



Davis Community Housing Authority Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program

Revised February 2025

Approved by the HA Board of Directors: April 8, 2025

Submitted to HUD:



Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

Introduction

HOTMA CHANGES IN THE ADMINSTRATIVE PLAN

HOTMA 102/104.....	Intro-i
HOTMA Voucher Final Rule	Intro-ii

ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

References Cited in the Administrative Plan.....	Intro-iii
HUD.....	Intro-iii
NSPIRE and HQS in the Administrative Plan.....	Intro-iv
HOTMA Sections 102 And 104 Changes in the Model Policy.....	Intro-iv
HOTMA Voucher Final Rule Changes in the Model Policy.....	Intro-v
Resources Cited in the Administrative Plan	Intro-v

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM AND PLAN

PART I:	THE PHA.....	1-1
	1-I.A. Overview.....	1-1
	1-I.B. Organization and Structure of the PHA.....	1-2
	1-I.C. PHA Mission	1-2
	1-I.D. The PHA’s Programs	1-3
	1-I.E. The PHA’s Commitment to Ethics and Service	1-3
PART II:	THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM.....	1-5
	1-II.A. Overview and History of the Program.....	1-5
	1-II.B. HCV Program Basics.....	1-7
	1-II.C. The HCV Partnerships	1-7
	The HCV Relationships:.....	1-8
	What Does HUD Do?	1-9
	What Does the PHA Do?.....	1-9
	What Does the Owner Do?	1-10
	What Does the Family Do?.....	1-11
	1-II.D. Applicable Regulations.....	1-12
PART III:	THE HCV ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN.....	1-13
	1-III.A. Overview and Purpose of the Plan.....	1-13
	1-III.B. Contents of the Plan (24CFR 982.54).....	1-13
	Mandatory vs. Discretionary Policy	1-15
	1-III.C. Organization of the Plan	1-15
	1-III.D. Updating and Revising the Plan	1-15

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 2
FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

PART I:	NONDISCRIMINATION.....	2-3
2-I.A.	Overview.....	2-3
2-I.B.	Nondiscrimination	2-4
	Providing Information to Families and Owners	2-5
2-1.C	Discrimination Complaints.....	2-5
	General Housing Discrimination Complaints.....	2-5
	Complaints under the Equal Access Final Rule [Notice PIH 2014-20]	2-5
	VAWA Complaint Processing [Notice FHEO 2023-01].....	2-6
PART II:	POLICIES RELATED TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	2-7
2-II.A.	Overview.....	2-7
2-II.B.	Definition of Reasonable Accommodation	2-8
	Types of Reasonable Accommodations.....	2-8
2-II.C.	Request for an Accommodation	2-9
2-II.D.	Verification of Disability.....	2-10
2-II.E.	Approval/Denial of a Requested Accommodation [Joint Statement of the Departments of HUD and Justice: Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act, Notice PIH 2010-26].....	2-11
2-II.F.	Program Accessibility for Persons with Hearing or Vision Impairments	2-12
2-II.G.	Physical Accessibility.....	2-13
2-II.H.	Denial or Termination of Assistance	2-14
PART III:	IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP).....	2-15
2-III.A.	Overview.....	2-15
2-III.B.	Oral Interpretation	2-16
2-III.C.	Written Translation.....	2-16
2-III.D.	Implementation Plan.....	2-17
Exhibit 2-1:	Definition of a Person with a Disability Under Federal Civil Rights Laws [24 CFR Parts 8.3, and 100.201].....	2-19

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 3
ELIGIBILITY**

PART I:	DEFINITIONS OF FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS.....	3-3
3-I.A.	Overview.....	3-3
3-I.B.	Family and Household [24 CFR 5.403; FR Notice 02/03/12; Notice PIH 2014-20; FR Notice 2/14/23].....	3-3
	Family	3-3
	Household.....	3-3
3-I.C.	Family Breakup and Remaining Member of Tenant Family.....	3-4
	Family Breakup [24 CFR 982.315; Notice PIH 2017-08].....	3-4
	Remaining Member of a Tenant Family [24 CFR 5.403]	3-5
3-I.D.	Head of Household [24 CFR 5.504(b)]	3-5
3-I.E.	Spouse, Cohead, and Other Adult	3-5
3-I.F.	Dependents and Minors [24 CFR 5.603].....	3-6
	Joint Custody of Dependents.....	3-6
3-I.G.	Full-Time Student [24 CFR 5.603, HVC GB, p. 5-29]	3-6
3-I.H.	Elderly and Near-Elderly Persons, and Elderly Family [24 CFR 5.100 and 5.403, FR Notice 02/03/12].....	3-6
	Elderly Persons	3-6
	Near-Elderly Persons	3-6
	Elderly Family	3-6
3-I.I.	Persons with Disabilities and Disabled Family [24 CFR 5.403, FR Notice 02/03/12]	3-7
	Persons with Disabilities.....	3-7
	Disabled Family.....	3-7
3-I.J.	Guests [24 CFR 5.100]	3-7
3-I.K.	Foster Children and Foster Adults [24 CFR 5.603].....	3-8
3-I.L.	Absent Family Members.....	3-8
	Definitions of Temporarily and Permanently Absent.....	3-8
	Absent Students	3-8
	Absences Due to Placement in Foster Care [24 CFR 5.403].....	3-9
	Absent Head, Spouse, or Cohead	3-9
	Family Members Permanently Confined for Medical Reasons [HCV GB, p. 5-22]	3-9
	Return of Permanently Absent Family Members	3-9
3-I.M.	Live-In Aide.....	3-10

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART II: BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA..... 3-11

 3-II.A. Income Eligibility and Targeting..... 3-11

 Income Limits..... 3-11

 Definitions of the Income Limits [24 CFR 5.603(b)]..... 3-11

 Using Income Limits for Eligibility [24 CFR 982.201] and Notice PIH 2023-27 3-11

 Using Income Limits for Targeting [24 CFR 982.201]..... 3-12

 3-II.B. Citizenship or Eligible Immigration Status [24 CFR 5, Subpart E] 3-13

 Declaration [24 CFR 5.508] 3-13

 Mixed Families 3-14

 Ineligible Families [24 CFR 5.514(d), (e), and (f)] 3-14

 Timeframe for Determination of Citizenship Status [24 CFR 5.508(g)] 3-15

 3-II.C. Social Security Numbers [24 CFR 5.216 and 5.218, Notice PIH 2018-24]..... 3-15

 3-II.D. Family Consent to Release of Information [24 CFR 5.230, 24 CFR 5.232, and HCV GB, p. 5-13] 3-15

 3-II.E. Students Enrolled In Institutions of Higher Education [24 CFR 5.612, FR Notice 4/10/06, FR Notice 9/21/16]..... 3-16

 Definitions 3-16

 Determining Student Eligibility..... 3-20

 3-II.F. EIV System Searches [EIV FAQs; EIV System Training 9/30/20; and Notice PIH 2023-27]..... 3-21

 Existing Tenant Search 3-21

 Debts Owed to PHAs and Terminations..... 3-22

 EIV Income Report..... 3-22

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART III:	DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE	3-23
3-III.A.	Overview.....	3-23
	Forms of Denial [24 CFR 982.552(a)(2); HCV GB, p. 5-35]	3-24
	Prohibited Reasons for Denial of Program Assistance [24 CFR 982.202(b), 24 CFR 5.2005(b)]	3-24
3-III.B.	Mandatory Denial of Assistance [24 CFR 982.553(a) and 24 CFR 982.552(b)(6)]	3-25
3-III.C.	Restriction on Assistance Based on Assets [24 CFR 5.618]	3-26
3-III.D.	Other Permitted Reasons for Denial of Assistance	3-28
	Criminal Activity [24 CFR 982.553].....	3-28
	Previous Behavior in Assisted Housing [24 CFR 982.552(c)].....	3-29
3-III.E.	Screening	3-31
	Screening for Eligibility	3-31
	Screening for Suitability as a Tenant [24 CFR 982.307].....	3-32
3-III.F.	Criteria for Deciding to Deny Assistance	3-33
	Evidence [24 CFR 982.553(c)].....	3-33
	Consideration of Circumstances [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)].....	3-33
	Removal of a Family Member's Name from the Application.....	3-35
	Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(iv)]	3-35
3-III.G.	Notice of Eligibility or Denial	3-36
3-III.H.	Prohibition Against Denial of Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Human Trafficking.....	3-37
	Notification	3-37
	Documentation.....	3-38
Exhibit 3-1:	Detailed Definitions Related to Disabilities	3-39
	Person with Disabilities [24 CFR 5.403].....	3-39
	Individual with Handicaps [24 CFR 8.3].....	3-41
Exhibit 3-2:	Definition of Institution of Higher Education [20 U.S.C 1001 and 1002]	3-43
	Eligibility of Students for Assisted Housing Under Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937; Supplementary Guidance; Notice [Federal Register, April 10, 2006]	3-43

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

Chapter 4

APPLICATIONS, WAITING LIST AND TENANT SELECTION

PART I:	THE APPLICATION PROCESS	4-3
4-I.A.	Overview.....	4-3
4-I.B.	Applying for Assistance [HCV GB, pp. 4-11 – 4-16, Notice PIH 2009-36].....	4-3
4-I.C.	Accessibility of the Application Process	4-4
	Elderly and Disabled Populations [24 CFR 8 and HCV GB, pp. 4-11 – 4-13]	4-4
	Limited English Proficiency	4-4
4-I.D.	Placement on the Waiting List.....	4-5
	Ineligible for Placement on the Waiting List.....	4-5
	Eligible for Placement on the Waiting List	4-5
PART II:	MANAGING THE WAITING LIST.....	4-7
4-II.A.	Overview.....	4-7
4-II.B.	Organization of the Waiting List [24 CFR 982.204 and 205]	4-7
4-II.C.	Opening and Closing the Waiting List [24 CFR 982.206]	4-8
	Closing the Waiting List.....	4-8
	Reopening the Waiting List.....	4-8
4-II.D.	Family Outreach [HCV GB, pp. 4-2 to 4-4].....	4-9
4-II.E.	Reporting Changes in Family Circumstances.....	4-10
4-II.F.	Updating the Waiting List [24 CFR 982.204]	4-10
	Purging the Waiting List.....	4-10
	Removal from the Waiting List	4-11
PART III:	SELECTION FOR HCV ASSISTANCE	4-13
4-III.A.	Overview.....	4-13
4-III.B.	Selection and HCV Funding Sources	4-13
	Special Admissions [24 CFR 982.203]	4-13
	Targeted Funding [24 CFR 982.204(e)]	4-13
	Regular HCV Funding.....	4-13
4-III.C.	Selection Method	4-14
	Local Preferences [24 CFR 982.207; HCV p. 4-16]	4-14
	Income Targeting Requirement [24 CFR 982.201(b)(2)].....	4-15
	Order of Selection.....	4-15
4-III.D.	Notification of Selection.....	4-16
4-III.E.	The Application Interview	4-16
4-III.F.	Completing the Application Process	4-18

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 5
BRIEFINGS AND VOUCHER ISSUANCE**

PART I:	BRIEFINGS AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS	5-1
5-I.A.	Overview.....	5-1
5-I.B.	Briefing [24 CFR 982.301].....	5-2
	Notification of Briefing	5-2
	In-Person Briefings.....	5-2
	Remote Briefings [Notice PIH 2020-32].....	5-3
	Accessibility Requirements for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals	5-3
	Conducting Remote Briefings	5-4
	Oral Briefing [24 CFR 982.301(a)]	5-5
	Briefing Packet [24 CFR 982.301(b); New HCV GB, Housing Search and Leasing, p. 7]	5-6
	Additional Items to be Included in the Briefing Packet	5-8
5-I.C.	Family Obligations	5-9
	Time Frames for Reporting Changes Required by Family Obligations	5-9
	Family Obligations [24 CFR 982.551]	5-9
PART II:	SUBSIDY STANDARDS AND VOUCHER ISSUANCE.....	5-13
5-II.A.	Overview.....	5-13
5-II.B.	Determining Family Unit (Voucher) Size [24 CFR 982.402]	5-13
5-II.C.	Exceptions to Subsidy Standards.....	5-15
5-II.D.	Voucher Issuance [24 CFR 982.302].....	5-16
5-II.E.	Voucher Term and Extensions.....	5-17
	Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303].....	5-17
	Extensions of Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303(b)]	5-17
	Suspensions of Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303(c)]	5-19
	Expiration of Voucher Term.....	5-19

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 6.A.
INCOME AND SUBSIDY DETERMINATIONS
[24 CFR Part 5, Subparts E and F; 24 CFR 982]**

PART I:	ANNUAL INCOME	6-2
6-I.A.	Overview.....	6-2
6-I.B.	Household Composition and Income.....	6-3
	Summary of Income Included and Excluded by Person.....	6-3
	Temporarily Absent Family Members.....	6-4
	Family Members Permanently Confined for Medical Reasons.....	6-5
	Joint Custody of Dependents	6-5
	Caretakers for a Child.....	6-6
6-I.C.	Anticipating Annual Income	6-7
	Basis of Annual Income Projection	6-7
	Projecting Income	6-8
6-I.D.	Earned Income	6-9
	Types of Earned Income Included in Annual Income	6-9
	Types of Earned Income <u>Not</u> Counted in Annual Income	6-10
6-I.E.	Earned Income Disallowance for Persons with Disabilities [24 CFR 5.617; Streamlining Final Rule (SFR) Federal Register 3/8/16; Notice PIH 2023 27]	6-11
	Calculation of the Disallowance	6-11
	Calculation Method	6-11
6-I.F.	Business Income [24 CFR 5.609(b)(28) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2023-27)]	6-12
	Independent Contractors	6-12
	Business Expansion	6-12
	Capital Indebtedness.....	6-13
	Negative Business Income.....	6-13
	Withdrawal of Cash or Assets from a Business.....	6-13
	Co-owned Businesses	6-13
6-I.G.	Student Financial Assistance [FR Notice 2/14/23 and Notice PIH 202327].....	6-14
	Introduction.....	6-14
	HOTMA Student Financial Assistance Requirements [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)].....	6-14
	Calculating Income from Student Financial Assistance [HOTMA Student Financial Assistance Resource Sheet; Notice PIH 2023-27].....	6-16
6-I.H.	Periodic Payments [Notice PIH 2023-27]	6-20
	Lump-Sum Payments for the Delayed Start of a Periodic Payment [24 CFR 5.609(b)(16) as updated for HOTMA]	6-20
	Retirement Accounts [24 CFR 5.609(b)(26) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2023-27]	6-21
	Social Security Benefits [Notice PIH 2023-27].....	6-21

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

6-I.I.	Nonrecurring Income [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24) as updated for HOTMA and Notice PIH 2023-27]	6-22
6-I.J.	State Payments to Allow Individuals with Disabilities to Live at Home [24 CFR 5.609(b)(19) as updated for HOTMA]	6-24
6-I.K.	Civil Rights Settlements [24 CFR 5.609(b)(25) as updated for HOTMA; FR Notice 2/14/23].....	6-24
6-I.L.	Additional Exclusions from Annual Income [24 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA; FR Notice 1/31/2024].....	6-25
6-I.M.	Assets [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3); 24 CFR 5.603(b)].....	6-31
	Overview.....	6-31
	General Policies	6-31
	Types of Assets.....	6-35
6-I.N.	Welfare Assistance	6-40
	Overview.....	6-40
	Sanctions Resulting in the Reduction of Welfare Benefits [24 CFR 5.615]	6-40
6-I.O.	Periodic and Determinable Allowances [24 CFR 5.609(b)(7)].....	6-41
	Alimony and Child Support.....	6-41
PART II:	ADJUSTED INCOME.....	6-43
6-II.A.	Introduction.....	6-43
	Overview.....	6-43
	Anticipating Expenses	6-43
6-II.B.	Dependent Deduction	6-44
6-II.C.	Elderly or Disabled Family Deduction	6-44
6-II.D.	Health and Medical Care Expenses Deduction [24 CFR 5.611(a)(3)(i) and 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA]	6-45
	Definition of <i>Medical Expenses</i>	6-45
	Summary of Allowable Medical Expenses from IRS Publication 502	6-46
	Families That Qualify for Both health and Medical Care and Disability Assistance Expenses.....	6-46
6-II.E.	Disability Assistance Expenses Deduction [24 CFR 5.603(b) and 24 CFR 5.611(a)(3)(ii)]	6-47
	Earned Income Limit on the Disability Assistance Expense Deduction	6-47
	Eligible Disability Expenses.....	6-48
	Necessary and Reasonable Expenses.....	6-49
	Families That Qualify for Both Medical and Disability Assistance Expenses	6-49
6-II.F.	Childcare Expense Deduction.....	6-50
	Clarifying the Meaning of <i>Child</i> for This Deduction	6-50
	Qualifying for the Deduction.....	6-50
	Earned Income Limit on Childcare Expense Deduction	6-51
	Eligible Childcare Expenses	6-52

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART III: CALCULATING FAMILY SHARE AND PHA SUBSIDY 6-53

6-III.A. Overview of Rent and Subsidy Calculations 6-53

 TTP Formula [24 CFR 5.628] 6-53

 Family Share [24 CFR 982.305(a)(5)]..... 6-53

 PHA Subsidy [24 CFR 982.505(b)]..... 6-54

 Utility Reimbursement [24 CFR 982.514(b); 982.514(c)] 6-54

6-III.B. Financial Hardships Affecting Minimum Rent [24 CFR 5.630] 6-55

 Overview..... 6-55

 HUD-Defined Financial Hardship..... 6-55

 Implementation of Hardship Exemption 6-56

6-III.C. Applying Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.505(c) and
Notice PIH 2024-34]..... 6-58

 Overview..... 6-58

 Changes in Payment Standards..... 6-58

 Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.503(d)(5)]..... 6-60

6-III.D. Applying Utility Allowances [24 CFR 982.517]..... 6-61

 Overview..... 6-61

 Flat Fees [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(iii)] 6-61

 PBV Developments [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(iv)] 6-61

 Reasonable Accommodation and Individual Relief 6-61

 Utility Allowance Revisions..... 6-62

6-III.E. Prorated Assistance for Mixed Families [24 CFR 5.520]..... 6-63

Exhibit 6-1: Annual Income Inclusions 6-65

 HHS Definition of "Assistance" 6-66

Exhibit 6-2: Annual Income Exclusions 6-68

Exhibit 6-3: Treatment of Family Assets..... 6-73

Exhibit 6-5: The Effect of Welfare Benefit Reduction 6-74

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 7.A.
VERIFICATION**

[24 CFR 982.516, 24 CFR 982.551, 24 CFR 5.230, Notice PIH 2018-18]

PART I:	GENERAL VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS	7-1
7-I.A.	Family Consent to Release of Information [24 CFR 982.516; 24 CFR 982.551; 24 CFR 5.230; and Notice PIH 2023-27]	7-1
	Consent Forms	7-1
	Form HUD-9886-A [24 CFR 5.230(b)(1), b(2), (c)(4), and (c)(5); and Notice PIH 2023-27]	7-2
	Penalties for Failing to Consent [24 CFR 5.232]	7-2
7-I.B.	Overview of Verification Requirements	7-3
	Use of Other Programs’ Income Determinations [24 CFR 5.609(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2023 27]	7-3
	HUD’s Verification Hierarchy [Notice PIH 2018-18]	7-6
	Requirements for Acceptable Documents	7-6
	File Documentation	7-7
7-I.C.	Up-Front Income Verification (UIV)	7-7
	Upfront Income Verification Using HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System (Mandatory)	7-8
	Upfront Income Verification Using Non-HUD Systems (Optional)	7-9
7-I.D.	Third-Party Written and Oral Verification	7-10
	Written Third-Party Verification [Notice PIH 2018-18]	7-10
	Written Third-Party Verification Form	7-11
	Oral Third-Party Verification [Notice PIH 2018-18]	7-11
	When Third-Party Verification is Not Required [Notice PIH 2018-18]	7-12
7-I.E.	Self-Certification	7-13
PART II:	VERIFYING FAMILY INFORMATION	7-15
7-II.A.	Verification of Legal Identity	7-15
7-II.B.	Social Security Numbers [24 CFR 5.216, Notice PIH 2018-24]	7-16
7-II.C.	Documentation of Age	7-18
7-II.D.	Family Relationships	7-18
	Marriage	7-19
	Separation or Divorce	7-19
	Absence of Adult Member	7-19
	Foster Children and Foster Adults	7-19
7-II.E.	Verification of Student Status	7-20
	General Requirements	7-20
	Restrictions on Assistance to Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education	7-20
7-II.F.	Documentation of Disability	7-21
	Family Members Receiving SSA Disability Benefits	7-22
	Family Members Not Receiving SSA Disability Benefits	7-22

