on wait lists for other housing programs must apply separately for this program and such applicants will not lose their place on other wait lists when they apply for public housing. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan, and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

HOC intends for the wait list to remain open indefinitely; however, if the Executive Director decides to close the list, the closing of the wait list will also be announced with a public notice. This public notice will state the date the wait list will be closed, and it will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and by any available minority media, including social media.

Organization of the Wait List

In July 2015, HOC merged its existing sub-jurisdictional wait lists for the Housing Choice Voucher program and all other housing programs into one combined wait list, referred to herein interchangeably as merged list, master list, merged master list, or wait list, except as specifically noted.

In conjunction with the merge of all of HOC's wait lists, HOC opened its merged master wait list for all programs, and left the merged list open indefinitely or until such time as a determination is made by the Executive Director that there is cause to close the wait list, at which time proper notice will be posted in a local newspaper of general circulation and by any available minority media, including social media.

Only one application may be submitted and it must be submitted by the head of household or his/her designee.

The wait list is maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The application will be a permanent file. Any contact between HOC and the applicant will be documented in the electronic applicant file.
2. All applications will be maintained in order of date and time of application, and applicable preference(s).
3. Under the merged wait list, one master list is maintained electronically through a proprietary program. All applications and updates to an application are submitted electronically through a proprietary on-line web portal. Paper and telephone submissions are not permitted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.
4. All applicants must give notice of any changes to their application within two weeks of a change. Changes include: change of mailing address, change of email address, change of phone number, change in family composition, change in income, or changes in factors affecting preference points. As noted in paragraph 3, all changes must be done electronically because paper and telephone submissions are not accepted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic update submissions.
5. The master wait list is updated daily and applicants' wait list profiles are accessible via the internet on a 24-hour basis.
6. For the Housing Choice Voucher program, HOC maintains one merged master list in order of date-time stamp and any applicable preference(s). However, within the master list there are sub-sorted separate lists for certain programs and properties. This includes the Choice Mobility wait list for those customers eligible for

project-based to tenant-based subsidy conversion. See Chapter 22 of this Administrative Plan for more information.

7. HOC entered into Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts to subsidize units at several properties that are operated by third-party managers and/or owners. The individual, property-specific wait lists for these properties are included within the master list but are sorted separately to only reflect applicants who satisfy the various property and programmatic eligibility criteria. More specifically, the details regarding these property-specific wait lists are as follows:
 - i. HOC maintains separate wait lists for Arcola Towers, Elizabeth House, Holly Hall, and Waverly House, which are housing facilities operated for the benefit of senior and/or disabled customers.
 - ii. HOC entered into a HAP contract to subsidize units at Emory Grove, Ken-Gar, Parkway Woods, Sandy Spring Meadow, Seneca Ridge, Town Centre Place, and Washington Square as required as part of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, and required Housing Choice Vouchers. The individual wait lists created for these RAD properties are included in the merged master list but are sorted separately to reflect only those applicants who are eligible for these properties.
 - iii. HOC entered into HAP contracts to subsidize units at several properties that are managed by third-party managers and/or owners. These properties provide supportive services to at-risk populations in the form of Housing Choice Vouchers. Applicants for these programs must meet stringent requirements and are ranked by date and time of application only. The individual wait lists created for these properties are included in the merged master list but are sorted separately to reflect only those applicants who are eligible for these properties.
8. Contact between HOC and wait list applicants for the purposes of selection from the list is documented in the applicant's wait list file.

Implementation of RAD Wait List Provisions

Former public housing (PH) applicants and residents receive priority consideration on the site-based wait lists created within *HOC Housing Path*, HOC's electronic wait list. Prior to the opening of the HOC Housing Path wait list, HOC mailed to all former PH wait list applicants a post card notifying them of the new wait list and instructed them to submit an application. The following policies describe how former PH applicants and residents receive priority consideration for housing at all of HOC's RAD-converted properties and at properties with Project-Based Voucher (PBV) assistance provided using the non-competitive selection process created by the Housing Opportunities Through Modernization Act (HOTMA), and described in Chapter 22, Section G of this Administrative Plan.

In order to provide former PH applicants with the best opportunity to be housed at one of the RAD properties, HOC adopted and follows the procedures listed below:

- Analyze HOC Housing Path to identify former PH wait list applicants and residents that have submitted a new application.
- Issue notices to former PH wait list applicants and residents informing them that they are eligible to receive priority consideration for housing at RAD properties, and instruct them to respond to the notice if they would like to be considered.
- Former PH applicants and residents who respond, but have not submitted a new HOC Housing Path application will be instructed to do so.
- For those families who respond to the notice and/or have submitted a new HOC Housing Path application, HOC will create a separate pool of applications that will receive priority consideration for vacancies at HOC's RAD properties.
- As vacancies become available at RAD properties, applicants will be selected from the priority pool based on their date and time of application to Housing Path.

B. WAIT LIST CUSTOMERS (FAMILIES)

All wait list applicants are required to maintain an e-mail address. To the extent an applicant chooses to use the e-mail address of another person, the applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed email address and lack of access to that account is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices. To the extent a family does not have an e-mail address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free email account. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in their e-mail address. HOC maintains public use computers at all of its HUB locations. Public use computers are also widely available at other public locations such as local libraries. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

All wait list applicants are required to list an address in their Housing Path application. If the applicant is homeless or does not have a permanent address, the applicant can choose to list the address of another person, so long as it is not the address of a current voucher holder. This address is used to send any paper correspondence to the applicant, including required paperwork as part of the selection process. The applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed address and lack of access to mail at that address is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices or paperwork. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in address.

Treatment of Single Applicants

Single applicants are treated as any other eligible family on the wait list for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

C. WAIT LIST [24 CFR 982.204]

Tenant-Based Voucher

HOC uses a consolidated wait list for the admission of all of its housing programs. The

consolidated list includes a sub list for admissions to the tenant-based voucher assistance program.

Except for Special Admissions, applicants are selected from the consolidated wait list in accordance with the policies, preferences, and income targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan.

HOC will maintain information that permits proper selection from the wait list.

The wait list contains the following information for each applicant listed:

- . Applicant Name
- . Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms family qualifies for under HOC's subsidy standards)
- . Date of application
- . Qualification for any local preference(s)
- . Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household
- . Targeted program qualifications

Project-Based Voucher

HOC maintains separate sub lists for admissions to the project-based voucher (PBV) assistance program. Any applicant that submits an application to the master wait list is also considered for inclusion on the PBV wait list.

Except for Special Admissions, applicants are selected from HOC's wait list in accordance with the policies, preferences, and income targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan.

Families are selected from the PBV wait list based on the bedroom size of the unit available at the time of selection.

HOC must maintain information that permits proper selection from the wait list.

The wait list contains the following information for each PBV applicant listed:

- . Applicant Name
- . Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms family qualifies for under HOC's subsidy standards)
- . Date of application
- . Qualification for any local preference(s)

- . Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household
- . Targeted program qualifications

D. **SPECIAL ADMISSIONS** [24 CFR 982.54(d)(e), 982.203]

If HUD awards HOC program funding that is targeted for specifically named families, HOC must admit these families under a Special Admission procedure.

Special admissions families are admitted outside of the regular wait list process. They may not have to qualify for any preferences, nor are they required to be on the program wait list. HOC administers two Special Programs and maintains separate records of these admissions.

The Family Unification Program (FUP):

The Family Unification Program (FUP) qualifies for special admissions as long as the individuals referred to HOC meet the program definition.

Family Unification Program-Eligible Family (A family that the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) has certified as a family for whom a 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 HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher.)

Family Unification Program-Eligible Youth (A youth that the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) has certified to be at least 18 years old and not more than 24 years old (has not reached his/her 25th birthday) who left foster care at age 16 or older and who does not have adequate housing, and that HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher.) **HOC may accept referrals from child welfare agencies for youth who will leave foster care within 120 days. HOC may execute a contract on behalf of any otherwise eligible FUP youth not more than 25 years of age (not reached their 26th birthday). This temporary provision expires December 30, 2021 in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.**

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV):

HOC administers 118 Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs). Eligible EHV applicants are referred to HOC from the Continuum of Care (CoC) via the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HOC can accept direct referrals outside of HHS to facilitate an emergency transfer in accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as outlined in HOC’s Emergency Transfer Plan, or if HHS lacks a sufficient number of eligible families to refer. HOC must enter into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a Victims Service Provider (VSP) to accept EHV referrals apart from HHS.

HOC must maintain a separate waitlist for EHV referrals at initial leasing and for any turnover vouchers. HOC cannot issue an EHV subsequent to September 30, 2023. Provided that the re-issuance

date is prior to September 30, 2023 the term of the EHV may extend beyond September 30, 2023.

EHV Eligibility Criteria:

Eligible applicants must meet one of the four eligibility categories:

- Homeless,
- At risk of homelessness,
- Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, or
- Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

EHV customers are not required to meet the local residency preference to live or work in Montgomery County. Additionally, income targeting requirements are not applicable for EHV families. EHV households can range from extremely low incomes (30% AMI) to low incomes (80% AMI).

HOC cannot deny program admission for the following reasons, pursuant to Title 24 part 982.552 and 982.55 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):

- If any member of the family has been evicted or terminated from federally assisted housing
- The family owes rent or other amounts owed to a Public Housing Authority ("PHA") in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing assistance
- The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a Housing Assistance Payment ("HAP") Contract for rent, damages to the unit or other amounts owed by the family under the lease
- The family breached an agreement with the PHA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA
- The family would otherwise be prohibited admission under alcohol abuse standards established by the PHA
- The PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in drug-related criminal activity, during a reasonable time before the admission

HOC will deny program admission for the following reasons pursuant to Title 24 part 982.553 of the CFR:

- If any member of the household has been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing

- If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program
- If any household member is currently engaged in, has engaged in violent criminal activity within the last 12 months
- If any household member has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal housing program within the previous 12 months
- If any household member engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HOC personnel within the previous 12 months

Voucher Issuance/Lease Term

HOC will issue the EHV voucher for a term of 120 days. The initial lease term for EHV households can be for a period less than 12 months, regardless of whether the shorter term is the prevailing market practice.

Services

HOC will assist EHV households by providing the following services based on documented need based and funding availability:

- Housing Location - EHV applicants will receive housing location assistance from HOC and/or the CoC. This includes helping the family identify and visit available units, providing transportation assistance and directions, assisting with the completion of rental applications and HOC forms and helping to find an accessible unit that meets the needs of a disabled household.
- Transportation Assistance – HOC will provide transportation assistance to EHV households to help them view and select housing units. HOC will provide up to \$150 in transportation assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
- Security Deposit - HOC will provide security deposit assistance to EHV households to help them secure housing. HOC will provide up to \$2,500 in security deposit assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability. If refundable, the security deposit will be refunded to HOC for future use of eligible EHV households.
- Application Fee/Holding Fee - HOC will provide application and/or holding fee assistance to EHV households to help them secure housing. HOC will provide up to \$200 in application and/or holding fee assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
- Moving Expenses - HOC will provide moving assistance to EHV households. HOC will provide up to \$1,800 moving expenses per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
- Essential Household Items - HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure essential household items. HOC will provide up to \$200 in assistance for

essential household items per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.

- Renters Insurance - HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure renter's insurance. HOC will provide up to \$175 in assistance for renter's insurance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
- Furniture - HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure furniture. HOC will provide up to \$1,000 in assistance for furniture per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.

Portability

EHV applicants can immediately port to another jurisdiction of their choice. The requirement to have a legal domicile in Montgomery County at the time of the application submission is waived. HOC cannot restrict an EHV family from exercising portability options because they are a non-resident applicant.

If the EHV family moves to another jurisdiction that does not administer an EHV Program, the receiving PHA may absorb the family into its regular HCV program or bill the initial PHA.

If the EHV family moves to another jurisdiction that administers an EHV program, the receiving PHA may only absorb the EHV family with an available EHV allocated voucher. If the PHA does not have an EHV available to absorb the family, it must bill the initial PHA.

The EHV administration of the voucher is in accordance with the receiving PHA's EHV policies.

Initial Certification Exam

HOC can accept income calculations and verifications from third party providers or an examination that HOC conducted on behalf of the family for another subsidized housing program in lieu of conducting an initial examination of income as long as the income was calculated in accordance with the rules outlined at Title 24 CFR Part 5 within the last six months, and the family certifies there has been no change in income or the family composition in the interim. At the time of the family's annual reexamination, HOC must conduct the annual reexamination of income as outlined in 24 CFR 982.516.

EHV applicants may provide third-party documentation which represents the applicant's income within the 60 day period prior to admission or voucher issuance but is not dated within 60 days of HOC's request.

HQS Inspections

HOC can pre-inspect available units that EHV Families may be interested in leasing. If an EHV family selects a unit that passed a HQS inspection within 45 days of the date of the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) Form, the unit may be approved as long as it meets all other conditions under Title 24 part 982.305 of the CFR.

Interim Examinations

When adding a family member after the EHV family has been placed under a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract, the regulations at 24 CFR 982.551(h)(2) apply. Other than the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child, the HOC must approve additional family members and may apply its regular screening criteria in doing so.

EHV applicants may provide third-party documentation which represents the applicant's income within the 60 day period prior to admission or voucher issuance but is not dated within 60 days of HOC's request.

The following are examples of types of program funding that may be designated by HUD for families living in a specified unit.

1. A family displaced because of demolition or disposition of a public or Indian housing project;
2. A family residing in a multifamily rental housing project when HUD sells, forecloses or demolishes the project;
3. For housing covered by the Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990;
4. A family residing in a project covered by a project-based Section 8 HAP contract at or near the end of the HAP contract term; and
5. A non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or HOPE 2 project.

Applicants who are admitted under Special Admissions, rather than from the wait list, are identified in HOC's database with special codes.

At turnover:

If a voucher issued to an FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth under the FUP program is terminated, the voucher is reissued to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth. If the award on turnover is not practicable, FUP vouchers may be used by HOC for such families based upon local needs.

If a customer served through Special Admissions in the FUP program is on an HOC Program Admissions Wait List (Tenant Based Voucher or Project Based Voucher), the client remains eligible on the wait list for the period of time the list is active. If a client is selected from the Program Wait List and utilizes the voucher, the FUP voucher is reissued, to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth.

E. WAIT LIST PREFERENCES [24 CFR 982.207]

When a family is selected from the wait list, the family is invited to an interview and the verification

process begins. It is at this point in time that the family's wait list preference(s) are verified. To qualify for a preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of the initial application or at the time of selection from the wait list. However, placement based upon preference is dependent on the family still qualifying for the preference at the time of selection.

If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top of the list, because the family does not qualify for a preference, then the family's preference status is removed. Importantly, however, the family will remain on the wait list based upon their original date and time of application. HOC must notify the family in writing of this determination and give the family the opportunity for an informal hearing to appeal the decision.

Once a preference is verified, the family completes a full application, presents Social Security number information, citizenship/eligible immigrant information, and signs the Consent for Release of Information forms.

An applicant is not granted any local preference for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists if any member of the family was evicted from housing assisted under a HUD 1937 Housing Act program during the past three years because of drug-related criminal activity or felonious charged criminal activity.

HOC will grant an exception to such a family if:

- The responsible member has successfully completed a rehabilitation program;
- The evicted person clearly did not participate in or know about the drug-related activity; and/or
- The evicted person no longer participates in any drug related criminal activity.

If an applicant makes a false statement in order to qualify for a local preference, HOC will deny the local preference.

F. **LOCAL PREFERENCES** [24 CFR 5.410]

HOC offers public notice when changing its preference system and the notices are publicized using the same guidelines as those for opening and closing the wait list.

HOC uses the following local preference system:

First Local Preference – Displacement: Families who are displaced as a result of a State or County redevelopment project, or a change in the nature of a project that is part of the County plan for maintaining affordable housing, and who are referred by the County Executive's Office. A signed certification from the County Executive's office is required for the family to qualify for this preference. [Two Points]

Second Local Preference – Residency preference for families who live, work, or have a bona fide offer to work in Montgomery County. To qualify for this preference, evidence is

required either at the time of application or at the time of selection from the wait list. HOC will treat graduates of, or active participants in, education or training programs in Montgomery County as residents of Montgomery County if the education or training program is designed to prepare individuals for the job market. To qualify and satisfy this preference, graduates must have graduated after the initial application for housing. [One Point]

Third Local Preference – HUD funded 2006 Main Stream Disabled (MSD) program; 15 units. [Two Points]

Fourth Local Preference – Veterans: Preference is given for ten (10) veterans and their families. The applicant must be at least 18 years old and a veteran.

HOC verifies the preference with a list of homeless veterans and their families provided by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). [Three Points]

Fifth Local Preference – Families with Histories of Homelessness: Preference is given for ten (10) families with histories of homelessness who are currently housed within the Montgomery County Homeless Continuum of Care. The applicant must be at least 18 years old and have at least one minor child (under the age of 18) within the household.

HOC verifies the preference by receiving direct referrals from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). [Three Points]

Sixth Local Preference – HUD funded 2017/2018 Mainstream Disabled (MSD) Grant program: Preference is given for Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) families who meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Transitioning out of institutional or other segregated settings;
2. At serious risk of institutionalization;
3. Homeless; or
4. At risk of becoming homeless.

NED is defined as disabled persons aged 18-62 and can include any member of a household. Eligibility for this preference is initially indicated based on responses to questions on HOC's wait list, which are designed to capture these criteria. Once a NED family is called up for a subsidy based on this preference, HOC staff conducts comprehensive verification of the preference qualifications, as explained in Section M of this Chapter. [Three Points]

Treatment of Single Applicants

Single applicants are treated as any other eligible family on the wait list for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

G. INCOME TARGETTING

In accordance with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, each fiscal year HOC reserves a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of its Section 8 new admissions for families whose incomes do not exceed thirty (30) percent of the area median income (AMI). HUD refers to these families as “extremely low-income families.” HOC must admit families who qualify under the Extremely Low-Income limit to meet the income targeting requirement, regardless of preference. This policy applies to the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

HOC’s income targeting requirement does not apply to low-income families continuously assisted, as provided for under the 1937 Housing Act.

HOC is also exempted from this requirement when HOC provides assistance to low income or moderate-income families entitled to preservation assistance under the tenant-based voucher program as a result of a mortgage prepayment or opt-out.

H. INITIAL DETERMINATION OF LOCAL PREFERENCE QUALIFICATION

[24 CFR 5.415]

May 2017

At the time of application, an applicant's entitlement to a local preference may be made on the following basis:

An applicant's certification that they qualify for a preference is accepted without verification at the pre-application. When the family is selected from the wait list for the final determination of eligibility, the preference is verified. To Qualify for the preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of the pre-application or at the time of certification.

If the preference verification indicates that an applicant does not qualify for the preference, the applicant is returned to the wait list (tenant-based or project-based) without the local preference, and given an opportunity for an office meeting.

I. TARGETED FUNDING [24 CFR 982.203]

When HUD awards special funding for certain family types, families who qualify are placed on the regular wait list. When a specific type of funding becomes available, the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists are searched for the first available family meeting the targeted funding criteria. HOC reserves the right to use this assistance under the “Interim Use” policy. [See Glossary under “Interim Use” for definition].

Applicants who are admitted under targeted funding which are not identified as a Special Admission are identified by codes in the automated system. HOC has the following "Targeted" Programs:

- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Mainstream Allocation Plan for Persons with Disabilities
- Voucher allocation for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans

For any voucher allocation for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities (NED) in Support of Designated Housing Plans, HOC identifies a non-elderly disabled family, as defined by HUD, on HOC's wait list that will not be housed due to an approved or submitted Designated Housing Plan.

At turnover:

Re-issuance upon turnover of vouchers in the Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans 2008 allocation will be to Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities on the wait list.

5.410] **Change in Circumstances**

Changes in an applicant's circumstances while on the wait list may affect the family's entitlement to a preference. Applicants are required to update their on-line application when their circumstances of change.

Cross-Listing of Different Housing Programs and Section 8 [24 CFR 982.205(a)]

HOC maintains a consolidated master wait list for all of its housing programs. An applicant is considered for admission to any program for which they are eligible until such time that documentation is presented which establishes a customer as ineligible for a given housing program(s). If a customer is determined ineligible for the voucher program, their application is maintained on the consolidated wait list so that they may continue to be considered for other housing opportunities.

Other Housing Assistance [24 CFR 982.205(b)]

Other housing assistance means a federal, State, or local housing subsidy, as determined by HUD, including public housing.

HOC may not take any of the following actions because an applicant has applied for, received, or

J. PREFERENCE AND INCOME TARGETING ELIGIBILITY [24 CFR refused other housing: [24 CFR 982.205(b)]

- . Refuse to list the applicant on the wait list for tenant-based voucher assistance;
- . Deny any admission preference for which the applicant is currently qualified;
- . Change the applicant's place on the wait list based on a preference, date of application, or other factors affecting selection under HOC's selection policy; or
- . Remove the applicant from the wait list.

However, HOC may remove the applicant from the wait list for tenant-based assistance if HOC has offered the applicant assistance under the Project-Based Voucher program.

K. **ORDER OF SELECTION** [24 CFR 982.207(e)]

HOC's method for selecting applicants from a preference category leaves a clear audit trail which can be used to verify that each applicant was selected in accordance with the method specified in the Administrative Plan. **Tenant-Based Voucher Wait List**

Local Preferences

HOC provides the following system to apply local preferences:

Each preference receives an allocation of points. The more preference points an applicant receives, the higher the applicant's position on the wait list.

Among Applicants with Equal Preference Status

Among applicants with equal preference status, the tenant-based voucher wait list was organized by the lottery selection process for the first 365 days after the wait list was opened in the summer of 2015. Thereafter, applicants with equal preference status on the tenant-based voucher wait list are organized by date and time stamp.

Project-Based List

HOC provides the following system to apply local preferences:

Each preference receives an allocation of points. The more preference points an applicant receives, the higher the applicant's position on the wait list.

The PBV sub list is organized by family size and the corresponding bedroom size as follows:

- . One and two person families are eligible for a one-bedroom unit.
- . Three and four person families are eligible for a two- bedroom unit.
- . Five and six person families are eligible for a three- bedroom unit.
- . Seven and eight person families are eligible for a four- bedroom unit.

Exceptions to this policy are made in accordance with HOC's policies of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities.

The number of persons per bedroom is subject to compliance with the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 26-5, Space, Use, and Location. Paragraph (b) of Chapter 26-5 is shown below:

b) *Floor area, sleeping.* In every dwelling unit of two or more rooms, every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant must contain at least 70 square feet of habitable space, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one occupant must contain at least 50 square feet of habitable space for each occupant. However, in a mobile home every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant must contain at least 50 square feet

of habitable space; by 2 occupants, at least 70 square feet of habitable space; and by more than 2 occupants, at least an additional 50 square feet of habitable space for each additional occupant.

Among Applicants with equal preference status, the PBV wait list is organized by the regular date-time selection process for each bedroom size.

L.1 PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER REFERRALS

Applicants referred to HOC for housing subsidy through PBVs by way of Offender Reentry programs sponsored by the Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition and Threshold Services, Inc. are granted an eligibility criminal background exception. The participant does not have rights to the HOC Grievance Procedures.

The eligibility exception is not extended to the following individuals:

1. Persons convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine;
2. Any person evicted from federally assisted housing for a serious violation of the lease (and for three years following the eviction);
3. Any person who fails to sign and submit consent forms to obtain information in accordance with the Administrative Plan Part 5, subparts B and F;
4. Any person required under HUD regulation to establish citizenship or eligible immigration status;
5. Any person subject to a life time registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program; and
6. Any persons convicted for violent felonies.

L.2 PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER REFERRALS

In an effort to minimize displacement of families, if a unit that is to be included in the PBV contract is occupied by an eligible family, the in-place family must be placed on the program wait list. When eligibility is determined, the family must be given an absolute selection preference and referred to the project owner for an appropriately size PBV contract.

A preference will be extended through the PBV program (only) for services offered. In selecting families, HOC may give a preference to disabled families who need services offered at a particular project. This preference (more specifically a referral) is limited to the population of families with disabilities that significantly interfere with their ability to obtain and maintain themselves in housing who, without appropriate supportive services, are not able to maintain themselves in housing.

Selection of applicants in the targeted funding Family Unification Program (FUP) 2008 allocation

are completed in conjunction with referrals from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCHHS). HOC will accept families certified by the MCHHS as eligible applicants for FUP. HOC will compare the names provided with the names on the current HOC wait list. Any referred family on the HOC wait list is served first. Those families referred and not on the HOC wait list will be added to the wait list and served based on date of referral or on a first come first served basis.

M. **FINAL VERIFICATION OF PREFERENCES** [24 CFR 5.415]

Preference information on pre-applications is updated as applicants are selected from the wait list. At that time, HOC will obtain necessary verifications of preference(s) at the interview and by third party verification.

Subsection A – Secondary Review/Credit Checks

Before issuing vouchers to applicant families, HOC requests a credit report of all new applicant families, all adults (persons 18 years of age and older) who will reside in the assisted household. The credit report is reviewed by HOC. Applicant households claiming they have zero income automatically undergo a credit check review. The information contained in the credit check is used to confirm the information provided to HOC by the family. Specially, the credit report is used to confirm:

- 1. Employment:** A credit report will list any employers the applicant has listed in any recent credit applications. If the credit report reveals employment for any adult household member within the last 12 months that was not disclosed, the family will be asked to provide additional documentation to resolve the discrepancy. Failure to disclose current employment may result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.
- 2. Aliases:** A credit report can provide information on other names that have been used for the purposes of obtaining credit. Common reasons for use of other names include a recent marriage or a divorce. If an alias has not been disclosed to HOC, the family will be asked to provide additional evidence of the legal identity of all adult family members.
- 3. Current and previous addresses:** A credit report can provide a history of where the family has lived. This is particularly important because HOC provides a residency preference. If the family has provided one address to HOC and the credit report indicates a different address, the family will be asked to provide additional proof of residency. This may include a history of utility bills, bank statements, school enrollment records for children, credit card statements, and/or other relevant documentation. Failure to provide adequate proof could result in denial of the residency preference.

Credit card and loan payments: A credit report will usually include a list of the family's financial obligations. Examples of the items that may show up include car loans, mortgage loans, student loans, and credit cards payments. HOC will review

this information to confirm the income and asset information provided by the family. If the family's current financial obligations (total amount of current monthly payments) exceed the amount of income reported by the family, HOC will ask the family to disclose how they are currently meeting their financial obligations. Accounts that have been charged off or are significantly delinquent are not included in this calculation. Failure to provide adequate proof of income could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.

- 5. Multiple Social Security Numbers:** A credit report may list multiple Social Security numbers if an adult family member has used different Social Security numbers to obtain credit. If the credit report information does not match the information provided by an adult family member, the family member or head of household will be required to obtain written confirmation of the Social Security number that was issued to him/her from the Social Security Administration.

Applicant families are not issued vouchers until all discrepancies between the information provided by the applicant family and the information contained in the credit report have been cleared by the applicant family and approved by HOC.