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

7-II.G.	Citizenship or Eligible Immigration Status [24 CFR 5.508]	7-23
	Overview.....	7-23
	U.S. Citizens and Nationals	7-23
	Eligible Immigrants	7-24
7-II.H.	Verification of Preference Status.....	7-24
PART III:	VERIFYING INCOME AND ASSETS	7-25
7-III.A.	Earned Income	7-25
	Tips	7-25
7-III.B.	Business and Self Employment Income	7-25
7-III.C.	Periodic Payments and Payments In Lieu of Earnings.....	7-26
	Social Security/SSI Benefits.....	7-26
7-III.D.	Alimony or Child Support	7-27
7-III.E.	Assets and Income From Assets	7-28
	Assets Disposed of for Less than Fair Market Value	7-28
7-III.F.	Net Income From Rental Property.....	7-28
7-III.G.	Retirement Accounts	7-29
7-III.H.	Income From Excluded Sources	7-30
7-III.I.	Zero Income Families [Notice PIH 2023-27].....	7-31
7-III.J.	Student Financial Assistance [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9) as updated for HOTMA].....	7-32
7-III.K.	Parental Income of Students Subject to Eligibility Restrictions.....	7-33
PART IV:	VERIFYING MANDATORY DEDUCTIONS	7-35
7-IV.A.	Dependent and Elderly/Disabled Household Deductions.....	7-35
	Dependent Deduction	7-35
	Elderly/Disabled Family Deduction	7-35
7-IV.B.	Health and Medical Care Expense Deduction	7-36
	Amount of Expense	7-36
	Eligible Household	7-37
	Qualified Expenses	7-37
	Unreimbursed Expenses	7-37
	Expenses Incurred in Past Years.....	7-37
7-IV.C.	Disability Assistance Expenses	7-38
	Amount of Expense	7-38
	Family Member is a Person with Disabilities.....	7-39
	Family Member(s) Permitted to Work	7-39
	Unreimbursed Expenses	7-39
7-IV.D.	Childcare Expenses.....	7-40
	Eligible Child.....	7-40
	Unreimbursed Expense.....	7-40
	Pursuing an Eligible Activity	7-41
	Allowable Type of Childcare.....	7-42
	Reasonableness of Expenses.....	7-42
Exhibit 7-1:	Summary of Documentation Requirements for Noncitizens [HCV GB, pp. 5-9 and 5-10].....	7-43

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 8.A.
HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS AND RENT REASONABLENESS
DETERMINATIONS**

[24 CFR 982 Subpart I and 24 CFR 982.507]

NSPIRE AND HQS	8-1
PART I: PHYSICAL STANDARDS	8-2
8-I.A. General HUD Requirements	8-2
HUD Performance and Acceptability Standards	8-2
NSPIRE Standards Applicable to HQS [HUD Letter 6/14/24]	8-3
Tenant Preference Items	8-3
Modifications to Provide Accessibility	8-3
8-I.B. Additional Local Requirements	8-4
Thermal Environment [HCV GB p.10-7]	8-4
Clarifications of HUD Requirements	8-4
8-I.C. Life-Threatening Conditions [24 CFR 982.404(a); FR Notice 1/18/17]	8-6
8-I.D. Owner and Family Responsibilities [24 CFR 982.404]	8-9
The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:	8-9
Family Responsibilities	8-9
Owner Responsibilities	8-9
The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:	8-9
Owner Obligation	8-9
Family Responsibilities	8-10
8-I.E. Special Requirements for Children with Elevated Blood Lead Level [24 CFR 35.1225; FR Notice 1/13/17; Notice PIH 2017-13]	8-11
8-I.F. Violation of HQS Space Standards [24 CFR 982.401, 24 CFR 982.403]	8-12
PART II: THE INSPECTION PROCESS	8-13
8-II.A. Overview [24 CFR 982.405]	8-13
Types of Inspections	8-13
Inspection of PHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)]	8-13
Inspection Costs [Notice PIH 2016-05; 24 CFR 5.705(h)]	8-14
Remote Video Inspections (RVIs) [Notice PIH 2020-31]	8-14
Notice and Scheduling	8-14
Owner and Family Inspection Attendance	8-15

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

8-II.B.	Initial HQS Inspection [24 CFR 982.405(a)]	8-15
	Approving Units with Non-Life-Threatening Deficiencies [FR Notice 1/18/17; Notice PIH 2017-20; FR Notice 5/7/24; and 24 CFR 982.405(j)]	8-15
	Approving Units Using Alternative Inspections [FR Notice 1/18/17; Notice PIH 2017-20; FR Notice 5/7/24; and 24 CFR 982.406].....	8-16
	Timing of Initial Inspections [24 CFR 982.305(b)(2)(i)]	8-16
	Inspection Results and Reinspections.....	8-17
	Utilities	8-17
	Appliances [Form HUD-52580]	8-17
8-II.C.	Periodic HQS Inspections [24 CFR 982.405(b) and Notice PIH 2016-05].....	8-18
	Scheduling the Inspection.....	8-18
8-II.D.	Special Interim Inspections [24 CFR 982.405(d)].....	8-18
8-II.E.	Supervisory Quality Control Inspections [24 CFR 982.405(b); 24 CFR 985.3(e); HCV GB, p. 10-32].....	8-19
8-II.F.	Inspection Results and Reinspections for Units Under HAP Contract.....	8-19
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:	8-19
	Notification of Corrective Actions	8-19
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:.....	8-20
	Notification of Corrective Actions [24 CFR 982.404(d)(1)].....	8-20
	Extensions.....	8-22
	Reinspections [24 CFR 982.405(i)].....	8-22
8-II.G.	Enforcing Owner Compliance	8-23
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:	8-23
	HAP Abatement.....	8-23
	HAP Contract Termination.....	8-23
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:.....	8-24
	HAP Withholding [24 CFR 982.404(d)(1)].....	8-24
	HAP Abatement [24 CFR 982.404(d)(2)]	8-24
	HAP Contract Termination.....	8-25
8-II.H.	Enforcing Family Compliance with HQS [24 CFR 982.404(b)].....	8-26
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:	8-26
	The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:.....	8-26

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART III: RENT REASONABLENESS [24 CFR 982.507]..... 8-27

 8-III.A. Overview..... 8-27

 PHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)]..... 8-27

 8-III.B. When Rent Reasonableness Determinations Are Required..... 8-28

 Owner-Initiated Rent Determinations..... 8-28

 PHA- and HUD-Initiated Rent Reasonableness Determinations ... 8-28

 LIHTC- and HOME-Assisted Units [24 CFR 982.507(c) 8-29

 8-III.C. How Comparability Is Established 8-29

 Factors to Consider 8-29

 Units that Must Not be Used as Comparables 8-29

 Rents Charged for Other Units on the Premises 8-30

 8-III.D. PHA Rent Reasonableness Methodology 8-31

 How Market Data Is Collected 8-31

 How Rents Are Determined..... 8-31

Exhibit 8-1: Overview of HUD Housing Quality Standards 8-33

Exhibit 8-2: Summary of Tenant Preference Areas Related to Housing Quality 8-37

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 9
GENERAL LEASING POLICIES**

9-I.A.	Tenant Screening	9-2
9-I.B.	Requesting Tenancy Approval [Form HUD-52517 and 24 CFR 982.302].....	9-3
9-I.C.	Owner Participation	9-4
9-I.D.	Eligible Units	9-5
	Ineligible Units [24 CFR 982.352(a)].....	9-5
	PHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)].....	9-5
	Special Housing Types [24 CFR 982 Subpart M]	9-5
	Duplicative Assistance [24 CFR 982.352(c)]	9-6
	Initial Inspection	9-6
	Unit Size	9-7
	Rent Reasonableness [24 CFR 982.305 and 24 CFR 982.507].....	9-7
	Rent Burden [24 CFR 982.508].....	9-7
9-I.E.	Lease and Tenancy Addendum.....	9-8
	Lease Form and Tenancy Addendum [24 CFR 982.308].....	9-8
	Lease Information [24 CFR 982.308(d)]	9-8
	Term of Assisted Tenancy	9-9
	Security Deposit [24 CFR 982.313 (a) and (b)]	9-9
	Separate Non-Lease Agreements between Owner and Tenant.....	9-10
	PHA Review of Lease	9-11
9-I.F.	Tenancy Approval [24 CFR 982.305]	9-12
9-I.G.	HAP Contract Execution [24 CFR 982.305]	9-13
9-I.H.	Changes in Lease or Rent [24 CFR 982.308].....	9-15

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

Chapter 10

MOVING WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE AND PORTABILITY

PART I:	MOVING WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE	10-1
10-I.A.	Allowable Moves.....	10-1
10-I.B.	Family Moves Due to Unit Deficiencies	10-3
	Units in Abatement [24 CFR 982.404(d)(3)]	10-3
	Termination of HAP Contract and Family Moves [24 CFR 982.404(e)].....	10-3
	Offer of Public Housing [24 CFR 982.404(e)(2)]	10-4
	Relocation Assistance [24 CFR 982.404(e)(3)].....	10-4
10-I.C.	Restrictions On Moves	10-5
	Denial of Moves	10-5
	Restrictions on Elective Moves [24 CFR 982.354(c)].....	10-6
10-I.D.	Moving Process	10-7
	Notification.....	10-7
	Approval	10-7
	Reexamination of Family Income and Composition.....	10-7
	Voucher Issuance and Briefing.....	10-7
	Housing Assistance Payments [24 CFR 982.311(d)]	10-8
	Zero HAP Families Who Wish to Move [24 CFR 982.455]	10-8
PART II:	PORTABILITY	10-9
10-II.A.	Overview.....	10-9
10-II.B.	Initial PHA Role	10-10
	Allowable Moves under Portability.....	10-10
	Determining Income Eligibility.....	10-11
	Reexamination of Family Income and Composition.....	10-11
	Briefing.....	10-12
	Voucher Issuance and Term	10-12
	Voucher Extensions and Expiration	10-13
	Preapproval Contact with the Receiving PHA	10-13
	Initial Notification to the Receiving PHA	10-13
	Sending Documentation to the Receiving PHA	10-14
	Initial Billing Deadline [Notice PIH 2016-09]	10-15
	Monthly Billing Payments [Notice PIH 2016-09].....	10-16
	Annual Updates of Form HUD-50058	10-16
	Denial or Termination of Assistance [24 CFR 982.355(c)(17)]... ..	10-16
10-II.C.	Receiving PHA Role.....	10-17
	Responding to Initial PHA’s Request [24 CFR 982.355(c)]	10-17
	Initial Contact with Family.....	10-17
	Briefing.....	10-18
	Income Eligibility and Reexamination	10-18
	Voucher Issuance.....	10-19
	Notifying the Initial PHA	10-20
	Administering a Portable Family’s Voucher	10-20
	Absorbing a Portable Family.....	10-24

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 11.A.
REEXAMINATIONS**

PART I:	ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS [24 CFR 982.516].....	11-1
11-I.A.	Overview.....	11-1
11-I.B.	Streamlined Annual Reexaminations [24 CFR 982.516(b); New HCV GB, Reexaminations]	11-2
11-I.C.	Scheduling Annual Reexaminations.....	11-3
	Notification of and Participation in the Annual Reexamination Process	11-3
11-I.D.	Conducting Annual Reexaminations	11-4
11-I.E.	Determining Ongoing Eligibility of Certain Students [24 CFR 982.552(b)(5)].....	11-6
11-I.F.	Effective Dates.....	11-7
PART II:	INTERIM REEXAMINATIONS [24 CFR 982.516].....	11-9
11-II.A.	Overview.....	11-9
11-II.B.	Changes In Family and Household Composition	11-9
	New Family Members <u>Not</u> Requiring PHA Approval	11-9
	New Family and Household Members Requiring Approval	11-10
	Departure of a Family or Household Member.....	11-11
	Changes in Family Unit Size (Voucher Size) [24 CFR 982.505(c)(6)]	11-11
11-II.C.	Changes Affecting Income or Expenses.....	11-12
	PHA-Initiated Interim Reexaminations	11-12
	Family-Initiated Interim Reexaminations.....	11-13
11-II.D.	Processing the Interim Reexamination	11-14
	Method of Reporting.....	11-14
	Effective Dates.....	11-14
PART III:	RECALCULATING FAMILY SHARE AND SUBSIDY AMOUNT	11-15
11-III.A.	Overview.....	11-15
11-III.B.	Changes In Payment Standards and Utility Allowances	11-15
	Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.505 and FR Notice 5/7/24].....	11-15
	Subsidy Standards [24 CFR 982.505(c)(4)]	11-15
	Utility Allowances [24 CFR 982.517(d)]	11-15
11-III.C.	Notification of New Family Share and HAP Amount.....	11-16
11-III.D.	Discrepancies.....	11-16

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 12
TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE AND TENANCY**

PART I: GROUND FORS FOR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE 12-1

- 12-I.A. Overview..... 12-1
- 12-I.B. Family No Longer Requires Assistance [24 CFR 982.455]..... 12-1
- 12-I.C. Family Chooses to Terminate Assistance..... 12-2
- 12-I.D. Mandatory Termination of Assistance..... 12-2
 - Eviction [24 CFR 982.552(b)(2), 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(1)]..... 12-2
 - Failure to Provide Consent [24 CFR 982.552(b)(3)]..... 12-3
 - Upon the PHA’s HOTMA 102/104 compliance date,
the below policy on failure to provide consent is added: 12-3
 - Failure to Document Citizenship [24 CFR 982.552(b)(4)
and 24 CFR 5.514(c)] 12-3
 - Failure to Disclose and Document Social Security Numbers
[24 CFR 5.218(c), Notice PIH 2018-24] 12-3
 - Methamphetamine Manufacture or Production
[24 CFR 983.553(b)(1)(ii)]..... 12-4
 - Lifetime Registered Sex Offenders [Notice PIH 2012-28] 12-4
 - Failure of Students to Meet Ongoing Eligibility
Requirements [24 CFR 982.552(b)(5) and FR 4/10/06]..... 12-4
 - Death of the Sole Family Member [24 CFR 982.311(d) and
Notice PIH 2010-9]..... 12-4
- 12-I.E. Mandatory Policies and Other Authorized Terminations..... 12-5
 - Mandatory Policies [24 CFR 982.553(b) and 982.551(l)]..... 12-5
 - Other Authorized Reasons for Termination of Assistance
[24 CFR 982.552(c), 24 CFR 5.2005(c), 24 CFR 984.101(d)] 12-7
 - Upon the PHA’s HOTMA 102/104 compliance date, the below
section on the asset limitation is added: 12-8
 - Asset Limitation [24 CFR 5.618; Notice PIH 2023-27]..... 12-8

PART II: APPROACH TO TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE..... 12-11

- 12-II.A. Overview..... 12-11
- 12-II.B. Method of Termination [24 CFR 982.552(a)(3)] 12-11
- 12-II.C. Alternatives to Termination of Assistance 12-11
 - Change in Household Composition..... 12-11
 - Repayment of Family Debts 12-11
- 12-II.D. Criteria for Deciding to Terminate Assistance 12-12
 - Evidence 12-12
 - Use of Criminal Conviction Records
after Admission [24 CFR 5.903] 12-12
 - Consideration of Circumstances [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(i)] 12-12
 - Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(iv)] 12-13
- 12-II.E. Terminations Related to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence,
Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking..... 12-14
 - VAWA Protections against Terminations 12-14

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

	Limitations on VAWA Protections [24 CFR 5.2005(d) and (e)]	12-15
	Documentation of Abuse [24 CFR 5.2007]	12-16
	Terminating the Assistance of a Domestic Violence Perpetrator	12-16
12-II.F.	Termination Notice	12-18
PART III:	TERMINATION OF TENANCY BY THE OWNER.....	12-19
12-III.A.	Overview.....	12-19
12-III.B.	Grounds for Owner Termination of Tenancy [24 CFR 982.310, 24 CFR 5.2005(c), and Form HUD-52641-A, Tenancy Addendum].....	12-19
	Serious or Repeated Lease Violations	12-19
	Violation of Federal, State, or Local Law	12-19
	Criminal Activity or Alcohol Abuse.....	12-19
	Other Good Cause.....	12-20
12-III.C.	Eviction [24 CFR 982.310(e) and (f) and Form HUD-52641-A, Tenancy Addendum]	12-21
12-III.D.	Deciding Whether to Terminate Tenancy [24 CFR 982.310(h), 24 CFR 982.310(h)(4)].....	12-22
12-III.E.	Effect of Tenancy Termination on the Family’s Assistance	12-22
Exhibit 12-1:	Statement of Family Obligations.....	12-23

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 13
OWNERS**

PART I:	OWNERS IN THE HCV PROGRAM	13-3
13-I.A.	Owner Recruitment and Retention [HCV GB, pp. 2-4 to 2-6; HCV Landlord Strategy Guidebook for PHAs].....	13-3
	Education and Outreach.....	13-3
	Retention.....	13-4
13-I.B.	Basic HCV Program Requirements	13-5
13-I.C.	Owner Responsibilities [24 CFR 982.452].....	13-7
13-I.D.	Owner Qualifications.....	13-8
	Owners Barred from Participation [24 CFR 982.306(a) and (b)]... ..	13-8
	Leasing to Relatives [24 CFR 982.306(d), HCV GB p. 11-2]	13-8
	Conflict of Interest [24 CFR 982.161; HCV GB p. 8-19; Form HUD-52641, Section 13]	13-8
	Owner Actions That May Result in Disapproval of a Tenancy Request [24 CFR 982.306(c)]	13-10
	Legal Ownership of Unit	13-11
13-I.E.	Non-Discrimination [HAP Contract – Form HUD-52641]	13-11
PART II:	HAP CONTRACTS.....	13-13
13-II.A.	Overview.....	13-13
13-II.B.	HAP Contract Contents	13-14
13-II.C.	HAP Contract Payments	13-16
	General.....	13-16
	Owner Certification of Compliance.....	13-16
	Late HAP Payments [24 CFR 982.451(a)(5)]	13-17
	Termination of HAP Payments [24 CFR 982.311(b)].....	13-17
13-II.D.	Breach of HAP Contract [24 CFR 982.453].....	13-18
13-II.E.	HAP Contract Term and Terminations.....	13-19
13-II.F.	Change In Ownership / Assignment of the HAP Contract [HUD-52641].....	13-21
13-II.G.	Foreclosure [Notice PIH 2010-49]	13-22

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 14
PROGRAM INTEGRITY**

PART I:	PREVENTING, DETECTING, AND INVESTIGATING ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE	14-3
	14-I.A. Preventing Errors and Program Abuse	14-3
	14-I.B. Detecting Errors and Program Abuse	14-4
	Quality Control and Analysis of Data	14-4
	Independent Audits and HUD Monitoring	14-4
	Individual Reporting of Possible Errors and Program Abuse	14-4
	14-I.C. Investigating Errors and Program Abuse.....	14-5
	When the PHA Will Investigate	14-5
	Consent to Release of Information [24 CFR 982.516].....	14-5
	Analysis and Findings.....	14-5
	Consideration of Remedies.....	14-6
	Notice and Appeals.....	14-6
PART II:	CORRECTIVE MEASURES AND PENALTIES	14-7
	14-II.A. Subsidy Under- or Overpayments	14-7
	Corrections.....	14-7
	Reimbursement.....	14-7
	14-II.B. Family-Caused Errors and Program Abuse	14-8
	Family Reimbursement to PHA [HCV GB pp. 22-12 to 22-13]	14-8
	PHA Reimbursement to Family [HCV GB p. 22-12].....	14-8
	Prohibited Actions	14-9
	Penalties for Program Abuse	14-9
	14-II.C. Owner-Caused Error or Program Abuse.....	14-10
	Owner Reimbursement to the PHA	14-10
	Prohibited Owner Actions	14-10
	Remedies and Penalties	14-11
	14-II.D. PHA-Caused Errors or Program Abuse.....	14-12
	De Minimis Errors [24 CFR 5.609(c)(4)].....	14-12
	Prohibited Activities	14-13
	14-II.E. Criminal Prosecution	14-14
	14-II.F. Fraud and Program Abuse Recoveries	14-14

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 15
SPECIAL HOUSING TYPES**

[24 CFR 982 Subpart M; New HCV GB, Special Housing Types]

PART I:	SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY [24 CFR 982.602 through 982.605; Form HUD-52641; New HCV GB, <i>Special Housing Types</i> , p. 4].....	15-3
	15-I.A. Overview.....	15-3
	15-I.B. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance, and HAP Calculation	15-3
	15-I.C. SRO: Housing Quality Standards [24 CFR 982.605(a)]	15-3
PART II:	CONGREGATE HOUSING [24 CFR 982.606 through 982.609; Form HUD-52641; New HCV GB, <i>Special Housing Types</i> , p. 6].....	15-5
	15-II.A. Overview.....	15-5
	15-II.B. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance, and HAP Calculation	15-6
	15-II.C. Congregate: Housing Quality Standards	15-6
PART III:	GROUP HOME [24 CFR 982.610 through 982.614; Form HUD-52641; and New HCV GB, <i>Special Housing Types</i> , p. 8].....	15-7
	15-III.A. Overview.....	15-7
	15-III.B. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance, and HAP Calculation	15-7
	15-III.C. Group Home: Housing Quality Standards.....	15-8
PART IV:	SHARED HOUSING [24 CFR 982.615 through 982.618; Form HUD-52641; Notice PIH 2021-05; New HCV GB, <i>Special Housing Types</i> , p. 11].....	15-11
	15-IV.A. Overview.....	15-11
	15-IV.B. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance and HAP Calculation	15-13
	15-IV.C. Shared Housing: Housing Quality Standards	15-14
PART V:	COOPERATIVE HOUSING [24 CFR 982.619; New HCV GB, <i>Special Housing Types</i> , p. 14].....	15-15
	15-V.A. Overview.....	15-15
	15-V.B. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance and HAP Calculation	15-15
	15-V.C. Cooperative: Housing Quality Standards	15-16

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART VI: MANUFACTURED HOMES [24 CFR 982.620 through 982.624;
FR Notice 1/18/17; New HCV GB, *Special Housing Types*, p. 15;] 15-17