When discrepancies are found, the family will be contacted by HOC. In most cases, the family will be allowed a maximum of ten (10) business days to provide the additional information. On a case-by-case basis, as a reasonable accommodation, the family may be granted additional time. If additional time is granted, the family receives written notification of the new deadline. No second or additional extensions will be granted. Failure to provide the required information to HOC could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs.

When the credit report reveals multiple discrepancies which require interview appointments, HOC will schedule up to two interview appointments. An additional appointment may be scheduled as a reasonable accommodation. Failure to appear at the interview session could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs.

N. PREFERENCE DENIAL [24 CFR 5.415]

If HOC denies a preference, HOC notifies the applicant in writing of the reasons why the preference was denied and offer the applicant an opportunity for an informal review to appeal the decision. If the preference denial is upheld as a result of the review, or the applicant does not request a review, the preference is removed from the applicant's entry on the wait list, returning the applicant to their regular date-time positioning. Applicants may exercise other rights if they believe they are a victim of discrimination.

If the applicant falsifies documents or makes false statements in order to qualify for any preference, they will be removed from the wait list.

O. REMOVAL FROM THE WAIT LIST AND PURGING [24 CFR 982.204(c)]

HOC will not remove an applicant's name from the wait list unless:

2. The applicant fails to respond to an electronic or written request for information or
 1. The applicant requests in writing that their name be removed; a request to declare their continued interest in the program; or
3. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program.
4. The applicant refuses two housing units without good cause.

Obligation to Annually Confirm Application Information

Each year, or at such time as HOC determines reasonable, HOC will issue notice to all applicants on the wait list requesting that each applicant confirm their continued interest in remaining on the wait list. Failure to renew the information in a timely manner will result in removal from the wait list.

HOC will provide notice to wait list applicants to confirm their continued interest and set a date by which their renewal must be completed. HOC will send notices thirty days, fifteen days, five days, and one day prior to the date when that renewal or confirmation is due.

All notices under this Section are sent by HOC electronically to the last known e-mail address listed on the application. Wait list applicants may also request text message notifications. If a family does not have an e-mail address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free email account. It will be the applicant's sole responsibility to check that email account from time to time and to respond to any email and/or SMS text from HOC. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

Should an applicant not respond to the request to confirm their continued interest in remaining on the wait list by renewing their application or to their notification of selection for a program for any reason, prior to the established deadline, the applicant is removed from the wait list. Reasons for non-response, resulting in removal from the list, include (but are not limited to) negligence in completing the electronic update/application in a timely manner and relocation resulting in a return of the e-notice to HOC with no forwarding email address provided. Applicants removed from the wait list will receive a notification identifying their removal from Housing Path.

Missed Appointments

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment with HOC are sent a written notice of termination of the process for eligibility. That written notification of termination may be sent as an attachment to an e-mail.

HOC will allow the family to reschedule an appointment for good cause. Generally, no more than one opportunity is given to reschedule without good cause, and no more than two opportunities are given for good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, HOC will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time. Applicants are advised of their right to an informal review before being removed from the wait list.

Notification of Negative Actions

Any applicant whose name is being removed from the wait list will be notified by HOC, in writing, that they have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request an informal review. The letter will also indicate that their name will be removed from the wait list if they fail to respond within the timeframe specified. HOC's system of removing applicant names from the wait list will not violate the rights of persons with disabilities. If an applicant claims that their failure to respond to a request for information or updates was caused by a disability, HOC will verify that there is in fact a disability, that the disability is what caused the failure to respond, and then provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the wait list based on the date and time of their original application.

Purging the Wait List

HOC will update and purge its wait list as needed to ensure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom HOC has current information, i.e. applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preference.

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County
Legislative and Regulatory Committee

VIA: Stacy L. Spann, Executive Director

FROM: Staff: Lynn Hayes Division: Housing Resources Ext. 9622
 Bonnie Hodge Housing Resources Ext. 9525

RE: **Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan:** Revisions to HOC’s Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program to add Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Related Waivers to the Plan in Accordance with HUD Notice PIH 2021-14.

DATE: June 25, 2021

STATUS: Consent Deliberation Status Report Future Action

OVERALL GOAL & OBJECTIVE:

To request that the Legislative and Regulatory Committee join staff’s recommendation to the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County to adopt revisions to HOC’s Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher program to extend COVID-19 related waivers to the plan, and authorize the Executive Director, or his designee, to implement the revisions to the Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (“Administrative Plan”).

BACKGROUND:

On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency. Subsequently he signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act into law on March 27, 2020. The CARES Act provides HUD with broad authority to waive statutes and regulations for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and emergency financial assistance.

HUD published PIH Notice 2021-14 on May 4, 2021. This notice extends the waivers and alternative requirements previously adopted in PIH Notices 2020-05, 2020-13 and 2020-33 until December 31, 2021 as reflected on the attached exhibit.

The notice introduces three new waivers. The waivers include self-certification of income at admission, self-certification of social security numbers and self-certification of birth certificate documentation along with self-certification of disability status. The PHA may accept self-certification of the above if a higher level of verification is not available. Additionally, the notice allows the PHA to waive the requirements to obtain documentation of eligible non-citizen status

Created: June 22, 2021

before admission.

The notice also stipulates that an applicant may initially lease an under occupied Project Based Voucher (PBV) or Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) unit. This will allow a family to lease a unit that has more bedrooms than the family qualifies for under PHA occupancy standards. We did not recommend adoption of this waiver because of the impact it may have on our ability to house large families. Additionally, this may present a financial impact on the program.

The adopted waivers provide administrative relief and alternative approaches to keep people housed and conduct critical operations during the pandemic. Pursuant to Notice 2021-14, PHA's may revise the administrative plan on a temporary basis, without approval from the Board of Commissioners through March 31, 2021. However, any informally adopted revision must be adopted by June 30, 2021.

Staff propose that we extend the adopted waivers in PIH Notice 2021-14 through December 31, 2021. The waivers affect chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 21 and 22 of the Administrative Plan. The HUD Secretary may establish new waivers and alternative requirements by subsequent Notice. The adopted waivers allow HOC to continue to serve its most vulnerable customers while reducing the risk of exposure to the virus.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

Does the Legislative and Regulatory Committee wish to join staff's recommendation to the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County to adopt revisions to HOC's Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher program to update Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 21 and 22 of the Plan (the "Revisions"), and authorization for the Executive Director, or his designee, to implement the revisions to the Administrative Plan for the Administrative Plan?

TIME FRAME:

For discussion by the Legislative and Regulatory Committee at its meeting on June 25, 2021. For Commission action on July 7, 2021.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION & COMMISSION ACTION NEEDED:

Staff recommends that the Legislative and Regulatory Committee recommend to the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County adoption of temporary revisions to HOC's Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher program to include COVID-19 waivers to Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 21 and 22 of the Plan (the "Revisions"), and authorization for the Executive Director, or his designee, to implement the revisions to the Administrative Plan.

**Attachment I: Summary of Public Housing and HCV Waivers and Alternative Requirements
(Refer back to the Notice using the item code for a full description and more detailed information.)**

This chart summarizes the waivers authorized under this Notice and the availability period for each. As stated in Section 5, PHAs must keep written documentation on the waivers applied by the PHA as well as the effective dates. To fulfill those requirements, PHAs may but are not required to utilize the last two columns to record this information.

Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
PH and HCV-1 PHA 5-Year and Annual Plan Submission Dates: Significant Amendment Requirements	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 5A(a)(1), Section 5A(b)(1), Section 5A(g), Section 5A(h)(2) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 903.5(a)(3), 903.5(b)(3), 903.13(c), 903.21, 903.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative dates for submission Changes to significant amendment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies based on FYE 12/31/20 	NO	
PH and HCV-2 Family Income and Composition: Delayed Annual Examinations	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 3(a)(1) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.516(a)(1), 960.257(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permits the PHA to delay the annual reexamination of income and family composition HCV PHAs must implement HCV-7 for impacted families if they implement this waiver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6/30/21 All reexams due in CY20 must be completed by 12/31/20. Reexams due between 1/1/21 and 12/31/21 would need to be completed by 12/31/21.	YES	4/20/20

**Attachment I: Summary of Public Housing and HCV Waivers and Alternative Requirements
(Refer back to the Notice using the item code for a full description and more detailed information.)**

Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
PH and HCV-3 Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination; Income Verification Requirements	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 5.233(a)(2), 960.259(c), 982.516(a) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2018-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirements to use the income hierarchy, including the use of EIV, and will allow PHAs to consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification • PHAs that implement this waiver will be responsible for addressing material income discrepancies that may arise later 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
PH and HCV-4 Family Income and Composition: Interim Examinations	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 3(a)(1) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 5.233(a)(2), 982.516(c)(2), 960.257(a), (b) and (d), 960.259(c) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2018-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirement to use the income verification requirements, including the use of EIV, for interim reexaminations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20

**Attachment I: Summary of Public Housing and HCV Waivers and Alternative Requirements
(Refer back to the Notice using the item code for a full description and more detailed information.)**

Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
PH and HCV-5 Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) Monitoring	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 5.233 <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2018-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the mandatory EIV monitoring requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
PH and HCV-6 Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Contract of Participation: Contract Extension	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 23(c)3 <u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 984.303(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSS has a provision that indicates that PHAs can extend Participation Contracts by up to two years (beyond the original five) for “good cause.” PHAs should consider pandemic-related issues as an “automatic” good cause 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
PH and HCV-7 Waiting List: Opening and Closing; Public Notice	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.206(a)(2) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2012-34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives public notice requirements for opening and closing waiting list • Requires alternative process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	NO	

**Attachment I: Summary of Public Housing and HCV Waivers and Alternative Requirements
(Refer back to the Notice using the item code for a full description and more detailed information.)**

Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
PH and HCV-8 Eligibility Determination: Income Verification	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 960.259(c), 982.201(e) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2018-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the third-party income verification requirements for applicants, and will allow PHAs to consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification at admission • PHAs must review the EIV Income and IVT Reports to confirm/validate family-reported income within 90 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	7/1/21
PH and HCV-9 Eligibility Determination: Social Security Number and Citizenship Verification	<u>Statutory Authority</u> 42 USC 1436a(d)(2) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 5.216(b)(2), (g), (h), 5.218, 5.508(b)(2)(ii), (b)(3)(ii), (g) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice PIH 2012-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirements to obtain and verify social security number documentation and documentation evidencing eligible noncitizen status before admitting applicants to the HCV and Public Housing programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	7/1/21

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHAs may accept self-certification of date of birth and disability status if a higher level of verification is not immediately available. • Individuals admitted under this waiver must provide the required documentation within 90 days of admission to be eligible for continued assistance 			
HQS-1 Initial Inspection Requirements	<p><u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A)(i), Section 8(o)(8)(C)</p> <p><u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.305(a), 982.305(b), 982.405</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes initial inspection requirements, allowing for owner certification that there are no life-threatening deficiencies • Where self-certification was used, PHA must inspect the unit no later than 6/30/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 • 6/30/22 	YES	4/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will include reminder that HQS waiver does not include a waiver of 24 CFR 35.1215, visual assessment for deteriorated paint 			
<p>HQS-2: Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Pre-HAP Contract Inspections: PHA Acceptance of Completed Units</p>	<p><u>Statutory Authority:</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A)</p> <p><u>Regulatory Authority:</u> §§ 983.103(b), 983.156(a)(1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes inspection requirements, allowing for owner certification that there are no life-threatening deficiencies Where self-certification was used, PHA must inspect the unit no later than 6/30/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 6/30/22 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>4/20/20</p>
<p>HQS-3 Initial Inspection: Non-Life-Threatening Deficiencies (NLT) Option</p>	<p><u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A)(ii)</p> <p><u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> HOTMA HCV Federal Register Notice January 18, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for extension of up to 30 days for owner repairs of non-life-threatening conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>4/20/20</p>

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
<p>HQS-4 HQS Initial Inspection Requirement: Alternative Inspection Option</p>	<p><u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A)(iii)</p> <p><u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> HOTMA HCV Federal Register Notice January 18, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under Initial HQS Alternative Inspection Option - allows for commencement of assistance payments based on owner certification there are no life-threatening deficiencies • Where self-certification was used, PHA must inspect the unit no later than 6/30/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 • 6/30/22 	<p>YES</p>	<p>4/20/20</p>
<p>HQS-5 HQS Inspection Requirement: Biennial Inspections</p>	<p><u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(D)</p> <p><u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.405(a), 983.103(d)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for delay in biennial inspections • PHAs must require owner certification there are no life-threatening deficiencies • PHAs must conduct all delayed biennial inspections from CY 2020 as soon as reasonably possible but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 • 6/30/22 	<p>NO</p>	

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
		no later than 6/20/22, and must conduct all delayed biennial inspections from CY 2021 as soon as reasonably possible but no later than 12/31/22			
HQS-6 HQS Interim Inspections	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(F) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.405(g), 983.103(e)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirement for the PHA to conduct interim inspection and requires alternative method • Allows for repairs to be verified by alternative methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HQS-7 PBV Turnover Unit Inspections	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 983.103(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows PBV turnover units to be filled based on owner certification there are no life-threatening deficiencies • Allows for delayed full HQS inspection NLT than 6/30/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 • 6/30/22 	YES	4/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HQS-8: PBV HAP Contract: HQS Inspections to Add or Substitute Units	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 983.207(a), 983.207(b) <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> HOTMA HCV Federal Register Notice January 18, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for PBV units to be added or substituted in the HAP contract based on owner certification there are no life-threatening deficiencies Allows for delayed full HQS inspection NLT 6/30/22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 6/30/22 	YES	4/20/20
HQS-9 HQS Quality Control Inspections	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.405(b), 983.103(e)(3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for a suspension of the requirement for QC sampling inspections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HQS-10 Housing Quality Standards: Space and Security	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.401(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waives the requirement that each dwelling unit have at least 1 bedroom or living/sleeping room for each 2 persons. 	Remains in effect one year from lease term or date of this Notice, whichever is longer	NO	

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HQS-11 Homeownership Option: Initial HQS Inspection	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(o)(8)(A)(i), Section 8(y)(3)(B) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.631(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirement to perform an initial HQS inspection in order to begin making homeownership assistance payments • Requires family to obtain independent professional inspection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-1 Administrative Plan	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.54(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes an alternative requirement that policies may be adopted without board approval until 9/30/21 • Any provisions adopted informally must be adopted formally by 12/31/21 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9/30/21 • 12/31/21 	YES	7/20/20
HCV-2 Information When Family is Selected: PHA Oral Briefing	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.301(a)(1), 983.252(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waives the requirement for an oral briefing • Provides for alternative methods to conduct required voucher briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HCV-3 Term of Voucher: Extensions of Term	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.303(b)(1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows PHAs to provide voucher extensions regardless of current PHA policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-4 PHA Approval of Assisted Tenancy: When HAP Contract is Executed	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.305(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for HAP payments for contracts not executed within 60 days PHA must not pay HAP to owner until HAP contract is executed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-5 Absence from Unit	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.312	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for PHA discretion on absences from units longer than 180 days PHAs must not make HAP payments beyond 12/31/20 for units vacant more than 180 consecutive days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HCV-6 Automatic Termination of HAP Contract	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.455	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows PHA to extend the period of time after the last HAP payment is made before the HAP contract terminates automatically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-7 Increase in Payment Standard During HAP Contract Term	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.505(c)(4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides PHAs with the option to increase the payment standard for the family at any time after the effective date of the increase, rather than waiting for the next regular reexamination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-8 Utility Allowance Schedule: Required Review and Revision	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.517	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for delay in updating utility allowance schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	NO	
HCV-9 Homeownership Option: Homeownership Counseling	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(y)(1)(D) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 982.630, 982.636(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waives the requirement for the family to obtain pre-assistance counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HCV-10 Family Unification Program (FUP): FUP Youth Age Eligibility to Enter HAP Contract	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(x)(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows PHAs to increase age to 26 for foster youth initial lease up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	4/20/20
HCV-11 Family Unification Program (FUP): Length of Assistance for Youth	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(x)(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows PHAs to suspend terminations of assistance for FUP youth who will reach the 36-month limit between April 10, 2020, and December 31, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	NO	
HCV-12 Family Unification Program (FUP): Timeframe for Referral	<u>Statutory Authority</u> Section 8(x)(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows PHAs to accept referrals of otherwise eligible youth who will leave foster care within 120 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	7/20/20
HCV-13 Homeownership: Maximum Term of Assistance	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> § 982.634(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows a PHA to extend homeownership assistance for up to 1 additional year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	7/20/20

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
HCV-14 Mandatory Removal of Unit from PBV HAP Contract	<u>Regulatory Authority</u> §§ 983.211(a); 983.258	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows a PHA to keep a PBV unit under contract for a period of time that extends beyond 180 from the last HAP but does not extend beyond December 31, 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	YES	7/20/20
HCV-15 Project-Based Voucher (PBV) and Enhanced Voucher (EV) Provisions on Under-Occupied Units	<u>Statutory Authority</u> 42 U.S.C. § 1437a(b)(3)(A) <u>Regulatory Authority</u> 24 CFR §§ 983.253(b), 983.260 <u>Sub-regulatory Guidance</u> Notice H 2019-9/PIH 2019-23, Notice PIH 2016-02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows a PHA to permit a family to initially lease an under-occupied PBV or RAD PBV unit (a unit that has more bedrooms than what the family qualifies for under PHA subsidy standards) under certain circumstances as described, and to allow for the continued occupancy of PBV and EV families already under a lease for an under-occupied PBV, RAD PBV, or EV unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12/31/21 	NO	

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Item	Statutory and regulatory waivers	Summary of alternative requirements	Availability Period Ends	Did the PHA implement the waiver or alternative requirement?	Date of PHA adoption.
		households instead of being terminated and will be charged the applicable FMR as the family's monthly rental amount			

Chapter 4

ESTABLISHING PREFERENCES AND MAINTAINING THE WAIT

LIST [24 CFR Part 5, Subpart D; 982.54(d)(1); 982.204, 982.205, 982.206]

INTRODUCTION

It is HOC's objective to ensure that families are placed in the proper order on the wait list and selected from the wait list for admission in accordance with the policies in this Administrative Plan.

This chapter explains how HOC will administer its consolidated wait list for all of its housing programs, including the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists, hereinafter referred to as the consolidated list or master list. The tenant-based wait list has five local preferences that HOC adopted to meet local housing needs, define the eligibility criteria for the preferences, and explain HOC's system of applying them. The wait list for housing subsidized with project-based vouchers is maintained as a sub list within the consolidated list. Any family selected to be housed utilizing a project-based voucher is only eligible for a specific bedroom sized unit based on their family size.

By maintaining an accurate wait list, HOC is able to perform the activities which ensure that an adequate pool of qualified applicants is available, so that program funds are used in a timely manner. Each family on the tenant-based wait list may also have its name on the project-based wait list.

A. MANAGING THE WAIT LIST

Opening and Maintaining the Wait List

Opening of the wait list will be announced with a public notice stating that applications for public housing, Housing Choice Voucher and all other wait lists maintained by the **Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC)** will again be accepted. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media, including social media. The public notice will state any limitations on who may apply. Wait lists for all sub-jurisdictions and Countywide will be opened and closed at the same time.

The notice will state that applicants already on wait lists for other housing programs must apply separately for this program and such applicants will not lose their place on other wait lists when they apply for public housing. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan, and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

HOC intends for the wait list to remain open indefinitely; however, if the Executive Director decides to close the list, the closing of the wait list will also be announced with a public notice. This public notice will state the date the wait list will be closed, and it will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and by any available minority media, including social media.

Organization of the Wait List

In July 2015, HOC merged its existing sub-jurisdictional wait lists for the Housing Choice Voucher program and all other housing programs into one combined wait list, referred to herein interchangeably as merged list, master list, merged master list, or wait list, except as specifically noted.

In conjunction with the merge of all of HOC's wait lists, HOC opened its merged master wait list for all programs, and left the merged list open indefinitely or until such time as a determination is made by the Executive Director that there is cause to close the wait list, at which time proper notice will be posted in a local newspaper of general circulation and by any available minority media, including social media.

Only one application may be submitted and it must be submitted by the head of household or his/her designee.

The wait list is maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The application will be a permanent file. Any contact between HOC and the applicant will be documented in the electronic applicant file.
2. All applications will be maintained in order of date and time of application, and applicable preference(s).
3. Under the merged wait list, one master list is maintained electronically through a proprietary program. All applications and updates to an application are submitted electronically through a proprietary on-line web portal. Paper and telephone submissions are not permitted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.
4. All applicants must give notice of any changes to their application within two weeks of a change. Changes include: change of mailing address, change of email address, change of phone number, change in family composition, change in income, or changes in factors affecting preference points. As noted in paragraph 3, all changes must be done electronically because paper and telephone submissions are not accepted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic update submissions.
5. The master wait list is updated daily and applicants' wait list profiles are accessible via the internet on a 24-hour basis.
6. For the Housing Choice Voucher program, HOC maintains one merged master list in order of date-time stamp and any applicable preference(s). However within the master list there are sub-sorted separate lists for certain programs and properties. This includes the Choice Mobility wait list for those customers eligible for

project-based to tenant-based subsidy conversion. See Chapter 22 of this Administrative Plan for more information.

7. HOC entered into Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts to subsidize units at several properties that are operated by third-party managers and/or owners. The individual, property-specific wait lists for these properties are included within the master list but are sorted separately to only reflect applicants who satisfy the various property and programmatic eligibility criteria. More specifically, the details regarding these property-specific wait lists are as follows:
 - i. HOC maintains separate wait lists for Arcola Towers, Elizabeth House, Holly Hall, and Waverly House, which are housing facilities operated for the benefit of senior and/or disabled customers.
 - ii. HOC entered into a HAP contract to subsidize units at Emory Grove, Ken-Gar, Parkway Woods, Sandy Spring Meadow, Seneca Ridge, Town Centre Place, and Washington Square as required as part of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program, and required Housing Choice Vouchers. The individual wait lists created for these RAD properties are included in the merged master list but are sorted separately to reflect only those applicants who are eligible for these properties.
 - iii. HOC entered into HAP contracts to subsidize units at several properties that are managed by third-party managers and/or owners. These properties provide supportive services to at-risk populations in the form of Housing Choice Vouchers. Applicants for these programs must meet stringent requirements and are ranked by date and time of application only. The individual wait lists created for these properties are included in the merged master list but are sorted separately to reflect only those applicants who are eligible for these properties.
8. Contact between HOC and wait list applicants for the purposes of selection from the list is documented in the applicant's wait list file.

Implementation of RAD Wait List Provisions

Former public housing (PH) applicants and residents receive priority consideration on the site-based wait lists created within *HOC Housing Path*, HOC's electronic wait list. Prior to the opening of the HOC Housing Path wait list, HOC mailed to all former PH wait list applicants a post card notifying them of the new wait list and instructed them to submit an application. The following policies describe how former PH applicants and residents receive priority consideration for housing at all of HOC's RAD-converted properties and at properties with Project-Based Voucher (PBV) assistance provided using the non-competitive selection process created by the Housing Opportunities Through Modernization Act (HOTMA), and described in Chapter 22, Section G of this Administrative Plan.

In order to provide former PH applicants with the best opportunity to be housed at one of the RAD properties, HOC adopted and follows the procedures listed below:

- Analyze HOC Housing Path to identify former PH wait list applicants and residents that have submitted a new application.
- Issue notices to former PH wait list applicants and residents informing them that they are eligible to receive priority consideration for housing at RAD properties, and instruct them to respond to the notice if they would like to be considered.
- Former PH applicants and residents who respond, but have not submitted a new HOC Housing Path application will be instructed to do so.
- For those families who respond to the notice and/or have submitted a new HOC Housing Path application, HOC will create a separate pool of applications that will receive priority consideration for vacancies at HOC's RAD properties.
- As vacancies become available at RAD properties, applicants will be selected from the priority pool based on their date and time of application to Housing Path.

B. WAIT LIST CUSTOMERS (FAMILIES)

All wait list applicants are required to maintain an e-mail address. To the extent an applicant chooses to use the e-mail address of another person, the applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed email address and lack of access to that account is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices. To the extent a family does not have an e-mail address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free email account. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in their e-mail address. HOC maintains public use computers at all of its HUB locations. Public use computers are also widely available at other public locations such as local libraries. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

All wait list applicants are required to list an address in their Housing Path application. If the applicant is homeless or does not have a permanent address, the applicant can choose to list the address of another person, so long as it is not the address of a current voucher holder. This address is used to send any paper correspondence to the applicant, including required paperwork as part of the selection process. The applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed address and lack of access to mail at that address is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices or paperwork. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in address.

Treatment of Single Applicants

Single applicants are treated as any other eligible family on the wait list for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

C. WAITLIST [24 CFR 982.204]

Tenant-Based Voucher

HOC uses a consolidated wait list for the admission of all of its housing programs. The consolidated list includes a sub list for admissions to the tenant-based voucher assistance program.

Except for Special Admissions, applicants are selected from the consolidated wait list in accordance with the policies, preferences, and income targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan.

HOC will maintain information that permits proper selection from the wait

list. The wait list contains the following information for each applicant listed:

- . Applicant Name
- . Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms family qualifies for under HOC’s subsidy standards)
- . Date of application
- . Qualification for any local preference(s)
- . Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household
- . Targeted program qualifications

Project-Based Voucher

HOC maintains separate sub lists for admissions to the project-based voucher (PBV) assistance program. Any applicant that submits an application to the master wait list is also considered for inclusion on the PBV wait list.

Except for Special Admissions, applicants are selected from HOC’s wait list in accordance with the policies, preferences, and income targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan.

Families are selected from the PBV wait list based on the bedroom size of the unit available at the time of selection.

HOC must maintain information that permits proper selection from the wait list.

The wait list contains the following information for each PBV applicant listed:

- . Applicant Name

- . Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms family qualifies for under HOC's subsidy standards)
- . Date of application
- . Qualification for any local preference(s)
- . Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household
- . Targeted program qualifications

D. SPECIAL ADMISSIONS [24 CFR 982.54(d)(e), 982.203]

If HUD awards HOC program funding that is targeted for specifically named families, HOC must admit these families under a Special Admission procedure.

Special admissions families are admitted outside of the regular wait list process. They do not have to qualify for any preferences, nor are they required to be on the program wait list. HOC maintains separate records of these admissions.

The Family Unification Program (FUP) qualifies for special admissions as long as the individuals referred to HOC meet the program definition.

Family Unification Program-Eligible Family (A family that the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) has certified as a family for whom a 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 HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher.)

Family Unification Program-Eligible Youth (A youth that the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) has certified to be at least 18 years old and not more than 24 years old (has not reached his/her 25th birthday) who left foster care at age 16 or older and who does not have adequate housing, and that HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher.) HOC may accept referrals from child welfare agencies for youth who will leave foster care within 120 days. HOC may execute a contract on behalf of any otherwise eligible FUP youth not more than 25 years of age (not reached their 26th birthday). This temporary provision expires December 31, 2021 in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

The following are examples of types of program funding that may be designated by HUD for families living in a specified unit.

1. A family displaced because of demolition or disposition of a public or Indian housing project;
2. A family residing in a multifamily rental housing project when HUD sells, forecloses or demolishes the project;

3. For housing covered by the Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990;
4. A family residing in a project covered by a project-based Section 8 HAP contract at or near the end of the HAP contract term; and
5. A non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or HOPE 2 project.

Applicant's who are admitted under Special Admissions, rather than from the wait list, are identified in HOC's database with special codes.

At turnover:

If a voucher issued to an FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth under the FUP program is terminated, the voucher is reissued to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth. If the award on turnover is not practicable, FUP vouchers may be used by HOC for such families based upon local needs.

If a customer served through Special Admissions in the FUP program is on an HOC Program Admissions Wait List (Tenant Based Voucher or Project Based Voucher), the client remains eligible on the wait list for the period of time the list is active. If a client is selected from the Program Wait List and utilizes the voucher, the FUP voucher is reissued, to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth.

E. WAIT LIST PREFERENCES [24 CFR 982.207]

When a family is selected from the wait list, the family is invited to an interview and the verification process begins. It is at this point in time that the family's wait list preference(s) are verified. To qualify for a preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of the initial application or at the time of selection from the wait list. However, placement based upon preference is dependent on the family still qualifying for the preference at the time of selection.

If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top of the list, because the family does not qualify for a preference, then the family's preference status is removed. Importantly, however, the family will remain on the wait list based upon their original date and time of application. HOC must notify the family in writing of this determination and give the family the opportunity for an informal hearing to appeal the decision.

Once a preference is verified, the family completes a full application, presents Social Security number information, citizenship/eligible immigrant information, and signs the Consent for Release of Information forms.

An applicant is not granted any local preference for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists if any member of the family was evicted from housing assisted under a HUD 1937 Housing Act program during the past three years because of drug-related criminal activity or felonious charged criminal activity.

HOC will grant an exception to such a family if:

- The responsible member has successfully completed a rehabilitation program;
- The evicted person clearly did not participate in or know about the drug-related activity; and/or
- The evicted person no longer participates in any drug related criminal activity.

If an applicant makes a false statement in order to qualify for a local preference, HOC will deny the local preference.

F. LOCAL PREFERENCES [24 CFR 5.410]

HOC offers public notice when changing its preference system and the notices are publicized using the same guidelines as those for opening and closing the wait list.

HOC uses the following local preference system:

First Local Preference – Displacement: Families who are displaced as a result of a State or County redevelopment project, or a change in the nature of a project that is part of the County plan for maintaining affordable housing, and who are referred by the County Executive’s Office. A signed certification from the County Executive’s office is required for the family to qualify for this preference. [Two Points]

Second Local Preference – Residency preference for families who live, work, or have a bona fide offer to work in Montgomery County. To qualify for this preference, evidence is required either at the time of application or at the time of selection from the wait list. HOC will treat graduates of, or active participants in, education or training programs in Montgomery County as residents of Montgomery County if the education or training program is designed to prepare individuals for the job market. To qualify and satisfy this preference, graduates must have graduated after the initial application for housing. [One Point]

Third Local Preference – HUD funded 2006 Main Stream Disabled (MSD) program; 15 units. [Two Points]

Fourth Local Preference – Veterans: Preference is given for ten (10) veterans and their families. The applicant must be at least 18 years old and a veteran.

HOC verifies the preference with a list of homeless veterans and their families provided by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). [Three Points]

Fifth Local Preference – Families with Histories of Homelessness: Preference is given for ten (10) families with histories of homelessness who are currently housed within the Montgomery County Homeless Continuum of Care. The applicant must be at least 18 years old and have at least one minor child (under the age of 18) within the household.

HOC verifies the preference by receiving direct referrals from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). [Three Points]

Sixth Local Preference – HUD funded 2017/2018 Mainstream Disabled (MSD) Grant program: Preference is given for Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) families who meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Transitioning out of institutional or other segregated settings;
2. At serious risk of institutionalization;
3. Homeless; or
4. At risk of becoming homeless.

NED is defined as disabled persons aged 18-62 and can include any member of a household. Eligibility for this preference is initially indicated based on responses to questions on HOC's wait list, which are designed to capture these criteria. Once a NED family is called up for a subsidy based on this preference, HOC staff conducts comprehensive verification of the preference qualifications, as explained in Section M of this Chapter. [Three Points]

Treatment of Single Applicants

Single applicants are treated as any other eligible family on the wait list for the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

G. INCOME TARGETTING

In accordance with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, each fiscal year HOC reserves a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of its Section 8 new admissions for families whose incomes do not exceed thirty (30) percent of the area median income (AMI). HUD refers to these families as "extremely low-income families." HOC must admit families who qualify under the Extremely Low-Income limit to meet the income targeting requirement, regardless of preference. This policy applies to the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists.

HOC's income targeting requirement does not apply to low-income families continuously assisted, as provided for under the 1937 Housing Act.

HOC is also exempted from this requirement when HOC provides assistance to low income or moderate-income families entitled to preservation assistance under the tenant-based voucher program as a result of a mortgage prepayment or opt-out.

H. INITIAL DETERMINATION OF LOCAL PREFERENCE QUALIFICATION

[24 CFR 5.415]

May 2017

At the time of application, an applicant's entitlement to a local preference may be made on the following basis:

An applicant's certification that they qualify for a preference is accepted without verification at the pre-application. When the family is selected from the wait list for the final determination of eligibility, the preference is verified. To Qualify for the preference,

an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of the pre-application or at the time of certification.

If the preference verification indicates that an applicant does not qualify for the preference, the applicant is returned to the wait list (tenant-based or project-based) without the local preference, and given an opportunity for an office meeting.

I. TARGETED FUNDING [24 CFR 982.203]

When HUD awards special funding for certain family types, families who qualify are placed on the regular wait list. When a specific type of funding becomes available, the tenant-based and project-based voucher wait lists are searched for the first available family meeting the targeted funding criteria. HOC reserves the right to use this assistance under the “Interim Use” policy. [See Glossary under “Interim Use” for definition].

Applicants who are admitted under targeted funding which are not identified as a Special Admission are identified by codes in the automated system. HOC has the following "Targeted" Programs:

- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Mainstream Allocation Plan for Persons with Disabilities
- Shelter Plus Care
- Welfare-to-Work
- Voucher allocation for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans

For any voucher allocation for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities (NED) in Support of Designated Housing Plans, HOC identifies a non-elderly disabled family, as defined by HUD, on HOC’s wait list that will not be housed due to an approved or submitted Designated Housing Plan.

At turnover:

If a voucher issued to a FUP-eligible family under the 2008 FUP program is terminated, the voucher will be reissued, to the extent practicable, to another FUP eligible family. If the award on turnover is not practicable, FUP vouchers may be used by HOC for such families based upon local needs.

Re-issuance upon turnover of vouchers in the Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans 2008 allocation will be to Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities on the wait list.

J. PREFERENCE AND INCOME TARGETING ELIGIBILITY [24CFR

5.410] **Change in Circumstances**

Changes in an applicant's circumstances while on the wait list may affect the family's entitlement to a preference. Applicants are required to update their on-line application when their circumstances of change.

Cross-Listing of Different Housing Programs and Section 8 [24 CFR 982.205(a)]

HOC maintains a consolidated master wait list for all of its housing programs. An applicant is considered for admission to any program for which they are eligible until such time that documentation is presented which establishes a customer as ineligible for a given housing program(s). If a customer is determined ineligible for the voucher program, their application is maintained on the consolidated wait list so that they may continue to be considered for other housing opportunities.

Other Housing Assistance [24 CFR 982.205(b)]

Other housing assistance means a federal, State, or local housing subsidy, as determined by HUD, including public housing.

HOC may not take any of the following actions because an applicant has applied for, received, or refused other housing: [24 CFR 982.205(b)]

- . Refuse to list the applicant on the wait list for tenant-based voucher assistance;
- . Deny any admission preference for which the applicant is currently qualified;
- . Change the applicant's place on the wait list based on a preference, date of application, or other factors affecting selection under HOC's selection policy; or
- . Remove the applicant from the wait list.

However, HOC may remove the applicant from the wait list for tenant-based assistance if HOC has offered the applicant assistance under the Project-Based Voucher program.

K. ORDER OF SELECTION [24 CFR 982.207(e)]

HOC's method for selecting applicants from a preference category leaves a clear audit trail which can be used to verify that each applicant was selected in accordance with the method specified in the Administrative Plan.

Tenant-Based Voucher Wait List

Local Preferences

HOC provides the following system to apply local preferences:

Each preference receives an allocation of points. The more preference points an applicant receives, the higher the applicant's position on the wait list.

Among Applicants with Equal Preference Status

Among applicants with equal preference status, the tenant-based voucher wait list was organized by the lottery selection process for the first 365 days after the wait list was opened in the summer of 2015. Thereafter, applicants with equal preference status on the tenant-based voucher wait list are organized by date and time stamp.

Project-Based List

HOC provides the following system to apply local preferences:

Each preference receives an allocation of points. The more preference points an applicant receives, the higher the applicant's position on the wait list.

The PBV sub list is organized by family size and the corresponding bedroom size as follows:

- . One and two person families are eligible for a one-bedroom unit.
- . Three and four person families are eligible for a two bedroom unit.
- . Five and six person families are eligible for a three bedroom unit.
- . Seven and eight person families are eligible for a four bedroom unit.

Exceptions to this policy are made in accordance with HOC's policies of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities.

The number of persons per bedroom is subject to compliance with the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 26-5, Space, Use, and Location. Paragraph (b) of Chapter 26-5 is shown below:

b) *Floor area, sleeping.* In every dwelling unit of two or more rooms, every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant must contain at least 70 square feet of habitable space, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one occupant must contain at least 50 square feet of habitable space for each occupant. However, in a mobile home every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant must contain at least 50 square feet of habitable space; by 2 occupants, at least 70 square feet of habitable space; and by more than 2 occupants, at least an additional 50 square feet of habitable space for each additional occupant.

Among Applicants with equal preference status, the PBV wait list is organized by the regular date-time selection process for each bedroom size.

L.1 PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER REFERRALS

Applicants referred to HOC for housing subsidy through PBVs by way of Offender Reentry programs sponsored by the Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition and Threshold Services, Inc. are granted an eligibility criminal background exception. The participant does not have rights to the HOC Grievance Procedures.

The eligibility exception is not extended to the following individuals:

1. Persons convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine;
2. Any person evicted from federally assisted housing for a serious violation of the lease (and for three years following the eviction);
3. Any person who fails to sign and submit consent forms to obtain information in accordance with the Administrative Plan Part 5, subparts B and F;
4. Any person required under HUD regulation to establish citizenship or eligible immigration status;
5. Any person subject to a life time registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program; and
6. Any persons convicted for violent felonies.

L.2 PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER REFERRALS

In an effort to minimize displacement of families, if a unit that is to be included in the PBV contract is occupied by an eligible family, the in-place family must be placed on the program wait list. When eligibility is determined, the family must be given an absolute selection preference and referred to the project owner for an appropriately size PBV contract.

A preference will be extended through the PBV program (only) for services offered. In selecting families, HOC may give a preference to disabled families who need services offered at a particular project. This preference (more specifically a referral) is limited to the population of families with disabilities that significantly interfere with their ability to obtain and maintain themselves in housing who, without appropriate supportive services, are not able to maintain themselves in housing.

Selection of applicants in the targeted funding Family Unification Program (FUP) 2008 allocation are completed in conjunction with referrals from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCHHS). HOC will accept families certified by the MCHHS as

eligible applicants for FUP. HOC will compare the names provided with the names on the current HOC wait list. Any referred family on the HOC wait list is served first. Those families referred and not on the HOC wait list will be added to the wait list and served based on date of referral or on a first come first served basis.

M. FINAL VERIFICATION OF PREFERENCES [24 CFR 5.415]

Preference information on pre-applications is updated as applicants are selected from the wait list. At that time, HOC will obtain necessary verifications of preference(s) at the interview and by third party verification.

Subsection A – Secondary Review/Credit Checks

Before issuing vouchers to applicant families, HOC requests a credit report of all new applicant families, all adults (persons 18 years of age and older) who will reside in the assisted household. The credit report is reviewed by HOC. Applicant households claiming they have zero income automatically undergo a credit check review. The information contained in the credit check is used to confirm the information provided to HOC by the family. Specially, the credit report is used to confirm:

1. **Employment:** A credit report will list any employers the applicant has listed in any recent credit applications. If the credit report reveals employment for any adult household member within the last 12 months that was not disclosed, the family will be asked to provide additional documentation to resolve the discrepancy. Failure to disclose current employment may result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.
2. **Aliases:** A credit report can provide information on other names that have been used for the purposes of obtaining credit. Common reasons for use of other names include a recent marriage or a divorce. If an alias has not been disclosed to HOC, the family will be asked to provide additional evidence of the legal identity of all adult family members.
3. **Current and previous addresses:** A credit report can provide a history of where the family has lived. This is particularly important because HOC provides a residency preference. If the family has provided one address to HOC and the credit report indicates a different address, the family will be asked to provide additional proof of residency. This may include a history of utility bills, bank statements, school enrollment records for children, credit card statements, and/or other relevant documentation. Failure to provide adequate proof could result in denial of the residency preference.
4. **Credit card and loan payments:** A credit report will usually include a list of the family's financial obligations. Examples of the items that may show up include car loans, mortgage loans, student loans, and credit cards payments. HOC will review this information to confirm the income and asset information provided by the family. If the family's current financial obligations (total amount of current

monthly payments) exceed the amount of income reported by the family, HOC will ask the family to disclose how they are currently meeting their financial obligations. Accounts that have been charged off or are significantly delinquent are not included in this calculation. Failure to provide adequate proof of income could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.

- 5. Multiple Social Security Numbers:** A credit report may list multiple Social Security numbers if an adult family member has used different Social Security numbers to obtain credit. If the credit report information does not match the information provided by an adult family member, the family member or head of household will be required to obtain written confirmation of the Social Security number that was issued to him/her from the Social Security Administration.

Applicant families are not issued vouchers until all discrepancies between the information provided by the applicant family and the information contained in the credit report have been cleared by the applicant family and approved by HOC.

When discrepancies are found, the family will be contacted by HOC. In most cases, the family will be allowed a maximum of ten (10) business days to provide the additional information. On a case-by-case basis, as a reasonable accommodation, the family may be granted additional time. If additional time is granted, the family receives written notification of the new deadline. No second or additional extensions will be granted. Failure to provide the required information to HOC could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs.

When the credit report reveals multiple discrepancies which require interview appointments, HOC will schedule up to two interview appointments. An additional appointment may be scheduled as a reasonable accommodation. Failure to appear at the interview session could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs.

N. PREFERENCE DENIAL [24 CFR 5.415]

If HOC denies a preference, HOC notifies the applicant in writing of the reasons why the preference was denied and offer the applicant an opportunity for an informal review to appeal the decision. If the preference denial is upheld as a result of the review, or the applicant does not request a review, the preference is removed from the applicant's entry on the wait list, returning the applicant to their regular date-time positioning. Applicants may exercise other rights if they believe they are a victim of discrimination.

If the applicant falsifies documents or makes false statements in order to qualify for any preference, they will be removed from the wait list.

O. REMOVAL FROM THE WAIT LIST AND PURGING [24 CFR 982.204(c)]

HOC will not remove an applicant's name from the wait list unless:

1. The applicant requests in writing that their name be removed;

2. The applicant fails to respond to an electronic or written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program; or
3. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program.
4. The applicant refuses two housing units without good

cause. **Obligation to Annually Confirm Application Information**

Each year, or at such time as HOC determines reasonable, HOC will issue notice to all applicants on the wait list requesting that each applicant confirm their continued interest in remaining on the wait list. Failure to renew the information in a timely manner will result in removal from the wait list.

HOC will provide notice to wait list applicants to confirm their continued interest and set a date by which their renewal must be completed. HOC will send notices thirty days, fifteen days, five days, and one day prior to the date when that renewal or confirmation is due.

All notices under this Section are sent by HOC electronically to the last known e-mail address listed on the application. Wait list applicants may also request text message notifications. If a family does not have an e-mail address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free email account. It will be the applicant's sole responsibility to check that email account from time to time and to respond to any email and/or SMS text from HOC. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

Should an applicant not respond to the request to confirm their continued interest in remaining on the wait list by renewing their application or to their notification of selection for a program for any reason, prior to the established deadline, the applicant is removed from the wait list. Reasons for non-response, resulting in removal from the list, include (but are not limited to) negligence in completing the electronic update/application in a timely manner and relocation resulting in a return of the e-notice to HOC with no forwarding email address provided. Applicants removed from the wait list will receive a notification identifying their removal from Housing Path.

Missed Appointments

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment with HOC are sent a written notice of termination of the process for eligibility. That written notification of termination may be sent as an attachment to an e-mail.

HOC will allow the family to reschedule an appointment for good cause. Generally, no more than one opportunity is given to reschedule without good cause, and no more than two opportunities are given for good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, HOC will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time. Applicants are advised of their right to an informal review before being removed from the wait list.

Notification of Negative Actions

Any applicant whose name is being removed from the wait list will be notified by HOC, in writing, that they have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request an informal review. The letter will also indicate that their name will be removed from the wait list if they fail to respond within the timeframe specified. HOC's system of removing applicant names from the wait list will not violate the rights of persons with disabilities. If an applicant claims that their failure to respond to a request for information or updates was caused by a disability, HOC will verify that there is in fact a disability, that the disability is what caused the failure to respond, and then provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the wait list based on the date and time of their original application.

Purging the Wait List

HOC will update and purge its wait list as needed to ensure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom HOC has current information, i.e. applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preference.

Chapter 6

FACTORS RELATED TO TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT AND FAMILY SHARE DETERMINATION

[24 CFR Part 5, Subparts E and F; 982.153, 982.551]

INTRODUCTION

HOC uses the methods as set forth in this Administrative Plan to verify and determine that family income at admission and at annual reexamination is correct. The accurate calculation of Annual Income and Adjusted Income ensures that families are not paying more or less money for rent than their obligation under the Regulations.

This Chapter defines the allowable expenses and deductions subtracted from Annual Income and how the presence or absence of household members may affect the Total Tenant Payment (TTP). Income and TTP are calculated in accordance with 24 CFR Part 5, Subparts E and F, and further instructions set forth in HUD Notices and Memoranda. The formula for the calculation of TTP is specific and not subject to interpretation. HOC's policies in this chapter address those areas which allow HOC discretion to define terms and to develop standards in order to assure consistent application of the various factors that relate to the determination of TTP.

A. INCOME AND ALLOWANCES [24 CFR 5.609]

Income: Includes all monetary amounts, which are received on behalf of the family, except any financial assistance received for mandatory education fees and charges (in addition to tuition). For purposes of calculating the Total Tenant Payment, HUD defines what is calculated and what is excluded in the federal regulations. In accordance with this definition, all income that is not specifically excluded in the regulations is counted.

Annual Income: is defined as the gross amount of income anticipated to be received by the family during the 12 months after certification or recertification. Gross income is the amount of income prior to any HUD allowable expenses or deductions, and does not include income that has been excluded by HUD. Annual income is used to determine whether or not applicants are within the applicable income limits. A family who actually works less than 12 months, as required by their employment, will have their income treated as though they worked 12 months.

Adjusted Income: is defined as the annual income minus any HUD allowable expenses and deductions.

HUD has five allowable deductions from Annual Income:

- 1. Dependent Allowance:** \$480 each for family members (other than the head or spouse) who are minors, and for family members who are 18 and older who are full-time students or who are disabled.

2. **Elderly/Disabled Allowance:** \$400 per family for families whose head or spouse is 62 or over or disabled.
3. **Allowable Medical Expenses:** Deducted for all family members of an eligible elderly/disabled family.
4. **Child Care Expenses:** Deducted for the care of children under 13 when child care is necessary to allow an adult member to work, attend school, or actively seek employment.
5. **Allowable Disability Assistance Expenses:** Deducted for attendant care or auxiliary apparatus for persons with disabilities if needed to enable the individual or an adult family member to work.

Allowable deductions from Annual Income are reviewed at annual reexamination.

Earned Income Disallowance/Disregard [24 CFR 5.617]

The Earned Income Disregard (EID) is designed to promote self-sufficiency for families with disabilities in the housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program who meet the definition of a “qualified family.”

Disallowance of increase in annual income

- (1) *Initial 12-month exclusion.* During the 12-month period beginning on the date a member who is a person with disabilities of a qualified family is first employed or the family first experiences an increase in annual income attributable to employment, HOC must exclude from annual income of a qualified family any increase in income of the family member who is a person with disabilities as a result of employment over prior income of that family member.
- (2) *Second 12-month exclusion and phase-in.* Upon the expiration of the 12-month period defined in paragraph (1) of this section and for the subsequent 12-month period, HOC must exclude from annual income of a qualified family at least 50 percent of any increase in income of such family member as a result of employment over the family member's baseline income.
- (3) *Maximum two-year disallowance.* The disallowance of increased income of an individual family member who is a person with disabilities as provided in paragraph (1) or (2) of this section is limited to a lifetime 24-month period. The disallowance applies for a maximum of 12 months for disallowance under paragraph (1) of this section and a maximum of 12 months for disallowance under paragraph (2) of this section, during the 24-month period starting from the initial exclusion under paragraph (1) of this section. Previously, families were eligible to receive the EID benefit for no more than 24 months, but which could be spread across a 48-month time period to account for potential changes in the employment status of the family member whose original employment caused the

family to be eligible for EID. That is no longer the case. EID eligibility is now limited to a maximum of only 24 straight months.

B. MINIMUM RENT [24 CFR 5.630]

Minimum Rent

"Minimum rent" is \$50. Minimum rent refers to the TFC and includes the combined amount a family pays towards rent and/or utilities when it is applied.

Hardship Requests for an Exception to Minimum Rent

HOC recognizes that in some circumstances even the minimum rent may create a financial hardship for families. HOC will review all relevant circumstances brought to the its attention regarding financial hardship as it applies to the minimum rent. The following section states HOC's procedures and policies in regard to minimum rent and financial hardship as set forth by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998. HUD has defined circumstances under which a hardship could be claimed.

Criteria for Hardship Exception

In order for a family to qualify for a hardship exception the family's circumstances must fall under one of the following HUD hardship criteria:

The family has lost eligibility or is awaiting an eligibility determination for Federal, State, or local assistance;

The family would be evicted as a result of the imposition of the minimum rent requirement;

The income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including:

Loss of employment

Death in the family

Other circumstances as determined by HOC or HUD

HOC Notification to Families of Right to Hardship Exception

HOC will notify all families subject to minimum rents of their right to request a minimum rent hardship exception. "Subject to minimum rent" means the minimum rent was the greatest figure in the calculation of the greatest of 30 percent of monthly-adjusted income, 10 percent of monthly income, minimum rent, or welfare rent.

If the minimum rent is the greatest figure in the calculation of TTP, HOC staff will include a copy of the notice regarding hardship request provided to the family in the family's file.

HOC notification will advise families that hardship exception determinations are subject to HOC's review and hearing procedures.

HOC will review all family requests for exception from the minimum rent due to financial hardships.

All requests for minimum rent hardship exceptions are required to be in writing.

HOC will request documentation as proof of financial hardship.

HOC will use its standard verification procedures to verify circumstances that have resulted in financial hardship.

Requests for minimum rent exception must include a statement of the family hardship that qualifies the family for an exception.

Suspension of Minimum Rent

HOC will grant the minimum rent exception to all families who request it, effective the first of the following month.

The minimum rent will be suspended until HOC determines whether the hardship is:

Covered by statute

Temporary or long term

"Suspension" means that HOC must not use the minimum rent calculation until HOC has made this decision.

During the minimum rent suspension period, the family will not be required to pay a minimum rent and the housing assistance payment will be increased accordingly.

If HOC determines that the minimum rent is not covered by statute, HOC will impose a minimum rent including payment for minimum rent from the time of suspension.

Temporary Hardship

If HOC determines that the hardship is temporary, a minimum rent will not be imposed for a period of up to 90 days from the date of the family's request. At the end of the temporary suspension period, a minimum rent will be imposed retroactively to the time of suspension.

HOC will offer a repayment agreement to the family for any such rent not paid during the temporary hardship period. (See "Owner and Family Debts to HOC" in the chapter which discusses the Repayment Agreement Policy).

Long-Term Duration Hardships [24 CFR 5.616(c)(3)]

If HOC determines that there is a qualifying long-term financial hardship, HOC must exempt the family from the minimum rent requirements.

Retroactive Determination

HOC will reimburse the family for any minimum rent charges that took effect after October 21, 1998 that qualified for one of the mandatory exceptions.

If the family is owed a retroactive payment, HOC will offset the family's future rent contribution payments by the amount in which HOC owes the family.

C. DEFINITION OF TEMPORARILY/PERMANENTLY ABSENT

[24 CFR 982.54(d)(10), 982.551]

HOC must compute all applicable income of every family member who is on the lease, including those who are temporarily absent. In addition, HOC must count the income of the spouse or the head of the household, if that person is temporarily absent, even if that person is not on the lease.

"Temporarily absent" is defined as away from the unit for more than 30 days.

Income of persons permanently absent will not be counted. If the spouse is temporarily absent and in the military, all military pay and allowances (except hazardous duty pay when exposed to hostile fire and any other exceptions to military pay HUD may define) is counted as income.

It is the responsibility of the head of household to report changes in family composition. HOC will evaluate absences from the unit using this policy.

Absence of Any Member

Any member of the household is considered permanently absent if s/he is away from the unit for 90 consecutive days, except as otherwise provided in this Chapter.

Absence due to Medical Reasons

If any family member leaves the household to enter a facility such as hospital, nursing home, or rehabilitation center, HOC will seek advice from a reliable qualified source as to the likelihood and timing of their return. If the verification indicates that the family member will be permanently confined to a nursing home, the family member is considered permanently absent. If the verification indicates that the family member will return in less than 180 consecutive days, the family member is not considered permanently absent.

If the person who is determined to be permanently absent is the sole member of the household, assistance is Terminated in accordance with HOC's "Absence of Entire Family" policy.

Absence Due to Full-time Student Status

Full time students who attend school away from the home are treated in the following manner:

Full time students who attend school away from home and live with the family during school recesses are considered temporarily absent from the household.

Absence due to Incarceration

If the sole member is incarcerated for more than 90 consecutive days, s/he is considered permanently absent. Any member of the household, other than the sole member, is considered permanently absent if s/he is incarcerated for 180 consecutive days.

HOC will determine if the reason for incarceration is for drug-related or violent criminal activity. If it is, then HOC must terminate the family

Absence of Children due to Placement in Foster Care

If the family includes a child or children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care, HOC will determine from the appropriate agency when the child/children will be returned to the home.

If the time period will be greater than 12 months from the date of removal of the child/ren, the voucher size is reduced. If all children are removed from the home permanently, the voucher size is reduced in accordance with HOC's subsidy standards (see Chapter 5).

Absence of Entire Family

These policy guidelines address situations when the family is absent from the unit, but has not moved out of the unit. In cases where the family has moved out of the unit, HOC will terminate assistance in accordance with appropriate termination procedures contained in this Administrative Plan.