15-VI.A. Overview..... 15-17

15-VI.B. Special Requirements for Manufactured Home Owners
Who Lease A Space..... 15-17

Family Income 15-17

Lease and HAP Contract 15-17

15-VI.C. Payment Standard, Utility Allowance and HAP Calculation 15-18

Payment Standards..... 15-18

Utility Allowance [24 CFR 982.624] 15-18

Space Rent [24 CFR 982.622] 15-18

Amortization Costs 15-18

Housing Assistance Payment [24 CFR 982.623(a)] 15-18

Eligible Housing Expenses [24 CFR 982.623(b)] 15-19

Rent Reasonableness [24 CFR 982.622(b)]..... 15-19

Distribution of HAP [24 CFR 982.623(c)] 15-20

Single HAP to Family [24 CFR 982.623.(d)]..... 15-20

15-VI.D. Manufactured Homes: Housing Quality Standards
[24 CFR 982.621] 15-20

PART VII: HOMEOWNERSHIP [24 CFR 982.625 through 982.643]..... 15-21

15-VII.A. Overview [24 CFR 982.625] 15-21

15-VII.B. Family Eligibility [24 CFR 982.627]..... 15-22

15-VII.C. Selection of Families [24 CFR 982.626] 15-24

15-VII.D. Eligible Units [24 CFR 982.628]..... 15-25

15-VII.E. Additional PHA Requirements for Search and Purchase
[24 CFR 982.629] 15-27

15-VII.F. Homeownership Counseling [24 CFR 982.630] 15-28

15-VII.G. Home Inspections, Contract of Sale, and PHA Disapproval of
Seller [24 CFR 982.631]..... 15-29

Home Inspections 15-29

Contract of Sale 15-30

Disapproval of a Seller 15-30

15-VII.H. FINANCING [24 CFR 982.632] 15-31

15-VII.I. Continued Assistance Requirements; Family Obligations
[24 CFR 982.633] 15-32

15-VII.J. Maximum Term of Homeowner Assistance [24 CFR 982.634]..... 15-33

15-VII.K. Homeownership Assistance Payments and Homeownership
Expenses [24 CFR 982.635] 15-34

15-VII.L. Portability [24 CFR 982.636, 982.637, 982.353(b) and (c),
982.552, 982.553]..... 15-36

15-VII.M. Moving with Continued Assistance [24 CFR 982.637]..... 15-37

15-VII.N. Denial or Termination of Assistance [24 CFR 982.638]..... 15-38

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 16
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

PART I:	ADMINISTRATIVE FEE RESERVE [24 CFR 982.155]	16-3
PART II:	SETTING PROGRAM STANDARDS AND SCHEDULES	16-5
	16-II.A. Overview.....	16-5
	16-II.B. Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.503; HCV GB, Chapter 7; and Notice PIH 2024-34].....	16-5
	Small Area FMR PHAs (Mandatory and Opt-In) [Notice PIH 2018-01; Notice PIH 2023 32; Notice PIH 2024-34; and Implementing Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMR) Guidebook]	16-6
	The Basic Range [24 CFR 982.503(c) and Notice PIH 2024-34].....	16-7
	Designated Payment Standard Areas [24 CFR 982.503(d), Notice PIH 2018-01, Notice PIH 2024-34, and FR Notice 9/27/21]	16-7
	Exception Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.503(c)(5), Notice PIH 2018-01, FR Notice 9/27/21].....	16-7
	Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.503(d)(5), 24 CFR 982.505(d), Notice PIH 2024 34, and Notice PIH 2010-26]	16-9
	Payment Standard below the Basic Range [24 CFR 982.503(e) and Notice PIH 2024-34]	16-9
	Updating Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.503(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2023-24].....	16-10
	16-II.C. Utility Allowances [24 CFR 982.517].....	16-11
	Energy Efficient Utility Allowance [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(ii)].....	16-11
	Air Conditioning [24 CFR 982.517(b)(1)(iii)]	16-11
	Reasonable Accommodation and Individual Relief	16-12
	Utility Allowance Revisions.....	16-12
PART III:	INFORMAL REVIEWS AND HEARINGS	16-13
	16-III.A. Overview.....	16-13
	16-III.B. Informal Reviews.....	16-13
	Decisions Subject to Informal Review [24 CFR 982.554(a) and (c)]	16-13
	Notice to the Applicant [24 CFR 982.554(a)]	16-14
	Scheduling an Informal Review	16-14
	Informal Review Procedures [24 CFR 982.554(b)]	16-14
	Remote Informal Reviews [Notice PIH 2020-32]	16-15
	Ensuring Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals	16-15
	Conducting Remote Informal Reviews	16-16
	Informal Review Decision [24 CFR 982.554(b)]	16-17

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

16-III.C.	Informal Hearings for Participants [24 CFR 982.555]	16-18
	Decisions Subject to Informal Hearing.....	16-18
	Remote Informal Hearings [Notice PIH 2020-32]	16-19
	Ensuring Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals	16-20
	Conducting Informal Hearings Remotely.....	16-21
	Informal Hearing Procedures.....	16-22
16-III.D.	Hearing and Appeal Provisions for Noncitizens [24 CFR 5.514]	16-29
	Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance [24 CFR 5.514(d)]	16-29
	USCIS Appeal Process [24 CFR 5.514(e)].....	16-30
	Informal Hearing Procedures for Applicants [24 CFR 5.514(f)]	16-30
	Informal Hearing Procedures for Residents [24 CFR 5.514(f)]	16-31
	Retention of Documents [24 CFR 5.514(h)]	16-31
PART IV:	OWNER OR FAMILY DEBTS TO THE PHA	16-33
16-IV.A.	Overview.....	16-33
16-IV.B.	Repayment Policy	16-33
	Owner Debts to the PHA	16-33
	Family Debts to the PHA.....	16-34
	Criminal Prosecution for Program Fraud/Abuse	16-34
	Refusal to Enter into an Agreement.....	16-34
	Repayment Agreement [24 CFR 792.103]	16-34
	General Repayment Agreement Guidelines for Families.....	16-35
PART V:	SECTION 8 MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (SEMAP)	16-39
16-V.A.	Overview.....	16-39
16-V.B.	SEMAP Certification [24 CFR 985.101].....	16-40
	HUD Verification Method.....	16-40
16-V.C.	SEMAP Indicators [24 CFR 985.3 and Form HUD-52648]	16-41
	SEMAP Indicators Chart	16-41
PART VI:	RECORD KEEPING	16-45
16-VI.A.	Overview.....	16-45
16-VI.B.	Record Retention [24 CFR 982.158; 24 CFR 908.101]	16-45
16-VI.C.	Records Management	16-46
	Privacy Act Requirements [24 CFR 5.212 and Form-9886-A]....	16-46
	Upfront Income Verification (UIV) Records	16-47
	Criminal Records.....	16-47
	Medical/Disability Records	16-47
	Documentation of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking or Human Trafficking.....	16-47

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART VII: REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING FOR CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL 16-49

 16-VII.A. Overview..... 16-49

 16-VII.B. Reporting Requirement [24 CFR 35.1225(e)); Notice PIH 2017-13]..... 16-49

 16-VII.C. Data Collection and Record Keeping [24 CFR 35.1225(f)] 16-49

PART VIII: DETERMINATION OF INSUFFICIENT FUNDING 16-51

 16-VIII.A. Overview 16-51

 16-VIII.B. Methodology 16-51

PART IX: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA): NOTIFICATION, DOCUMENTATION, CONFIDENTIALITY 16-53

 16-IX.A. Overview 16-53

 16-IX.B. Definitions [24 CFR 5.2003]..... 16-53

 16-IX.C. Notification [24 CFR 5.2005(a), 42 USC 13925] 16-55

 Notification to Public..... 16-55

 Notification to Program Applicants and Participants [24 CFR 5.2005(a)(1)] 16-56

 Notification to Owners and Managers 16-57

 16-IX.D. Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007] 16-58

 Conflicting Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(e)]..... 16-59

 Discretion to Require No Formal Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(d)] 16-59

 Failure to Provide Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(c)] 16-60

 16-IX.E. CONFIDENTIALITY [24 CFR 5.2007(b)(4)]..... 16-60

Exhibit 16-1: Sample Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act, Form HUD-5380 16-61

Exhibit 16-2: Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking and Alternate Documentation, Form HUD-5382 16-67

Exhibit 16-3: Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (HCV Version) 16-69

Exhibit 16-4: Emergency Transfer Request for Certain Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking, Form HUD-5383 16-73

Exhibit 16-5: Model Owner Notification of Rights and Obligations 16-77

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

**Chapter 19
SPECIAL PURPOSE VOUCHERS**

PART I:	VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (VASH) PROGRAM.....	19-2
19-I.A.	Program Overview	19-2
19-I.B.	Referrals [FR Notice 8/13/24 and HUD-VASH Qs and As].....	19-3
19-I.C.	HCV Program Eligibility [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-4
	Social Security Numbers	19-4
	Proof of Age	19-4
	Photo Identification	19-4
	Income Eligibility [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-5
	Minimum Rent [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-6
	Screening [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-6
	Denial of Assistance [Notice PIH 2008-37]	19-6
19-I.D.	Changes in Family Composition	19-7
	Adding Family Members [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-7
	Remaining Family Members [HUD-VASH Qs and As]	19-7
	Family Break Up [HUD-VASH Qs and As]	19-7
19-III.E.	Leasing [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-8
	Waiting List	19-8
	Exception Payment Standards [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-8
	Voucher Issuance [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-8
	Special Housing Types [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-9
	Initial Lease Term [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-9
	Ineligible Housing [[FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-9
	Pre-Inspections [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-9
19-III.F.	Portability [Notice PIH 2011-53 and FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-10
	General Requirements	19-10
	Portability within the Initial VAMC or DSP’s Catchment Area ..	19-10
	Portability Outside of the Initial VAMC or DSP’s Catchment Area.....	19-10
	Portability Outside of the Initial VAMC or DSP’s Catchment Area under VAWA	19-11
19-III.G.	Termination of Assistance [FR Notice 8/13/24].....	19-12
	Cessation of Case Management.....	19-12
	Serious Violation of the Lease.....	19-12
	VAWA [FR Notice 8/13/24]	19-13

Administrative Plan -Table of Contents

PART II: MAINSTREAM VOUCHER PROGRAM..... 19-14

- 19-II.A. Program Overview [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Notice PIH 2-2024-30] 19-14
- 19-II.B. Eligible Population [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Notice PIH 2020-22]..... 19-15
- 19-II.C. Partnership And Supportive Services [Notice PIH 2020-01] 19-15
- 19-II.D. Waiting List Administration [Notice PIH 2024-30] 19-16
- 19-II.E. Preferences [Notice PIH 2024-30]..... 19-17
- 19-II.F. Voucher Issuance..... 19-18
 - Initial Search Term [Notice PIH 2024-30] 19-18
 - Voucher Extension [Notice PIH 2024-30] 19-18
- 19-II.G. Portability [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Mainstream Voucher Basics Webinar, 10/15/20]..... 19-20

PART III: NON-ELDERLY DISABLED (NED) VOUCHERS..... 19-21

- 19-III.A. Program Overview [Notice PIH 2013-19]..... 19-21
- 19-III.B. Eligible Population 19-22
 - General Requirements [Notice PIH 2013-19] 19-22
- 19-III.C. Waiting List 19-22
 - General Requirements [Notice PIH 2013-19] 19-22
 - Reissuance of Turnover Vouchers [Notice PIH 2013-19]..... 19-22
- 19-III.D. Lease Up [Notice PIH 2013-19]..... 19-23
 - Briefings 19-23
 - Voucher Term..... 19-23

Introduction

HOTMA CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

On July 29, 2016, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) was signed into law. HOTMA made numerous changes to statutes governing HUD programs, including sections of the United States Housing Act of 1937. Title I of HOTMA contains 14 different sections that impact the public housing and Section 8 programs.

HOTMA 102/104

HUD published a final rule on February 14, 2023, revising regulations related to income, assets, adjusted income, verification, and reexams (among others) to implement Sections 102 and 104 of HOTMA. While the new regulations were effective January 1, 2024, HUD has delayed the compliance date for HOTMA 102/104. Initially, HUD published a delayed compliance date of January 1, 2025, but HUD again delayed the compliance date for HOTMA 102/104 and no new date has been provided. *Compliance* with Sections 102 and 104 of HOTMA means not only applying HOTMA 102/104 regulations to affected programs but also reporting in HUD's new Housing Information Portal (HIP) system. Currently, DCHA remains unable to comply with HOTMA 102/104 because compliance depends on transitioning from HUD's IMS/PIC system (which is unable to accept HOTMA-compliant Form HUD-50058) to HUD's new HIP system (which will be the only system that accepts HOTMA-compliant Form HUD-50058). DCHA cannot transition to HOTMA until HIP is in place, HOTMA-compliant, and accessible. However, HUD has determined that a few HOTMA 102/104 policies are not dependent on transition systems and easily isolated from other HOTMA 102/104 policy changes. These policies may be implemented prior to the migration to HIP.

HUD stated that DCHA may update their policy documents before determining the date at which they will transition to all HOTMA Section 102 and 104 policies. HUD stated that in order to update their policy documents for HOTMA in this circumstance, DCHA may create an appendix that contains the HOTMA policies that will be incorporated at a later date. The model policy adopts such an approach. HOTMA 102/104 policies are provided in each affected area of the model policy. However, with the exception of the policies HUD has indicated may be adopted early, HOTMA policies that are "on hold" are indicated in the model policy as such. Further, an appendix has been provided to explicitly call out those policies that are on hold.

HOTMA VOUCHER FINAL RULE

The final rule implementing streamlining changes to the HCV and PBV programs was published on May 7, 2024, and codified certain provisions in Sections 101, 105, 106, and 112 of HOTMA, as well as incorporating changes from the NSPIRE final rule discussed above. The rule is known as the “HOTMA voucher final rule.” The effective date of the HOTMA voucher final rule was June 6, 2024. While the compliance date for certain provisions of the rule is the same as the effective date, the compliance date for other provisions is not until 90 days, 180 days, or one year after the effective date. Further, many new changes to the regulations described in the HOTMA voucher final rule require changes to DCHA’s administrative plan. DCHA must make all revisions needed to bring existing policies into compliance with the final rule no later than June 6, 2025 (one year after the effective date). However, if DCHA wishes to use program flexibilities requiring adoption of new local policies not already present in DCHA’s administrative plan, DCHA must add those policies to the administrative plan prior to using those program flexibilities.

Further, the delayed compliance date for policies of June 6, 2025, does not authorize delayed compliance with the provisions of the rule. If DCHA chooses not to bring their policies into compliance with the rule until June 6, 2025, they must still implement each provision on its compliance date.

In order to identify those provisions of the final rule that are not effective until after June 6, 2024, the model policy states that certain policies are not effective until a specific date.

ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

REFERENCES CITED IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

The authority for DCHA policies is derived from many sources. Primary among these sources are federal statutes, federal regulations, and guidance issued by HUD. State law also directs DCHA policy. State law must be followed where such law exists and does not conflict with federal regulations. Industry practice may also be used to develop policy as long as it does not conflict with federal requirements or prohibitions.

HUD

HUD provides the primary source of DCHA policy through federal regulations, HUD notices, and handbooks. Compliance with federal regulations, current HUD notices, and current HUD handbooks is mandatory.

HUD also provides guidance to DCHA through other means such as HUD-published guidebooks, expired HUD notices, and expired handbooks. Basing DCHA policy on HUD guidance is optional, as long as DCHA policies comply with federal law, federal regulations and mandatory policy. Because HUD has already determined that the guidance it provides is consistent with mandatory policies, DCHA reliance on HUD guidance provides DCHA with a “safe harbor.”

Material posted on the HUD website can provide further clarification of HUD policies. For example, FAQs on the HUD website can provide direction on the application of federal regulations in various aspects of the program.

State Law

Where there is no mandatory federal guidance, DCHA must comply with state law, if it exists. Where state law is more restrictive than federal law, but does not conflict with it, DCHA should follow the state law.

Industry Practice

Where no law or HUD authority exists on a particular subject, industry practice may support DCHA policy. Industry practice refers to a way of doing things or a policy that has been adopted by a majority of PHAs.

NSPIRE AND HQS IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

DCHA must determine that the rental unit selected by the family is in safe and habitable condition at certain times prescribed by the regulations. The current applicable inspection standard for the HCV and PBV programs is Housing Quality Standards (HQS). On May 11, 2023 HUD published a final rule implementing the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE final rule), a new approach to defining and assessing housing quality across multiple HUD programs. 24 CFR 5.703 describes the NSPIRE standards, including variations for the HCV and PBV programs. Notice PIH 2023-28 finalized the administrative procedures for NSPIRE as they pertain specifically to the HCV and PBV programs. Collectively, this is known as “NSPIRE-V”.

The compliance date for NSPIRE-V is no later than October 1, 2025, at which point the HQS inspection standard will sunset. DCHA may, however, implement NSPIRE-V prior to October 1, 2025, provided they do so in accordance with requirements in FR Notice 7/5/24.

However, even once the HQS inspection standard has sunset, the regulations at 24 CFR Part 982 and 983 governing the HCV and PBV programs will continue to use the terms *HQS* and *housing quality standards* rather than *NSPIRE*. This is because, the definition of *housing quality standards (HQS)* at 24 CFR 982.4 means the minimum quality standards developed by HUD in accordance with 24 CFR 5.703 for the HCV program, including any variations approved by HUD for DCHA. As such, the model policy uses the term *housing quality standards* whenever applicable regulations use this term. Except in the chapter describing HQS, the acronym *HQS* is not used in the model policy in order to avoid confusion between the umbrella term meaning housing standards and the specific inspection protocol. The model policy only uses the term *NSPIRE* when referring to specific NSPIRE standards.

HOTMA SECTIONS 102 AND 104 CHANGES IN THE MODEL POLICY

On July 29, 2016 the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) was signed into law. HOTMA made numerous changes to statutes governing HUD programs, including sections of the United States Housing Act of 1937. Title I of HOTMA contains 14 different sections that impact the public housing and Section 8 programs. HUD published a final rule on February 14, 2023, revising regulations related to income and assets (Sections 102 and 104 of HOTMA). While the new income and asset regulations were effective January 1, 2024, DCHA was instructed to select a compliance date no later than January 1, 2025. *Compliance* with Sections 102 and 104 of HOTMA means not only applying HOTMA regulations to affected programs but also reporting in HUD’s new Housing Information Portal (HIP) system. Currently, DCHA remains unable to select a compliance date because HOTMA compliance depends on transitioning from HUD’s IMS/PIC system (which is unable to accept HOTMA-compliant Form HUD-50058) to HUD’s new HIP system (which will be the only system that accepts HOTMA-compliant Form HUD-50058). Because HOTMA compliant reexaminations cannot be successfully submitted to IMS/PIC, HUD advised DCHA not to begin conducting reexaminations under HOTMA rules without further information on when the new HOTMA-compliant Form HUD-50058 in HIP will be available. DCHA cannot transition to HOTMA until HIP is in place, HOTMA-compliant, and accessible.

HOTMA VOUCHER FINAL RULE CHANGES IN THE MODEL POLICY

The final rule implementing streamlining changes to the HCV and PBV programs was published on May 7, 2024, and codified certain provisions in Sections 101, 105, 106, and 112 of HOTMA, as well as incorporating changes from the NSPIRE final rule discussed above. The rule is known as the “HOTMA voucher final rule.” The effective date of the HOTMA voucher final rule was June 6, 2024. While the compliance date for certain provisions of the rule is the same as the effective date, the compliance date for other provisions is not until 90 days, 180 days, or one year after the effective date. Further, many new changes to the regulations described in the HOTMA voucher final rule require changes to DCHA’s administrative plan. DCHA must make all revisions needed to bring existing policies into compliance with the final rule no later than June 6, 2025 (one year after the effective date). However, if DCHA wishes to use program flexibilities requiring adoption of new local policies not already present in DCHA’s administrative plan, DCHA must add those policies to the administrative plan prior to using those program flexibilities. Further, the delayed compliance date for policies of June 6, 2025, does not authorize delayed compliance with the provisions of the rule. If DCHA chooses not to bring their policies into compliance with the rule until June 6, 2025, they must still implement each provision on its compliance date.

In order to identify those provisions of the final rule that are not effective until after June 6, 2024, the model policy states that certain policies are not effective until a specific date.

RESOURCES CITED IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

The administrative plan cites several documents. Where a document or resource is cited frequently, it may be abbreviated. Where it is cited only once or twice, the administrative plan may contain the entire name of the document or resource. Following is a key to abbreviations used for various sources that are frequently cited in the administrative plan and a list of references and document locations that are referenced in the administrative plan or that may be helpful to you.