Families are required both to notify HOC before they move out of a unit and to give HOC information about any family absence from the unit.

Families must notify HOC at least 30 days before leaving the unit, if they are going to be absent from the unit for more than 60 consecutive days.

If the entire family is absent from the assisted unit for more than 60 consecutive days, the unit is considered vacated, and the assistance is terminated. HOC may continue to make HAP payments and not terminate the HAP contract if the family is absent more than 180 consecutive days due to extenuating circumstances. This temporary policy expires on December 31, 2021 accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

If it is determined that the family is absent from the unit, HOC will discontinue assistance payments.

HUD regulations require HOC to terminate assistance if the entire family is absent from the unit for a period of more than 180 consecutive days.

"Absence" means that no family member is residing in the unit.

In order to determine if the family is absent from the unit, HOC may:

- Write letters to the family at the unit

- Telephone the family at the unit

- Interview neighbors

- Verify if utilities are in service

- Check with the post office

A person with a disability may request an extension of time as an accommodation, provided that the extension does not go beyond the HUD-allowed 180 consecutive calendar days' limit.

If the absence which resulted in termination of assistance was due to a person's disability, and HOC can verify that the person was unable to notify HOC in accordance with the family's responsibilities, and if funding is available, HOC may reinstate the family as a reasonable accommodation, if requested by the family, so long as the period was within 180 consecutive days.

Caretaker for Children

If neither parent remains in the household and the appropriate agency determines that another adult must be brought into the assisted unit to care for the children for an indefinite period, HOC will treat that adult as a visitor for the first 30 days.

If by the end of that period, court-awarded custody or legal guardianship is awarded to the caretaker, the voucher is transferred to the caretaker.

If the appropriate agency cannot confirm the guardianship status of the caretaker, HOC will review the status at six month intervals.

If custody or legal guardianship is not awarded by the court, but the action is in process, HOC will secure verification from social services staff or the attorney as to the status.

The caretaker is allowed to remain in the unit, as a visitor, until a determination of custody is made.

HOC will transfer the voucher to the caretaker, in the absence of a court order, if the caretaker has been in the unit for more than 180 days and it is reasonable to expect that custody will be granted.

When HOC approves an adult to reside in the unit as caretaker for the child/ren, their income is counted pending a final disposition. HOC will work with the appropriate service agencies and the landlord to provide a smooth transition in these cases.

If a member of the household is subject to a court order that restricts him/her from the home for more than 180 days, the person is considered permanently absent.

Visitors

Any adult not included on the HUD 50058 who has been in the unit more than 30 consecutive days without HOC approval, or a total of 60 days in a 12-month period, is considered to be living in the unit as an unauthorized household member.

Absence of evidence of any other address is considered verification that the visitor is a member of the household.

Statements from neighbors and/or the landlord are considered in making the determination.

Use of the unit address as the visitor's current residence for any purpose that is not explicitly temporary is construed as permanent residence.

The burden of proof that the individual is a visitor rests on the family. In the absence of such proof, the individual is considered an unauthorized member of the household and HOC will terminate assistance since prior approval was not requested for the addition.

Minors and college students who were part of the family but who now live away from home during the school year and are no longer on the lease may visit for up to 60 days per year without being considered a member of the household.

In a joint custody arrangement, if the minor is in the household less than 180 days per year, the minor is considered to be an eligible visitor and not a family member.

Reporting Additions to Owner and HOC

Reporting changes in household composition to HOC is both a HUD and an HOC requirement.

The family obligations require the family to request HOC approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit and to inform HOC of the birth, adoption, or court awarded custody of a child. The family must request prior approval of additional household members in writing.

If the family does not obtain prior written approval from HOC, any person the family has permitted to move in will be considered an unauthorized household member.

In the event that a visitor continues to reside in the unit after the maximum allowable time, the family must report it to HOC in writing within 10 days of the maximum allowable time.

Families are required to report any additions to the household in writing to HOC within 10 days of the move-in date.

An interim reexamination is conducted for any additions to the household.

In addition, the lease may require the family to obtain prior written approval from the owner when there are changes in family composition other than birth, adoption, or court awarded custody.

Reporting Absences to HOC

Reporting changes in household composition is both a HUD and an HOC requirement.

If a family member leaves the household, the family must report this change to HOC, in writing, within 10 days of the change and certify as to whether the member is temporarily absent or permanently absent.

HOC will conduct an interim evaluation for changes that affect the TTP in accordance with the interim policy.

D. AVERAGING INCOME

When Annual Income cannot be anticipated for a full 12 months, HOC may:

Average known sources of income that vary to compute an annual income, or

Annualize current income and conduct an interim reexamination if income changes.

If there are bonuses or overtime which the employer cannot anticipate for the next 12 months, bonuses and overtime received the previous year will be used.

If, by averaging, an estimate can be made for those families whose income fluctuates from month to month, this estimate will be used so as to reduce the number of interim adjustments.

The method used depends on the regularity, source and type of income.

E. MINIMUM INCOME

There is no minimum income requirement. Families who report zero income are required to complete a written certification every 90 days.

Families that report zero income are required to provide information regarding their means of basic subsistence, such as food, utilities, transportation, etc.

If the family's expenses exceed their known income, HOC will make inquiry of the head of household as to the nature of the family's accessible resources.

F. INCOME OF PERSON PERMANENTLY CONFINED TO NURSING HOME
[24 CFR 982.54(d)(10)]

If a family member is permanently confined to a hospital or nursing home and there is a family member left in the household, HOC calculates the income by using the following methodology, and uses the income figure that would result in a lower payment by the family:

Exclude the income of the person permanently confined to the nursing home and give the family no deductions for medical expenses of the confined family member.

OR

Include the income of the person permanently confined to the nursing home and give the family the medical deductions allowable on behalf of the person in the nursing home.

G. REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS AND GIFTS [24 CFR 5.609]

Regular contributions and gifts received from persons outside the household are counted as income for calculation of the Total Tenant Payment (TTP).

Any contribution or gift received every 180 days, or more frequently, is considered a "regular" contribution or gift, unless the amount is less than \$500 per year. This includes rent and utility payments made on behalf of the family and other cash or non-cash contributions provided on a regular basis. It does not include casual contributions or sporadic gifts. (Please see the "Verification Procedures" chapter in this Administrative Plan for further information.)

If the family's expenses exceed its known income, HOC investigates the family regarding any contributions and/or gifts received.

H. ALIMONY AND CHILD SUPPORT [24 CFR 5.609]

Regular alimony and child support payments are counted as income for calculation of the TTP.

If the amount of child support or alimony received is less than the amount awarded by the court, HOC will use the amount awarded by the court; unless the family can verify that they are not receiving the full amount and verification of item(s) below are provided.

HOC accepts verification that the family is receiving an amount less than the amount awarded by the court if:

HOC receives verification from the agency responsible for enforcement or collection.

The family furnishes documentation of child support or alimony collection action filed through a child support enforcement/collection agency, or has filed an enforcement or collection action through an attorney.

It is the family's responsibility to supply a certified copy of the divorce decree.

I. LUMP-SUM RECEIPTS [24 CFR 5.609]

Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health, accident insurance, and worker's compensation), capital gains, and settlement for personal or property losses, are not included in income but may be included in assets.

Lump-sum payments caused by delays in processing periodic payments such as unemployment or welfare assistance are counted as income. Lump sum payments from Social Security or SSI are excluded from income, but any amount remaining is considered an asset. Deferred periodic payments which have accumulated due to a dispute are treated the same as periodic payments which are deferred due to delays in processing.

In order to determine the amount of retroactive tenant rent that the family owes as a result of the lump sum receipt:

HOC uses a calculation method that calculates retroactively or prospectively, depending on the circumstances.

Prospective Calculation Methodology

If the payment is reported on a timely basis, the calculation is done prospectively and will result in an interim adjustment calculated as follows:

The lump sum is added in the same way for any interim adjustments that occur prior to the next annual recertification.

If amortizing the payment over one year will cause the family to pay more than 50 percent of the family's adjusted income (before the lump sum was added) for TTP, HOC and the family may enter into a Repayment Agreement, with the approval of the Director of the Housing Resources Division, for the balance of the amount over the 50 percent calculation. The beginning date for this Repayment Agreement will start at the next annual reexamination of income.

Retroactive Calculation Methodology

HOC goes back to the date of receipt of the lump-sum payment, or to the date of admission, whichever is closer.

At HOC's option, HOC may enter into a Repayment Agreement with the family.

The amount owed by the family is a collectible debt even if the family becomes unassisted.

Attorney Fees

The family's attorney fees are eligible for deduction from the lump-sum payments when computing annual income if the attorney's efforts have recovered a lump-sum compensation, and the recovery paid to the family does not include an additional amount in full satisfaction of the attorney's fees.

J. CONTRIBUTIONS TO RETIREMENT FUNDS - ASSETS [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

Contributions to company retirement/ pension funds are handled as follows:

While an individual is employed, HOC counts contributions to company retirement/ pension funds as assets only for amounts which the family can withdraw without retiring or terminating their employment.

After retirement or termination of employment, HOC counts any amount the employee elects to receive as a lump sum from a company retirement/ pension fund.

K. ASSETS

Income from assets is calculated based on the current balance of the account.

L. ASSETS DISPOSED OF FOR LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE [24 CFR 5.603(d)(3)]

HOC must count assets disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years preceding certification or reexamination. HOC counts the difference between the market value and the actual payment received in calculating total assets.

Assets disposed of as a result of foreclosure or bankruptcy are not considered to be assets disposed of for less than fair market value. Assets disposed of as a result of a divorce or separation are not considered to be assets disposed of for less than fair market value.

HOC's minimum threshold for counting assets disposed of for less than Fair Market value is \$1,000. If the total value of assets disposed of within a one-year period is less than \$1,000, they are not considered an asset.

M. CHILD CARE EXPENSES [24 CFR 5.603]

Child-care expenses for children under 13 are eligible for deduction from annual income if they enable an adult to work or attend school full time, or to actively seek employment.

In the case of a child attending a private school, only before/ after-hours care are permitted for counting as child-care expenses.

Permissibility of deductions for child-care expenses is based on the following guidelines:

Child care to work: The maximum child care expense allowed must be less than the amount earned by the person enabled to work. The "person enabled to work" is the adult member of the household who earns the least amount of income from working.

Child care for school: The number of hours claimed for child care cannot exceed the number of hours the family member is attending school, including reasonable travel time to and from school.

N. MEDICAL EXPENSES [24 CFR 5.609(a)(2), 5.603]

When it is unclear in the HUD rules as to whether or not to allow an item as a medical expense, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 502 is used as a guide.

Nonprescription medicines are counted toward medical expenses for families who qualify, if the family furnishes legible receipts.

Acupressure, acupuncture, and related herbal medicines, as well as chiropractic services are also considered allowable medical expenses.

O. PRORATION OF ASSISTANCE FOR "MIXED" FAMILIES [24 CFR 5.520]

Applicability

Pro-ration of assistance is offered to any "mixed" applicant or participant family. A "mixed" family is one that includes at least one U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant and any number of ineligible family members.

Prorated Assistance Calculation

Prorated assistance is calculated by determining the amount of assistance payable if all family members were eligible, and multiplying by the percent of the family members who actually are eligible. Calculations for each housing program are performed on the HUD 50058 form.

P. REDUCTION IN BENEFITS

Please see the chapter of this Administrative Plan on recertifications for a description of how to handle income changes resulting from welfare program requirements.

Q. UTILITY ALLOWANCE AND UTILITY REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENTS

[24 CFR 982.153, 982.517]

The same utility allowance schedule is used for all tenant-based programs.

The utility allowance is intended to cover the cost of utilities not included in the rent. The allowance is based on the typical cost of utilities and services paid by energy-conservative households that occupy housing of similar size and type in the same locality. Allowances are not based on an individual family's actual energy consumption.

HOC's utility allowance schedule, and the utility allowance for an individual family, must include the utilities and services that are necessary in the locality to provide housing that complies with the housing quality standards.

HOC does not provide any allowance for non-essential utility costs, such as costs of cable or satellite television.

HOC must classify utilities in the utility allowance schedule according to the following general categories: space heating, air conditioning, cooking, water heating, water, sewer, trash collection, other electric, refrigerator (for tenant supplied refrigerator), range (cost of tenant-supplied range), and other specified services.

An allowance for tenant-paid air conditioning is provided in those cases where the majority of housing units in the market have central air conditioning or are wired for tenant installed air conditioners [24 CFR 982.517].

HOC reviews the utility allowance schedule annually. If the review finds a utility rate changed by 10 percent or more since the last revision of the utility allowance schedule, the schedule is revised to reflect the new rate. Revised utility allowances are applied to a participant family's rent calculation at their next reexamination.

The utility allowance is based on the lesser of the size of dwelling unit actually leased by the family or the voucher size issued, as determined under HOC's subsidy standards (please see the Subsidy Standards chapter in this Administrative Plan for more information). In cases where HOC provided a reasonable accommodation to a family that includes a person with disabilities, HOC will use the appropriate utility allowance for the size of the dwelling unit actually leased by the family.

Where the calculation on the HUD 50058 results in a utility reimbursement payment due to the family, HOC will provide a Utility Reimbursement Payment to the family each month. The check is made out directly to the tenant.

Chapter 7

VERIFICATION PROCEDURES

[24 CFR Part 5, Subparts B, D, E and F; 982.108]

INTRODUCTION

HUD regulations require that the factors of eligibility and Total Tenant Payment/Family Share be verified by the PHA. PHA staff will obtain written verification from independent sources whenever possible, or will document in tenant files why third party verification was impossible to obtain.

Applicants and program participants must provide true and complete information to the PHA whenever information is requested. The PHA's verification requirements are designed to maintain program integrity. This Chapter explains the PHA's procedures and standards for verification of preferences, income, assets, allowable deductions, family status, and changes in family composition. The PHA will obtain proper authorization from the family before requesting information from independent sources.

A. METHODS OF VERIFICATION AND TIME ALLOWED [24 CFR 982.516]

The PHA will verify information through the five methods of verification acceptable to HUD in the following order:

1. Upfront Income Verification through HUD's Enterprise Income Verification system, see HOC's EIV policy
2. Third-Party Written Verification
3. Third-Party Oral Verification
4. Review of Documents
5. Certification/Self-Declaration

HOC may forgo third-party income verification requirements, including the use of EIV and consider self-certification, the highest form of income verification for applicants and participants until December 31, 2021. This temporary verification method is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

The PHA will verify information through a secondary review through third party credit reports.

The PHA will allow 14 days for return of third-party verifications and 14 days to obtain other types of verifications before going to the next method. The PHA will document the file as to why third party written verification was not used.

For applicants, verifications may not be more than 60 days old at the time of voucher issuance. For participants, they are valid for 60 days from date of receipt.

Upfront Income Verification (W-UIV)

The verification of income, before or during a family re-examination, through an independent source that systemically and uniformly maintains income information in a computerized form for a large number of individuals.

The UIV data is used to validate client reported income and supplement client provided documents. When the client disputes the UIV data, the PHA must request written third party verification.

Acceptable Verification:

UIV plus current client provided documents or

UIV plus current client provided documents plus written third-party verification

Tenant-provided documents should be dated within the last 120 days of the reexamination, pay stubs should be current and consecutive.

The PHA will use state or federal records of child support payments to document and calculate income

Projecting Annual Income through UIV:

When UIV data is not substantially different than client-reported income:

If UIV data is less than client reported income, use client provided documents to calculate anticipated annual income.

If UIV data is greater than client reported income, use UIV data to calculate anticipated annual income, unless client can provide the PHA with acceptable documentation to verify a change in circumstances.

When UIV data is substantially different than client reported income:

The PHA must request written third-party verification from the discrepant income source.

Third-Party Written Verification

Third-party verification is used to verify information directly with the source. Third-party written verification forms will be sent and returned via first class mail. The family will be required to sign an authorization for the information source to release the specified information.

Verifications received electronically directly from the source are considered third party written verifications.

Third-Party Oral Verification

Oral third-party verification will be used when written third party verification is delayed or not possible. When third-party oral verification is used, staff will be required to complete a Certification of Document Viewed or Person Contacted form, noting with whom they spoke, the

date of the conversation, and the facts provided. If oral third party verification is not available, the PHA will compare the information to any documents provided by the Family. If provided by telephone, the PHA must originate the call.

Review of Documents

In the event that third-party written or oral verification is unavailable, or the information has not been verified by the third party within two weeks, the PHA will annotate the file accordingly and utilize documents provided by the family as the primary source if the documents provide complete information.

All such documents, excluding government checks, will be photocopied and retained in the applicant file. In cases where documents are viewed which cannot be photocopied, staff viewing the document(s) will complete a Certification of Document Viewed or Person Contacted form or document.

The PHA will accept the following documents from the family provided that the document is such that tampering would be easily noted:

- Printed wage stubs
- Computer print-outs from the employer
- Signed letters (provided that the information is confirmed by phone)
- Other documents noted in this Chapter as acceptable verification

The PHA will accept photocopies after review of the original documents.

If third-party verification is received after documents have been accepted as provisional verification, and there is a discrepancy, the PHA will utilize the third party verification.

The PHA will not delay the processing of an application beyond 14 days because a third party information provider does not return the verification in a timely manner.

Self-Certification/Self-Declaration

When verification cannot be made by third-party verification or review of documents, families will be required to complete a self-certification.

Subsection – Secondary Review/Credit Checks

The Housing Authority uses credit reports obtained from a third party source as a secondary review of income verifications for all adult household members (non student persons 18 years of age and older) who reside in the assisted household and claim zero income. The secondary review includes a comparison between the information contained in the credit report, for each adult household member and the information provided by the family to the Housing Authority for eligibility purposes (Personal Declaration). Specifically, the Housing Authority reviews the credit report to verify:

Employment: If the credit report reveals employment during the subsidized period that has not been disclosed to the Housing Authority, the family will be required to provide documentation that the employment did not occur or provide information regarding the amount of earnings received during the employment period. If a family contends that the employment was made up for the purposes of obtaining credit or was erroneously placed on the credit report, the family must supply a letter from the employers listed confirming such information. If the family failed to disclose employment for a period longer than six months, the Housing Authority may purpose termination of the family's housing assistance and seek repayment of any overpayment. If the family failed to disclose employment for less than six months, the family will be required to attend a counseling interview and re-sign all program documents reinforcing the family's obligations. The family will also be required to repay any housing subsidy overpayment. A recurrence of this violation could result in termination from the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.

Assets: The credit report information will be used to verify assets, particularly large items such as real property. If the credit report reveals that the family owns property, the family will be required to provide the appropriate documentation regarding the property. If all documentation confirms that the family or any household member owns real estate property that was purposely concealed, the Housing Authority will propose termination of assistance and seek repayment of any overpayment amount.

Aliases: A credit report can provide information on other names that have been used for the purposes of obtaining credit. Common reasons for use of other names include a recent marriage or a divorce. If an alias has not been disclosed to the Housing Authority, the family will be asked to provide additional evidence of the legal identity of all adult family members.

Current and previous addresses: A credit report can provide a history of where the family has lived. This is particularly important because the Housing Authority provides a residency preference. If the family has provided one address to the Housing Authority and the credit report indicates a different address, the family will be asked to provide additional proof of residency. This may include a history of utility bills, bank statements, and school enrollment records for children, credit card statements or other relevant documentation. Failure to provide adequate proof could result in denial of the residency preference.

Credit card and loan payments: A credit report will usually include a list of the family's financial obligations. Examples of the items that may show up include car loans, mortgage loans, student loans and credit cards payments. The Housing Authority will review this information to confirm the income and asset information provided by the family. If the family's current financial obligations (total amount of current monthly payments) exceed the amount of income reported by the family, the Housing Authority will ask the family to disclose how they are currently meeting their financial obligations. Accounts that have been charged off or are significantly delinquent are not included in this calculation. Failure to provide adequate proof of income could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 programs.

Multiple Social Security Numbers: A credit report may list multiple Social Security numbers if an adult family member has used different Social Security numbers to obtain credit. If the credit report information does not match the information provided by an adult family member, the family member or head of household will be required to obtain written confirmation of the Social Security

number that was issued to him/her from the Social Security Administration.

A family will not be issued a voucher until all discrepancies between the information provided by the applicant family and the information contained in the credit report have been cleared by the applicant family and approved by the Housing Authority. When discrepancies are found, the family will be contacted by the Housing Authority. In most cases, the family will be allowed a maximum of ten business days to provide the additional information. On a case-by-case basis, as a reasonable accommodation, the family may be granted additional time. If additional time is granted, the family receives written notification of the new deadline. No second or additional extension will be granted. Failure to provide the required information to the Housing Authority could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs. When the credit report reveals multiple discrepancies which require interview appointments, the Housing Authority will schedule up to two interview appointments. An additional appointment may be scheduled as a reasonable accommodation. Failure to appear at the interview session could result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Programs.

B. RELEASE OF INFORMATION [24 CFR 5.230]

Adult family members will be required to sign the HUD 9886 Release of Information/Privacy Act form.

In addition, family members will be required to sign specific authorization forms when information is needed that is not covered by the HUD form 9886, Authorization for Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice.

Each member requested to consent to the release of specific information will be provided with a copy of the appropriate forms for their review and signature.

Family refusal to cooperate with the HUD prescribed verification system will result in denial of admission or termination of assistance because it is a family obligation to supply any information and to sign consent forms requested by the PHA or HUD.

C. COMPUTER MATCHING

Where allowed by HUD and/or other State or local agencies, computer matching will be done.

The PHA will utilize the HUD established Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)/Upfront Income Verification (UIV) tool for obtaining Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income, benefit history and tenant income discrepancy reports from the Social Security Administration (Refer to EIV policy).

A. INITIAL LEASE UP [24 CFR 5.233]

For each New Admission (form HUD-50058 action type 1) Income Report

- . PHAs must review the Income Report to confirm/validate family-reported income within 90 days of the admission date.

- . Any income discrepancies must be resolved with the family within 30 days of the Income Report date

For each Historical Adjustment (form HUD-50058 action type 14) Income Report

- . PHAs must review the Income Report to confirm/validate family-reported income within 90 days of the PIC submission date
- . Any income discrepancies must be resolved with the family within 30 days of the Income Report date

When computer matching results in a discrepancy with information in the PHA records, the PHA will follow up with the family and verification sources to resolve this discrepancy. If the family has unreported or underreported income, the PHA will follow the procedures in the Program Integrity Addendum of the Administrative Plan.

D. ITEMS TO BE VERIFIED [24 CFR 982.516]

All income not specifically excluded by the regulations.

Full-time student status including High School students who are 18 or over.

Current assets including assets disposed of for less than fair market value in preceding two years.

Child-care expense where it allows an adult family member to be employed or to further his/her education.

Total medical expenses of all family members in households whose head or spouse is elderly or disabled.

Disability assistance expenses to include only those costs associated with attendant care or auxiliary apparatus for a disabled member of the family, which allow an adult family member to be employed.

Disability for determination of preferences, allowances or deductions. **HOC may accept self-certification of disability status if a higher level of verification is not immediately available. If self-certification is used, HOC must obtain a higher level of verification within 90 days of admission. This temporary provision expires on December 31, 2021 in accordance with waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.**

U.S. citizenship/eligible immigrant status. **HOC may forgo obtaining documentation of eligible non-citizenship status before admittance to the HCV program. HOC will accept self-certification in lieu of the required documentation. The family must provide the required documentation within 90 days of admission to be eligible for continued assistance, pending verification until December 31, 2021. This temporary verification method is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.**

Social Security Numbers are required for all household members. HOC may forgo obtaining

documentation of valid social security numbers for household numbers. HOC will accept self-certification in lieu of the required documentation. The family must submit the required documentation within 90 days of admission to be eligible for continued assistance pending verification until December 31, 2021. This temporary verification method is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

"Preference" status.

Familial/Marital status when needed for head or spouse definition.

Verification of Reduction in Benefits for Noncompliance:

The PHA will obtain written verification from the welfare agency stating that the family's benefits have been reduced for fraud or noncompliance before denying the family's request for rent reduction.

E. VERIFICATION OF INCOME [24 CFR 982.516]

This section defines the methods the PHA will use to verify various types of income.

Employment Income

Verification forms request the employer to specify the:

Dates of employment

Amount and frequency of pay

Date of the last pay increase

Likelihood of change of employment status and effective date of any known salary increase during the next 12 months

Year to date earnings

Estimated income from overtime, tips, bonus pay expected during next 12

months. Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Employment verification form completed by the employer.
2. Four current consecutive pay stubs or earning statements, which indicate the employee's gross pay, frequency of pay or year to date earnings.
3. W-2 forms plus income tax return forms.

4. Self-certification or income tax returns signed by the family may be used for verifying self-employment income, or income from tips and other gratuities.

Applicants and program participants may be requested to sign an authorization for release of information from the Internal Revenue Service for further verification of income.

In cases where there are questions about the validity of information provided by the family, the PHA will require the most recent federal income tax statements.

Where doubt regarding income exists, a referral to IRS for confirmation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Social Security, Pensions, Supplementary Security Income (SSI), Disability Income

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Utilize the HUD established Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)/Upfront Income Verification (UIV) tool for benefits, benefit history and tenant income discrepancy reports from the Social Security Administration (Refer to EIV policy).
2. Benefit verification form completed by agency providing the benefits.
3. Award or benefit notification letters prepared and signed by the providing agency.
4. Computer report electronically obtained or in hard copy.

Unemployment Compensation

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Utilize the HUD established Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)/Upfront Income Verification (UIV) tool for benefits and benefit history reports from the Unemployment Compensation agency.
2. Verification form completed by the unemployment compensation agency.
3. Computer report electronically obtained or in hard copy, from unemployment office stating payment dates and amounts.
4. Payment stubs.

Welfare Payments or General Assistance

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. PHA verification form completed by payment provider.

2. Written statement from payment provider indicating the amount of grant/payment, start date of payments, and anticipated changes in payment in the next 12 months.
3. Computer-generated Notice of Action.
4. Computer-generated list of recipients from Welfare Department.

Alimony or Child Support Payments

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Copy of a separation or settlement agreement or a divorce decree stating amounts and types of support and payment schedules.
2. State or federal records of child support payments.
3. A notarized statement or affidavit signed by the person providing the support. This document must include amount of support, payor name, address, and phone number
4. Copy of 3 latest check and/or payment stubs from Child Support Enforcement. For verbal third party the PHA must record the date, amount, and number of the check.
5. Family's self-certification of amount received and of the likelihood of support payments being received in the future, or that support payments are not being received.

If payments are irregular, the family must provide:

A copy of the separation or settlement agreement, or a divorce decree stating the amount and type of support and payment schedules.

A statement from the agency responsible for enforcing payments to show that the family has filed for enforcement.

A notarized affidavit from the family indicating the amount(s) received.

A welfare notice of action showing amounts received by the welfare agency for child support.

A written statement from an attorney certifying that a collection or enforcement action has been filed.

Net Income from a Business

In order to verify the net income from a business, the PHA will view IRS and financial documents from prior years and use this information to anticipate the income for the next 12 months.