HUD HCV Guidebook

In November 2019 HUD began issuing a new version of the HCV Guidebook chapter-by-chapter. Unlike the previous version of the HCV Guidebook in which chapters were numbered, the new version of the guidebook includes chapter names, but no numbers. As the new version of the guidebook has not yet been fully released, and since the previous version of the guidebook contains guidance not found in the new version, the policy cites both versions of the guidebook. Therefore, where the HCV Guidebook is cited in the policy, the citation will make a distinction between the “old” and “new” versions of the guidebook. The “old” version of the guidebook will continue to be cited as *HCV GB* with a chapter/page reference (example: HCV GB, p. 5-4). If HUD has also released a new chapter on the same topic with information that either adds new information or updates existing information from the previous guidebook, the new guidebook will be cited as *New HCV GB* with a chapter title and page reference (example: New HCV GB, *Payment Standards*, p. 11). On September 29, 2023, HUD issued Notice PIH 2023-27 to implement sections 102 and 104 of the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA). The notice supersedes relevant portions of the guidebook, specifically the chapters on eligibility, denials, and annual reexaminations and interim reexaminations. Where chapters have not been altered by the HOTMA implementation notice, the model policy continues to cite the HCV Guidebook.

Abbreviations

Throughout the administrative plan, abbreviations are used to designate certain documents in citations. The following is a table of abbreviations of documents cited in the administrative plan.

Abbreviation	Document
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
HCV GB	Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook (7420.10G), April 2001.
New HCV GB	Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook (7420.10G), Various dates of release
HUD-50058 IB	HUD-50058 Instruction Booklet
RHIIP FAQs	Rental Housing Integrity Improvement Program (RHIIP) Frequently Asked Questions.
VG	PIH Notice 2004-01 Verification Guidance, March 9, 2004.
HB 4350.3	Occupancy Requirements of Subsidized Multifamily Housing Programs

Resources and Where to Find Them

The HUD website is <https://www.hud.gov/>.

Guidebooks, handbooks, and other HUD resources may be found at the HUDClips website: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips.

Following is a list of resources helpful to DCHA or referenced in the administrative plan, and the online location of each.

Document and Location
Code of Federal Regulations https://www.ecfr.gov/
Eligibility of Students for Assisted Housing Under Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937; Final Rule http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-19435.pdf
Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System, Security Procedures for Upfront Income Verification data https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/EIVSECGUIDEPHA.PDF
Executive Order 11063 https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/11063.html
Federal Register https://www.federalregister.gov/
Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook (7420.10G), Updated Chapters https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/guidebook
HOTMA Final Rule https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/02/14/2023-01617/housing-opportunity-through-modernization-act-of-2016-implementation-of-sections-102-103-and-104?utm_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm_source=federalregister.gov&utm_medium=email
HOTMA Implementation Notice, PIH 2023-27 https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/OCHCO/documents/2023-27pihn.pdf
Joint Statement of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice, issued May 17, 2004 https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2010/12/14/joint_statement_ra.pdf
Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, published January 22, 2007 https://www.lep.gov/guidance/HUD_guidance_Jan07.pdf
Notice PIH 2010-26 (HA), Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Notice https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/DOC_8993.PDF
Notice PIH 2017-12, Administrative Guidance for Effective and Mandated Use of the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/PIH2017-12EIVNOTICE.PDF
VAWA Resources https://www.hud.gov/vawa

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM AND PLAN

INTRODUCTION

DCHA receives its funding for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. DCHA is not a federal department or agency. A public housing agency (PHA) is a governmental or public body, created and authorized by state law to develop and operate housing and housing programs for low-income families. The PHA enters into an Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) with HUD to administer the program requirements on behalf of HUD. DCHA must ensure compliance with federal laws, regulations and notices and must establish policy and procedures to clarify federal requirements and to ensure consistency in program operation.

This chapter contains information about the DCHA and its programs with emphasis on the HCV program. It also contains information about the purpose, intent and use of the plan and guide.

There are three parts to this chapter:

Part I: The Public Housing Agency (PHA). This part includes a description of the PHA, its jurisdiction, its programs, and its mission and intent.

Part II: The HCV Program. This part contains information about the Housing Choice Voucher program operation, roles and responsibilities, and partnerships.

Part III: The HCV Administrative Plan. This part discusses the purpose and organization of the plan and its revision requirements.

PART I: THE PHA

1-I.A. OVERVIEW

This part explains the origin of the DCHA's creation and authorization, the general structure of the organization, and the relationship between the DCHA Board and staff.

1-I.B. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE PHA

The Section 8 tenant-based Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance program is funded by the federal government and administered by the **Davis Community Housing Authority** for the jurisdiction of Davis County Utah; **Cities of Clinton, Sunset, West Point, Clearfield, South Weber, Layton, East Layton, Syracuse, Kaysville, Fruit Heights, Farmington, Centerville, Bountiful, North Salt Lake, Woods Cross and West Bountiful / County of Davis.**

The officials of DCHA are known as commissioners or, collectively, as the board of commissioners. Commissioners are appointed in accordance with state housing law and generally serve in the same capacity as the directors of a corporation, establishing policies under which DCHA conducts business, ensuring that policies are followed by DCHA staff and ensuring that DCHA is successful in its mission. The board is responsible for preserving and expanding the agency's resources and assuring the agency's continued viability.

Formal actions of DCHA are taken through written resolutions, adopted by the board of commissioners and entered into the official records of DCHA.

The principal staff member of DCHA is the executive director (ED), hired and appointed by the board of commissioners. The executive director is directly responsible for carrying out the policies established by the board and is delegated the responsibility for hiring, training and supervising the DCHA staff in order to manage the day-to-day operations of DCHA. The executive director is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and directives for the programs managed. In addition, the executive director's duties include budgeting and financial planning for the agency.

1-I.C. DCHA MISSION

The purpose of a mission statement is to communicate the purpose of the agency to people inside and outside of the agency. It provides guiding direction for developing strategy, defining critical success factors, searching out key opportunities, making resource allocation choices, satisfying clients and stakeholders, and making decisions.

DCHA Policy

The mission is to provide safe, decent and sanitary housing conditions for very-low-income families and to manage resources efficiently. DCHA is to promote personal, economic and social upward mobility to provide families the opportunity to make the transition from subsidized to non-subsidized housing.

1-I.D. DCHA'S PROGRAMS

The following programs are included under this administrative plan:

DCHA Policy

The PHA's administrative plan is applicable to the operation of the Housing Choice Voucher, Non-Elderly Disabled (NED), Mainstream, and VASH programs.

1-I.E. DCHA'S COMMITMENT TO ETHICS AND SERVICE

As a public service agency, DCHA is committed to providing excellent service to HCV program participants, owners, and to the community. DCHA's standards include:

- Administer applicable federal and state laws and regulations to achieve high ratings in performance measurement indicators while maintaining efficiency in program operation to ensure fair and consistent treatment of clients served.
- Provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing – in compliance with program housing quality standards – for very-low-income families while ensuring that family rents are fair, reasonable, and affordable.
- Encourage self sufficiency of participant families and assist in the expansion of family opportunities which address educational, socio-economic, recreational and other human services needs.
- Promote fair housing and the equal opportunity for very low-income families of all ethnic backgrounds to experience freedom of housing choice.
- Promote a housing program which maintains quality service and integrity while providing an incentive to private property owners to rent to very low-income families.
- Promote a market-driven housing program that will help qualified low-income families be successful in obtaining affordable housing and increase the supply of housing choices for such families.
- Create positive public awareness and expand the level of family, owner, and community support in accomplishing DCHA's mission.
- Attain and maintain a high level of standards and professionalism in day-to-day management of all program components.
- Administer an efficient, high-performing agency through continuous improvement of DCHA's support systems and a high level of commitment to our employees and their development.

DCHA will make every effort to keep program participants informed of HCV program rules and regulations, and to advise participants of how the program rules affect them.

PART II: THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM

1-II.A. OVERVIEW AND HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

The intent of this section is to provide the public and staff with information related to the overall operation of the program. There have been many changes to the program since its inception in 1974 and a brief history of the program will assist the reader to better understand the program.

The United States Housing Act of 1937 (the “Act”) is responsible for the birth of federal housing program initiatives. The Act was intended to provide financial assistance to states and cities for public works projects, slum clearance and the development of affordable housing developments for low-income residents.

The Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974 created a new federally assisted housing program – the Section 8 Existing program (also known as the Section 8 Certificate program). The HCD Act represented a significant shift in federal housing strategy from locally owned public housing to privately owned rental housing.

Under the Certificate program, federal housing assistance payments were made directly to private owners of rental housing, where this housing was made available to lower-income families. Eligible families were able to select housing in the private rental market. Assuming that the housing met certain basic physical standards of quality (“housing quality standards”) and was within certain HUD-established rent limitations (“fair market rents”), the family would be able to receive rental assistance in the housing unit. Family contribution to rent was generally set at 30 percent of the family’s adjusted income, with the remainder of the rent paid by the program.

Another unique feature of the Certificate program was that the rental assistance remained with the eligible family, if the family chose to move to another privately-owned rental unit that met program requirements (in contrast to the public housing program where the rental assistance remains with the unit, should the family decide to move). Consequently, the Certificate program was characterized as tenant-based assistance, rather than unit-based assistance.

The Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1987 authorized a new version of tenant-based assistance – the Section 8 Voucher program. The Voucher program was very similar to the Certificate program in that eligible families were able to select housing in the private rental market and receive assistance in that housing unit.

However, the Voucher program permitted families more options in housing selection. Rental housing still had to meet the basic housing quality standards, but there was no fair market rent limitation on rent. In addition, family contribution to rent was not set at a limit of 30 percent of adjusted income. Consequently, depending on the actual rental cost of the unit selected, a family might pay more or less than 30 percent of their adjusted income for rent.

From 1987 through 1999, public housing agencies managed both the Certificate and Voucher tenant-based assistance programs, with separate rules and requirements for each. From 1994 through 1998, HUD published a series of new rules, known as “conforming” rules, to more closely combine and align the two similar housing programs, to the extent permitted by the law.

In 1998, the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) – also known as the Public Housing Reform Act – was signed into law. QHWRA eliminated all statutory differences between the Certificate and Voucher tenant-based programs and required that the two programs be merged into a single tenant-based assistance program, now known as the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

The HCV program was modeled closely on the pre-merger Voucher program. However, unlike the pre-merger Voucher program, the HCV program requires an assisted family to pay at least 30 percent of adjusted income for rent.

The transition of assistance from the Certificate and Voucher programs to the new HCV program began in October 1999. By October 2001, all families receiving tenant-based assistance were converted to the HCV program.

On July 29, 2016, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) was signed into law. HOTMA made numerous changes to statutes governing HUD programs, including sections of the United States Housing Act of 1937. Title I of HOTMA contains 14 different sections that impact the public housing and Section 8 programs.

- The Final Rule implementing broad changes to income and assets in Sections 102 and 104 of HOTMA, and for PHAs that administer the public housing program over-income provisions in Section 103, was officially published in the *Federal Register* on February 14, 2023. On September 29, 2023, HUD issued notice PIH 2023-27, which provided guidance to PHAs on the implementation of the program changes described in the Final Rule. HUD issued a revised version of the notice on February 2, 2024.
- The Final Rule implementing streamlining changes to the HCV and PBV programs was published on May 7, 2024, and codified certain provisions in Sections 101, 105, 106, and 112 of HOTMA as well as incorporation changes from the NSPIRE final rule.

1-II.B. HCV PROGRAM BASICS

The purpose of the HCV program is to provide rental assistance to eligible families. The rules and regulations of the HCV program are determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. DCHA is afforded choices in the operation of the program which are included in DCHA's administrative plan, a document approved by the board of commissioners of DCHA.

The HCV program offers mobility to eligible families because they may search for suitable housing anywhere in DCHA's jurisdiction and may also be eligible to move under portability to other PHAs' jurisdictions.

When a family is determined to be eligible for the program and funding is available, DCHA issues the family a housing voucher. When the family finds a suitable housing unit and funding is available, DCHA will enter into a contract with the owner and the family will enter into a lease with the owner. Each party makes their respective payment to the owner so that the owner receives full rent.

Even though the family is determined to be eligible for the program, the owner has the responsibility of approving the family as a suitable renter. DCHA continues to make payments to the owner as long as the family is eligible and the housing unit continues to qualify under the program.

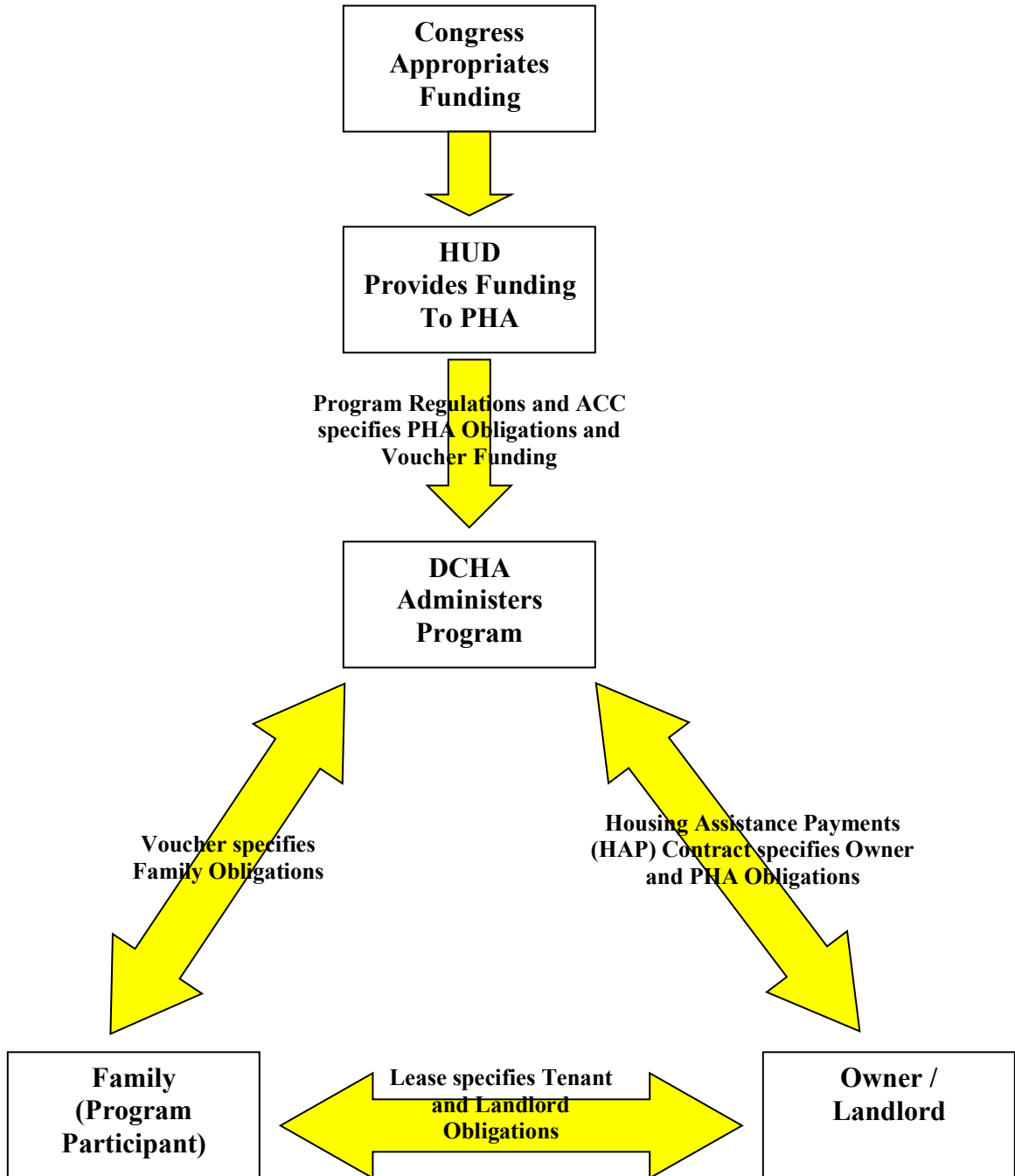
1-II.C. THE HCV PARTNERSHIPS

To administer the HCV program, DCHA enters into a contractual relationship with HUD (Consolidated Annual Contributions Contract). DCHA also enters into contractual relationships with the assisted family and the owner or landlord of the housing unit.

For the HCV program to work and be successful, all parties involved – HUD, DCHA, the owner, and the family – have important roles to play. The roles and responsibilities of all parties are defined in federal regulations and in legal documents that parties execute to participate in the program.

The chart on the following page illustrates key aspects of these relationships.

The HCV Relationships:



What Does HUD Do?

HUD has the following major responsibilities:

- Develop regulations, requirements, handbooks, notices and other guidance to implement HCV housing program legislation passed by Congress;
- Allocate HCV program funds to PHAs;
- Provide technical assistance to PHAs on interpreting and applying HCV program requirements;
- Monitor PHA compliance with HCV program requirements and PHA performance in program administration.

What Does DCHA Do?

DCHA administers the HCV program under contract with HUD and has the following major responsibilities:

- Establish local policies to administer the program;
- Review applications from interested applicants to determine whether they are eligible for the program;
- Maintain a waiting list and select families for admission;
- Issue vouchers to eligible families and provide information on how to lease a unit;
- Conduct outreach to owners, with special attention to owners outside areas of poverty or minority concentration;
- Approve the rental unit (including assuring compliance with housing quality standards and rent reasonableness), the owner, and the tenancy;
- Make housing assistance payments to the owner in a timely manner;
- Recertify families for continued eligibility under the program;
- Ensure that owners and families comply with their contractual obligations;
- Provide families and owners with prompt, professional service;
- Comply with all fair housing and equal opportunity requirements, HUD regulations and requirements, the ACC, HUD-approved applications for funding, DCHA's administrative plan, and other applicable federal, state and local laws.

What Does the Owner Do?

The owner has the following major responsibilities:

- Screen families who apply for tenancy, to determine suitability as renters.
 - DCHA can provide some information to the owner, but the primary responsibility for tenant screening rests with the owner.
 - The owner should consider family background factors such as rent and bill-paying history, history of caring for property, respecting the rights of others to peaceful enjoyment of the property, compliance with essential conditions of tenancy, whether the family is engaging in drug-related criminal activity or other criminal activity that might threaten others.
- Comply with the terms of the Housing Assistance Payments contract executed with the DCHA;
- Comply with all applicable fair housing laws and do not discriminate against anyone;
- Maintain the housing unit in accordance with minimum quality standards developed by HUD in accordance with 24 CFR 5.703 (including any variations approved by HUD for DCHA) and make necessary repairs in a timely manner;
- Collect rent due from the assisted family and otherwise comply with and enforce provisions of the dwelling lease.

What Does the Family Do?

The family has the following responsibilities:

- Provide DCHA with complete and accurate information as determined by DCHA to be necessary for administration of the program;
- Make their best and most timely efforts to locate qualified and suitable housing;
- Attend all appointments scheduled by DCHA;
- Allow DCHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice;
- Take responsibility for care of the housing unit, including any violations of housing quality standards caused by the family;
- Comply with the terms of the lease with the owner;
- Comply with the family obligations of the voucher;
- Not commit serious or repeated violations of the lease;
- Not engage in drug-related or violent criminal activity;
- Notify DCHA and the owner before moving or terminating the lease;
- Use the assisted unit only for residence and as the sole residence of the family. Not sublet the unit, assign the lease, or have any interest in the unit;
- Promptly notify DCHA of any changes in family composition;
- Not commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any housing programs.

1-II.D. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Applicable regulations include:

- 24 CFR Part 5: General Program Requirements
- 24 CFR Part 8: Nondiscrimination
- 24 CFR Part 35: Lead-Based Paint
- 24 CFR Part 100: The Fair Housing Act
- 24 CFR Part 982: Section 8 Tenant-Based Assistance: Housing Choice Voucher Program
- 24 CFR Part 983: Project-Based Vouchers
- 24 CFR Part 985: The Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)

PART III: THE HCV ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

1-III.A. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The administrative plan is required by HUD. The purpose of the administrative plan is to establish policies for carrying out the programs in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives contained in the PHA's agency plan. This administrative plan is a supporting document to the DCHA agency plan and is available for public review as required by CFR 24 Part 903.

This administrative plan is set forth to define DCHA's local policies for operation of the housing programs in accordance with federal laws and regulations. All issues related to the HCV program not addressed in this document are governed by such federal regulations, HUD handbooks and guidebooks, notices, and other applicable law. The policies in this administrative plan have been designed to ensure compliance with the consolidated ACC and all HUD-approved applications for program funding.

DCHA is responsible for complying with all changes in HUD regulations pertaining to the HCV program. If such changes conflict with this plan, HUD regulations will have precedence.

Administration of the HCV program and the functions and responsibilities of PHA staff shall be in compliance with DCHA's personnel policy and HUD regulations as well as all federal, state and local fair housing laws and regulations.

1-III.B. CONTENTS OF THE PLAN [24 CFR 982.54]

The HUD regulations at 24 CFR 982.54 define the policies that must be included in the administrative plan. They are as follow:

- Selection and admission of applicants from the DCHA waiting list, including any DCHA admission preferences, procedures for removing applicant names from the waiting list, and procedures for closing and reopening the DCHA waiting list (Chapter 4);
- Issuing or denying vouchers, including DCHA policy governing the voucher term and any extensions of the voucher term. If DCHA decides to allow extensions of the voucher term, the DCHA administrative plan must describe how DCHA determines whether to grant extensions, and how DCHA determines the length of any extension (Chapter 5);
- Any special rules for use of available funds when HUD provides funding to DCHA for a special purpose (e.g., desegregation), including funding for specified families or a specified category of families (Chapter 4);

- Occupancy policies, including definition of what group of persons may qualify as a 'family', definition of when a family is considered to be 'continuously assisted'; standards for denying admission or terminating assistance based on criminal activity or alcohol abuse in accordance with 982.553 (Chapters 3 and 12);
- Encouraging participation by owners of suitable units located outside areas of low income or minority concentration (Chapter 13);
- Assisting a family that claims that illegal discrimination has prevented the family from leasing a suitable unit (Chapter 2);
- Providing information about a family to prospective owners (Chapters 3 and 9);
- Disapproval of owners (Chapter 13);
- Subsidy standards (Chapter 5);
- Family absence from the dwelling unit (Chapter 12);
- How to determine who remains in the program if a family breaks up (Chapter 3);
- Informal review procedures for applicants (Chapter 16);
- Informal hearing procedures for participants (Chapter 16);
- The process for establishing and revising voucher payment standards, (Chapter 16);
- Policies on administering decreases and increases in the payment standard during the HAP contract term (Chapter 6);
- The method of determining that rent to owner is a reasonable rent (initially and during the term of a HAP contract) (Chapter 8);
- Special policies concerning special housing types in the program (e.g., use of shared housing) (Chapter 15);
- Policies concerning payment by a family to DCHA of amounts the family owes DCHA (Chapter 16);
- Interim redeterminations of family income and composition (Chapter 11);
- Restrictions, if any, on the number of moves by a participant family (Chapter 10);
- Approval by the board of commissioners or other authorized officials to charge the administrative fee reserve (Chapter 16);
- Procedural guidelines and performance standards for conducting required housing quality standards inspections (Chapter 8);
- DCHA screening of applicants for family behavior or suitability for tenancy (Chapter 3);
- Policies governing the project-basing of vouchers in both the standard Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program (Chapter 17) and the RAD Project-Based Voucher program (Chapter 18); and

Special policies governing any special purpose vouchers issued by DCHA (Chapter 19)

Mandatory vs. Discretionary Policy

HUD makes a distinction between:

- Mandatory policies: those driven by legislation, regulations, current handbooks, notices, and legal opinions, and
- Optional, non-binding guidance, including guidebooks, notices that have expired and recommendations from individual HUD staff.

HUD expects DCHA to adopt local policies and procedures that are consistent with mandatory policies in areas where HUD gives DCHA discretion. DCHA's administrative plan is the foundation of those policies and procedures. HUD's directions require DCHA to make policy choices that provide sufficient guidance to staff and ensure consistency to program applicants and participants.

Creating policies based upon HUD guidance is not mandatory but provides DCHA with a “safe harbor.” HUD has already determined that the recommendations and suggestions it makes are consistent with mandatory policies. If DCHA adopts an alternative strategy, it must make its own determination that the alternative approach is consistent with legislation, regulations, and other mandatory requirements. There may be very good reasons for adopting a policy or procedure that is different than HUD's safe harbor, but DCHA should carefully think through those decisions.

1-III.C. ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The plan is organized to provide information to users in particular areas of operation.

1-III.D. UPDATING AND REVISING THE PLAN

DCHA will revise this administrative plan as needed to comply with changes in HUD regulations. The original plan and any changes must be approved by the board of commissioners of the agency, the pertinent sections included in the Agency Plan, and a copy provided to HUD.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will review and update the plan as needed, to reflect changes in regulations, DCHA operations, or when needed to ensure staff consistency in operation.

Chapter 2

FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the laws and HUD regulations requiring Davis Community Housing Authority to affirmatively further civil rights and fair housing in all federally assisted housing programs. The letter and spirit of these laws are implemented through consistent policy and processes. The responsibility to further nondiscrimination pertains to all areas of DCHA's housing choice voucher (HCV) operations.

This chapter describes HUD regulations and DCHA policies related to these topics in three parts:

Part I: Nondiscrimination. This part presents the body of laws and regulations governing the responsibilities of DCHA regarding nondiscrimination.

Part II: Policies Related to Persons with Disabilities. This part discusses the rules and policies of the housing choice voucher program related to reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. These rules and policies are based on the Fair Housing Act (42.U.S.C.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and incorporate guidance from the Joint Statement of The Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice (DOJ), issued May 17, 2004.

Part III: Prohibition of Discrimination Against Limited English Proficiency Persons. This part details the obligations of DCHA to ensure meaningful access to the HCV program and its activities by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). This part incorporates the Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons published January 22, 2007, in the *Federal Register*.

PART I: NONDISCRIMINATION

2-I.A. OVERVIEW

Federal laws require DCHA to treat all applicants and participants equally, providing the same opportunity to access services, regardless of family characteristics and background. Federal law prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, and disability. In addition, HUD regulations provide for additional protections regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status. DCHA will comply fully with all federal, state, and local nondiscrimination laws, and with rules and regulations governing fair housing and equal opportunity in housing and employment, including:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (as amended by the Community Development Act of 1974 and the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988)
- Executive Orders 11063 and 13988
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (to the extent that it applies, otherwise Section 504 and the Fair Housing Amendments govern)
- The Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity Final Rule, published in the *Federal Register* February 3, 2012 and further clarified in Notice PIH 2014-20
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

When more than one civil rights law applies to a situation, the laws will be read and applied together.

Any applicable state laws or local ordinances and any legislation protecting individual rights of tenants, applicants, or staff that may subsequently be enacted will also apply.

DCHA Policy

The State of Utah prohibits discrimination based on source of income.

2-I.B. NONDISCRIMINATION

Federal regulations prohibit discrimination against certain protected classes and other groups of people. State and local requirements, as well as DCHA policies, can prohibit discrimination based on other factors.

DCHA shall not discriminate because of race, color, sex, religion, familial status, age, disability or national origin (called “protected classes”)

Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18.

DCHA will not discriminate on the basis of marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation [FR Notice 02/03/12; Executive Order 13988].

DCHA Policy

DCHA identifies source of income as an additional protected class, per state law,

DCHA will not use any of these factors to:

- Deny to any family the opportunity to apply for housing, nor deny to any qualified applicant the opportunity to participate in the housing choice voucher program
- Provide housing that is different from that provided to others
- Subject anyone to segregation or disparate treatment
- Subject anyone to sexual harassment
- Restrict anyone's access to any benefit enjoyed by others in connection with the housing program
- Treat a person differently in determining eligibility or other requirements for admission
- Steer an applicant or participant toward or away from a particular area based any of these factors
- Deny anyone access to the same level of services
- Deny anyone the opportunity to participate in a planning or advisory group that is an integral part of the housing program
- Discriminate in the provision of residential real estate transactions
- Discriminate against someone because they are related to or associated with a member of a protected class
- Publish or cause to be published an advertisement or notice indicating the availability of housing that prefers or excludes persons who are members of a protected class

Providing Information to Families and Owners

DCHA must take steps to ensure that families and owners are fully aware of all applicable civil rights laws. As part of the briefing process, DCHA must provide information to HCV applicant families about civil rights requirements and the opportunity to rent in a broad range of neighborhoods [24 CFR 982.301]. The Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract informs owners of the requirement not to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, or disability in connection with the contract.

2-I.C. DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

General Housing Discrimination Complaints

If an applicant or participant believes that any family member has been discriminated against by DCHA or an owner, the family should advise DCHA. DCHA should make every reasonable attempt to determine whether the applicant's or participant's assertions have merit and take any warranted corrective action.

In all cases, DCHA will advise the family that they may file a fair housing complaint if the family feels they have been discriminated against under the Fair Housing Act.

DCHA Policy

Applicants or participants who believe that they have been subject to unlawful discrimination may notify DCHA either orally or in writing.

Within 10 business days of receiving the complaint, DCHA will investigate and attempt to remedy discrimination complaints made against DCHA. DCHA will also advise the family of their right to file a fair housing complaint with HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO). The fair housing poster, posted in conspicuous and accessible locations DCHA lobbies, will reference how to file a complaint with FHEO.

DCHA will keep a record of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions. (See Chapter 16.)

Complaints under the Equal Access Final Rule [Notice PIH 2014-20]

Notice PIH 2014-20 requires an articulated complaint process for allegations of discrimination under the Equal Access Final rule. The Equal Access Final Rule requires that DCHA provide equal access regardless of marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation. DCHA will be informed on these obligations by the HUD Field Office or FHEO when an Equal Access complaint investigation begins.

DCHA Policy

Applicants or tenant families who believe that they have been subject to unlawful discrimination based on marital status, gender identity, or sexual orientation under the Equal Access Rule may notify DCHA either orally or in writing.

Within 10 business days of receiving the complaint, DCHA will provide a written notice to those alleged to have violated the rule. DCHA will also send a written notice to the complainant informing them that notice was sent to those alleged to have violated the rule, as well as information on how to complete and submit a housing discrimination complaint form to HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO).

DCHA will attempt to remedy discrimination complaints made against DCHA and will conduct an investigation into all allegations of discrimination.

Within 10 business days following the conclusion of DCHA's investigation, DCHA will provide the complainant and those alleged to have violated the rule with findings and either a proposed corrective action plan or an explanation of why corrective action is not warranted.

DCHA will keep a record of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions. (See Chapter 16.)

VAWA Complaint Processing [Notice FHEO 2023-01]

A complainant may, not later than one year after an alleged VAWA violation has occurred or terminated, file a complaint with FHEO alleging such violation. If there is a violation that began prior to a year before the complaint is filed, but it continues into the one-year time period, HUD will accept the complaint. FHEO will investigate the complaint if it is timely and FHEO otherwise has jurisdiction. If a complaint is filed more than one year after the alleged violation occurred or terminated, FHEO may, but is not required to, investigate the allegations under the additional authority and procedures described in FHEO 2023-01.

Complaints do not need to allege a violation of the Fair Housing Act for FHEO to accept and investigate the complaint.

DCHA Policy

Applicants or tenant families who wish to file a VAWA complaint against DCHA may notify DCHA either orally or in writing.

DCHA will advise the family of their right to file a VAWA complaint with HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO). DCHA will inform the family that not later than one year after an alleged VAWA violation has occurred or terminated, applicants and tenants who believe they have been injured by a VAWA violation or will be injured by such a violation that is about to occur may file a VAWA complaint using FHEO's online complaint form via mail, email, or telephone.

DCHA will attempt to remedy complaints made against DCHA and will conduct an investigation into all allegations of discrimination.

DCHA will keep a record of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions. (See Chapter 16.)

PART II: POLICIES RELATED TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2-II.A. OVERVIEW

One type of disability discrimination prohibited by the Fair Housing Act is the refusal to make reasonable accommodation in rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodation may be necessary to afford a person with a disability the equal opportunity to use and enjoy a program or dwelling under the program.

DCHA must ensure that persons with disabilities have full access to DCHA's programs and services. This responsibility begins with the first contact by an interested family and continues through every aspect of the program.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will ask all applicants and participants if they require any type of accommodations, in writing, on the intake application, reexamination documents, and notices of adverse action by DCHA, by including the following language:

“If you or anyone in your family is a person with disabilities, and you require a specific accommodation in order to fully utilize our programs and services, please contact the housing authority.”

A specific name and phone number of designated staff will be provided to process requests for accommodation.

DCHA will display posters and other housing information and signage in locations throughout DCHA's office in such a manner as to be easily readable from a wheelchair.

2-II.B. DEFINITION OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

A reasonable accommodation is an adjustment made to a rule, policy, practice, or service that allows a person with a disability to have equal access to the HCV program. For example, reasonable accommodations may include making home visits, extending the voucher term, or approving an exception payment standard in order for a participant to lease an accessible dwelling unit.

Federal regulations stipulate that requests for accommodations will be considered reasonable if they do not create an “undue financial and administrative burden” for DCHA, or result in a “fundamental alteration” in the nature of the program or service offered. A fundamental alteration is a modification that alters the essential nature of a provider’s operations.

Types of Reasonable Accommodations

When needed, DCHA will modify normal procedures to accommodate the needs of a person with disabilities. For example, reasonable accommodations may include making home visits, extending the voucher term, or approving an exception payment standard in order for a participant to lease an accessible unit. The following will be determined on a case-by case basis:

- Allowing for exceptions to DCHA’s subsidy standards
- Allowing a change in the family’s rent due date to correspond with the receipt of the head of household, or spouse or cohead’s SSI or SSDI benefits

2-II.C. REQUEST FOR AN ACCOMMODATION

If an applicant or participant indicates that an exception, change, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service is needed because of a disability, HUD requires that DCHA treat the information as a request for a reasonable accommodation, even if no formal request is made [Joint Statement of the Departments of HUD and Justice: Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act].

The family must explain what type of accommodation is needed to provide the person with the disability full access to DCHA's programs and services.

If the need for the accommodation is not readily apparent or known to DCHA, the family must explain the relationship between the requested accommodation and the disability. There must be an identifiable connection, or nexus, between the requested accommodation and the individual's disability.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will encourage the family to make its request in writing using a reasonable accommodation request form. However, DCHA will consider the accommodation any time the family indicates that an accommodation is needed whether or not a formal written request is submitted.

2-II.D. VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY

The regulatory civil rights definition for persons with disabilities is provided in Exhibit 2-1 at the end of this chapter. The definition of a person with a disability for the purpose of obtaining a reasonable accommodation is much broader than the HUD definition of disability which is used for waiting list preferences and income allowances.

Before providing an accommodation, DCHA must determine that the person meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that the accommodation will enhance the family's access to DCHA's programs and services.

If a person's disability is obvious or otherwise known to DCHA, and if the need for the requested accommodation is also readily apparent or known, no further verification will be required [Joint Statement of the Departments of HUD and Justice: Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act].

If a family indicates that an accommodation is required for a disability that is not obvious or otherwise known to DCHA, the DCHA must verify that the person meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that the limitations imposed by the disability require the requested accommodation.

When verifying a disability, DCHA will follow the verification policies provided in Chapter 7. All information related to a person's disability will be treated in accordance with the confidentiality policies provided in Chapter 16. In addition to the general requirements that govern all verification efforts, the following requirements apply when verifying a disability:

- Third-party verification must be obtained from an individual identified by the family who is competent to make the determination. A doctor or other medical professional, a peer support group, a non-medical service agency, or a reliable third party who is in a position to know about the individual's disability may provide verification of a disability [Joint Statement of the Departments of HUD and Justice: Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act]
- DCHA must request only information that is necessary to evaluate the disability-related need for the accommodation. DCHA will not inquire about the nature or extent of any disability.
- Medical records will not be accepted or retained in the participant file.
- In the event that DCHA does receive confidential information about a person's specific diagnosis, treatment, or the nature or severity of the disability, DCHA will dispose of it. In place of the information, DCHA will note in the file that the disability and other requested information have been verified, the date the verification was received, and the name and address of the knowledgeable professional who sent the information [Notice PIH 2010-26].

2-II.E. APPROVAL/DENIAL OF A REQUESTED ACCOMMODATION [Joint Statement of the Departments of HUD and Justice: Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Act, Notice PIH 2010-26].

DCHA must approve a request for an accommodation if the following three conditions are met:

- The request was made by or on behalf of a person with a disability.
- There is a disability-related need for the accommodation.
- The requested accommodation is reasonable, meaning it would not impose an undue financial and administrative burden on DCHA, or fundamentally alter the nature of DCHA's HCV operations (including the obligation to comply with HUD requirements and regulations).

Requests for accommodations must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account factors such as the overall size of DCHA's program with respect to the number of employees, type of facilities and size of budget, type of operation including composition and structure of workforce, the nature and cost of the requested accommodation, and the availability of alternative accommodations that would effectively meet the family's disability-related needs.

Before making a determination whether to approve the request, DCHA may enter into discussion and negotiation with the family, request more information from the family, or may require the family to sign a consent form so that DCHA may verify the need for the requested accommodation.

DCHA Policy

After a request for an accommodation is presented, DCHA will respond in writing within 10 business days.

In certain situations, wherein DCHA is awaiting additional information from a professional and/or the requestor, DCHA may communicate with the requestor via phone and/or email if contact information is provided on the required form.

If DCHA denies a request for an accommodation because there is no relationship, or nexus, found between the disability and the requested accommodation, the notice will inform the family of the right to appeal DCHA's decision through an informal review (if applicable) or informal hearing (see Chapter 16).

If DCHA denies a request for an accommodation because it is not reasonable (it would impose an undue financial and administrative burden or fundamentally alter the nature of DCHA's operations), DCHA will discuss with the family whether an alternative accommodation could effectively address the family's disability-related needs without a fundamental alteration to the HCV program and without imposing an undue financial and administrative burden.

If DCHA believes that the family has failed to identify a reasonable alternative accommodation after interactive discussion and negotiation, DCHA will notify the family in writing of its determination within 10 business days from the date of the most recent discussion or communication with the family.

2-II.F. PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH HEARING OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS

HUD regulations require DCHA to ensure that persons with disabilities related to hearing and vision have reasonable access to DCHA's programs and services [24 CFR 8.6].

At the initial point of contact with each applicant, DCHA shall inform all applicants of alternative forms of communication that can be used other than plain language paperwork.

DCHA Policy

To meet the needs of persons with hearing impairments, TTD/TTY (text telephone display / teletype) communication will be available.

To meet the needs of persons with vision impairments, large-print and audio versions of key program documents will be made available upon request. When visual aids are used in public meetings or presentations, or in meetings with DCHA staff, one-on-one assistance will be provided upon request.

Additional examples of alternative forms of communication are sign language interpretation; having material explained orally by staff; or having a third-party representative (a friend, relative or advocate, named by the applicant) to receive, interpret and explain housing materials and be present at all meetings.

2-II.G. PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

DCHA must comply with a variety of regulations pertaining to physical accessibility, including the following:

- Notice PIH 2010-26
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968
- The Fair Housing Act of 1988

DCHA's policies concerning physical accessibility must be readily available to applicants and participants. They can be found in three key documents:

- This plan describes the key policies that govern DCHA's responsibilities with regard to physical accessibility.
- Notice PIH 2010-26 summarizes information about pertinent laws and implementing regulations related to nondiscrimination and accessibility in federally-funded housing programs.
- The DCHA Plan provides information about self-evaluation, needs assessment, and transition plans.

The design, construction, or alteration of DCHA facilities must conform to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). Newly-constructed facilities must be designed to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. Alterations to existing facilities must be accessible to the maximum extent feasible, defined as not imposing an undue financial and administrative burden on the operations of the HCV program.

When issuing a voucher to a family that includes an individual with disabilities, DCHA will include a current list of available accessible units known to DCHA and will assist the family in locating an available accessible unit, if necessary.

In general, owners must permit the family to make reasonable modifications to the unit. However, the owner is not required to pay for the modification and may require that the unit be restored to its original state at the family's expense when the family moves.

2-II.H. DENIAL OR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

DCHA's decision to deny or terminate the assistance of a family that includes a person with disabilities is subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation [24 CFR 982.552 (2)(iv)].

When applicants with disabilities are denied assistance, the notice of denial must inform them of DCHA's informal review process and their right to request an informal review. In addition, the notice must inform applicants with disabilities of their right to request reasonable accommodations to participate in the informal review process.

When a participant family's assistance is terminated, the notice of termination must inform them of DCHA's informal hearing process and their right to request a hearing and reasonable accommodation.

When reviewing reasonable accommodation requests, DCHA must consider whether any mitigating circumstances can be verified to explain and overcome the problem that led to DCHA's decision to deny or terminate assistance. If a reasonable accommodation will allow the family to meet the requirements, DCHA must make the accommodation.

PART III: IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

2-III.A. OVERVIEW

Language for Limited English Proficiency Persons (LEP) can be a barrier to accessing important benefits or services, understanding and exercising important rights, complying with applicable responsibilities, or understanding other information provided by the HCV program. In certain circumstances, failure to ensure that LEP persons can effectively participate in or benefit from federally-assisted programs and activities may violate the prohibition under Title VI against discrimination on the basis of national origin. This part incorporates the Final Guidance to Federal Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, published January 22, 2007, in the *Federal Register*.

DCHA will take affirmative steps to communicate with people who need services or information in a language other than English. These persons will be referred to as Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

LEP is defined as persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English. For the purposes of this administrative plan, LEP persons are HCV applicants and participants, and parents and family members of applicants and participants.

In order to determine the level of access needed by LEP persons, DCHA will balance the following four factors: (1) the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the Housing Choice Voucher program; (2) the frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program; (3) the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives; and (4) the resources available to DCHA and costs. Balancing these four factors will ensure meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue burdens on DCHA.

2-III.B. ORAL INTERPRETATION

DCHA will offer competent interpretation services free of charge, upon request, to the LEP person.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will utilize a language line for telephone interpreter services.

When exercising the option to conduct remote briefings, informal reviews, or hearings, however, DCHA will coordinate with a remote interpretation service which, when available, uses video conferencing technology rather than voice-only interpretation.

Where LEP persons desire, they will be permitted to use, at their own expense, an interpreter of their own choosing, in place of or as a supplement to the free language services offered by DCHA. DCHA, at its discretion, may choose to use the language services even when LEP persons desire to use an interpreter of their choosing. The interpreter may be a family member or friend. If the interpreter chosen by the family is a minor, DCHA will not rely on the minor to serve as the interpreter.

DCHA will analyze the various kinds of contacts it has with the public, to assess language needs and decide what reasonable steps should be taken. "Reasonable steps" may not be reasonable where the costs imposed substantially exceed the benefits.

Where feasible and possible DCHA will train and hire bilingual staff to be available to act as interpreters and translators, will pool resources with other PHAs, and will standardize documents.

2-III.C. WRITTEN TRANSLATION

Translation is the replacement of a written text from one language into an equivalent written text in another language.