Acceptable methods of verification include:

1. IRS Form 1040, including:

Schedule C (Small Business)

Schedule E (Rental Property Income)

Schedule F (Farm Income)

2. If accelerated depreciation was used on the tax return or financial statement, an accountant's calculation of depreciation expense computed using straight-line depreciation rules.
3. Audited or un-audited financial statement(s) of the business.
4. Credit report or loan application.
5. Documents such as manifests, appointment books, cashbooks, bank statements, and receipts will be used as a guide for the prior 180 days (or lesser period if not in business for 90 days) to project income for the next 12 months. The family will be advised to maintain these documents in the future if they are not available.
6. Family's self-certification as to net income realized from the business during previous years.

Child Care Business

If an applicant/participant is operating a licensed day care business, income will be verified as with any other business.

If the applicant/participant is operating a "cash and carry" operation (which may or may not be licensed), the PHA will require that the applicant/participant complete a form for each customer which indicates: name of person(s) whose child (children) is/are being cared for, phone number, number of hours child is being cared for, method of payment (check/cash), amount paid, and signature of person.

If the family has filed a tax return, the family will be required to provide it.

The PHA will conduct interim reevaluations every year and require the participant to provide a log with the information about customers and income.

If childcare services were terminated, third-party verification will be sent to the parent whose child was cared for.

Recurring Gifts

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

- A notarized statement or affidavit signed by the person providing the assistance giving the purpose, date and value of gifts. This document should include the payor name, address and phone number.

- A self-certification provided by the family that contains the following information: The person who provides the gift, the value of the gifts, the dates of the gifts and the purpose of the gifts.

Zero Income Status

Families claiming to have no income will be required to execute verification forms to determine that forms of income such as unemployment benefits, TANF, SSI, etc. are not being received by the household.

The PHA will request information from the State Employment Development Department.

The PHA will run a credit report if information is received that indicates the family has an unreported income source.

Full-time Student Status

Only the first \$480 of the earned income of full time students, other than head, co-head, or spouse, will be counted towards family income.

Financial aid, scholarships and grants received by full time students is not counted towards family income.

Verification of full time student status includes:

Written verification from the registrar's office or other school official; or school records which show a sufficient number of credits to be considered a full-time student by the educational institution attended.

School records, such as an official report card, indicating enrollment for sufficient number of credits to be considered a full-time student by the educational institution.

E. INCOME FROM ASSETS [24 CFR 982.516]

***VERIFICATION OF ASSESTS**

Asset Accounts with Interest Income and Dividends with current balance exceeding \$1,000

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Verification forms from a financial institution or broker.
2. Passbook, account statements, certificate of deposit, bonds, or financial statements completed by a financial institution or broker including current interest rates and dividends.
3. Broker's statements showing value of stocks or bonds and the earnings credited the family. Earnings can be obtained by oral broker's verification or current newspaper quotations.

4. IRS Form 1099 from the financial institution provided that the PHA must adjust the information to project earnings expected for the next 12 months.

Interest Income from Mortgages or Similar Arrangements

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. Amortization schedule showing interest for the 12 months following the effective date of the certification or recertification.
2. A letter from an accountant, attorney, real estate broker, the buyer, or financial institution stating interest due for the next 12 months. (A copy of the check paid by the buyer to the family is not sufficient unless of a breakdown of interest is present.

Net Rental Income from Property Owned by Family

Acceptable methods of verification include, in this order:

1. IRS Form 1040 with Schedule E (Rental Income)
2. A copy of latest rent receipts, leases, or other documentation of rent amounts.
3. Documentation of allowable operating expenses of the property: tax statements, insurance invoices, bills for reasonable maintenance and utilities, and bank statements or amortization schedules showing monthly interest expense.
4. Lessee's written statement verifying rent payments to the family and family's self-certification as to the net income realized.

Verification for assets to determine the current cash value

(the net amount the family would receive if the assets were converted to cash).

Quotes from a stock broker or realty agent as to the net amount family would receive if they liquidated securities or real estate.

Real estate tax statements if the approximate current cash value can be deduced from the assessment.

Financial statements from business assets

Copies of closing documents showing the selling price and the distribution of the sales proceeds.

Appraisals of personal property held as an investment.

Family's self certification describing assets or cash held at the family's home or in a safe deposit boxes.

Assets Disposed of for Less than Fair Market Value (FMV) During the Two Years Preceding the Effective Date of Certification or Recertification

For all Certifications and Recertifications, the PHA will obtain the Family's certification as to whether any member has disposed of assets for less than fair market value during the two years preceding the effective date of the certification or recertification.

If the family certifies that they have disposed of assets for less than fair market value, verification if required that shows: (a) all assets disposed of for less than FMV, (b) the date they were disposed of, (c) the amount the family received, and (d) the market value of the assets at the time of disposition. Third party verification will be obtained whenever possible.

H. VERIFICATION OF ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS FROM INCOME

[24 CFR 982.516]

Child Care Expenses

Written verification from the person who receives the payments is required. If the child care provider is an individual, s/he must provide a statement of the amount they are charging the family for their services. Additionally, the family must provide two months of cancelled checks or cancelled cashier money orders verifying the child care costs.

Verifications must specify the child care provider's name, address, telephone number, Social Security Number, the names of the children cared for, the number of hours the child care occurs, the rate of pay, and the typical yearly amount paid, including school and vacation periods.

Family's certification as to whether any of those payments have been or will be paid or reimbursed by outside sources.

Medical Expenses

Families, who claim medical expenses will be required to submit a certification as to whether or not any expense payments have been, or will be, reimbursed by an outside source. All expense claims will be verified by one or more of the methods listed below:

Written verification by a doctor, hospital or clinic personnel, dentist, pharmacist, of (a) the anticipated medical costs to be incurred by the family and regular payments due on medical bills; and (b) extent to which those expenses will be reimbursed by insurance or a government agency.

Written confirmation by the insurance company or employer of health insurance premiums to be paid by the family.

Written confirmation from the Social Security Administration of Medicare premiums to be paid by the family over the next 12 months. A computer printout will be accepted.

For attendant care:

A reliable, knowledgeable professional's certification that the assistance of an attendant is necessary as a medical expense and a projection of the number of hours the care is needed for calculation purposes.

Attendant's written confirmation of hours of care provided and amount and frequency of payments received from the family or agency (or copies of canceled checks the family used to make those payments) or stubs from the agency providing the services.

Receipts, canceled checks, or pay stubs that verify medical costs and insurance expenses likely to be incurred in the next 12 months.

Copies of payment agreements or most recent invoice that verify payments made on outstanding medical bills that will continue over all or part of the next 12 months.

Receipts or other record of medical expenses incurred during the past 12 months that can be used to anticipate future medical expenses, which includes regular visits to doctors or dentists, for "general medical expenses". For non-prescription drugs verification is needed from a medical professional stating that these drugs are prescribed is also needed along with receipts. One time, nonrecurring expenses from the previous year will not be included.

The PHA will use mileage at the IRS rate, or cab, bus fare, or other public transportation cost for verification of the cost of transportation directly related to medical treatment.

Assistance to Persons with Disabilities [24 CFR

5.611(c)] In All Cases:

Written certification from a reliable, knowledgeable professional that the person with disabilities requires the services of an attendant and/or the use of auxiliary apparatus to permit him/her to be employed or to function sufficiently independently to enable another family member to be employed.

Family's certification as to whether they receive reimbursement for any of the expenses of disability assistance and the amount of any reimbursement received.

Attendant Care:

Attendant's written certification of amount received from the family, frequency of receipt, and hours of care provided.

Certification of family and attendant and/or copies of canceled checks family used to make payments.

Auxiliary Apparatus:

Receipts for purchases or proof of monthly payments and maintenance expenses for auxiliary apparatus.

In the case where the person with disabilities is employed, a statement from the employer that the auxiliary apparatus is necessary for employment.

I. VERIFYING NON-FINANCIAL FACTORS [24 CFR 982.153(b)(15)]

Verification of Legal Identity

In order to prevent program abuse, the PHA will require applicants to furnish verification of legal identity for all family members.

The documents listed below will be considered acceptable verification of legal identity for adults. If a document submitted by a family is illegible or otherwise questionable, more than one of these documents may be required.

Certificate of Birth, naturalization papers. **HOC may accept self-certification of date of birth if a higher level of verification is not immediately available. If self-certification is used, HOC must obtain a higher level of verification within 90 days of admission. This temporary policy expires on December 31, 2021 in accordance with waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.**

- Church issued baptismal certificate
- Current, valid Driver's license
- U.S. military discharge (DD 214)
- U.S. passport
- Department of Motor Vehicles Identification Card
- Hospital records

Documents considered acceptable for the verification of legal identity for minors may be one or more of the following:

- Certificate of Birth
- Adoption papers
- Custody agreement
- Health and Human Services ID
- School records

Verification of Marital Status

Verification of divorce status will be a certified copy of the divorce decree, signed by a Court Officer.

Verification of a separation may be a copy of court-ordered maintenance or other records.

Verification of marriage status is a marriage certificate.

Familial Relationships (pages 7-16 and 7-17)

Certification will normally be considered sufficient verification of family relationships. In cases where reasonable doubt exists, the family may be asked to provide verification.

The following verifications will always be required if applicable:

- Verification of relationship:
 - Official identification showing names
 - Birth Certificates
 - Baptismal certificates
 - Verification of guardianship is:
 - Court-ordered assignment
 - Verification from social services agency

Verification of Permanent Absence of Family Member

If an adult member who was formerly a member of the household is reported permanently absent by the family, the PHA will consider any of the following as verification:

Husband or wife institutes divorce action.

Husband or wife institutes legal separation.

Order of protection/restraining order obtained by one family member against another.

Proof of another home address, such as utility bills, canceled checks for rent, driver's license, or lease or rental agreement, if available.

Statements from other agencies such as social services or a written statement from the landlord or manager that the adult family member is no longer living at that location.

If the adult family member is incarcerated, a document from the Court or correctional

facility should be obtained stating how long they will be incarcerated.

Verification of Change in Family Composition

The PHA may verify changes in family composition (either reported or unreported) through letters, telephone calls, utility records, inspections, landlords, credit data, school, employment, or DMV records, and other sources. In cases of domestic violence, stalking, or dating violence, HOC will accept a final order of protection, peace order, or similar court order to remove a household member.

If the family is unable to obtain the above documentation, HOC will accept documentation from the U.S. Postal Service that indicates that the removed household member does not receive mail at the program unit address and a notarized statement from the head of household, the former member or both.

Verification of Disability

Verification of disability must be receipt of SSI or SSA disability payments under Section 223 of the Social Security Act or 102(7) of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 6001(7) or for those who do not receive disability benefits the disability can be verified by appropriate diagnostician such as physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist, rehab specialist, or licensed social worker, using the HUD language as the verification format.

Verification of Citizenship/Eligible Immigrant Status [24 CFR 5.508, 5.510, 5.512, 5.514]

To be eligible for assistance, individuals must be U.S. citizens or eligible immigrants. Individuals who are neither may elect not to contest their status. Eligible immigrants must fall into one of the categories specified by the regulations and must have their status verified by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Family members must declare their status once. Assistance cannot be delayed, denied, or terminated while verification of status is pending except that assistance to applicants may be delayed while the PHA hearing is pending.

Citizens or Nationals of the United States are required to sign a declaration under penalty of perjury.

The PHA will require citizens to provide documentation of citizenship. Acceptable documentation will include at least one of the following original documents:

United States birth certificate

United States passport

Resident alien/registration card

Other appropriate documentation as determined by the PHA

Eligible Immigrants who were Participants and 62 or over on June 19, 1995, are required to sign a declaration of eligible immigration status and provide proof of age.

Non-citizens with eligible immigration status must sign a declaration of status and verification consent form and provide their original immigration documents which are copied front and back and returned to the family. The PHA verifies the status through the INS SAVE system. If this primary verification fails to verify status, the PHA must request within 10 days that the INS conduct a manual search.

Ineligible family members who do not claim to be citizens or eligible immigrants must be listed on a statement of ineligible family members signed by the head of household or spouse.

Non-citizen students on student visas are ineligible members even though they are in the country lawfully. They must provide their student visa but their status will not be verified and they do not sign a declaration but are listed on the statement of ineligible members.

Failure to Provide: If an applicant or participant family member fails to sign required declarations and consent forms or provide documents as required, they must be listed as an ineligible member. If the entire family fails to provide and sign as required, the family may be denied or terminated for failure to provide required information.

Time of Verification

For applicants, verification of U.S. citizenship/eligible immigrant status occurs at the same time as verification of other factors of eligibility for final eligibility determination.

The PHA will not provide assistance to any family prior to the affirmative establishment and verification of the eligibility of the individual or at least one member of the family.

The PHA will verify the U.S. citizenship/eligible immigration status of all participants no later than the date of the family's first annual reexamination following the enactment of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998.

For family members added after other members have been verified, the verification occurs at the first recertification after the new member moves in.

Once verification has been completed for any covered program, it need not be repeated except that, in the case of port-in families, if the initial PHA does not supply the documents, the PHA must conduct the determination.

Extensions of Time to Provide Documents

The PHA will grant an extension of 30 days for families to submit evidence of eligible immigrant status.

Acceptable Documents of Eligible Immigration

The regulations stipulate that only the following documents are acceptable unless changes are published in the Federal Register:

Resident Alien Card (I-551)

Alien Registration Receipt Card (I-151)

Arrival-Departure Record (I-94)

Temporary Resident Card (I-688)

Employment Authorization Card (I-688B)

Receipt issued by the INS for issuance of replacement of any of the above documents that shows individual's entitlement has been verified

A birth certificate is not acceptable verification of status. All documents in connection with U.S. citizenship/eligible immigrant status must be kept 5 years.

The PHA will verify the eligibility of a family member at any time such eligibility is in question, without regard to the position of the family on the waiting list.

If the PHA determines that a family member has knowingly permitted another individual who is not eligible for assistance to reside permanently in the family's unit, the family's assistance will be terminated for 36 months, unless the ineligible individual has already been considered in prorating the family's assistance.

Verification of Social Security Numbers [24 CFR 5.216]

Social security numbers must be provided as a condition of eligibility for all family members if they have been issued a number, except any member who is older than 62 as of Jan 31, 2010 and receiving assistance as of that date.

At the time any change in family composition is reported to HOC, each new family member will be required to produce a Social Security card or original document issued by a federal or state government agency that provides the Social Security Number of the individual along with other identifying information. HOC will accept HUD prescribed documentation of this information.

If an applicant or participant is able to disclose the Social Security Number but cannot meet the documentation requirements, the applicant or participant cannot become a participant or continue as a participant until the applicant or participant can provide the complete and accurate Social Security Number assigned to each member of the household.

HOC permits a 90-day period during which an applicant family may become a program participant, even if the family lacks the documentation necessary to verify the Social Security Number (SSN) of a family member under the age of six (6) years old. An extension of one additional 90-day period must be granted if HOC determines that, in its discretion, the applicant's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not reasonably have been foreseen and were outside of the control of the applicant. For example, an applicant may be able to demonstrate timely submission of a request for a Social Security Number, in which case processing time would be the cause of the delay. If the applicant family does not produce the required documentation within the authorized time period,

HOC must impose appropriate penalties, in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations at 24 CFR 5.218.

If merited, HOC will offer a grace period and/or an extension. HOC will implement this provision just as it currently implements the provision for program participants. Specifically, an applicant family with a child under the age of six (6) years may become a participant family, even if the Social Security Number for the child has not been verified at the time of admission. If the Social Security Number has still not been verified at the end of the initial 90-day period, then HOC must determine whether a 90-day extension is merited. If it is not merited, then HOC must follow the provisions of 24 CFR 5.218. If a 90-day extension is merited, then HOC must either verify the Social Security Number for the child by the end of the 90-day extension period or follow the provisions of 24 CFR 5.218.

Failure to provide the required documentation during the recertification process will result in an incomplete recertification action and may subject the family to termination of housing assistance.

Medical Need for Larger Unit

A written certification that a larger unit is necessary must be obtained from a reliable, knowledgeable professional, such as a doctor, social worker, or caseworker.

Chapter 8

VOUCHER ISSUANCE AND BRIEFINGS

[24 CFR 982.301, 982.302]

INTRODUCTION

The PHA's goals and objectives are designed to assure that families selected to participate are equipped with the tools necessary to locate an acceptable housing unit. Families are provided sufficient knowledge and information regarding the program and how to achieve maximum benefit while complying with program requirements. When eligibility has been determined, the PHA will conduct a mandatory briefing to ensure that families know how the program works. The briefing will provide a broad description of owner and family responsibilities, PHA procedures, and how to lease a unit. The family will also receive a briefing packet that provides more detailed information about the program including the benefits of moving outside areas of poverty and minority concentration. This Chapter describes how briefings will be conducted, the information that will be provided to families, and the policies for how changes in the family composition will be handled.

A. ISSUANCE OF VOUCHERS [24 CFR 982.204(d), 982.54(d)(2)]

When funding is available, the PHA will issue Vouchers to applicants whose eligibility has been determined. The number of Vouchers issued must ensure that the PHA stays as close as possible to 100 percent lease-up. The PHA performs a monthly calculation electronically to determine whether applications can be processed, the number of Vouchers that can be issued, and to what extent the PHA can over-issue (issue more Vouchers than the budget allows to achieve lease-up).

The PHA may over-issue Vouchers only to the extent necessary to meet leasing goals. All Vouchers that are over-issued must be honored. If the PHA finds it is over-leased, it must adjust future issuance of Vouchers in order not to exceed the ACC budget limitations over the fiscal year.

B. BRIEFING TYPES AND REQUIRED ATTENDANCE [24 CFR 982.301]

Initial Applicant Briefing

A full HUD-required briefing will be conducted for applicant families who are determined to be eligible for assistance. The briefings will be conducted in groups. Families who attend group briefings and still have the need for individual assistance will be referred to their Rental Assistance Specialist. HOC may conduct the briefing by other means, such as a webcast, video call, or expanded information packet. These alternative methods expire on December 31, 2021 in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

Briefings will be conducted in English.

The purpose of the briefing is to explain how the program works and the documents in the Voucher holder's packet to families so that they are fully informed about the program. This will enable them to utilize the program to their advantage, and it will prepare them to discuss it with potential owners and property managers.

The PHA will not issue a Voucher to a family unless the household representative has attended a briefing and signed the Voucher. Applicants who provide prior notice of inability to attend a briefing will automatically be scheduled for the next briefing. Applicants who fail to attend 2 scheduled briefings, without prior notification and approval of the PHA, may be denied admission based on failure to supply information needed for certification. The PHA will conduct individual briefings for families with disabilities at their home, upon request by the family, if required for reasonable accommodation.

Briefing Packet [24 CFR 982.301(b)]

The documents and information provided in the briefing packet for the voucher program will comply with all HUD requirements. The PHA also includes other information and/or materials that are not required by HUD. This information will be provided at the applicant's Initial and the participant's Move Briefing.

The family is provided with the following information and materials

The term of the voucher, and the PHA policy for requesting extensions or suspensions of the voucher (referred to as tolling).

A description of the method used to calculate the housing assistance payment for a family, including how the PHA determines the payment standard for a family; how the PHA determines total tenant payment for a family and information on the payment standard and utility allowance schedule. How the PHA determines the maximum allowable rent for an assisted unit.

For a family that qualifies to lease a unit outside the PHA jurisdiction under portability procedures, the information must include an explanation of how portability works.

The HUD required tenancy addendum, which must be included in the lease.

The Request for Approval of Tenancy form, and a description of the procedure for requesting approval for a unit.

A statement of the PHA policy on providing information about families to prospective owners.

The PHA Subsidy Standards including when and how exceptions are made and how the voucher size relates to the unit size selected.

The HUD brochure on how to select a unit and/or the HUD brochure "A Good Place to Live" on how to select a unit that complies with HQS.

The HUD brochure on lead-based paint and information about where blood level testing is available.

Information on Federal, State and local equal opportunity laws and a copy of the housing discrimination complaint form. The PHA will also include the pamphlet "Fair Housing: It's Your Right" and other information about fair housing laws and guidelines, and the telephone numbers of the local fair housing agency and the HUD enforcement office.

A list of units available for the Section 8 program which is updated monthly and compiled by bedroom size.

If the family includes a person with disabilities, notice that the PHA will provide assistance in locating accessible units.

The Family Obligations under the program.

The grounds on which the PHA may terminate assistance for a participant family because of family action or failure to act.

PHA informal hearing procedures including when the PHA is required to offer a participant family the opportunity for an informal hearing, and how to request the hearing.

Information packet including an explanation of how portability works, including a list of neighboring housing agencies with the name, address and telephone number of a portability contact person at each for use by families who move under portability. (required for PHAs in MSAs)

A family participating in the project-based voucher program will be offered available tenant-based assistance either under the voucher program or under another comparable form of tenant-based assistance as defined by HUD

Information regarding the PHA's outreach program that assists families who are interested in, or experiencing difficulty in obtaining available housing units in areas outside of minority concentrated locations.

The HQS checklist.

Procedures for notifying the PHA and/or HUD of program abuses such as side payments, extra charges, violations of tenant rights, and owner failure to repair.

The family's rights as a tenant and a program participant.

Requirements for reporting changes between annual recertifications.

Information on security deposits and legal referral services.

Exercising choice in residency

Choosing a unit carefully and only after due consideration.

The Family Self-Sufficiency program and its advantages.

If the family includes a person with disabilities, the PHA will ensure compliance with CFR 8.6 to ensure effective communication.

Move Briefing

A full HUD-required move briefing will be held for participants who will be reissued a Voucher to move, and who have been recertified within the last 120 days, and have given notice of intent to vacate to their landlord. This briefing includes incoming and outgoing portable families. The briefings will be conducted in groups. Families who attend group briefings and still have the need for individual assistance will be referred to their Rental Assistance Specialist.

Owner Briefing

Briefing may be held for owners periodically. The purpose of the briefing is to assure successful owner participation in the program. Information provided will include the responsibilities and obligations of the three parties.

C. ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN AREAS WITHOUT LOW INCOME OR MINORITY CONCENTRATION (Regional Opportunity Counseling (ROC) Grant)

At the briefing, families are encouraged to search for housing in non-impacted areas and the PHA will provide assistance to families who wish to do so.

The PHA has areas of poverty and minority concentration clearly delineated in order to provide families with information and encouragement in seeking housing opportunities outside highly concentrated areas.

The PHA provides information about facilities and services in neighboring areas such as schools, transportation, and supportive and social services.

The PHA will investigate and analyze when voucher holders are experiencing difficulties locating or obtaining housing units outside areas of concentration.

The assistance provided to such families includes:

- Providing families with a search record form to gather and record info.
- Direct contact with landlords.
- Counseling with the family.
- Providing information about services in various non-impacted areas.
- Meeting with neighborhood groups to promote understanding.
- Formal or informal discussions with landlord groups.
- Formal or informal discussions with social service agencies.
- Meeting with rental referral companies or agencies.
- Will meet with fair housing groups or agencies as needed or upon request.

D. ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WHO CLAIM DISCRIMINATION

The PHA will give participants a copy of HUD form 903 to file a complaint.

E. SECURITY DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS [24 CFR 982.313]

Leases Effective Prior to October 2, 1995

The amount of Security Deposit that could have been collected by owners under contracts effective prior to October 2, 1995 is:

Under the pre-merger Certificate Program, the owner could have collected a Security Deposit in an amount not to exceed Total Tenant Payment or \$50.00, whichever is greater, for non-lease-in-place families.

For the pre-merger Voucher Program, the owner, at his/her discretion, could have collected a Security Deposit in an amount not to exceed (PHA policy):

The greater of 30% of adjusted monthly income or \$50 for non-lease-in-place families.

The amount charged to unassisted tenants may not exceed the maximum allowed under state or local law.

The greater of 30% of adjusted monthly income or [amount].

Leases Effective on or after October 2, 1995

The owner is not required to, but may collect a security deposit up to the maximum allowed by State and local law.

Security deposits charged to families may be any amount the owner wishes to charge, subject to the following conditions:

Security deposits charged by owners may not exceed those charged to unassisted tenants nor the maximum prescribed by State or local law.

For lease-in-place families, responsibility for first and last month's rent is not considered a security deposit issue. In these cases, the owner should settle the issue with the tenant prior to the beginning of assistance.

E. TERM OF VOUCHER [24 CFR 982.303, 982.54(d)(11)]

During the briefing session, each household will be issued a voucher which represents a contractual agreement between the PHA and the Family specifying the rights and responsibilities of each party. It does not constitute admission to the program which occurs when the lease and contract become effective.

Expirations

The Voucher is valid for a period of at least ninety (90) calendar days from the date of issuance. The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and Lease within the ninety-day period unless an extension has been granted by the PHA.

If the Voucher has expired, and has not been extended by the PHA or expires after an extension, the family will be denied assistance. The family will not be entitled to a review or hearing. If the family is currently assisted, they may remain as a participant in their unit if there is an assisted lease/contract in effect.

Suspensions

When a Request for Approval of Tenancy is received, the PHA will deduct the number of days required to process the request from the 90 day term of the voucher.

Extensions

The PHA will extend the term up to 150 days from the beginning of the initial term if the family needs and request an extension as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by a family member with a disability. If as a reasonable accommodation, the family needs an extension in excess of 150 days, they must request the same in writing, prior to the expiration date of the voucher. The PHA may grant such a request.

A family may request an extension of the voucher time period. All requests for extensions must be received, in writing, prior to the expiration date of the voucher.

Extensions are permissible at the discretion of the PHA up to a maximum of an additional 60 days primarily for these reasons:

- Extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization or a family emergency for an extended period of time which has affected the family's ability to find a unit within the initial 90 day period. Verification is required.
- The PHA is satisfied that the family has made a reasonable effort to locate a unit, including seeking the assistance of the PHA, throughout the initial 90 day period. A completed search record **is** required.
- The family was prevented from finding a unit due to disability accessibility requirements or bedroom unit requirement. The Search Record is part of the required verification.

The PHA extends in one or more increments. Unless approved by the Director or the Assistant Director of Rental Assistance, extensions will not exceed more than a total of an additional sixty days to the initial term of the voucher. HOC may grant extensions for other non-listed reasons through December 31, 2021. This temporary policy is in accordance with waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

Assistance to Voucher Holders

Families who require additional assistance during their search may call the PHA Office to request assistance. Voucher holders will be notified at their briefing session that the PHA periodically updates the listing of available units and how the updated list may be obtained.

The PHA will assist families with negotiations with owners and provide other assistance related to the families' search for housing.

After the first 30 days of the search the family is required to maintain a search record.

G. VOUCHER ISSUANCE DETERMINATION FOR SPLIT HOUSEHOLDS

24 CFR 982.315]

In those instances when a family assisted under the Section 8 program becomes divided into two otherwise eligible families due to divorce, legal separation, or the division of the family, and the new families cannot agree as to which new family unit should continue to receive the assistance, and there is no determination by a court, the Director of Rental Assistance shall consider the following factors to determine which of the families will continue to be assisted:

- Which of the two new family units has custody of dependent children.
- Which family member was the head of household when the Voucher was initially issued (listed on the initial application).
- The composition of the new family units, and which unit contains elderly or disabled members.
- Whether domestic violence was involved in the breakup.
- Which family members remain in the unit.
- Recommendations of social service professionals.