DCHA Policy

In order to comply with written-translation obligations, DCHA will take the following steps:

DCHA will provide written translations of vital documents for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes 5 percent or 1,000 persons, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered. Translation of other documents, if needed, can be provided orally; or

If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group that reaches the 5 percent trigger, DCHA does not translate vital written materials, but provides written notice in the primary language of the LEP language group of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.

2-III.D. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

After completing the four-factor analysis and deciding what language assistance services are appropriate, DCHA shall determine whether it is necessary to develop a written implementation plan to address the identified needs of the LEP populations it serves.

If DCHA determines that it is not necessary to develop a written implementation plan, the absence of a written plan does not obviate the underlying obligation to ensure meaningful access by LEP persons to DCHA's Housing Choice Voucher program and services.

DCHA Policy

If it is determined that DCHA serves very few LEP persons, and DCHA has very limited resources, DCHA will not develop a written LEP plan, but will consider alternative ways to articulate in a reasonable manner a plan for providing meaningful access. Entities having significant contact with LEP persons, such as schools, grassroots and faith-based organizations, community groups, and groups working with new immigrants will be contacted for input into the process.

If DCHA determines it is appropriate to develop a written LEP plan, the following five steps will be taken: (1) Identifying LEP individuals who need language assistance; (2) identifying language assistance measures; (3) training staff; (4) providing notice to LEP persons; and (5) monitoring and updating the LEP plan.

**EXHIBIT 2-1: DEFINITION OF A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY UNDER
FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS [24 CFR Parts 8.3 and 100.201]**

A person with a disability, as defined under federal civil rights laws, is any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual, or
- Has a record of such impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such impairment

The phrase “physical or mental impairment” includes:

- Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic or disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
- Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The term “physical or mental impairment” includes, but is not limited to: such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction and alcoholism.

“Major life activities” includes, but is not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, learning, and/or working.

“Has a record of such impairment” means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

“Is regarded as having an impairment” is defined as having a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit one or more major life activities but is treated by a public entity (such as DCHA) as constituting such a limitation; has none of the impairments defined in this section but is treated by a public entity as having such an impairment; or has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, only as a result of the attitudes of others toward that impairment.

The definition of a person with disabilities does not include:

- Current illegal drug users
- People whose alcohol use interferes with the rights of others
- Persons who objectively pose a direct threat or substantial risk of harm to others that cannot be controlled with a reasonable accommodation under the HCV program

The above definition of disability determines whether an applicant or participant is entitled to any of the protections of federal disability civil rights laws. Thus, a person who does not meet this disability is not entitled to a reasonable accommodation under federal civil rights and fair housing laws and regulations.

The HUD definition of a person with a disability is much narrower than the civil rights definition of disability. The HUD definition of a person with a disability is used for purposes of receiving the disabled family preference, the \$525 elderly/disabled household deduction, the amount of the dependent deduction, the allowance for medical expenses, or the allowance for disability assistance expenses.

The definition of a person with a disability for purposes of granting a reasonable accommodation request is much broader than the HUD definition of disability. Many people will not qualify as a disabled person under the HCV program, yet an accommodation is needed to provide equal opportunity.

Chapter 3

ELIGIBILITY

INTRODUCTION

DCHA is responsible for ensuring that every individual and family admitted to the HCV program meets all program eligibility requirements. This includes any individual approved to join the family after the family has been admitted to the program. The family must provide any information needed by DCHA to confirm eligibility and determine the level of the family's assistance.

To be eligible for the HCV program:

- The applicant family must:
 - Qualify as a family as defined by HUD and DCHA.
 - Have income at or below HUD-specified income limits.
 - Qualify on the basis of citizenship or the eligible immigrant status of family members.
 - Provide social security number information for household members as required.
 - Consent to DCHA's collection and use of family information as provided for in DCHA-provided consent forms.
 - Not currently be receiving a duplicative subsidy.
 - Meet net asset and property ownership restriction requirements.
- DCHA must determine that the current or past behavior of household members does not include activities that are prohibited by HUD or DCHA.

This chapter contains three parts:

Part I: Definitions of Family and Household Members. This part contains HUD and DCHA definitions of family and household members and explains initial and ongoing eligibility issues related to these members.

Part II: Basic Eligibility Criteria. This part discusses income eligibility, and rules regarding citizenship, social security numbers, and family consent.

Part III: Denial of Assistance. This part covers factors related to an applicant's past or current conduct (e.g., criminal activity) that can cause DCHA to deny assistance as well as the asset limitation for HCV.

PART I: DEFINITIONS OF FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

3-I.A. OVERVIEW

Some eligibility criteria and program rules vary depending upon the composition of the family requesting assistance. In addition, some requirements apply to the family as a whole and others apply to individual persons who will live in the assisted unit. This part provides information that is needed to correctly identify family and household members, and to apply HUD's eligibility rules.

3-I.B. FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD [24 CFR 5.403; FR Notice 02/03/12; Notice PIH 2014-20; and FR Notice 2/14/23] The terms *family* and *household* have different meanings in the HCV program.

Family

To be eligible for assistance, an applicant must qualify as a family. *Family* as defined by HUD includes, but is not limited to the following, regardless actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status, a single person, who may be an elderly person, displaced person, disabled person, near-elderly person, or any other single person, an otherwise eligible youth who has attained at least 18 years and not more than 24 years of age and who has left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan described in section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675(5)(H)), and is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless or is at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older; or a group of persons residing together; or a group of persons residing together.

Such group includes but is not limited to a family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family), an elderly family, a near-elderly family, a disabled family, a displaced family, and the remaining member of a tenant family. DCHA has the discretion to determine if any other group of persons qualifies as a family.

Gender Identity means actual or perceived gender characteristics.

Sexual orientation means homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

DCHA Policy

A family also includes two or more individuals who are not related by blood, marriage, adoption, or other operation of law but who either can demonstrate that they have lived together previously or certify that each individual's income and other resources will be available to meet the needs of the family.

Each family must identify the individuals to be included in the family at the time of application and must notify DCHA if the family's composition changes.

Household

Household is a broader term that includes additional people who, with DCHA's permission, live in an assisted unit, such as live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults.

3-I.C. FAMILY BREAKUP AND REMAINING MEMBER OF TENANT FAMILY

Family Breakup [24 CFR 982.315; Notice PIH 2017-08]

Except under the following conditions, DCHA has discretion to determine which members of an assisted family continue to receive assistance if the family breaks up:

- If the family breakup results from an occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, DCHA must ensure that the victim retains assistance. (For documentation requirements and policies related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking, see section 16-IX.D of this plan.)
- In accordance with Notice PIH 2017-08, for HUD–Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD–VASH) vouchers, when the veteran is the perpetrator of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, the victim must continue to be assisted. Upon termination of the perpetrator’s HUD–VASH voucher, the victim should be given a regular HCV if one is available, and the perpetrator’s HUD–VASH voucher should be used to serve another eligible family. If a regular HCV is not available, the victim will continue to use the HUD–VASH voucher, which must be issued to another eligible family upon the voucher’s turnover.
- If a court determines the disposition of property between members of the assisted family, DCHA is bound by the court’s determination of which family members continue to receive assistance.

DCHA Policy

When a family on the waiting list breaks up into two otherwise eligible families, only one of the new families may retain the original application date. Other former family members may make a new application with a new application date if the waiting list is open.

If a family breaks up into two otherwise eligible families while receiving assistance, only one of the new families will continue to be assisted.

In the absence of a judicial decision or an agreement among the original family members, DCHA will determine which family will retain their placement on the waiting list or continue to receive assistance. In making its determination, DCHA will take into consideration the following factors: (1) the interest of any minor children, including custody arrangements; (2) the interest of any ill, elderly, or disabled family members; (3) the interest of any family member who is the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, including a family member who was forced to leave an assisted unit as a result of such actual or threatened abuse; (4) any possible risks to family members as a result of criminal activity; and (5) the recommendations of social service professionals

Remaining Member of a Tenant Family [24 CFR 5.403]

The HUD definition of family includes the *remaining member of a tenant family*, which is a member of an assisted family who remains in the unit when other members of the family have left the unit. Household members such as live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults do not qualify as remaining members of a family.

If dependents are the only “remaining members of a tenant family” and there is no family member able to assume the responsibilities of the head of household, see Chapter 6, Section 6-I.B, for the policy on “Caretakers for a Child.”

3-I.D. HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

Head of household means the adult member of the family who is considered the head for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent. The head of household is responsible for ensuring that the family fulfills all of its responsibilities under the program, alone or in conjunction with a cohead or spouse.

DCHA Policy

The family may designate any qualified family member as the head of household.

The head of household must have the legal capacity to enter into a lease under state and local law. A minor who is emancipated under state law may be designated as head of household.

3-I.E. SPOUSE, COHEAD, AND OTHER ADULT

A family may have a spouse or cohead, but not both [HUD-50058 IB, p. 13].

Spouse means the marriage partner of the head of household.

DCHA Policy

A *marriage partner* includes the partner in a "common law" marriage as defined in state law. The term “spouse” does not apply to friends, roommates, or significant others who are not marriage partners. A minor who is emancipated under state law may be designated as a spouse.

A *cohead* is an individual in the household who is equally responsible with the head of household for ensuring that the family fulfills all of its responsibilities under the program, but who is not a spouse. A family can have only one cohead.

DCHA Policy

Minors who are emancipated under state law may be designated as a cohead.

Other adult means a family member, other than the head, spouse, or cohead, who is 18 years of age or older. Foster adults and live-in aides are not considered other adults.

3-I.F. DEPENDENTS AND MINORS [24 CFR 5.603]

A *minor* is a member of the family, other than the head of family or spouse, who is under 18 years of age.

A *dependent* is a family member who is under 18 years of age or a person of any age who is a person with a disability or a full-time student, except that the following persons can never be dependents: the head of household, spouse, cohead, foster children/adults and live-in aides. Identifying each dependent in the family is important because each dependent qualifies the family for a dependent allowance as described in Chapter 6.

Joint Custody of Dependents

DCHA Policy

Dependents that are subject to a joint custody arrangement will be considered a member of the family, if they live with the applicant or participant family 50 percent or more of the time.

When more than one applicant or participant family is claiming the same dependents as family members, the family with primary custody at the time of the initial examination or reexamination will be able to claim the dependents. If there is a dispute about which family should claim them, DCHA will make the determination based on available documents such as court orders, or an IRS return showing which family has claimed the child for income tax purposes.

3-I.G. FULL-TIME STUDENT [24 CFR 5.603; HCV GB, p. 5-29]

A *full-time student* (FTS) is a person who is attending school or vocational training on a full-time basis. The time commitment or subject load that is needed to be full-time is defined by the educational institution.

Identifying each FTS is important because: (1) each family member that is an FTS, other than the head, spouse, or cohead, qualifies the family for a dependent allowance, and (2) the earned income of such an FTS is treated differently from the income of other family members.

3-I.H. ELDERLY AND NEAR-ELDERLY PERSONS, AND ELDERLY FAMILY [24 CFR 5.100 and 5.403, FR Notice 02/03/12]

Elderly Persons

An *elderly person* is a person who is at least 62 years of age.

Near-Elderly Persons

A *near-elderly person* is a person who is 50-61 years of age.

Elderly Family

An *elderly family* is one in which the head, spouse, cohead, or sole member is an elderly person. Identifying elderly families is important because elderly families qualify for the elderly family allowance as described in Chapter 6.

3-I.I. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND DISABLED FAMILY [24 CFR 5.403, FR Notice 02/03/12]

Persons with Disabilities

Under the HCV program, special rules apply to persons with disabilities and to any family whose head, spouse, or cohead is a person with disabilities. The technical definitions of individual with handicaps and persons with disabilities are provided in Exhibit 3-1 at the end of this chapter. These definitions are used for a number of purposes including ensuring that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against based upon disability.

As discussed in Chapter 2, DCHA must make all aspects of the HCV program accessible to persons with disabilities and consider reasonable accommodations requested based upon a person's disability.

Disabled Family

A *disabled family* is one in which the head, spouse, or cohead is a person with disabilities. Identifying disabled families is important because these families qualify for the disabled family allowance as described in Chapter 6.

Even though persons with drug or alcohol dependencies are considered persons with disabilities, this does not prevent DCHA from denying assistance for reasons related to alcohol and drug abuse in accordance with the policies found in Part III of this chapter, or from terminating assistance in accordance with the policies in Chapter 12.

3-I.J. GUESTS [24 CFR 5.100]

A *guest* is a person temporarily staying in the unit with the consent of a member of the household who has expressed or implied authority to so consent.

DCHA Policy

A guest can remain in the assisted unit no longer than 30 consecutive days or a total of 90 cumulative calendar days during any 12-month period.

Children who are subject to a joint custody arrangement or for whom a family has visitation privileges, that are not included as a family member because they live outside of the assisted household more than 50 percent of the time, are not subject to the time limitations of guests as described above.

A family may request an exception to this policy for valid reasons (e.g., care of a relative recovering from a medical procedure is expected to last 40 consecutive days). An exception will not be made unless the family can identify and provide documentation of the residence to which the guest will return.

3-I.K. FOSTER CHILDREN AND FOSTER ADULTS [24 CFR 5.603]

Prior to DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date, the following policy on foster children and foster adults will be used:

Foster adults are usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone [24 CFT 5.609].

The term *foster child* is not specifically defined by the regulations.

Foster children and foster adults who are living with an applicant or who have been approved by DCHA to live with a participant family are considered household member but not family members. The income of foster children/adults is not counted in family annual income, and foster children/adults do not qualify for a dependent deduction [24 CFR 5.603; HUD-50058 IB, p. 13].

DCHA Policy

A *foster child* is a child that is in the legal guardianship or custody of a state, county, or private adoption or foster care agency, yet is cared for by foster parents in their own homes, under some kind of short-term or long-term foster care arrangement with the custodial agency.

A foster child or foster adult may be allowed to reside in the unit if their presence would not result in a violation of HQS space standards according to 24 CFR 982.401.

Children that are temporarily absent from the home as a result of placement in foster care are discussed in Section 3-I.L].

DCHA Policy

A foster child or foster adult may be allowed to reside in the unit if their presence would not result in a violation of space standards as described in Section 8.I.F. of this policy.

Children that are temporarily absent from the home as a result of placement in foster care are discussed in Section 3-I.L.

3-I.L. ABSENT FAMILY MEMBERS

Individuals may be absent from the family, either temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons including educational activities, placement in foster care, employment, illness, incarceration, and court order.

Definitions of Temporarily and Permanently Absent

DCHA Policy

Generally, an individual who is or is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for 180 consecutive days or less is considered temporarily absent and continues to be considered a family member. Generally, an individual who is or is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for more than 180 consecutive days is considered permanently absent and no longer a family member. Exceptions to this general policy are discussed below.

Absent Students

DCHA Policy

When someone who has been considered a family member attends school away from home, the person will continue to be considered a family member unless information becomes available to DCHA indicating that the student has established a separate household or the family declares that the student has established a separate household.

Absences Due to Placement in Foster Care [24 CFR 5.403]

Children temporarily absent from the home as a result of placement in foster care are considered members of the family.

DCHA Policy

If a child has been placed in foster care, DCHA will verify with the appropriate agency whether and when the child is expected to be returned to the home. Unless the agency confirms that the child has been permanently removed from the home, the child will be counted as a family member.

Absent Head, Spouse, or Cohead

DCHA Policy

An employed head, spouse, or cohead absent from the unit more than 180 consecutive days due to employment will continue to be considered a family member.

Family Members Permanently Confined for Medical Reasons [HCV GB, p. 5-22]

If a family member is confined to a nursing home or hospital on a permanent basis, that person is no longer considered a family member and the income of that person is not counted [HCV GB, p. 5-22].

DCHA Policy

An individual confined to a nursing home or hospital on a permanent basis is not considered a family member.

DCHA will request verification of the family member's permanent absence from a responsible medical professional. If the responsible medical professional cannot provide a determination, the person will be considered temporarily absent. If the family certifies that the family member is confined on a permanent basis, they may present, and DCHA will consider, any additional documentation or evidence.

Return of Permanently Absent Family Members

DCHA Policy

The family must request DCHA approval for the return of any adult family members that DCHA previously determined to be permanently absent. The individual is subject to the eligibility and screening requirements discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

3-I.M. LIVE-IN AIDE

A *live-in aide* is a person who resides with one or more elderly persons, or near-elderly persons, or persons with disabilities, and who: (1) is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons, (2) is not obligated for the support of the persons, and (3) would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services [24 CFR 5.403].

DCHA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation in accordance with 24 CFR 8, to make the program accessible to and usable by the family member with disabilities.

The income of a live-in aide is not counted in the calculation of annual income for the family [24 CFR 5.609(b)]. Relatives may be approved as live-in aides if they meet all of the criteria defining a live-in aide. Because live-in aides are not *family* members, a relative who serves as a live-in aide would not be considered a remaining member of a tenant family.

DCHA Policy

A family's request for a live-in aide may be made either orally or in writing. DCHA will verify the need for a live-in aide with a reliable, knowledgeable professional, such as a doctor, social worker, or case worker, unless the disability-related need is apparent or known to DCHA. For continued approval, the family may be required to submit a new, written request-subject to DCHA verification at each annual reexamination.

In addition, the family and live-in aide will be required to submit a certification stating that the live-in aide is (1) not obligated for the support of the person(s) needing the care, and (2) would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services.

DCHA will not approve a particular person as a live-in aide, and may withdraw such approval if [24 CFR 982.316(b)]:

- The person commits fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program;

- The person commits drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity; or

- The person currently owes rent or other amounts to DCHA or to another PHA in connection with Section 8 or public housing assistance under the 1937 Act.

DCHA will notify the family of its decision in writing within 10 business days of receiving a request for a live-in aide, including all required documentation related to the request.

PART II: BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3-II.A. INCOME ELIGIBILITY AND TARGETING

Income Limits

HUD establishes income limits for all areas of the country and publishes them annually in the *Federal Register*. They are based upon estimates of median family income with adjustments for family size. The income limits are used to determine eligibility for the program and for income targeting purposes as discussed in this section.

Definitions of the Income Limits [24 CFR 5.603(b)]

Low-income family. A family whose annual income does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area, adjusted for family size.

Very low-income family. A family whose annual income does not exceed 50 percent of the median income for the area, adjusted for family size.

Extremely low-income family. A family whose annual income does not exceed the federal poverty level or 30 percent of the median income for the area, whichever number is higher.

Area median income is determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families. HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 30, 50, or 80 percent of the median income for an area if HUD finds that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes.

Using Income Limits for Eligibility [24 CFR 982.201 and Notice PIH 2023-27]

Income limits are used for eligibility only at admission. Income eligibility is determined by comparing the annual income of an applicant to the applicable income limit for their family size. Income and net family assets of household members are excluded when determining income eligibility; however, household members are considered for purposes of unit size and subsidy standards. In order to be income eligible, an applicant family must be one of the following:

In order to be income eligible, an applicant family must be one of the following:

- A *very low-income* family
- A *low-income* family that has been “continuously assisted” under the 1937 Housing Act. A family is considered to be continuously assisted if the family is already receiving assistance under any 1937 Housing Act program at the time the family is admitted to the HCV program [24 CFR 982.4; 24 CFR 982.201(b)]

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consider a family to be continuously assisted if the family was leasing a unit under any 1937 Housing Act program at the time they were selected from DCHA’s waiting list.

- A *low-income* family that qualifies for voucher assistance as a non-purchasing household living in HOPE 1 (public housing homeownership), HOPE 2 (multifamily housing homeownership) developments, or other HUD-assisted multifamily homeownership programs covered by 24 CFR 248.173

- A low-income or moderate-income family that is displaced as a result the prepayment of a mortgage or voluntary termination of a mortgage insurance contract on eligible low-income housing as defined in 24CFR 248.101.
- A low-income family is eligible for assistance under VASH [FR Notice 8/13/24]. See Chapter 19 of this policy for more information.

HUD permits DCHA to establish additional categories of low-income families that may be determined eligible. The additional categories must be consistent with the DCHA plan and the consolidated plans for local governments within DCHA's jurisdiction.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has not established any additional categories of eligible low-income families.

Using Income Limits for Targeting [24 CFR 982.201]

At least 75 percent of the families admitted to DCHA's program during a DCHA fiscal year must be extremely low-income families. HUD may approve exceptions to this requirement if DCHA demonstrates that it has made all required efforts, but has been unable to attract an adequate number of qualified extremely low-income families.

Families continuously assisted under the 1937 Housing Act and families living in eligible low-income housing that are displaced as a result of prepayment of a mortgage or voluntary termination of a mortgage insurance contract are not counted for income targeting purposes.

3-II.B. CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE IMMIGRATION STATUS [24 CFR 5, Subpart E]

Housing assistance is available only to individuals who are U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals (herein referred to as citizens and nationals), or noncitizens that have eligible immigration status. At least one family member must be a citizen, national, or noncitizen with eligible immigration status in order for the family to qualify for any level of assistance.

All applicant families must be notified of the requirement to submit evidence of their citizenship status when they apply. Where feasible, and in accordance with DCHA's Limited English Proficiency Plan, the notice must be in a language that is understood by the individual if the individual is not proficient in English.

Declaration [24 CFR 5.508]

HUD requires each family member to declare whether the individual is a citizen, a national, or an eligible noncitizen, except those members who elect not to contend that they have eligible immigration status. Those who elect not to contend their status are considered to be ineligible noncitizens. For citizens, nationals and eligible noncitizens the declaration must be signed personally by the head, spouse, cohead, and any other family member 18 or older, and by a parent or guardian for minors. The family must identify in writing any family members who elect not to contend their immigration status (see Ineligible Noncitizens below). No declaration is required for live-in aides, foster children, or foster adults.

U.S. Citizens and Nationals

In general, citizens and nationals are required to submit only a signed declaration as verification of their status. However, HUD regulations permit DCHA to request additional documentation of their status, such as a passport.

DCHA Policy

Family members who declare citizenship or national status will not be required to provide additional documentation unless DCHA receives information indicating that an individual's declaration may not be accurate.

Eligible Noncitizens

In addition to providing a signed declaration, those declaring eligible noncitizen status must sign a verification consent form and cooperate DCHA efforts to verify their immigration status as described in Chapter 7. The documentation required for establishing eligible noncitizen status varies depending upon factors such as the date the person entered the U.S., the conditions under which eligible immigration status has been granted, the person's age, and the date on which the family began receiving HUD-funded assistance.

Lawful residents of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau, together known as the Freely Associated States, or FAS, are eligible for housing assistance under section 141 of the Compacts of Free Association between the U.S. Government and the Governments of the FAS [Public Law 106-504].

Ineligible Noncitizens

Those noncitizens who do not wish to contend their immigration status are required to have their names listed on a noncontending family members listing, signed by the head, spouse, or cohead (regardless of citizenship status), indicating their ineligible immigration status. DCHA is not required to verify a family member's ineligible status and is not required to report an individual's unlawful presence in the U.S. to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Providing housing assistance to noncitizen students is prohibited [24 CFR 5.522]. This prohibition extends to the noncitizen spouse of a noncitizen student as well as to minor children who accompany or follow to join the noncitizen student. Such prohibition does not extend to the citizen spouse of a noncitizen student or to the children of the citizen spouse and noncitizen student. Such a family is eligible for prorated assistance as a mixed family.

Mixed Families

A family is eligible for assistance as long as at least one member is a citizen, national, or eligible noncitizen. Families that include eligible and ineligible individuals are considered *mixed families*. Such families will be given notice that their assistance will be prorated, and that they may request a hearing if they contest this determination. See Chapter 6 for a discussion of how rents are prorated, and Chapter 16 for a discussion of informal hearing procedures.

Ineligible Families [24 CFR 5.514(d), (e), and (f)]

DCHA may elect to provide assistance to a family before the verification of the eligibility of the individual or one family member [24 CFR 5.512(b)]. Otherwise, no individual or family may be assisted prior to the affirmative establishment by DCHA that the individual or at least one family member is eligible. Verification of eligibility for this purpose occurs when the individual or family members have submitted documentation to DCHA in accordance with program requirements [24 CFR 5.512(a)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not provide assistance to a family before the verification of at least one family member.

When DCHA determines that an applicant family does not include any citizens, nationals, or eligible noncitizens, following the verification process, the family will be sent a written notice within 10 business days of the determination.

The notice will explain the reasons for the denial of assistance, that the family may be eligible for proration of assistance, and will advise the family of its right to request an appeal to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or to request an informal hearing with DCHA. The informal hearing with DCHA may be requested in lieu of the USCIS appeal, or at the conclusion of the USCIS appeal process. The notice must also inform the applicant family that assistance may not be delayed until the conclusion of the USCIS appeal process, but that it may be delayed pending the completion of the informal hearing process.

Informal hearing procedures are contained in Chapter 16.

Timeframe for Determination of Citizenship Status [24 CFR 5.508(g)]

For new occupants joining the assisted family, DCHA must verify status at the first interim or regular reexamination following the person's occupancy, whichever comes first.

If an individual qualifies for a time extension for the submission of required documents, DCHA must grant such an extension for no more than 30 days [24 CFR 5.508(h)].

Each family member is required to submit evidence of eligible status only one time during continuous occupancy.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify the citizenship status of applicants at the time other eligibility factors are determined.

3-II.C. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS [24 CFR 5.216 and 5.218, Notice PIH 2018-24]

The applicant and all members of the applicant's household must disclose the complete and accurate social security number (SSN) assigned to each household member, and the documentation necessary to verify each SSN. If a child under age 6 has been added to an applicant family within 6 months prior to voucher issuance, an otherwise eligible family may be admitted to the program and must disclose and document the child's SSN within 90 days of the effective date of the initial HAP contract. A detailed discussion of acceptable documentation is provided in Chapter 7.

Note: These requirements do not apply to noncitizens who do not contend eligible immigration status.

DCHA must deny assistance to an applicant family if they do not meet the SSN disclosure and documentation requirements contained in 24 CFR 5.216.

3-II.D. FAMILY CONSENT TO RELEASE OF INFORMATION [24 CFR 5.230, 24 CFR 5.232, and; HCV GB, p. 5-13]

HUD requires that each adult family member, and the head of household, spouse, or cohead, regardless of age, sign form HUD-9886-A, Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, the form HUD-52675 Debts Owed to Public Housing Agencies and Terminations, and other consent forms as needed to collect information relevant to the family's eligibility and level of assistance. Chapter 7 provides detailed information concerning the consent forms and verification requirements. The consent form remains effective until the family is denied assistance, assistance is terminated, or the family provides written notification to revoke consent.

DCHA must deny admission to the program if any member of the applicant family fails to sign and submit the consent forms for obtaining information in accordance with 24 CFR 5, Subparts B and F [24 CFR 982.552(b)(3) and 24 CFR 5.232(a)].

Upon DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date, the following on revocation of consent is added:

However, this does not apply if the applicant or participant, or any member of their family, revokes their consent with respect to the ability of DCHA to access financial records from financial institutions, unless DCHA establishes a policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in denial of admission or termination of assistance [24 CFR 5.232(c)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA has established a policy that revocation of consent to access financial records will result in denial of admission.

**3-II.E. STUDENTS ENROLLED IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
[24 CFR 5.612, FR Notice 4/10/06, FR Notice 9/21/16]**

Section 327 of Public Law 109-115 and the implementing regulation at 24 CFR 5.612 established new restrictions on the eligibility of certain students (both part- and full-time) who are enrolled in institutions of higher education.

If a student enrolled at an institution of higher education is under the age of 24, is not a veteran, is not married, does not have a dependent child, and is not a person with disabilities receiving HCV assistance as of November 30, 2005, the student's eligibility must be examined along with the income eligibility of the student's parents. In these cases, both the student and the student's parents must be income eligible for the student to receive HCV assistance. If, however, a student in these circumstances is determined independent from their parents in accordance with DCHA policy, the income of the student's parents will not be considered in determining the student's eligibility.

The new law does not apply to students who reside with parents who are applying to receive HCV assistance. It is limited to students who are seeking assistance on their own, separately from their parents.

Definitions

In determining whether and how the new eligibility restrictions apply to a student, DCHA will rely on the following definitions [FR Notice 4/10/06, FR Notice 9/21/16].

Dependent Child

In the context of the student eligibility restrictions, *dependent child* means a dependent child of a student enrolled in an institution of higher education. The dependent child must also meet the definition of *dependent* in 24 CFR 5.603, which states that the dependent must be a member of the assisted family, other than the head of household or spouse, who is under 18 years of age, or is a person with a disability, or is a full-time student. Foster children and foster adults are not considered dependents.

Independent Student

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consider a student “independent” from their parents and the parents’ income will not be considered when determining the student’s eligibility if the following four criteria are all met:

The individual is of legal contract age under state law.

The individual has established a household separate from their parents for at least one year prior to application for occupancy or the individual meets the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of independent student.

To be considered an *independent student* according to the Department of Education, a student must meet one or more of the following criteria:

The individual is at least 24 years old by December 31 of the award year for which aid is sought

The individual is an orphan, in foster care, or a ward of the court, or was an orphan, in foster care, or ward of the court at any time when the individual was 13 years of age or older

The individual is, or was immediately prior to attaining the age of majority, an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction in the individual’s state of legal residence

The individual is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or is currently serving on active duty in the Armed Forces for other than training purposes

The individual is a graduate or professional student

The individual is married

The individual has one or more legal dependents other than a spouse (for example, dependent children or an elderly dependent parent)

The individual has been verified during the school year in which the application is submitted as either an unaccompanied youth who is a homeless child or youth, or as unaccompanied, at risk of homelessness, and self-supporting by:

A local educational agency homeless liaison

The director of a program funded under subtitle B of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act or a designee of the director

A financial aid administrator

The individual is a student for whom a financial aid administrator makes a documented determination of independence by reason of other unusual circumstances

The individual was not claimed as a dependent by their parents pursuant to IRS regulations, as demonstrated on the parents' most recent tax forms.

The individual provides a certification of the amount of financial assistance that will be provided by their parents. This certification must be signed by the individual providing the support and must be submitted even if no assistance is being provided.

If DCHA determines that an individual meets the definition of a *vulnerable youth* such a determination is all that is necessary to determine that the person is an *independent student* for the purposes of using only the student's income for determining eligibility for assistance.

DCHA will verify that a student meets the above criteria in accordance with the policies in Section 7-II.E.

Institution of Higher Education

DCHA will use the statutory definition under section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to determine whether a student is attending an *institution of higher education* (see Exhibit 3-2).

Parents

DCHA Policy

For purposes of student eligibility restrictions, the definition of *parents* includes biological or adoptive parents, stepparents (as long as they are currently married to the biological or adoptive parent), and guardians (e.g., grandparents, aunt/uncle, godparents, etc).

Person with Disabilities

DCHA will use the statutory definition under section 3(b)(3)(E) of the 1937 Act to determine whether a student is a *person with disabilities* (see Exhibit 3-1).

Veteran

DCHA Policy

A *veteran* is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released from such service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Vulnerable Youth

DCHA Policy

A *vulnerable youth* is an individual who meets the U.S. Department of Education's definition of *independent student* in paragraphs (b), (c), or (h), as adopted in Section II of FR Notice 9/21/16:

The individual is an orphan, in foster care, or a ward of the court, or was an orphan, in foster care, or ward of the court at any time when the individual was 13 years of age or older

The individual is, or was immediately prior to attaining the age of majority, an emancipated minor or in legal guardianship as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction in the individual's state of legal residence

The individual has been verified during the school year in which the application is submitted as either an unaccompanied youth who is a homeless child or youth, or as unaccompanied, at risk of homelessness, and self-supporting by:

A local educational agency homeless liaison

The director of a program funded under subtitle B of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act or a designee of the director

A financial aid administrator

Determining Student Eligibility

If a student is applying for assistance on their own, apart from their parents, DCHA must determine whether the student is subject to the eligibility restrictions contained in 24 CFR 5.612. If the student is subject to those restrictions, DCHA must ensure that: (1) the student is individually eligible for the program, (2) either the student is independent from their parents or the student's parents are income eligible for the program, and (3) the "family" with which the student is applying is collectively eligible for the program.

DCHA Policy

For any student who is subject to the 5.612 restrictions, DCHA will:

Follow its usual policies in determining whether the student individually and the student's "family" collectively are eligible for the program

Determine whether the student is independent from their parents in accordance with the definition of *independent student* in this section

Follow the policies below, if applicable, in determining whether the student's parents are income eligible for the program

If DCHA determines that the student, the student's parents (if applicable), or the student's "family" is not eligible, DCHA will send a notice of denial in accordance with the policies in Section 3-III.F, and the applicant family will have the right to request an informal review in accordance with the policies in Section 16-III.B.

Determining Parental Income Eligibility

DCHA Policy

For any student who is subject to the 5.612 restrictions and who does not satisfy the definition of *independent student* in this section, DCHA will determine the income eligibility of the student's parents as follows:

If the student's parents are married and living together, DCHA will obtain a joint income declaration and certification of joint income from the parents.

If the student's parent is widowed or single, DCHA will obtain an income declaration and certification of income from that parent.

If the student's parents are divorced or separated, DCHA will obtain an income declaration and certification of income from each parent.

If the student has been living with one of their parents and has not had contact with or does not know where to contact their other parent, DCHA will require the student to submit a certification under penalty of perjury describing the circumstances and stating that the student does not receive financial assistance from the other parent. DCHA will then obtain an income declaration and certification of income from the parent with whom the student has been living or had contact.

In determining the income eligibility of the student's parents, DCHA will use the income limits for the jurisdiction in which the parents live.

3-II.F. EIV SYSTEM SEARCHES [EIV FAQs; EIV System Training 9/30/20; and Notice PIH 2023-27]

Existing Tenant Search

Prior to admission to the program, DCHA must search for all household members using the EIV Existing Tenant Search module. DCHA must review the reports for any SSA matches involving another PHA or a multifamily entity and follow up on any issues identified. DCHA must provide the family with a copy of the Existing Tenant Search results if requested. At no time may any family member receive duplicative assistance.

If the tenant is a new admission to DCHA, and a match is identified at a multifamily property, DCHA must report the program admission date to the multifamily property and document the notification in the tenant file. The family must provide documentation of move-out from the assisted unit, as applicable.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will contact the other PHA or owner identified in the report to confirm that the family has moved out of the unit and obtain documentation of current tenancy status, including a form HUD-50058 or 50059, as applicable, showing an end of participation. DCHA will only approve assistance contingent upon the move-out from the currently occupied assisted unit.

Debts Owed to PHAs and Terminations

All adult household members must sign the form HUD-52675 Debts Owed to Public Housing and Terminations. Prior to admission to the program, DCHA must search for each adult family member in the Debts Owed to PHAs and Terminations module.

If a current or former tenant disputes the information in the module, the tenant should contact the PHA directly in writing to dispute the information and provide any documentation that supports the dispute. If the PHA determines that the disputed information is incorrect, the PHA will update or delete the record from EIV. Former tenants may dispute debt and termination information for a period of up to three years from the end of participation date in the program.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will require each adult household member to sign the form HUD-52675 once at the eligibility determination. Any new members added to the household after admission will be required to sign the form HUD-52675 prior to being added to the household.

DCHA will search the Debts Owed to PHAs and Terminations module as part of the eligibility determination for new households and as part of the screening process for any household members added after the household is admitted to the program. If any information on debts or terminations is returned by the search, DCHA will determine if this information warrants a denial in accordance with the policies in Part III of this chapter.

EIV Income Reports

For each new admission, DCHA is required to review the income information in EIV to confirm and validate family reported income within 120 days after the admission information is transmitted to HUD. DCHA must print and maintain copies of the reports in the tenant file and resolve any discrepancies with the family.

PART III: DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE

3-III.A. OVERVIEW

A family that does not meet the eligibility criteria discussed in Parts I and II, must be denied assistance. DCHA may deny assistance for an applicant because of the family's action or failure to act as described in 24 CFR 982.552 or 982.553. In this section we will discuss other situations and circumstances in which denial of assistance is mandatory for DCHA, and those in which denial of assistance is optional for DCHA.

While the regulations state that DCHA must prohibit admission for certain types of criminal activity and give DCHA the option to deny for other types of previous criminal history, more recent HUD rules and OGC guidance must also be taken into consideration when determining whether a particular individual's criminal history merits denial of admission.

When considering any denial of admission, DCHA may not use arrest records as the basis for the denial. Further, HUD does not require the adoption of "One Strike" policies and reminds DCHA of their obligation to safeguard the due process rights of applicants and tenants [Notice PIH 2015-19].

HUD's Office of General Counsel issued a memo on April 4, 2016, regarding the application of Fair Housing Act standards to the use of criminal records. This memo states that DCHA violates the Fair Housing Act when their policy or practice has an unjustified discriminatory effect, even when DCHA had no intention to discriminate. Where a policy or practice that restricts admission based on criminal history has a disparate impact on a particular race, national origin, or other protected class, that policy or practice is in violation of the Fair Housing Act if it is not necessary to serve a substantial, legitimate, nondiscriminatory interest of DCHA, or if that interest could be served by another practice that has a less discriminatory effect [OGC Memo 4/4/16]. HUD codified this stance on disparate impact and discriminatory effects in a final rule dated March 31, 2023. In doing so, HUD also standardized its long-practiced three-step approach to assessing burdens of proof.

PHAs who impose blanket prohibitions on any person with any conviction record, no matter when the conviction occurred, what the underlying conduct entailed, or what the convicted person has done since then will be unable to show that such policy or practice is necessary to achieve a substantial, legitimate, nondiscriminatory interest. Even a PHA with a more tailored policy or practice that excludes individuals with only certain types of convictions must still prove that its policy is necessary. To do this, the PHA must show that its policy accurately distinguishes between criminal conduct that indicates a demonstrable risk to resident safety and property and criminal conduct that does not.

Forms of Denial [24 CFR 982.552(a)(2); HCV GB, p. 5-35]

Denial of assistance includes any of the following:

- Not placing the family's name on the waiting list
- Denying or withdrawing a voucher
- Not approving a request for tenancy or refusing to enter into a HAP contract
- Refusing to process a request for or to provide assistance under portability procedures

Prohibited Reasons for Denial of Program Assistance [24 CFR 982.202(b), 24 CFR 5.2005(b)]

HUD rules prohibit denial of program assistance to the program based on any of the following criteria:

- Age, disability, race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (See Chapter 2 for additional information about fair housing and equal opportunity requirements.)
- Where a family lives prior to admission to the program
- Where the family will live with assistance under the program. Although eligibility is not affected by where the family will live, there may be restrictions on the family's ability to move outside DCHA's jurisdiction under portability. (See Chapter 10.)
- Whether members of the family are unwed parents, recipients of public assistance, or children born out of wedlock
- Whether the family includes children
- Whether a family decides to participate in a family self-sufficiency program
- Whether or not a qualified applicant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking if the applicant is otherwise qualified for assistance (See section 3-III.G.)

3-III.B. MANDATORY DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 982.553(a) and 24 CFR 982.552(b)(6)]

HUD requires DCHA to deny assistance in the following cases:

- Any member of the household has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last three years for drug-related criminal activity. HUD permits, but does not require, DCHA to admit an otherwise-eligible family if the household member has completed a DCHA-approved drug rehabilitation program or the circumstances which led to eviction no longer exist (e.g., the person involved in the criminal activity no longer lives in the household).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will admit an otherwise-eligible family who was evicted from federally assisted housing within the past three years for drug-related criminal activity if DCHA is able to verify that the household member who engaged in the criminal activity has completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program approved by DCHA, or the person who committed the crime, is no longer living in the household.

- DCHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in the use of illegal drugs.

DCHA Policy

Currently engaged in is defined as any use of illegal drugs during the previous three months.

- DCHA has reasonable cause to believe that any household member's current use or pattern of use of illegal drugs, or current abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol, may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

DCHA Policy

In determining reasonable cause, DCHA will consider all credible evidence, including but not limited to, any record of convictions, arrests, or evictions of household members related to the use of illegal drugs or the abuse of alcohol. A record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis of determining reasonable cause. DCHA will also consider evidence from treatment providers or community-based organizations providing services to household members.

- Any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the production or manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
- Any household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program
- Any member of the family fails to sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
- The family does not meet the restrictions on net assets and real property ownership as required by 24 CFR 5.618.

Upon DCHA's HOTMA compliance date, the following section on asset limitation is added. The asset limitation does not apply until DCHA's HOTMA compliance date.

3-III.C. RESTRICTION ON ASSISTANCE BASED ON ASSETS [24 CFR 5.618]

There are two circumstances under which a family is ineligible to receive assistance based on asset ownership.

First, assistance may not be provided to any family if the family's net assets exceed HUD-published asset limitation amount (adjusted annually by HUD).

- This amount is listed in HUD's current year Inflation-Adjusted Values tables
- \$100,000 for 2024, \$103,200 for 2025

Second, the family has real property that is suitable for occupancy by the family as a residence and the family has:

- A present ownership interest in the real property; and
- A legal right to reside in the real property; and
- The effective legal authority to sell (based on state or local laws of the jurisdiction where the property is located) the real property.

DCHA does not have the discretion not to enforce or provide limited enforcement of the asset limitation at admission. However, the real property restriction does not apply in the following circumstances:

- Any property for which the family is receiving assistance for a manufactured home under 24 CFR 982.620 or under the HCV Homeownership program;
- Any property that is jointly owned by a member of the family and at least one non-household member who does not live with the family, if the non-household member resides at the jointly owned property;
- Any family that is offering the property for sale; or
- Any person who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
 - When a family asks for an exception because a family member is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, DCHA must comply with all the confidentiality requirements under VAWA. DCHA must accept a self-certification from the family member, and the restrictions on requesting documentation under VAWA apply.

A property is considered *suitable for occupancy* unless the family demonstrates that it:

- Does not meet the disability-related needs for all members of the family (e.g., physical accessibility requirements, disability-related need for additional bedrooms, proximity to accessible transportation, etc.);
- Is not sufficient for the size of the family;

DCHA Policy

DCHA defines *not sufficient for the size of the family* as being overcrowded based on space standards in chapter 8 of this policy.

- Is geographically located so as to be a hardship for the family (e.g., the distance or commuting time between the property and the family's place of work or school would be a hardship to the family, as determined by DCHA or owner);

DCHA Policy

In general, DCHA defines a *geographic hardship* to include when a family members' work, school, health care provider, or other necessary services. DCHA will consider circumstantial details a family faces when determining whether a geographic hardship is present

- Is not safe to reside in because of the physical condition of the property (e.g., property's physical condition poses a risk to the family's health and safety and the condition of the property cannot be easily remedied); or
- Is not a property that a family may reside in under the state or local laws of the jurisdiction where the property is located.