Documentation of these factors will be the responsibility of the requesting parties.

If documentation is not provided, the PHA will terminate assistance on the basis of failure to provide information necessary for a recertification.

H. REMAINING MEMBER OF TENANT FAMILY - RETENTION OF VOUCHER

[24 CFR 982.315]

To be considered the remaining member of the tenant family, the person must have been previously approved by the PHA to be living in the unit.

A live-in attendant, by definition, is not a member of the family and will not be considered a remaining member of the Family.

In order for a minor child to continue to receive assistance as a remaining family member:

- The court has to have awarded emancipated minor status to the minor, or
- The PHA has to have verified that social services and/or the Juvenile Court has arranged for another adult to be brought into the assisted unit to care for the child(ren) for an indefinite period.

A reduction in family size may require a reduction in the voucher family unit size.

I. SPLIT HOUSEHOLDS DURING PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

When families currently receiving assistance split, the current head of household retains continual voucher assistance. Remaining family members must separately apply when the waiting list is open to receive assistance.

Chapter 9

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF TENANCY AND CONTRACT EXECUTION

[24 CFR 982.302]

INTRODUCTION [24 CFR 982.305(a)]

The PHA's program operations are designed to utilize available resources in a manner that is efficient and provides eligible families timely assistance based on the number of units that have been budgeted. The PHA's objectives include maximizing HUD funds by providing assistance to as many eligible families and for as many eligible units as the budget will allow.

After families are issued a voucher, they may search for a unit anywhere within the jurisdiction of the PHA or outside of the PHA's jurisdiction if they qualify for portability. The family must find an eligible unit under the program rules, with an owner/landlord who is willing to enter into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract with the PHA. This Chapter defines the types of eligible housing, the PHA's policies that pertain to initial inspections, lease requirements, owner disapproval, and the processing of Requests For Approval of Tenancy (RFAT).

A. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF TENANCY [24 CFR 982.302, 982.305(b)]

The Request for Approval of Tenancy (RFAT) and a copy of the proposed Lease, including the HUD prescribed tenancy addendum, must be submitted by the family during the term of the voucher. The family must submit the Request for Approval of Tenancy in the form and manner required by the PHA.

The Request for Approval of Tenancy must be signed by both the owner and Voucher holder.

The PHA will not permit the family to submit more than one RFAT at a time.

The PHA will review the proposed lease and the Request for Approval of Tenancy documents to determine whether or not they are approvable. The Request will be approved if:

The unit is an eligible type of housing

The unit meets HUD's Housing Quality Standards (and any additional criteria as identified in this Administrative Plan)

The rent is reasonable

The Security Deposit is approvable in accordance with any limitations in this plan.

The proposed lease complies with HUD and PHA requirements (See "Lease Review" section below).

The owner is approvable, and there are no conflicts of interest (See "Owner Disapproval" section below). In addition to the above, at the time a family initially receives assistance (new admissions and moves), the family share of rent may not exceed 40 percent of the family monthly adjusted income (See "Owner Rents, Rent Reasonableness and Payment Standards" chapter of this Administrative Plan).

Disapproval of RFAT

When, for any reason, an RFAT is not approved, the PHA will furnish another RFAT form to the family so that the family can continue to search for eligible housing.

B. **ELIGIBLE TYPES OF HOUSING** [24 CFR 982.353, 982.54(d)(15)]

The PHA will approve any of the following types of housing in the Voucher program: All structure types can be utilized.

Manufactured homes where the tenant leases the mobile home and the pad.

Manufactured homes where the tenant owns the mobile home and leases the pad for Vouchers

Congregate facilities (only the shelter rent is assisted)

Single Room Occupancy

Units owned (but not subsidized) by the PHA (following HUD-prescribed requirements).

A family can own a rental unit but cannot reside in it while being assisted, except in the case when the tenant owns the mobile home and leases the pad. A family may lease in and have an interest in a cooperative housing development.

The PHA may not permit a voucher holder to lease a unit that is receiving Project-Based Section 8 assistance or any duplicative rental subsidies.

C. **LEASE REVIEW** [24 CFR 982.308]

Actions Before Lease Term

All of the following must always be completed before the beginning of the initial term of the lease for a unit:

The PHA has inspected the unit and has determined that the unit satisfies the HQS;

The landlord and the tenant have executed the lease, including the HUD-prescribed tenancy addendum; and

The PHA has approved leasing of the unit in accordance with program requirements.

D. SEPARATE AGREEMENTS

Separate agreements are not necessarily illegal side agreements. Families and owners will be advised of the prohibition of illegal side payments for additional rent, or for items normally included in the rent of unassisted families, or for items not shown on the approved lease.

The family is not liable under the lease for unpaid charges for items covered by separate agreements and nonpayment of these agreements cannot be cause for eviction.

Owners and families may execute separate agreements for services, appliances (other than range and refrigerator) and other items that are not included in the lease if the agreement is in writing and approved by the PHA.

Any appliances, services or other items that are routinely provided to unassisted families as part of the lease (such as air conditioning, dishwasher or garage) or are permanently installed in the unit, cannot be put under separate agreement and must be included in the lease. For there to be a separate agreement, the family must have the option of not utilizing the service, appliance or other item.

If the family and owner have come to a written agreement on the amount of allowable charges for a specific item, so long as those charges are reasonable and not a substitute for higher rent, they will be allowed.

All agreements for special items or services must be attached to the lease approved by the PHA. If agreements are entered into at a later date, they must be approved by the PHA and attached to the lease.

The PHA will not approve separate agreements for modifications to the unit for persons with disabilities. The modifications are usually within the dwelling and are critical to the use of the dwelling.

E. INITIAL INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.305(a) & (b)]

See "Housing Quality Standards and Inspections" chapter of this Administrative Plan.

E. RENT LIMITATIONS [24 CFR 982.503]

The PHA will make a determination as to the reasonableness of the proposed rent in relation to comparable units available for lease on the private unassisted market, and the rent charged by the owner for a comparable unassisted unit in the building or premises.

G. DISAPPROVAL OF PROPOSED RENT [24 CFR 982.502]

In any of the programs, if the proposed Gross Rent is not reasonable, at the family's request, the PHA will negotiate with the owner to reduce the rent to a reasonable rent.

At the family's request, the PHA will negotiate with the owner to reduce the rent or include some or all of the utilities in the rent to owner.

If the rent can be approved after negotiations with the owner, the PHA will continue processing the RFAT and Lease. If the revised rent involves a change in the provision of utilities, a new RFAT must be submitted by the owner.

If the owner does not agree on the Rent to Owner after the PHA has tried and failed to negotiate a revised rent, the PHA will inform the family and owner that the lease is disapproved.

H. INFORMATION TO OWNERS [24 CFR 982.307(b), 982.54(d)(7)]

In accordance with HUD requirements, the PHA will furnish, upon written request to the prospective owners, the name and address of the last known landlord.

The PHA will inform owners that it is the responsibility of the landlord to determine the suitability of prospective tenants. Owners will be encouraged to screen applicants for rent payment history, payment of utility bills, eviction history, respecting the rights of other residents, damage to units, drug-related criminal activity or other criminal activity that is a threat to the health, safety or property of others, and compliance with other essential conditions of tenancy.

A statement of the PHA's policy on release of information to prospective landlords will be included in the briefing packet that is provided to the family.

The PHA will not provide documented information regarding tenancy history to prospective landlords.

The PHA will not furnish prospective owners with information about the family's rental history, or any history of drug trafficking.

I. OWNER DISAPPROVAL [24 CFR 982.306]

See Chapter on "Owner Disapproval and Restriction."

J. CHANGE IN TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT (TTP) PRIOR TO HAP EFFECTIVE DATE

When the family reports changes in factors that will affect the Total Family Share prior to the effective date of the HAP contract at admission, the information will be verified and the Total Family Share will be recalculated. If the family does not report any change, the PHA need not obtain new verifications before signing the HAP Contract, even if verifications are more than 60 days old.

K. CONTRACT EXECUTION PROCESS [24 CFR 982.305(c)]

The PHA prepares the Housing Assistance Contract for execution. The owner and family will execute the Lease agreement. The owner and the PHA will execute the HAP Contract. A copy of the HAP contract will be furnished to the landlord who signed the respective documents. The PHA will retain a copy of all signed documents.

The PHA makes every effort to execute the HAP Contract before the commencement of the lease term. The HAP Contract may not be executed more than 60 days after commencement of the lease term and no payments will be made until the contract is executed. Through December 31, 2021 HOC may execute the HAP contract no later than 120 days from the beginning of the lease term. This temporary policy is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

The Director of Rental Assistance or other designated official is/are authorized to execute a contract on behalf of the PHA.

Owners must provide the current address of their residence (not a Post Office box). If families lease properties owned by relatives, the owner's current address will be compared to the subsidized unit's address.

The owner must provide a home telephone number and business number if applicable.

Unless the lease was effective prior to June 17, 1998, a family may not lease properties owned by a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any family member. The PHA may waive this restriction as a reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with a disability.

L. **CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP** See Owner Disapproval and Restriction" chapter.

Reserved

Chapter 10

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS AND INSPECTIONS

[24 CFR 982.401]

INTRODUCTION

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) are the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) minimum quality standards for tenant-based programs. All voucher units are required to meet HQS standards both at initial occupancy and during the term of the lease. HQS standards apply to the building and premises, as well as to the unit. Newly leased units must pass the HQS inspection before the beginning date of the assisted lease and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract.

HOC inspects each unit under contract with one of its voucher families at least annually. HOC also has an inspection supervisor perform quality control inspections on the number of files required for file sampling for the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) annually to maintain HOC's required standards and to assure consistency in HOC's program. A separate sample, also meeting SEMAP thresholds, of any owner-certified repairs following a failed inspection is subject to quality control review by an HOC inspections supervisor. This Chapter describes HOC's procedures for performing HQS and other types of inspections, and HOC's standards for the timeliness of deficiency repairs following a failed inspection. This Chapter also explains the responsibilities of the owner and the family in the inspections process, and the consequences of non-compliance with HQS requirements for both families and owners. The use of the term "HQS" in this Administrative Plan refers to the combination of both HUD and HOC's requirements. Please see the additions to HQS listed under "Acceptability Criteria and Exceptions to HQS" later in this chapter for more information about HOC's additions to HUD's HQS criteria.

A. GUIDELINES/ TYPES OF INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.401(a), 982.405]

At all times, HOC encourages owners to provide housing above HQS minimum standards. HOC does not promote any additional acceptability criteria which is likely to adversely affect the health or safety of participant families, or severely restrict housing choice.

All utilities must be active and in service prior to the HOC's inspection of the unit. If the utilities are not in service at the time of inspection, the inspector notifies the tenant or owner (whomever is responsible for the utilities according to the Request for Tenancy Approval [RFTA]) and requests that the utilities are turned on. The inspector then schedules a re-inspection.

There are five types of inspections which HOC performs:

1. Initial/Move-in: Conducted upon receipt of RFTA;
2. Annual: Conducted within 12 months of the last annual inspection;

3. Special/Complaint: At the request of an owner, family, agency, or third-party;
4. Quality Control: Conducted by HOC's inspection lead or supervisor; and
5. Move-Out/Vacate: An inspection requested by the landlord to demonstrate tenant-caused damages.

B. INITIAL HOS INSPECTION [24 CFR 982.401(a)]

Timely Initial HOS Inspection

HOC inspects the unit, determines whether the unit satisfies HQS and notifies the family and owner of the determination in writing within 15 days unless HOC determines that it is unable to do so in the stated timeframe; in which case the file is appropriately documented to explain the delayed notification. Through December 31, 2021, HOC may rely the owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life threatening conditions exist in the unit instead of conducting an initial inspection. HOC must conduct an inspection in the unit no later than 1 year from the date of the owner's certification. This temporary provision is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

Through December 31, 2021, HOC may authorize occupancy of a unit if the unit passed an alternative inspection in the previous 24 months. The owner must certify that he/ she has reasonable basis to have knowledge that no life threatening conditions exist in the unit. HOC must conduct the HQS inspection no later than 1 year from the date of the owner's certification This temporary provision is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

HOC makes every reasonable effort to conduct initial HQS inspections for the family and owner in a manner that is time efficient and indicative of good customer service.

HOC periodically reviews the average time required for a family and owner to have a unit inspected from the time the RFTA is submitted by the family and owner to HOC.

If HOC determines after a periodic review of files that the average time for a family and owner to obtain an initial inspection is longer than 15 days, HOC will review staffing needs relevant to HQS inspection and make improvements.

The Initial Inspection is conducted to:

Determine if the unit and property meet the HQS defined in this Administrative Plan.

Document the current condition of the unit as to assist in future evaluations whether the condition of the unit exceeds normal wear and tear.

Document the information used for determination of rent-reasonableness.

If the unit fails the initial HQS inspection, the owner is advised to notify HOC once repairs are completed.

On an initial inspection, the owner is given up to 30 days to correct the items noted as failed, at the inspector's discretion, depending on the amount and complexity of work to be done.

HOC may provide the owner an additional 30 days to make repairs for non-life threatening deficiencies. The period of availability to approve an additional 30 days is temporary and ends December 31, 2021. This temporary provision is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

The owner is allowed up to one re-inspection for repair work to be completed. At its discretion, HOC may accept owner certification that the repairs were completed as detailed in the initial inspection.

If the time period given by the inspector to correct the repairs elapses, or the maximum number of failed re-inspections occurs, then the family must select another unit.

Families are not adversely impacted by the failure of a unit to pass the initial HQS inspection. Instead, HOC extends the remaining time on the voucher by suspending the voucher timeline from the date of HOC's receipt of the RFTA until notification to select another unit. This is known as tolling time.

Project-Based Voucher (PBV)

Pre-HAP Contract Inspections- HOC is not required to conduct pre-contract inspections and may rely on the owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life threatening conditions exist in the PBV units. HOC must inspect the units no later than 1 year from the date of the owner's certification. This temporary provision expires on December 31, 2021 is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

PBV Turnover Inspections: HOC may waive the initial inspection requirement to fill a turnover PBV unit. HOC may rely on the owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life threatening conditions exist in the PBV units. HOC must inspect the units no later than 1 year from the date of the owner's certification. This temporary provision expires on December 31, 2021 and is in accordance with waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

PBV HAP Contract – HQS Inspections to Substitute Units

HOC may amend the PBV HAP Contract to add additional PBV contract units or to substitute a different unit for a previously covered contract unit without conducting an initial inspection. This is subject to the PBV program cap and income mixing requirements. HOC may rely on the owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life threatening conditions exist in the unit or units in question. HOC must inspect the than no later than 1 year from the date of the owner's certification. This temporary provision expires on December 31, 2021 and is in accordance with waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

C. ANNUAL HOS INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(a)]

HOC conducts a unit inspection in accordance with HQS at least annually. These annual inspections are scheduled for 60 days prior to the anniversary of the last annual inspection, so that the inspections are conducted at least annually, as required by the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP). Special inspections may be scheduled between anniversary dates.

Landlords must correct any HQS deficiencies that cause a unit to fail unless it is a fail for which the tenant is responsible.

The family must allow HOC to inspect the unit at reasonable times with reasonable notice. [24 CFR 982.51 (d)]

Inspections are conducted on business days only.

Reasonable hours to conduct an inspection are between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

HOC notifies the family in writing at least three days prior to the inspection.

First Inspection: The family and the owner are notified of the date and time of the inspection appointment in writing using postal or electronic mail. The family is required to provide access to the unit for any inspection. If the family is unable to participate and is unable to otherwise arrange access, they must reschedule the appointment. Rescheduling must occur within 72 hours of the initial scheduled inspection date. HOC permits only one such rescheduling per year.

If the family fails to provide access to the unit, HOC considers the family to have violated a Family Obligation and their assistance may be terminated in accordance with the termination procedures in this Administrative Plan. HOC will reschedule up to one HQS inspection, due to a missed appointment, as long as the inspection is completed within scheduling requirements.

Re-inspection: The family and owner are provided a notice of any re-inspection appointment by postal or electronic mail. HOC may accept owner certification that the repairs were completed as detailed in the initial inspection. If the family is not at home for the re-inspection appointment, a card is left at the unit. The appointment letter contains a warning of abatement and a notice of the owner's responsibility. After this point, responsibility to open the unit for the inspector falls on the unit owner or landlord.

The family is also notified that it is a Family Obligation to allow HOC to inspect the unit. If the family is responsible for a breach of HQS identified in the "Denial or Termination of Assistance" chapter of this Administrative Plan, they will be advised of their responsibility to correct.

Time Standards for Repairs

Emergency items which endanger the family's health or safety must be corrected by the owner within 24 hours of notification. (See Emergency Repair Items section.)

For non-emergency items, repairs are required within 30 days.

Failure by either the family or the owner to provide access to the unit for re-inspection does not extend the 30-day time frame to complete repairs, and HOC will abate the unit.

For major repairs, HOC may approve a written request from the owner for an extension beyond 30 days.

Rent Increases: HOC may not approve rent to owner increases if the unit is in a failed condition.

D. SPECIAL/COMPLAINT INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(c)]

If at any time the family or owner notifies HOC that the unit does not meet HQS, HOC will conduct an inspection to verify the condition of the unit. If the reported deficiency is life threatening HOC will notify the owner of the deficiency in lieu of conducting an inspection. The owner must correct the deficiency within 24 hours of the HOC notification or provide documentation that the deficiency does not exist. HOC is not required to conduct an on-site inspection to verify that the repairs have been made, but may rely on alternative verification methods. This temporary provision expires on December 31, 2021 and is in accordance with the w a v i e r flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

HOC may also conduct a special inspection based on information from third parties such as neighbors or public officials.

HOC will inspect only the items which were reported, but if the Inspector notices additional deficiencies that would cause the unit to fail HQS, the responsible party will be required to make the necessary repairs following the special inspection.

If the annual inspection date is within 120 days of a special inspection, and as long as all items are inspected that are included in an annual inspection, the special inspection may be categorized as the annual inspection and all annual procedures will be followed at that time.

E. QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(b)]

Quality Control inspections are performed by the Housing Inspections Supervisor, or another designated official, on the number of files required by SEMAP for the given fiscal year. The purpose of Quality Control inspections is to confirm that each inspector is conducting accurate and complete inspections, and to ensure that there is consistency among inspectors in application of the HQS.

The sampling of files for the Quality Control inspections includes recently completed inspections (within the prior 90 days), a cross-section of neighborhoods, and a cross-section of inspectors.

F. MOVE OUT/VACATE

A move out inspection is performed only at the landlord's request. HOC may charge the landlord a fee in order to conduct these inspections.

G. ACCEPTABILITY CRITERIA AND EXCEPTIONS TO HQS [24 CFR 982.401(a)]

HOC strictly adheres to the acceptability criteria in the Housing Choice Voucher program regulations at 24 CFR, Section 982. However, HOC amends the acceptability criteria to require that an owner participating in the HOC's voucher program comply with the local government rental licensing requirements in Montgomery County, Maryland. HOC allows owners adequate time to obtain the required license(s). However, HOC will not enter into a HAP contract with an unlicensed owner. HOC may hold HAP from an owner under contract when HOC is notified by Montgomery County that the owner failed to maintain the appropriate rental license(s).

Modifications

Modifications or adaptations to a unit due to a disability must meet all applicable HQS and building codes.

Extension for repair items not required by HQS may be granted for modifications/ adaptations to the unit if agreed to by the tenant and the landlord. HOC will allow execution of the HAP contract if the unit meets all requirements and the modifications do not affect the livability of the unit.

H. EMERGENCY REPAIR ITEMS [24 CFR 982.401(a)]

The following items are considered of an emergency nature and require repair by the owner or tenant (whoever is responsible) within 24 hours of notice by the inspector:

- Lack of security for the unit;
- Waterlogged ceiling in imminent danger of falling;
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding;
- Natural gas leaks or fumes;
- Electrical problems which could result in shock or fire;
- No heat when the outside temperature is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit and the temperature inside the unit is below 68 degrees Fahrenheit;
- Utilities not in service;
- No running hot water;
- Broken glass where someone could be injured;
- Obstacle which prevents tenant's entrance or exit;
- Lack of functioning toilet; and

- Non-working smoke detector or missing smoke detector, as required.

HOC may give a short extension (not more than 48 additional hours) if immediate notification of the responsible party is delayed or if it is impossible to make the repair within the 24-hour period.

In those cases where there is leaking gas, potential for fire, or other threat to public safety, and the responsible party cannot be notified immediately or it is impossible to make the repair within 24 hours, HOC will notify the proper authorities.

If the emergency repair item(s) are not corrected in the time period required by HOC, and the owner is responsible, payments to the owner are abated and the HAP contract is terminated.

If the emergency repair item(s) are not corrected in the time period required by HOC, and it is an HQS breach that is a family obligation, HOC terminates the assistance to the family.

Smoke Detectors

Inoperable smoke detectors are a serious health and safety threat and are treated by HOC as an emergency (24-hour) fail item.

HOC will issue a written warning to any family determined to have purposely disconnected a unit's smoke detector. The warning will state that deliberate disconnection of the unit's smoke detector is a health and fire hazard and is considered a violation of HQS.

I. CONSEQUENCES IF OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE (NON-EMERGENCY ITEMS) [24 CFR 982.405, 982.453]

If a unit fails to meet HQS due to an owner-caused deficiency at the re-inspection, the HAP to the owner is abated.

Abatement

A Notice of Abatement is sent to the owner, explaining that the abatement is effective from the day after the date of the failed inspection. The notice is for 30 days.

HOC will inspect abated units within 15 days of the owner's notification that the repair work is completed.

If the owner makes repairs during the abatement period, payment resumes on the day the unit passes inspection.

No retroactive payments are made to the owner for the abatement period. The notice of abatement states that the tenant is not responsible for HOC's portion of rent during the abatement. However, the tenant must continue to pay their portion of the rent even during the abatement period.

Reduction of Payments

HOC may grant an extension in lieu of abatement in the following cases:

The owner is experiencing extenuating circumstances and has a good history of HQS compliance.

- There is an unavoidable delay in completing repairs due to difficulties in obtaining parts or contracting for services.
- The owner makes a good faith effort to make the repairs.
- The repairs are expensive (such as exterior painting or roof repair) and the owner needs time to obtain the necessary funds.
- The repairs are delayed due to climate conditions.

Owners must provide supporting documentation to request abatement extension. Extensions are made for a period of time not to exceed 30 days. At the end of that time, at HOC's discretion, if the work is not completed, HOC will begin the abatement.

Termination of Contract

If the owner is responsible for repairs, and fails to correct all of the deficiencies cited prior to the end of the abatement period (which is 30 days), the owner and the tenant are sent a HAP Contract Proposed Termination Notice. The tenant is also notified of a scheduled relocation appointment. The proposed termination notice is a 60-day notice. The family is required to begin the process to relocate from the unit or risk termination from the program. Prior to the effective date of the termination, if the repairs are not completed, the abatement remains in effect.

If repairs are completed before the effective termination date, the termination may be rescinded by HOC if the tenant chooses to remain in the unit. Only one HQS inspection is conducted after the termination notice is issued.

I. DETERMINATION OF RESPONSIBILITY [24 CFR 982.404, 982.54(d)(14)]

Certain HQS deficiencies are considered the responsibility of the family, such as:

- Tenant-paid utilities not in service
- Failure to provide or maintain family-supplied appliances
- Damage to the unit, or premises, caused by a household member or guest beyond normal wear and tear
 - "Normal wear and tear" is defined as items which could be charged against the tenant's security deposit under state law or court practice.
- Vermin infestation in a rented single-family home or other detached unit.

The owner is responsible for all other HQS violations.

The owner is responsible for any vermin infestation for multifamily and non-detached units. However, if such infestation is caused by the family's living habits and is serious and repeated, it may be considered a lease violation. The owner may then evict the family for violation of the lease. HOC may choose to terminate the family's assistance on that basis as well.

If the family is responsible but the owner carries out the repairs, the owner is encouraged to bill the family for the cost of the repairs.

K. CONSEQUENCES IF FAMILY IS RESPONSIBLE [24 CFR 982.404(b)]

If the family is responsible for any emergency or non-emergency violations of HQS, then the family is responsible to work with the owner or landlord to make any repair(s) or corrections within 24 hours or 30 days, as appropriate. If the repair(s) or correction(s) are not made in this time period, HOC will terminate assistance to the family, after providing an opportunity for an informal hearing. Extensions in these cases require approval by the Housing Inspector Supervisor or another designated official. The owner's rent is not abated for items that are the family's responsibility.

If the tenant is responsible and corrections are not made, the HAP Contract is terminated when the assistance to the family is terminated. HOC will provide the owner with adequate notice (no less than 30 days) of the termination date of the HAP. Contract cancellation due to tenant-caused HQS deficiencies does not preclude the owner from immediately executing a new HAP with HOC for another voucher tenant.

Chapter 21

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOMEOWNERSHIP OPTION

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program of the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, Maryland ("HOC") offers eligible participants in the Housing Choice Voucher program, including participants with portable vouchers, the option of purchasing a home with their Housing Choice Voucher assistance rather than renting. This is a program, which is limited to up to twenty-five (25). As many as three (3) slots are designated for households meeting HUD definition of disabled.

Participants will be chosen through the Commission-approved random selection and screening process.

Eligible applicants for the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program must be participants in the Housing Choice Voucher rental program, may not owe HOC or any other Housing Authority an outstanding debt (unless they are making regular payments on the debt), and must meet the eligibility criteria set forth herein.

Housing Choice Voucher homeownership assistance may be used to purchase a home within Montgomery County (excluding the city of Rockville). HOC also will permit portability of Housing Choice Voucher homeownership assistance to another jurisdiction, provided the receiving jurisdiction operates and has an opening in Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program for which the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership applicant qualifies.

B. FAMILY ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Participation in the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program is voluntary. Each Housing Choice Voucher homeownership applicant must meet the general requirements for admission to the Housing Choice Voucher program as set forth in HOC's Administrative Plan. Such Housing Choice Voucher family also must be "eligible" to participate in the homeownership program. The additional eligibility requirements for participation in HOC's Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program include that the family must: (1) be a first-time homeowner or have a member who is a person with disabilities; (2) with the exception of elderly and disabled households, meet a minimum income requirement without counting income from "welfare assistance" sources; (3) with the exception of elderly and disabled households, meet the requisite employment criteria; (4) be a current participant in the Housing Choice Voucher program; (5) have fully repaid any outstanding debt owed to HOC or any other Housing Authority (unless they are making regular payments); (6) not defaulted on a mortgage securing debt to purchase a home under the homeownership option; and (7) not have any member who has a present ownership interest in a residence at the commencement of homeownership assistance.

1. First-Time Homeowner.

Each Housing Choice Voucher family, except families with a disabled member, must be a first-time homeowner. A "first-time homeowner" means that no member of the household has had an ownership interest in any residence during the three years preceding commencement of home- ownership assistance. However, a single parent or displaced homemaker who, while married, owned a home with a spouse (or resided in a home owned by a spouse), and no longer owns the home, is considered a "first-time homeowner" for purposes of the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership option; and the right to purchase title to a residence under a lease-purchase agreement is not considered an "ownership interest."

2. Minimum Income Requirement.

(a) Amount of Income.

At the time the family begins receiving homeownership assistance, the head of household, spouse, and/or other adult household members who will own the home must have a gross annual income of \$24,000.

(b) Exclusion of Welfare Assistance Income.

With the exception of elderly and disabled families, HOC will disregard any "welfare assistance" income in determining whether the family meets the minimum income requirement. Welfare assistance includes assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ("TANF"), Supplemental Security Income ("SSI") that is subject to an income eligibility test, food stamps, general assistance, or other welfare assistance specified by HUD. The disregard of welfare assistance income under this section affects the determination of minimum monthly income in determining initial qualification for the homeownership program. It does not affect the determination of income-eligibility for admission to the Housing Choice Voucher program, calculation of the family's total tenant payment, or calculation of the amount of homeownership assistance payments.

3. Employment History.

With the exception of disabled and elderly households, each family must demonstrate that one or more adult members of the family who will own the home at commencement of homeownership assistance is employed full-time (an average of 30 hours per week) and has been so continuously employed for one year prior to execution of the sales agreement. In order to reasonably accommodate a family's enrollment in the program, HOC will exempt families that include a person with disabilities from this requirement. HOC's Executive Director may also consider whether and to

what extent an employment interruption is considered permissible in satisfying the employment requirement. The Executive Director may also consider successive employment during the one-year period and self-employment in a business.

4. Current Participant in Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Applicants for and new applicants and participants in the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program must be current participants in the rental program and be in good standing with HOC.

5. Repayment of any Housing Authority Debts.

Applicants in the Housing Choice Voucher program shall be ineligible for participation in the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program in the event any debt or portion of a debt remains owed to HOC or any other Housing Authority. Nothing in this provision will preclude Housing Choice Voucher participants that have fully repaid such debt(s) from applying for and participating in the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program (unless they are making regular payments on the debt).

6. Additional Eligibility Factors.

(a) Elderly and Disabled Households.

Elderly and disabled families are exempt from the employment requirements set forth in Section B (3) above. In the case of an elderly or disabled family, HOC will consider income from all sources, including welfare assistance, in evaluating whether the household meets the minimum income required to purchase a home through the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program.

(b) Participation in FSS Program.

In order to be selected for the homeownership program, all applicants, excluding those with disabilities, must have either successfully graduated from HOC's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program or be currently enrolled in HOC's FSS Program and completed two years of participation in HOC's Family Self-Sufficiency ("FSS") Program prior to completion of homeownership counseling, and be in good standing with the FSS Program, in order to apply for and participate in

the homeownership program. Persons with disabilities must have completed one year of participation in HOC's Family Self Sufficiency ("FSS") Program.

(c) Prior Mortgage Defaults.

If a head of household, spouse, or other adult household member who will execute the contract of sale, mortgage and loan documents has previously defaulted on a mortgage obtained through the Housing Choice Voucher home- ownership program, the family will be ineligible to participate in the homeownership program.

C. FAMILY PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Once a family is determined to be eligible to enroll in the program, it must comply with the following additional requirements: (1) complete a home- ownership counseling program approved by HOC prior to commencement of homeownership assistance; (2) within three years of completion of counseling, locate and contract for the home it proposes to purchase; (3) submit a sales agreement containing specific components to HOC for approval; (4) allow HOC to inspect the proposed homeownership dwelling to assure that the dwelling meets appropriate housing quality standards; (5) obtain an independent inspection covering major building systems; (6) obtain HOC approval of the proposed mortgage (which must comply with generally accepted mortgage underwriting requirements); and (7) enter into a written agreement with HOC to comply with all of its obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher program.

1. Homeownership Counseling Program.

A family's participation in the homeownership program is conditioned on the family attending and successfully completing a homeownership counseling program provided or approved by HOC prior to commencement of homeownership assistance. The homeownership and counseling program will include home maintenance; budgeting and money management; credit counseling; negotiating purchase price; securing mortgage financing; finding a home; and the advantages of purchasing and locating homes in areas that do not have a high concentration of low-income families. HOC may permit a family to purchase a home without fulfilling pre-assistance homeownership counseling requirements. This temporary provision expires December 30, 2021 in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

The counseling agency providing the counseling program shall be approved either by HUD and/or HOC, or the program shall be consistent with the homeownership counseling provided under HUD's Housing Counseling program. HOC may require families to participate in a HOC-approved homeownership counseling program on a continuing basis.

2. Locating and Purchasing a Home.

(a) Locating a Home.

Upon approval for the Housing Choice Voucher home- ownership program and completion of counseling, a family shall have three years to settle on a home to purchase. A home shall be considered located if the family submits a signed sales agreement with the requisite components to HOC. During a Housing Choice Voucher participant's search for a home to purchase, the Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance shall continue pursuant to the Administrative Plan. If a Housing Choice Voucher participant family is unable to locate a home within the time approved by HOC, their Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance through the Housing Choice Voucher program shall continue.

(b) Type of Home.

A family approved for Housing Choice Voucher homeownership assistance may purchase the following type of homes within Montgomery County: a new or existing home with a purchase price at or below the FNMA/FHLMC Single Family Loan Limits, a single-family home, a condominium, a home in a planned use development, a cooperative, a loft or live/work unit, or a manufactured home to be situated on a privately owned lot or on a leased pad in a mobile home park. The home must already exist or be under construction at the time HOC determines the family eligible for homeownership assistance to purchase the unit. The family also may purchase a home in a jurisdiction other than Montgomery County, provided the Housing Authority in the receiving jurisdiction operates a Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program for which the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership applicant qualifies. In such a case, a family's participation in the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program will be subject to the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program and policies of the receiving jurisdiction.

(c) Purchasing a Home.

Once a home is located and a sales agreement approved by HOC is signed by the family, the family shall have up to three (3) months, or such other time as is approved by HOC's Executive Director or set forth in the HOC-approved sales agreement, to purchase the home.

(d) Failure to Complete Purchase.

If a Housing Choice Voucher participant is unable to purchase the home within the maximum time permitted by HOC, HOC shall terminate the participant's enrollment in the home- ownership program. The family may

not re-apply for the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program until they have completed two additional years of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher program following the initial determination of their eligibility for the homeownership option.

(e) Lease-Purchase

Lease-purchase agreements are not permitted.

(f) Down Payment

The family must meet a minimum homeowner down payment requirement of at least three percent of the purchase price for participation in the Voucher homeownership program. At least one percent of the purchase price must come from the family's personal resources.

3. Sales Agreement.

Prior to execution of the offer to purchase or sales agreement, the financing terms must be provided by the family to HOC for approval. The sales agreement must provide for inspection by HOC and the independent inspection referred to in Section C(4) and must state that the purchaser is not obligated to purchase unless such inspections are satisfactory to HOC. The contract also must provide that the purchaser is not obligated to pay for any necessary repairs. The sales agreement must provide that the purchaser is not obligated to purchase if the mortgage financing terms are not approved by HOC pursuant to Section C(6). The sales agreement must also contain a seller certification that the seller is not debarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation under 24 CFR part 24.

4. Independent Initial Inspection Conducted.

To assure the home complies with the housing quality standards of the Housing Choice Voucher program, homeownership assistance payments may not commence until HOC first inspects the home. An independent inspection of existing homes covering major building systems also must be completed by a professional selected by the family and approved by HOC. HOC will not pay for the independent inspection. The independent inspection report must be provided to HOC. HOC may disapprove the unit due to information contained in the report or for failure to meet federal housing quality standards. Through December 30, 2021 HOC may waive the initial homeownership inspection requirement. This temporary policy is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

5. Financing Requirements.

The proposed financing terms must be submitted to and approved by HOC prior to close of escrow. HOC will approve or disapprove the financing terms within five (5) business days. HOC shall determine the affordability of the family's proposed financing. In making such determination, HOC may take into account

other family expenses, including but not limited to child care, unreimbursed medical expenses, education and training expenses and the like. Certain types of financing, including but not limited to, balloon payment mortgages and adjustable rate mortgages, are prohibited and will not be approved by HOC. Seller-financing mortgages shall be considered by HOC on a case by case basis. If a mortgage is not FHA-insured, HOC will require the lender to comply with generally accepted mortgage underwriting standards consistent with those of HUD/ FHA, Ginnie Mae, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta, or other private lending institution.

A second trust for closing costs is permitted.

6. Family Compliance with Program Policies.

A family must agree, in writing, to comply with all family obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher program and HOC's homeownership policies. These obligations include (1) attending ongoing home- ownership counseling, if required by HOC; (2) complying with the mortgage terms; (3) not selling or transferring the home to anyone other than a member of the assisted family who resides in the home while receiving homeownership assistance; (4) not refinancing or adding debt secured by the home without prior approval by HOC; (5) not obtaining a present ownership interest in another residence while receiving home- ownership assistance; and (6) supplying all required information to HOC including, but not limited to, annual verification of household income, notice of change in homeownership expenses, notice of move-out, and notice of mortgage default. HOC's Homeownership Family Obligation policies are set forth in Appendix A. Once the home purchase is complete, the family becomes a participant in the HCV homeownership program.

D. AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE

The amount of the monthly assistance payment will be based on three factors: the voucher payment standard for which the family is eligible, the monthly home- ownership expenses, and the family's household income. HOC will pay the lower of either the payment standard minus the total family contribution ("TFC") or the family's monthly homeownership expenses minus the TFC. The Housing Choice Voucher family will pay the difference.

1. Determining the Payment Standard.

The voucher payment standard is the fixed dollar amount the HOC annually establishes for a unit of a particular size located within the HOC jurisdiction. In the homeownership program, the initial payment standard will be the lower of either (1) the payment standard for which the family is eligible based on family size, or (2) the payment standard which is applicable to the size of the home the

family decides to purchase. The payment standard for subsequent years will be based on the higher of: (1) the payment standard in effect at commencement of the homeownership assistance, or (2) the payment standard in effect at the most recent regular reexamination of the family's income and size. The initial payment standard, for purposes of this comparison, shall not be adjusted even if there is a subsequent decrease in family size.

Exception rents, if in effect for the Housing Choice Voucher rental program, will also apply to the homeownership program.

2. Determining the Monthly Homeownership Expense.

Monthly homeownership expense includes all of the following: principal and interest on the initial mortgage and any mortgage insurance premium (MIP) incurred to finance the purchase and any refinancing of such debt; real estate taxes and public assessments; homeowner's insurance; maintenance expenses per HOC allowance; costs of major repairs and replacements per HOC allowance (replacement reserves); utility allowance per HOC's schedule of utility allowances; principal and interest on mortgage debt incurred to finance major repairs, replacements or improvements for the home including changes needed to make the home accessible; and homeowner association dues, fees or regular charges assessed, if any. Homeownership expenses for a cooperative member may only include HOC approved amounts for the cooperative charge under the cooperative occupancy agreement including payment for real estate taxes and public assessments on the home; principal and interest on initial debt incurred to finance purchase of cooperative membership shares and any refinancing of such debt; home insurance; the allowances for maintenance expenses, major repairs and replacements and utilities; and principal and interest on debt incurred to finance major repairs, replacements, or improvements, including changes needed to make the home accessible.

3. Determining the Total Family Contribution

The TFC is that portion of the homeownership expense that the family must pay. It is generally 30% of the family's adjusted income plus any gap between the payment standard and the actual housing cost. All family income (including public assistance) will be counted to determine the family's adjusted monthly income for purposes of determining the amount of assistance.

4. Payment to Family or Lender.

HOC will provide the lender with notice of the amount of the housing assistance payment prior to close of escrow and will pay HOC's contribution towards the family's homeowner expense directly to the family unless otherwise required by the lender. The family will be responsible to submit the entire mortgage payment to the lender unless the lender requires direct payment of HOC's contribution.

ASSISTANCE

1. Grounds for Termination of Homeownership Assistance.

E. TERMINATION OF HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOMEOWNERSHIP

- (a) Failure to Comply with Family Obligations under Housing Choice Voucher Program or HOC's Homeownership Policies.

A family's homeownership assistance may be terminated if the family fails to comply with its obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher program, HOC homeownership policies, or if the family defaults on the mortgage. If required, the family must attend and complete ongoing homeownership and housing counseling classes. The family must comply with the terms of any mortgage incurred to purchase and/or refinance the home. The family must provide HOC with written notice of any sale or transfer of any interest in the home, any plan to move out of the home prior to the move, the family's household income and homeownership expenses on an annual basis, any notice of mortgage default received by the family, and any other notices which may be required pursuant to HOC homeownership policies. Except as otherwise provided in this Section, the family may not convey or transfer the home to any entity or person other than a member of the assisted family while receiving homeownership assistance.

- (b) Occupancy of Home.

Homeownership assistance will only be provided while the family resides in the home. If the family moves out of the home, HOC will not continue homeownership assistance commencing with the month after the family moves out. Neither the family nor the lender is obligated to reimburse HOC for homeownership assistance paid for the month the family moves out. HOC may extend the maximum term of home ownership assistance for 1 year if the family is in the last year of the term and is experiencing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This temporary policy is in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2020-13.

- (c) Changes in Income Eligibility.

A family's homeownership assistance may be changed in the month following annual recertification of the household income, but participation in the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership program shall continue until such time as the assistance payment amounts to \$0 for a period of six (6) consecutive months.

- (d) Maximum Term of Homeownership Assistance.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section E(1), subparagraphs (a) through (c), except for disabled and elderly families, a family may receive Housing Choice Voucher homeownership assistance for not longer than ten (10) years from the date of close of escrow unless the initial mortgage incurred to finance purchase of the home has a term that is 20 years or longer, in which case the maximum term is 15 years. Families that qualify as elderly at the commencement of homeownership assistance are not subject to a maximum term limitation. Families that qualify as disabled families at the commencement of homeownership assistance or at any time during the provision of homeownership assistance are not subject to a maximum term limitation. If a disabled family or elderly family ceases to qualify as disabled or elderly, the appropriate maximum term becomes applicable from the date homeownership assistance commenced provided, however, that such family shall be eligible for at least six additional months of homeownership assistance after the maximum term becomes applicable. The time limit applies to any member of the household who has an ownership interest in the unit during any time that homeownership payments are made or is a spouse of any member of the household who has an ownership interest.

2. Procedure for Termination of Homeownership Assistance.

A participant in the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership program is a family who has purchased a home in this program. Participants shall be entitled to the same termination notice and informal hearing procedures as set forth in the Administrative Plan of the HOC for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

E. CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

1. Default on FHA-Insured Mortgage.

If the family defaults on an FHA-insured mortgage, HOC may permit the family to move with continued Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance if the family demonstrates that it has (a) conveyed title to the home to HUD or its designee as required by HUD, and (b) moved from the home within the period established or approved by HUD.

2. Default on non-FHA-Insured Mortgage.

If the family defaults on a mortgage that is not FHA-insured, HOC may permit the family to move with continued Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance if the family demonstrates that it has (a) conveyed title to the home to the lender, to HOC or to its designee, as may be permitted or required by the lender; and (b)

moved from the home within the period established or approved by the lender and/or HOC.

3. Continued Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance

HOC will determine on a case-by-case basis, in compliance with federal law and regulations, if a family terminated from the home- ownership program will remain eligible Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance.

G. HOC ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

For each month that homeownership assistance is paid by HOC on behalf of the family, HOC shall be paid the ongoing administrative fee described in 24 C.F.R. §982.152(b).

H. WAIVER OR MODIFICATION OF HOMEOWNERSHIP POLICIES

The Executive Director of HOC shall have the discretion to waive or modify any provision of the Housing Choice Voucher homeownership program or policies not governed by statute or regulation for good cause or to comply with changes in HUD regulations or directives.

APPENDIX A: HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOMEOWNERSHIP OBLIGATIONS

This form is to be signed by the home buyer(s) in the presence of the Housing Opportunities Commission's (HOC) Homeownership Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will explain any and all clauses which you, the home buyer(s), may not understand.

The following paragraphs describe your responsibilities under the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program. If you or members of your household do not meet these responsibilities through your actions or your failure to act, you may be determined ineligible for or terminated from the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program.

1. Family Obligations: You must comply with all Family Obligations of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, excepting only the prohibition against owning or having an interest in the unit. Family Obligations §§ 982.551(c),(d),(e),(f),(g) and (j) do not apply to the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program.

2. Housing Counseling: All applicant family members (i.e. those who will be signing the purchase offer and loan documents) must satisfactorily complete a HOC provided or approved counseling program prior to commencement of homeownership assistance. HOC may require any or all applicant family members to attend additional housing counseling classes as a condition of continued assistance.

3. **Employment History:** With the exception of disabled and elderly households, each family must demonstrate that one or more adult members of the family who will own the home at commencement of homeownership assistance is employed full-time(an average of 30 hours per week) and has been so continuously employed for one year prior to execution of the sales agreement. In order to reasonably accommodate a family enrollment in the program, HOC will exempt families that include a person with disabilities from this requirement. HOC's Executive Director may also consider whether and to what extent an employment interruption is considered permissible in satisfying the employment requirement. The Executive Director may also consider successive employment during the one-year period and self-employment in a business.
4. **Purchase Contract:** You must include contract conditions in any Offer to Purchase that give HOC a reasonable time (a) to inspect the home for compliance with HUD's Housing Quality Standards, (b) to review and approve a professional home inspection report obtained by you from a HOC approved inspector, and (c) approve the terms of your proposed financing. Advise your real estate broker, agent or Realtor of these requirements. You must settle on a home within three years of completion of home ownership counseling.
5. **Mortgage Obligations:** You must comply with the terms of any mortgage incurred in the purchase of the property and must notify HOC's Homeownership Program Counselor within five (5) days of receipt of any late payment notice or default notice.
6. **Occupancy:** You must occupy the unit as your principal residence. You may not transfer, sell, or assign any interest in the property without HOC's prior written consent. You may not rent or lease any part of the premises without HOC's prior written consent. You must notify HOC in writing at least 30 days prior to moving out of the house for a period of 30 days or longer or prior to any sale, transfer, assignment, lease or other form of alienation of the assisted property.
7. **Maintenance:** You must maintain the property in a decent, safe and sanitary manner in compliance with County codes and other prevailing standards. You must allow HOC to inspect the property within one-week of a demand by HOC to conduct an inspection. You must correct any notice of deficiency issued by HOC within the time limit specified in the notice. If you fail to adequately maintain the property, HOC may divert the maintenance and replacement reserves portions, if applicable, of the Homeownership Assistance Payment to an escrow account to be used to pay for reasonable and necessary maintenance expenses.
8. **Annual Re-examination:** You must annually provide HOC with current information regarding family income and composition in a format required by HOC.
9. **Refinancing:** You must notify HOC in writing of any proposal to refinance the original purchase mortgage or of any proposal to encumber the property with secondary financing and obtain HOC's written approval of such financing prior to executing any loan documents.
10. **Default:** In the event of a default on your mortgage obligation, you must cooperate with HOC and the lender to minimize any loss to the lender in order to maintain your eligibility to continue as a participant in the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

By signing below, I attest that I have read and understand my obligations as an applicant and a participant in the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program and I agree to abide by these responsibilities. I understand that HOC may determine me ineligible for homeownership assistance if I violate my obligations after the purchase of a home, but that I may request an informal hearing of any notice of termination prior to it becoming effective.

Chapter 22

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROJECT-BASED PROGRAM

[24 CFR 983]

A. OVERVIEW

1. Purpose of Program: The program goals for the Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program are:

1. To contribute to the improvement and long-term viability of the area's housing stock.
2. To increase the supply of affordable housing and location choice for very low-income households.
3. To integrate housing and supportive services such as education, case management, job training, and day care to help families and individuals achieve stability and self-reliance.
4. To promote the coordination and leveraging of resources of public, semi-public, or nonprofit agencies with compatible missions.

2. Program Elements:

1. A PHA may attach up to 20 percent of its voucher baseline to PBV units. Additionally, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) authorizes the PHA to project-base an additional 10% of its baseline above the 20% program limit for HAP Contracts executed on or after April 18, 2017. The additional units must fall into at least one of the following eligible categories:
 - a. The units are specifically made available to house individuals and families who meet the definition of homeless under section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and contained in the Continuum of Care Interim Rule at 24 CFR 578.3
 - b. The units are specifically made available to house families that are comprised of or include a veteran.
 - c. The units provide annual supportive services to persons with disabilities or elderly persons. Potential services may include meal service, housekeeping aid, personal aid,

transportation services, health-related services, case management, child care, educational services, employment services, job training, counseling and financial literacy. The service provision must be clearly defined at the time of the application and will be considered in addition to other criteria.

- d. The units are located in a census tract with a poverty rate of 20% or less, as determined in the most recent American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. The units eligible for the additional 10% exception category may be distributed among one, all, or a combination of the categories as long as the total number of units does not exceed the 10% cap.
2. The units may be new construction, rehabilitated or existing units.
3. The greater of 25 units or 25 percent of the units in any building may be assisted with PBV. The exceptions to this limitation are for single-family properties (defined as 1-4 units in a building) and “excepted units” in a multi-family building. Excepted units are those that are specifically made available for elderly families or families eligible to receive supportive services.
4. The location of PBV units must be consistent with the goals of deconcentrating poverty and expanding housing and economic opportunities. For HAP Contracts executed on or after April 18, 2017, the maximum amount of PBV assistance may be increased to the greater of 25 units or 40% of the units in the building. The building must be located in a census tract with a poverty rate of 20% or less as determined in the most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

3. Requirements for Participation:

1. **Competitive Selection Process:** HOC must follow a competitive selection process as described in the regulations at 24 CFR §983.51. Exceptions to the competitive selection process are permitted on a case by case basis, as described in item 3 of this section.
2. **Developers/Owners Proposal:** Developers/owners must submit a proposal for PBV assistance in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by HOC as part of the competitive selection process described in item 1, above.
3. **Non-Competitive Selection Process:** As per the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) HOC may, by amendment to this Administrative Plan, from time to time attach PBV assistance to units in a project in which HOC has an ownership interest or over which HOC has control, without following a competitive selection process. Use of this non-competitive selection exception requires HOC’s engagement in an initiative to improve, develop, or replace a public housing property or site.

- a. PHA ownership interest. In order to qualify for this exception to use a non-competitive selection process for receipt of PBV assistance, the units which receive the assistance must be in a project in which HOC has an ownership interest or over which HOC has control. For the purposes of this exception, an “ownership interest” is not limited to the definition of “PHA owned” as defined herein or otherwise by HUD, and does include any HOC connection to a project where HOC, its officers, employees, or agents hold any direct or indirect interest in the project in which the units are located, including, but not limited to, an interest as any of the following:
 - i. Titleholder;
 - ii. Lessee;
 - iii. Stockholder;
 - iv. Member, or general or limited partner;
 - v. Member of a limited liability corporation; or
 - vi. Lessor of the ground lease for the land upon which the PBV project is located or will be constructed.

- b. Other conditions for use of the non-competitive selection exception are as follows:
 - i. HOC must be engaged in an initiative to improve, develop, or replace public housing properties or sites. The public housing properties or sites may be in HOC’s existing public housing inventory or they may be from those previously removed from the public housing inventory through any available legal removal tool within five years of the date on which HOC entered into the Agreement to Enter a Housing Assistance Payments (AHAP) contract or Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract, pursuant to the non-competitive selection.

 - ii. If HOC plans rehabilitation or new construction, a minimum threshold of \$25,000 in hard costs per-unit is required, except as provided in iii, below.

 - iii. If HOC plans to replace public housing by attaching project-based assistance to existing housing in which the Agency has an ownership interest or over which HOC has control, then the \$25,000 per-unit minimum threshold does not apply as long as the existing housing substantially complies with HUD’s housing quality standards (HQS). See Chapter 10 of this Administrative Plan for further information on what it means to substantially comply with HUD’s housing quality standards.

- iv. An explanation of the work HOC plans to do on the property or site and how many units of PBV assistance the Agency plans to add via non-competitive selection must be added to this Chapter in Section G.
- v. All of the units identified by HOC for non-competitive selection must be eligible for PBV assistance in accordance with 24 CFR 983.53. Furthermore, selection of the units must satisfy all other statutory and regulatory requirements of the PBV program as per HUD and this chapter of HOC's Administrative Plan.

4. Selection Criteria:

HOC will review proposals requesting PBV based on the selection criteria detailed in the Request for Proposals, and in compliance with all relevant statutory, regulatory, and HOC requirements.

Before HOC will provide voucher rental assistance, all developments must have PHA Board approval, meet Housing Quality Standards and have an executed Housing Assistance Payments Contract.

B. ELIGIBLE UNITS

1. Eligible Units:

- a. All PBV selected sites must be in compliance with PBV goals, Civil Rights requirements and Housing Quality Standards. HOC will review the applications to determine if the location is consistent with the goal of deconcentrating poverty and preserving and/or expanding housing and economic opportunities. HOC will take into consideration the site selection standards listed in 24 CFR §983.57 and the PBV program goals.
- b. To define a PBV unit as a unit in a rehabilitated housing, each unit must require a minimum of \$3000 in rehabilitation costs.
- c. For units requesting an exception to the 25 units or 25 percent cap in a building, and that exception is based on providing supportive services, the services must be designed as services essential for maintaining or achieving independent living such as, but not limited to, counseling, education, job training, health care, mental health services, alcohol and/or other substance abuse services, child care services and or case management services. These services may be defined as being a participant in a PHA's FSS program.

2. Ineligible Units: HOC may not attach PBV assistance for units of the following types of housing:

- a. Shared housing
- b. Units on the grounds of a penal, reformatory, medical, mental or similar public or private institution
- c. Nursing homes or facilities providing continuous psychiatric medical, nursing service, board and care or intermediate care
- d. Units that are owned or controlled by an educational institution and are designated for occupancy by students of the institution
- e. Manufactured homes
- f. Transitional housing
- g. Owner occupied units
- h. Units occupied by an ineligible family.
- i. Units subsidized with any governmental rent subsidy or any governmental subsidy that covers all or any part of the operating costs of the housing. (24 CFR 983.54(c)(d)).

C. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Applicant eligibility for the project-based program is also covered in Chapter 2 of this document.

1. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements for tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher Program.
2. Persons who will reside in PBV units must come from HOC wait list and/or be referred by the owner.
 - a. When a vacancy occurs in a PBV supportive housing unit, the owner may refer applicants to HOC. The applicant names will be placed on the HOC wait list and selected as a special admission for the available unit.
 - b. HOC will survey its regular wait list no less than once a year for each bedroom size for vacancies in non-supportive housing PBV developments. If the PHA is unable to provide enough eligible applicants from its wait list to fill PBV units, the owner may refer applicants to HOC.
3. HOC will not screen applicants for family behavior or check rental references. This will remain the responsibility of the owner. HOC will screen applicants in the manner established for all voucher applicants.
4. If the owner of a PBV unit denies a PBV applicant that was selected from HOC's wait list, that denial does not affect their place on the wait list for tenant based assistance.

5. If the owner refers an applicant (because HOC was unable to provide interested, eligible applicants) that applicant will be placed on the wait list as a special admission for the PBV program. The applicant must still meet all tenant-based eligibility requirements.
6. If an applicant from HOC wait list has been approved by the owner and is in verification status with HOC and their name comes to the top of the wait list to receive tenant based assistance (TBA), the applicant will be given the option to continue to be processed for the PBV unit or to be processed for a TBA voucher. The applicant will sign a statement declaring their choice.

D. LEASES AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACTS

1. If the owner uses a standard lease form for rental to unassisted tenants, the lease for a voucher-assisted tenant must be in such standard form but it must be for a one-year initial term and it must include the HUD tenancy addendum. The lease must specify the name(s) of the owner(s) and the tenant, the address of the unit rented, the term of the lease including any provision for renewal, the amount of the tenant rent to owner, a listing of what services, maintenance, equipment and utilities to be provided by the owner and the amount of any charges that are for food, furniture or supportive services.
2. The Housing Assistance Payments contract between the owner and HOC will be for an initial term of up to 20 years, or such longer term permitted by HUD regulations than in effect. After the initial term, HOC may agree to extend the term of the contract for an additional term of up to 20 years, or such longer term permitted by HUD regulations than in effect. To be eligible for an extension, the property and owner must be in compliance with program rules and applicable HUD statutes and regulations. The length of the extension will be negotiated with the owner and the form will be subject to any HUD prescribed conditions at the time of the extension.
3. An owner may request an increase to the rent at the annual anniversary of the HAP contract by a 60 day written notice to HOC. See Chapter 11 of this Administrative Plan for further information regarding rent increase guidelines for the Housing Choice Voucher program.
4. Under the PBV program, HOC is required to remove a unit from a PBV HAP contract after 180 days of zero housing assistance payments to the unit owner. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, at its discretion HOC may keep a unit under contract for a period of time that exceeds 180 days but does not extend beyond December 31, 2021. This temporary policy expires on December 31, 2021 in accordance with the waiver flexibility authorized in PIH Notice 2021-14.

E. CONTINUED PARTICIPATION

1. A family may choose to move out of a PBV unit with continued assistance any time after 12 months of initial occupancy. If a family moves before their completion of 12 months of occupancy in their PBV unit, they are terminated from the Housing Choice Voucher program. Program termination in this context includes termination from the PBV program as well as from the opportunity to convert to a tenant-based voucher.
2. If a PBV tenant is determined no longer eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher PBV program, they are given a minimum of 30 days to vacate a unit. If the family does not vacate the unit, HOC must remove that PBV unit from the HAP contract or substitute a similar unit in the building. A PBV tenant who is terminated from the PBV program is given a minimum of 30 days notice of the termination and must vacate the unit on the effective date of the termination.
3. If the family receives no rent assistance for six months (that is, if the family's income remained at a level where their Total Tenant Payment [TTP] is equal to or exceeds the gross rent for the unit), the family will be required to vacate the unit. HOC will notify the family at least sixty days before the six months deadline that they must vacate the unit. If the family does not vacate the unit at the end of the six months, HOC must remove the unit from the HAP contract or substitute a similar unit in the same complex.
4. If HOC determines, at annual recertification, that the family is occupying a wrong size unit or determines anytime that the family is occupying a unit with accessibility features that the family does not require but another family does require, HOC will offer continued assistance in the following order:
 - a. An appropriate unit in another PBV unit either in the same building or another PBV assisted building.
 - b. Tenant based assistance if the family has been a PBV participant for at least 12 months.
 - c. Other project-based assistance.
5. For families residing in units that provide qualifying supportive services, as detailed in the HAP contract (see paragraph B. 1. in this chapter), the project must verify annually that at least one family member in each such unit receives supportive services. These services do not have to be provided by the project or at the project, but must comply with the terms of the HAP contract.

To verify the receipt of services, the project must use the format and procedures prescribed by HOC and notify HOC whether or not each family is in compliance.

If a family, without good cause, fails to participate in at least one of the qualifying supportive services, as detailed in the HAP contract, HOC will determine that the family is no longer eligible to participate in the program (see paragraph E. 2. in this chapter and in Chapter 15).

F: RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) successfully applied to participate in the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As part of HOC's RAD process, the Agency will be converting some of its existing Public Housing (PH) portfolio to Project-Based Voucher (PBV) rental assistance. For those existing HOC PH residents whose subsidies will be converting through RAD to PBV, the following participation parameters and resident rights will apply above and beyond the existing procedures and policies detailed in this Administrative Plan which would have otherwise applied to them:

1. No Re-screening of Tenants upon Conversion: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.1]

Pursuant to the RAD statute, at conversion, current households are not subject to rescreening, income eligibility, or income targeting. Consequently, current households will be grandfathered for conditions that occurred prior to conversion, but will be subject to any ongoing eligibility requirements for actions that occur after conversion. For example, a unit with a household that was over-income at the time of conversion would continue to be treated as an assisted unit. Thus, 24 CFR § 982.201, concerning eligibility and targeting, will not apply for current households. Once that remaining household moves out, the unit must be leased to an eligible family.

2. Right to Return: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.2]

Any resident that may need to be temporarily relocated to facilitate rehabilitation or construction has a right to return to an assisted unit at the Covered Project once rehabilitation or construction is completed. Permanent involuntary displacement of residents may not occur as a result of a project's conversion of assistance, including, but not limited to, as a result of a change in bedroom distribution, a de minimis reduction of units, the reconfiguration of efficiency apartments, or the repurposing of dwelling units in order to facilitate social service delivery. Where the transfer of assistance to a new site is warranted and approved, residents of the Converting Project will have the right to reside in an assisted unit at the new site once rehabilitation or construction is complete.

3. Renewal of Lease: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.3]

The regulations under 24 CFR § 983.257(b)(3) require Project Owners to renew all leases upon lease expiration, unless cause exists. Examples of cause include:

- a. Serious violation or repeated violation of the terms and conditions of the lease; and
- b. Violation of federal, State, or local law that imposes obligations on the tenant in connection with the occupancy or use of the premises.

In accordance with 24 CFR § 983.257(a) for the PBV program, cause does not include a business or economic reason or desire to use the unit for an individual, family, or nonresidential rental purpose.

4. Phase-in of Tenant Rent Increases Over 3 Years: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.4]

If a tenant's monthly rent increases by more than the greater of 10 percent or \$25 purely as a result of conversion, the rent increase will be phased in over 3 years. The method described below explains the set percentage-based phase-in a Project Owner must follow according to the phase-in period. For purposes of this section "standard TTP" refers to the Total Tenant Payment calculated in accordance with regulations at 24 CFR §5.628 and the "most recently paid TTP" refers to the TTP recorded on line 9j of the family's most recent HUD Form 50058. If a family in a project converting from Public Housing to PBV was paying a flat rent immediately prior to conversion, HOC will use the flat rent amount to calculate the phase-in amount for Year 1, as illustrated below.

Three Year Phase-in:

- Year 1: Any recertification (interim or annual) performed prior to the second annual recertification after conversion – 33% of difference between most recently paid TTP or flat rent and the standard TTP
- Year 2: Year 2 Annual Recertification (AR) and any Interim Recertification (IR) prior to Year 3 AR – 66% of difference between most recently paid TTP and the standard TTP
- Year 3: Year 3 AR and all subsequent recertifications – Full standard TTP

5. Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) and Resident Opportunities and Self Sufficiency Service Coordinator (ROSS-SC) programs: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.5]

Public Housing residents that are current FSS participants will continue to be eligible for FSS once their housing is converted under RAD, and PHAs will be allowed to use any remaining PH FSS funds, to serve those FSS participants who live in units converted by RAD. Due to the program merger between PH FSS and HCV FSS that took place pursuant to the FY 2014 Appropriations Act (and was continued in the FY 2015 Appropriations Act), no special provisions are required to continue serving FSS participants that live in public housing units converting to PBV under RAD.

However, there are certain FSS requirements (e.g. escrow calculation and escrow forfeitures) that apply differently depending on whether the FSS participant is a participant under the HCV program or a public housing resident, and HOCs must follow such requirements accordingly. HOC administers the FSS program in accordance with FSS regulations at 24 CFR Part 984, the participants' contracts of participation, and the alternative requirements established in the "Waivers and Alternative Requirements for the FSS Program" Federal Register notice, published on December 29, 2014, at 79 FR 78100. Further, upon conversion to PBV, already escrowed funds for FSS participants shall be transferred into the HCV escrow account and be considered Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) funds, thus reverting to the HAP account if forfeited by the FSS participant.

Current ROSS-SC grantees will be able to finish out their current ROSS-SC grants once their housing is converted under RAD. However, once the property is converted, it will no longer be eligible to be counted towards the unit count for future ROSS-SC grants, nor will its residents be eligible to be served by future ROSS-SC grants, which, by statute, can only serve public housing residents.

6. Resident Participation and Funding: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.6] [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, Attachment 1B]

In accordance with Attachment 1B of PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, residents of Covered Projects with converted PBV assistance will have the right to establish and operate a resident organization for the purpose of addressing issues related to their living environment and be eligible for resident participation funding, which includes the terms and conditions of their tenancy as well as activities related to housing and community development.

- a. **Legitimate Resident Organization.** A Project Owner must recognize legitimate resident organizations and give reasonable consideration to concerns raised by legitimate resident organizations. A resident organization is legitimate only if it has been established by the residents of a Covered Project, meets regularly, operates democratically, is representative of all residents in the project, and is completely independent of the Project Owner, management, and their representatives. In the absence of a legitimate resident organization at a Covered Project, HUD encourages the Project Owner and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster a constructive working relationship, including supporting the formation of a legitimate residents organization. Residents are encouraged to contact the Project Owner directly with questions or concerns regarding issues related to their tenancy. Project Owners are also encouraged to actively engage residents in the absence of a resident organization; and
- b. **Protected Activities.** Project Owners must allow residents and resident organizers to conduct the following activities related to the establishment or operation of a resident organization:

- i. Distributing leaflets in lobby areas;
- ii. Placing leaflets at or under residents' doors;
- iii. Distributing leaflets in common areas;
- iv. Initiating contact with residents;
- v. Conducting door-to-door surveys of residents to ascertain interest in establishing a resident organization and to offer information about resident organizations;
- vi. Posting information on bulletin boards;
- vii. Assisting residents to participate in resident organization activities;
- viii. Convening regularly scheduled resident organization meetings in a space on site and accessible to residents, in a manner that is fully independent of management representatives. In order to preserve the independence of resident organizations, management representatives may not attend such meetings unless invited by the resident organization to specific meetings to discuss a specific issue or issues; and
- ix. Formulating responses to Project Owner's requests for:
 - 1. Rent increases;
 - 2. Partial payment of claims;
 - 3. The conversion from project-based paid utilities to resident-paid utilities;
 - 4. A reduction in resident utility allowances;
 - 5. Converting residential units to non-residential use, cooperative housing, or condominiums;
 - 6. Major capital additions; and
 - 7. Prepayment of loans.

In addition to these activities, Project Owners must allow residents and resident organizers to conduct other reasonable activities related to the establishment or operation of a resident organization.

Project Owners shall not require residents and resident organizers to obtain prior permission before engaging in the activities permitted in this section.

- c. Meeting Space. Project Owners must reasonably make available the use of any community room or other available space appropriate for meetings that is part of the multifamily housing project when requested by:
 - i. Residents or a resident organization and used for activities related to the operation of the resident organization; or
 - ii. Residents seeking to establish a resident organization or collectively address issues related to their living environment.

Resident and resident organization meetings must be accessible to persons with disabilities unless this is impractical for reasons beyond the organization's control. If the project has an accessible common area or areas, it will not be impractical to make organizational meetings accessible to persons with disabilities.

Project Owners may charge a reasonable, customary and usual fee, approved by the Secretary as may normally be imposed and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary, for the use of meeting space. HOC may waive this fee.

- d. Resident Organizers. A resident organizer is a resident or non-resident who assists residents in establishing and operating a resident organization, and who is not an employee or representative of current or prospective Project Owners, managers, or their agents.

Project Owners must allow resident organizers to assist residents in establishing and operating resident organizations.

- e. Canvassing. If a Covered Project has a consistently enforced, written policy against canvassing, then a non-resident resident organizer must be accompanied by a resident while on the property of the project.

If a project has a written policy favoring canvassing, any non-resident resident organizer must be afforded the same privileges and rights of access as other uninvited outside parties in the normal course of operations. If the project does not have a consistently enforced, written policy against canvassing, the project shall be treated as if it has a policy favoring canvassing.

A resident has the right not to be re-canvassed against his or her wishes regarding participation in a resident organization.

- f. Funding. Project Owners must provide \$25 per occupied unit annually for resident participation, of which at least \$15 per occupied unit shall be provided to the legitimate resident organization at the covered property. These funds must be used for resident education, organizing around tenancy issues, and training activities. In the absence of a legitimate resident organization at a Covered Project:
 - i. HOC encourages the Project Owners and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster a constructive working relationship, including supporting the formation of a legitimate residents organization. Residents are encouraged to contact the Project Owner directly with questions or concerns regarding issues related to their tenancy. Project Owners are also encouraged to actively engage residents in the absence of a resident organization; and
 - ii. Project Owners must make resident participation funds available to residents for organizing activities in accordance with this Notice. Residents must make requests for these funds in writing to the Project Owner. These requests will be subject to approval by the Project Owner.

HOC's Resident Advisory Board (RAB) will serve as the required resident organization described herein and in compliance with this section.

7. Resident Procedural Rights: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.7]

The following items are incorporated into both the Section 8 Administrative Plan and the Project Owner's lease, which includes the required tenancy addendum, as appropriate. Evidence of such incorporation may be requested by HUD for purposes of monitoring the program.

a. **Termination Notification.** HUD is incorporating additional termination notification requirements to comply with section 6 of the Act for public housing projects that convert assistance under RAD. In addition to the regulations at 24 CFR § 983.257 related to Project Owner termination of tenancy and eviction (the termination procedure for RAD conversions to PBV requires that HOC provide adequate written notice of termination of the lease which shall not be less than:

i. A reasonable period of time, but not to exceed 30 days:

1. If the health or safety of other tenants, HOC employees, or persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises is threatened; or
2. In the event of any drug-related or violent criminal activity or any felony conviction;
3. 14 days in the case of nonpayment of rent; and
4. 30 days in any other case, except that if a State or local law provides for a shorter period of time, such shorter period shall apply.

b. **Grievance Process.** In accordance with the RAD Statute, the following procedural rights are required in order to comply with section 6 of the Act.

For issues related to tenancy and termination of assistance, PBV program rules require the Project Owner to provide an opportunity for an informal hearing, as outlined in 24 CFR § 982.555. RAD will specify alternative requirements for 24 CFR § 982.555(b) in part, which outlines when informal hearings are not required, to require that:

- i. In addition to reasons that require an opportunity for an informal hearing given in 24 CFR § 982.555(a)(1)(i)-(vi), an opportunity for an informal hearing must be given to residents for any dispute that a resident may have with respect to a Project Owner action in accordance with the individual's lease or the contract administrator in accordance with RAD PBV requirements that adversely affect the resident's rights, obligations, welfare, or status.
- ii. For any hearing required under 24 CFR § 982.555(a)(1)(i)-(vi), the contract administrator will perform the hearing, as is the current standard in the program. The hearing officer must be selected in accordance with 24 CFR § 982.555(e)(4)(i). For any additional hearings required under RAD, the Project Owner will perform the hearing.

- iii. There is no right to an informal hearing for class grievances or to disputes between residents not involving the Project Owner or contract administrator. The Project Owner gives residents notice of their ability to request an informal hearing as outlined in 24 CFR § 982.555(c)(1) for informal hearings that will address circumstances that fall outside of the scope of 24 CFR § 982.555(a)(1)(i)-(vi).
- iv. The Project Owner provides opportunity for an informal hearing before an eviction.

Current PBV program rules require that hearing procedures must be outlined in HOC's Section 8 Administrative Plan. See Chapter 19: Complaints and Appeals.

8. Earned Income Disregard (EID): [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.8]

Tenants who are employed and are currently receiving the EID exclusion at the time of conversion will continue to receive the EID after conversion in accordance with regulations at 24 CFR § 5.617. Upon the expiration of the EID for such families, the rent adjustment shall not be subject to rent phase-in as described in Section 1.6.C.4 of the RAD Notice; instead, the rent will automatically rise to the appropriate rent level based upon tenant income at that time.

Under the Housing Choice Voucher program, the EID exclusion is limited only to persons with disabilities (24 CFR § 5.617(b)). In order to allow all tenants (including non-disabled persons) who are employed and currently receiving the EID at the time of conversion to continue to benefit from this exclusion in the PBV project, the provision in section 5.617(b) limiting EID to disabled persons is waived. The waiver and the resulting alternative requirements apply only to tenants receiving the EID at the time of conversion. No other tenant (e.g., tenants who at one time received the EID but are not receiving the EID exclusion at the time of conversion) is covered by this waiver.

9. Jobs Plus: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.9]

Jobs Plus grantees awarded in FY14 and future funds that convert the Jobs Plus target projects(s) under RAD will be able to finish out their Jobs Plus period of performance at that site unless significant relocation and/or change in building occupancy is planned. If either is planned at the Jobs Plus target project(s), HUD may allow for a modification of the Jobs Plus work plan or may, at the Secretary's discretion, choose to end the Jobs Plus program at that project.

10. When Total Tenant Payment Exceeds Gross Rent: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.10]

Under normal PBV rules, HOC may only select an occupied unit to be included under the PBV HAP contract if the unit's occupants are eligible for housing assistance payments (24 CFR §983.53(d)). Also, HOC must remove a unit from the contract when no assistance has been paid

for 180 days because the family's TTP has risen to a level that is equal to or greater than the contract rent, plus any utility allowance, for the unit (i.e., the Gross Rent)) (24 CFR §983.258). Since the rent limitation under this Section of the Notice may often result in a family's TTP equaling or exceeding the gross rent for the unit, for current residents (i.e. residents living in the public housing property prior to conversion), HUD has waived both of these provisions and requires that the unit for such families be placed on and/or remain under the HAP contract when TTP equals or exceeds the Gross Rent. Further, HUD is establishing the alternative requirement that the rent to owner for the unit equal the family's TTP until such time that the family is eligible for a housing assistance payment. HUD has waived this policy as necessary to implement this alternative provision, the provisions of Section 8(o)(13)(H) of the Act and the implementing regulations at 24 CFR 983.301 as modified by Section 1.6.B.5 of the RAD Notice. In such cases, the resident is considered a participant under the program, and all of the family obligations and protections under RAD and PBV apply to the resident. Likewise, all requirements with respect to the unit, such as compliance with the HQS requirements, apply as long as the unit is under a HAP contract. Assistance may subsequently be reinstated if the tenant becomes eligible for assistance. HOC is required to process these individuals through the Form-50058 submodule in PIC.

Following conversion, 24 CFR §983.53(d) applies, and any new families referred to the RAD PBV project must be initially eligible for a HAP payment at admission to the program, which means that their TTP may not exceed the gross rent for the unit at that time. Further, HOC must remove a unit from the contract when no assistance has been paid for 180 days. If units are removed from the HAP contract because a new admission's TTP comes to equal or exceed the gross rent for the unit and if the project is fully assisted, HUD is imposing an alternative requirement that HOC must reinstate the unit after the family has vacated the property; and, if the project is partially assisted, HOC may substitute a different unit for the unit on the HAP contract in accordance with 24 CFR §983.207 or, where "floating" units have been permitted, Section 1.6.B.10 of PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2.

11. Under-Occupied Unit: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.C.11]

If a family is in an under-occupied unit under 24 CFR 983.259 at the time of conversion, the family may remain in that unit until an appropriate-sized unit becomes available in the Covered Project. When an appropriate-sized unit becomes available in the Covered Project, the family living in the under-occupied unit must move to the appropriate-sized unit within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the administering Voucher Agency. HOC has determined this time frame to be 60 days. In order to allow the family to remain in the under-occupied unit until an appropriate-sized unit becomes available in the Covered Project, 24 CFR 983.259 is waived.

12. Wrong-sized Unit: [Quick Reference Guide for Public Housing Project Converting to PBV Assistance 3.4.1]

In cases where, after initial tenancy, the family is occupying a wrong-sized unit or a unit that has accessibility features not required by the family and where the unit is needed by a family that requires this accessibility feature, HOC will promptly notify the owner and the family can be offered assistance in:

- a. Another appropriate size unit (in the same building); or
- b. The form of a tenant-based voucher, if funding is available.

13. Establishment of Wait List: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.D.4]

24 CFR §983.251 sets out PBV program requirements related to establishing and maintaining a voucher-wide, PBV program-wide, or site-based wait list from which residents for the Covered Project will be admitted. These provisions will apply unless the project is covered by a remedial order or agreement that specifies the type of wait list and other wait list policies. HOC shall consider the best means to transition applicants from the current public housing wait list, including:

- a. Transferring an existing site-based wait list to a new site-based wait list. If HOC is transferring the assistance to another neighborhood, HOC must notify applicants on the wait list of the transfer of assistance and of how they can apply for residency at the new project site or other sites. Applicants on a project-specific wait list for a project where the assistance is being transferred shall have priority on the newly formed wait list for the new project site in accordance with the date and time of their application to the original project's wait list.
- b. Informing applicants on the site-based wait list on how to apply for a PBV program-wide or HCV program-wide wait list.
- c. Informing applicants on a public housing community-wide wait list on how to apply for a voucher-wide, PBV program-wide, or site-based wait list. If using a site-based wait list, HOC shall establish a wait list in accordance with 24 CFR § 903.7(b)(2)(ii)-(iv) to ensure that applicants on the PHA's public housing community-wide wait list have been offered placement on the converted project's initial wait list. In all cases, HOC has the discretion to determine the most appropriate means of informing applicants on the public housing community-wide wait list given the number of applicants, HOC resources, and admissions requirements of the projects being

- d. converted under RAD. HOC may consider contacting every applicant on the public housing wait list via direct mailing; advertising the availability of housing to the population that is less likely to apply, both minority and non-minority groups, through various forms of media (e.g., radio stations, posters, newspapers) within the marketing area; informing local non-profit entities and advocacy groups (e.g., disability rights groups); and conducting other outreach as appropriate. Applicants on the agency's public housing community-wide wait list who wish to be placed onto the newly established site-based wait list must be placed in accordance with the date and time of their original application to the centralized public housing wait list. Any activities to contact applicants on the public housing wait list must be conducted in accordance with the requirements for effective communication with persons with disabilities at 24 CFR § 8.6 and with the obligation to provide meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).

HOC is required to maintain any site-based wait list in accordance with all applicable civil rights and fair housing laws and regulations unless the project is covered by a remedial order or agreement that specifies the type of wait list and other wait list policies.

To implement this provision, HUD has specified alternative requirements for 24 CFR § 983.251(c)(2). However, after the initial wait list is established, HOC shall administer its wait list for the converted project in accordance with 24 CFR § 983.251(c).

14. Choice-Mobility: [PIH-2012-32 (HA), REV-2, 1.6.D.9]

One of the key features of the PBV program is the mobility component; this component provides that if a family elects to terminate the assisted lease at any time after the first 12 months of occupancy in accordance with program requirements, HOC must offer the family the opportunity for continued tenant-based rental assistance in the form of either assistance under the voucher program or other comparable tenant-based rental assistance.

Similarly, former Public Housing residents converted via RAD to Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), also receive special choice mobility. For RAD-converted PBRA customers, if the family elects to terminate their assisted lease at any time after the first 24 months of occupancy in accordance with program requirements, HOC must offer the family the opportunity for continued tenant-based rental assistance in the form of either assistance under the voucher program or other comparable tenant-based rental assistance.

Once a RAD-converted PBV or PBRA family elects to terminate their assisted lease so that they can convert from their current project-based subsidy to a tenant-based subsidy, their name is added to HOC's Choice Mobility Wait List. As customers on this Choice Mobility Wait List reach the top of the list, they are selected for their tenant-based voucher and will continue through the voucher issuance process described in Chapter 8 of this Administrative Plan.

RAD Voucher Turnover Cap

All RAD-converted PBV and PBRA customers who reach their eligibility for Choice Mobility (12 months and 24 months, respectively) are subject to the following procedures of HOC's RAD Voucher Turnover Cap:

- Up to 15 percent of turnover units at each RAD project in any given Calendar Year may be used by customers called from the Choice Mobility Wait List.
- For eligible customers who are unable to exercise their Choice Mobility option at a property because the cap is exhausted for that year, HOC will add their names to the Choice Mobility Wait List.
- HOC's Choice Mobility Wait List is stored within Housing Path and is a unified list across all RAD properties.
- Among all available HOC turnover vouchers, every third voucher is available to a customer coming off the Choice Mobility Wait List.

This RAD Voucher Turnover Cap does not apply to PBVs entered into outside of the context of RAD.

15. Vacancy Payments:

In order to receive vacancy payments, Project Owners assisted under RAD must meet the following requirements:

a. Payments for the Move-out Month:

If an assisted family moves out of the unit, the Project Owner may keep the housing assistance payment payable for the calendar month when the family moves out. However, the owner may not keep the payment if HOC determines the vacancy is the owner's fault.

b. Vacancy Payment:

At its discretion, HOC will make vacancy payments of the monthly rent, but not to exceed two full months following the move out month. Any vacancy payment may cover only the period the unit remains vacant. In order to claim the vacancy loss, the unit must be available for lease and the landlord must:

- i. Notify HOC within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, upon learning of the vacancy, or prospective vacancy; and
- ii. Pursue activities to fill the vacancy, including:
 1. Seek eligible applicants by listing the unit with HOC;

2. Notify HOC of the availability of the unit; and
3. Not reject potentially eligible applicants except for good cause.

G: PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS OF PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER ASSISTANCE PROVIDED USING A NON-COMPETITIVE SELECTION PROCESS

Each property or site which will receive PBVs through the non-competitive selection process provided for in this Administrative Plan, are identified below.

1. In December of 2017, HOC used the non-competitive selection process provided for herein to award HOC 40 Project-Based Vouchers (PBV). These vouchers are reserved for use at HOC's Park View apartment project. Park View is a new construction, age-restricted property which is currently under development, and is expected to open for occupancy in April of 2019. Park View is located at 3132 Bel Pre Road in Aspen Hill, Maryland. HOC is developing Park View as a mixed-income property with a total of 120 units. HOC expects to exceed the required minimum threshold of \$25,000 in hard costs per unit during construction of Park View. At closing, Park View had an estimated hard cost per unit of \$142,610.
2. In November of 2018, HOC used the non-competitive selection process provided for herein to award HOC 26 Project-Based Vouchers (PBV). These vouchers are reserved for use at HOC's Elizabeth House III apartment project. Elizabeth House III is a new construction, age-restricted property which is currently under development, and is expected to open for occupancy in 2021. Elizabeth House III is located in downtown Silver Spring, Maryland; an area rich in amenities, including multiple public transit, entertainment, employment, education, and retail options. HOC is developing Elizabeth House III as part a mixed-income group of properties known together as Elizabeth Square. The full Elizabeth House III will include approximately 267 units. HOC expects to exceed the required minimum threshold of \$25,000 in hard costs per unit during construction of Elizabeth House III.