If a family meets one of the above exceptions, the real property is not automatically excluded from the calculation of net family assets. Unless the real property is specifically excluded from net family assets as described in 24 CFR 5.603 and Chapter 6 of this policy, it will be included in net family assets. If the value of that real property brings the net family assets above the HUD-published asset limitation amount, the family is out of compliance with the asset limitation.

See Chapter 7 for information on verifying net family assets for purposes of the asset limitation.

3-III.D. OTHER PERMITTED REASONS FOR DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE

HUD permits, but does not require, DCHA to deny assistance for the reasons discussed in this section.

Criminal Activity [24 CFR 982.553]

HUD permits, but does not require, DCHA to deny assistance if DCHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in, or has engaged in during a reasonable time before the family would receive assistance, certain types of criminal activity.

DCHA Policy

If any household member is currently engaged in, or has engaged in any of the following criminal activities, within the past three years for misdemeanor dispositions, within the past five years for felony dispositions the family will be denied assistance.

Drug-related criminal activity, defined by HUD as the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug [24 CFR 5.100];

DCHA also considers possession of drug paraphernalia a drug related criminal activity.

Violent criminal activity, defined by HUD as any criminal activity that has as one of its elements the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force substantial enough to cause, or be reasonably likely to cause, serious bodily injury or property damage [24 CFR 5.100];

Criminal activity that may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or persons residing in the immediate vicinity;

Immediate vicinity means within a three-block radius of the premises.

Criminal sexual conduct, including but not limited to sexual assault, incest, open and gross lewdness, or child abuse; or

Criminal activity that may threaten the health or safety of property owners, management staff, and persons performing contract administration functions or other responsibilities on behalf of DCHA (including a DCHA employee or a DCHA contractor, subcontractor, or agent).

Evidence of such criminal activity includes, but is not limited to:

Any misdemeanor conviction for drug-related or violent criminal activity within the past three years. Any felony conviction within the past five years.

Records of arrests for drug-related or violent criminal activity within the past three years, although a record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis for the denial or proof that the applicant engaged in disqualifying criminal activity.

In making its decision to deny assistance, DCHA will consider the factors discussed in Section 3-III.F and 3-III.G. Upon consideration of such factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, decide not to deny assistance.

Previous Behavior in Assisted Housing [24 CFR 982.552(c)]

HUD authorizes DCHA to deny assistance based on the family's previous behavior in assisted housing.

DCHA is not permitted to deny assistance to a family because the family previously failed to meet its obligations under the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program [24 CFR 984.101(d)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA **will** deny assistance to an applicant family if:

The family does not provide information that DCHA or HUD determines is necessary in the administration of the program.

The family does not provide complete and true information to DCHA.

Any family member has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last three years.

Any family member has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program.

The family owes rent or other amounts to any PHA in connection with Section 8 or other public housing assistance under the 1937 Act, unless the family repays the full amount of the debt prior to being selected from the waiting list.

If the family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts the PHA paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease, unless the family repays the full amount of the debt prior to being selected from the waiting list.

The family has breached the terms of a repayment agreement entered into with DCHA, unless the family repays the full amount of the debt covered in the repayment agreement prior to being selected from the waiting list.

When denying admission due to family debts as shown in HUD's EIV system, DCHA will provide the family with a copy of the EIV Debt Owed to PHA and Termination report.

If the family wishes to dispute the information in the report, the family must contact the PHA that entered the information in EIV in writing, explaining why EIV information is disputed. The family must also provide a copy of the letter and all applicable verification to the PHA to support the family's claim. The PHA will consider the information provided by the family prior to issuing a notice of denial.

A family member has engaged in or threatened violent or abusive behavior toward DCHA personnel.

Abusive or violent behavior towards DCHA personnel includes verbal as well as physical abuse or violence. Use of racial epithets, or other language, written or oral, that is customarily used to intimidate may be considered abusive or violent behavior.

Threatening refers to oral or written threats or physical gestures that communicate intent to abuse or commit violence.

In making its decision to deny assistance, DCHA will consider the factors discussed in Section 3-III.F and 3-III.G. Upon consideration of such factors, the DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, decide not to deny assistance.

3-III.E. SCREENING

Screening for Eligibility

DCHA is authorized to obtain criminal conviction records from law enforcement agencies to screen applicants for admission to the HCV program. This authority assists DCHA in complying with HUD requirements and DCHA policies to deny assistance to applicants who are engaging in or have engaged in certain criminal activities. In order to obtain access to the records DCHA must require every applicant family to submit a consent form signed by each adult household member [24 CFR 5.903].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will perform a criminal background check through local law enforcement for every adult household member. If no record of the household exists in local databases, DCHA will utilize national agencies to search any and all states where the applicant has resided within the past five years.

If the results of the criminal background check indicate that there may be past criminal activity, but the results are inconclusive, DCHA will request a fingerprint card and will request information from the National Crime Information center (NCIC).

While DCHA has regulatory authority to use criminal conviction records for the purpose of applicant screening for admission, there is no corresponding authority to use these records to check for criminal and illegal drug activity by participants, and therefore, DCHA may not use records for this purpose.

DCHA is required to perform criminal background checks necessary to determine whether any household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender program in the state where the housing is located, as well as in any other state where a household member is known to have resided [24 CFR 982.553(a)(2)(i)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender database to screen applicants for admission. The Dru Sjodin database is available at <http://.nsopw.gov>.

Additionally, DCHA must ask whether the applicant, or any member of the applicant's household, is subject to a lifetime registered sex offender registration requirement in any state [Notice PIH 2012-28].

If DCHA proposes to deny assistance based on a criminal record or on lifetime sex offender registration information, DCHA must notify the household of the proposed action and must provide the subject of the record and the applicant a copy of the record and an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the information prior to a denial of admission. [24 CFR 5.903(f) and 5.905(d)].

Screening for Suitability as a Tenant [24 CFR 982.307]

DCHA has no liability or responsibility to the owner for the family's behavior or suitability for tenancy. DCHA has the authority to conduct additional screening to determine whether an applicant is likely to be a suitable tenant.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not conduct additional screening to determine an applicant family's suitability for tenancy.

The owner is responsible for screening and selection of the family to occupy the owner's unit. DCHA must inform the owner that screening and selection for tenancy is the responsibility of the owner. An owner may consider a family's history with respect to factors such as: payment of rent and utilities, caring for a unit and premises, respecting the rights of other residents to the peaceful enjoyment of their housing, criminal activity that is a threat to the health, safety or property of others, and compliance with other essential conditions of tenancy.

HUD requires DCHA to provide prospective owners with the family's current and prior address (as shown in DCHA records) and the name and address (if known) of the owner at the family's current and prior addresses. HUD permits DCHA to provide owners with additional information, as long as families are notified that the information will be provided, and the same type of information is provided to all owners.

DCHA may not disclose to the owner any confidential information provided to DCHA by the family in response to a DCHA request for documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, except at the written request or with the written consent of the individual providing the documentation [see 24 CFR 5.2007(a)(4)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will inform owners of their responsibility to screen prospective tenants, and will provide owners with the required known name and address information, at the time of the initial inspection or before. DCHA will not provide any additional information to the owner, such as tenancy history or criminal history, etc.

3-III.F. CRITERIA FOR DECIDING TO DENY ASSISTANCE

Evidence [24 CFR 982.553(c)]

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the concept of the preponderance of the evidence as the standard for making all admission decisions.

Preponderance of the evidence is defined as evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence which, as a whole, shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.

Preponderance of the evidence may not be determined by the number of witnesses, but by the greater weight of all evidence.

Consideration of Circumstances [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)]

HUD authorizes DCHA to consider all relevant circumstances when deciding whether to deny assistance based on a family's past history except in the situations for which denial of assistance is mandatory (see Section 3-III.B).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consider the following facts and circumstances prior to making its decision:

The seriousness of the case, especially with respect to how it would affect other residents' safety or property

The effects that denial of assistance may have on other members of the family who were not involved in the action or failure to act

The extent of participation or culpability of individual family members, including whether the culpable family member is a minor or a person with disabilities, or (as discussed further in section 3-III.H) a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking

The length of time since the violation occurred, including the age of the individual at the time of the conduct, as well as the family's recent history and the likelihood of favorable conduct in the future

While a record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis for denial, an arrest may trigger an investigation to determine whether the applicant actually engaged in disqualifying criminal activity. As part of its investigation, DCHA may obtain the police report associated with the arrest and consider the reported circumstances of the arrest. DCHA may also consider:

- Any statements made by witnesses or the applicant not included in the police report

- Whether criminal charges were filed

- Whether, if filed, criminal charges were abandoned, dismissed, not prosecuted, or ultimately resulted in an acquittal

- Any other evidence relevant to determining whether or not the applicant engaged in disqualifying activity

Evidence of criminal conduct will be considered if it indicates a demonstrable risk to safety and/or property

In the case of drug or alcohol abuse, whether the culpable household member is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully

- DCHA will require the applicant to submit evidence of the household member's current participation in or successful completion of a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, or evidence of otherwise having been rehabilitated successfully.

Removal of a Family Member's Name from the Application

Should DCHA's screening process reveal that an applicant's household includes an individual subject to state lifetime registered sex offender registration, DCHA must offer the family the opportunity to remove the ineligible family member from the household. If the family is unwilling to remove that individual from the household, DCHA must deny admission to the family [Notice PIH 2012-28].

For other criminal activity, DCHA may permit the family to exclude the culpable family members as a condition of eligibility. [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(ii)].

DCHA Policy

As a condition of receiving assistance, a family may agree to remove the culpable family member from the application. In such instances, the head of household must certify that the family member will not be permitted to visit, stay as a guest, or reside in the assisted unit.

After admission to the program, the family must present evidence of the former family member's current address upon DCHA request.

Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(iv)]

If the family includes a person with disabilities, DCHA's decision concerning denial of admission is subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation in accordance with 24 CFR Part 8.

DCHA Policy

If the family indicates that the behavior of a family member with a disability is the reason for the proposed denial of assistance, DCHA will determine whether the behavior is related to the stated disability. If so, upon the family's request, DCHA will determine whether admitting the family as a reasonable accommodation is appropriate. DCHA will only consider accommodations that can reasonably be expected to address the behavior that is the basis of the proposed denial of assistance. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of reasonable accommodation.

3-III.G. NOTICE OF ELIGIBILITY OR DENIAL

If the family is eligible for assistance, DCHA will notify the family in writing and schedule an applicant briefing, as discussed in Chapter 5.

If DCHA determines that a family is not eligible for the program for any reason, the family must be notified promptly. The notice must describe: (1) the reasons for which assistance has been denied, (2) the family's right to an informal review, and (3) the process for obtaining the informal review [24 CFR 982.554 (a)]. See Chapter 16, for informal review policies and procedures.

DCHA Policy

The family will be notified of a decision to deny assistance in writing within 14 business days of the determination.

If DCHA uses a criminal record or sex offender registration information obtained under 24 CFR 5, Subpart J, as the basis of a denial, a copy of the record must precede the notice to deny, with an opportunity for the applicant to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the information before DCHA can move to deny the application. In addition, a copy of the record must be provided to the subject of the record [24 CFR 5.903(f) and 5.905(d)]. DCHA must give the family an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of that record, in the informal review process in accordance with program requirements [24 CFR 982.553(d)].

DCHA Policy

If based on a criminal record or sex offender registration information, an applicant family appears to be ineligible DCHA will notify the family in writing of the proposed denial and provide a copy of the record to the applicant and to the subject of the record. The family will be given 10 business days to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the information. If the family does not contact DCHA to dispute the information within that 10-day period, DCHA will proceed with issuing the notice of denial of admission. A family that does not exercise their right to dispute the accuracy of the information prior to issuance of the official denial letter will still be given the opportunity to do so as part of the informal review process.

Notice requirements related to denying assistance to noncitizens are contained in Section 3-II.B.

Notice policies related to denying admission to applicants who may be victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking are contained in Section 3-III.H.

3-III.H. PROHIBITION AGAINST DENIAL OF ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, STALKING, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Violence against Women Act (VAWA) and the HUD regulation at 24 CFR 5.2005(b) prohibit DCHA from denying an applicant admission to the HCV program on the basis or as a direct result of the fact that the applicant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, if the applicant otherwise qualifies for assistance or admission.

- Although the VAWA 2022 statute does not specifically include human trafficking in the list of victims protected under VAWA, in 2022 HUD began including human trafficking as part of the list of victims protected under VAWA (as seen in Notices PIH 2022-06, PIH 2022-22, and PIH 2022-24). In the absence of a final rule implementing VAWA 2022 and to mirror HUD's recent usage, this policy includes human trafficking in addition to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking anywhere such a list appears.

Definitions of key terms used in VAWA are provided in section 16-IX of this plan, where general VAWA requirements and policies pertaining to notification, documentation, and confidentiality are also located.

Notification

VAWA requires DCHA to provide applicants who are denied assistance with a VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights (form HUD-5380) and a domestic violence certification form (HUD-5382) at the time the applicant is denied.

DCHA Policy

DCHA acknowledges that a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking may have an unfavorable history (e.g., a poor credit history, poor rental history, a record of previous damage to an apartment, a prior arrest record) due to adverse factors that would warrant denial under DCHA's policies.

While DCHA is not required to identify whether adverse factors that resulted in the applicant's denial are a result of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, the applicant may inform DCHA that their status as a victim is directly related to the grounds for the denial. DCHA will request that the applicant provide enough information to DCHA to allow DCHA to make an objectively reasonable determination, based on all circumstances, whether the adverse factor is a direct result of their status as a victim.

DCHA will include in its notice of denial the VAWA information described in section 16-IX.C of this plan as well as including a copy of the form HUD-5382. DCHA will request in writing that an applicant wishing to claim protection under VAWA notify DCHA within 14 business days.

Documentation

Victim Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007]

DCHA Policy

If an applicant claims the protection against denial of assistance that VAWA provides to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, DCHA will request in writing that the applicant provide documentation supporting the claim in accordance with section 16-IX.D of this plan.

Perpetrator Documentation

DCHA Policy

If the perpetrator of the abuse is a member of the applicant family, the applicant must provide additional documentation consisting of one of the following:

A signed statement (1) requesting that the perpetrator be removed from the application and (2) certifying that the perpetrator will not be permitted to visit or to stay as a guest in the assisted unit

Documentation that the perpetrator has successfully completed, or is successfully undergoing, rehabilitation or treatment. The documentation must be signed by an employee or agent of a domestic violence service provider or by a medical or other knowledgeable professional from whom the perpetrator has sought or is receiving assistance in addressing the abuse. The signer must attest under penalty of perjury to their belief that the rehabilitation was successfully completed or is progressing successfully. The victim and perpetrator must also sign or attest to the documentation.

EXHIBIT 3-1: DETAILED DEFINITIONS RELATED TO DISABILITIES

Person with Disabilities [24 CFR 5.403]

The term *person with disabilities* means a person who has any of the following types of conditions:

- Has a disability, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 423(d)(1)(A), which reads:

Inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months; *or*

In the case of an individual who has attained the age of 55 and is blind (within the meaning of “blindness” as defined in section 416(i)(1) of this title), inability by reason of such blindness to engage in substantial gainful activity, requiring skills or ability comparable to those of any gainful activity in which he has previously engaged with some regularity and over a substantial period of time.
- Has a developmental disability as defined in the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 [42 U.S.C.15002(8)], which defines developmental disability in functional terms as follows:

(A) In General

The term “developmental disability” means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that:

- (i) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments;
- (ii) is manifested before the individual attains age 22;
- (iii) is likely to continue indefinitely;
- (iv) results in substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the following areas of major life activity: (I) Self-care, (II) Receptive and expressive language, (III) Learning, (IV) Mobility, (V) Self-direction, (VI) Capacity for independent living, (VII) Economic self-sufficiency; and
- (v) reflects the individual’s need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

(B) Infants and Young Children

An individual from birth to age 9, inclusive, who has a substantial developmental delay or specific congenital or acquired condition, may be considered to have a developmental disability without meeting 3 or more of the criteria described in clauses (i) through (v) of subparagraph (A) if the individual, without services and supports, has a high probability of meeting those criteria later in life.

- Has a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration; substantially impedes their ability to live independently, and is of such a nature that the ability to live independently could be improved by more suitable housing conditions.

People with the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for AIDS are not excluded from this definition.

A person whose disability is based solely on any drug or alcohol dependence does not qualify as a person with disabilities for the purposes of this program.

For purposes of reasonable accommodation and program accessibility for persons with disabilities, the term person with disabilities refers to an individual with handicaps.

Individual with Handicaps [24 CFR 8.3]

Individual with handicaps means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. The term does not include any individual who is an alcoholic or drug abuser whose current use of alcohol or drugs prevents the individual from participating in the program or activity in question, or whose participation, by reason of such current alcohol or drug abuse, would constitute a direct threat to property or the safety of others. As used in this definition, the phrase:

(1) Physical or mental impairment includes:

- (a) Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
- (b) Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The term physical or mental impairment includes, but is not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction and alcoholism.

(2) *Major life activities* mean functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

(3) Has a record of such an impairment means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

(4) *Is regarded as having an impairment* means:

- (a) Has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit one or more major life activities but that is treated by a recipient as constituting such a limitation;
- (b) Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or
- (c) Has none of the impairments defined in paragraph (1) of this section but is treated by a recipient as having such an impairment.

**EXHIBIT 3-2: DEFINITION OF INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
[20 U.S.C. 1001 and 1002]**

Eligibility of Students for Assisted Housing Under Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937; Supplementary Guidance; Notice [Federal Register, April 10, 2006]

Institution of Higher Education shall have the meaning given this term in the Higher Education Act of 1965 in 20 U.S.C. 1001 and 1002.

Definition of “Institution of Higher Education” From 20 U.S.C. 1001

- (a) Institution of higher education. For purposes of this chapter, other than subchapter IV and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of Title 42, the term “institution of higher education” means an educational institution in any State that
- (1) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;
 - (2) Is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
 - (3) Provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor’s degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree;
 - (4) Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and
 - (5) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted preaccreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of preaccreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.
- (b) Additional institutions included. For purposes of this chapter, other than subchapter IV and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of Title 42, the term “institution of higher education” also includes—
- (1) Any school that provides not less than a 1-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation and that meets the provision of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of subsection (a) of this section; and
 - (2) A public or nonprofit private educational institution in any State that, in lieu of the requirement in subsection (a)(1) of this section, admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located.
- (c) List of accrediting agencies. For purposes of this section and section 1002 of this title, the Secretary shall publish a list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies or associations that the Secretary determines, pursuant to subpart 2 of part G of subchapter IV of this chapter, to be reliable authority as to the quality of the education or training offered.

Definition of “Institution of Higher Education” From 20 U.S.C. 1002

- (a) Definition of institution of higher education for purposes of student assistance programs

- (1) Inclusion of additional institutions. Subject to paragraphs (2) through (4) of this subsection, the term “institution of higher education” for purposes of subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of title 42 includes, in addition to the institutions covered by the definition in section 1001 of this title—
 - (A) A proprietary institution of higher education (as defined in subsection (b) of this section);
 - (B) A postsecondary vocational institution (as defined in subsection (c) of this section); and
 - (C) Only for the purposes of part B of subchapter IV of this chapter, an institution outside the United States that is comparable to an institution of higher education as defined in section 1001 of this title and that has been approved by the Secretary for the purpose of part B of subchapter IV of this chapter.
- (2) Institutions outside the United States
 - (A) In general. For the purpose of qualifying as an institution under paragraph (1)(C), the Secretary shall establish criteria by regulation for the approval of institutions outside the United States and for the determination that such institutions are comparable to an institution of higher education as defined in section 1001 of this title (except that a graduate medical school, or a veterinary school, located outside the United States shall not be required to meet the requirements of section 1001 (a)(4) of this title). Such criteria shall include a requirement that a student attending such school outside the United States is ineligible for loans made, insured, or guaranteed under part B of subchapter IV of this chapter unless—
 - (i) In the case of a graduate medical school located outside the United States—
 - (I)(aa) At least 60 percent of those enrolled in, and at least 60 percent of the graduates of, the graduate medical school outside the United States were not persons described in section 1091(a)(5) of this title in the year preceding the year for which a student is seeking a loan under part B of subchapter IV of this chapter; and
 - (bb) At least 60 percent of the individuals who were students or graduates of the graduate medical school outside the United States or Canada (both nationals of the United States and others) taking the examinations administered by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates received a passing score in the year preceding the year for which a student is seeking a loan under part B of subchapter IV of this chapter; or
 - (II) The institution has a clinical training program that was approved by a State as of January 1, 1992; or
 - (ii) In the case of a veterinary school located outside the United States that does not meet the requirements of section 1001(a)(4) of this title, the institution’s students complete their clinical training at an approved veterinary school located in the United States.
 - (B) Advisory panel

- (i) In general. For the purpose of qualifying as an institution under paragraph (1)(C) of this subsection, the Secretary shall establish an advisory panel of medical experts that shall—
 - (I) Evaluate the standards of accreditation applied to applicant foreign medical schools; and
 - (II) Determine the comparability of those standards to standards for accreditation applied to United States medical schools.
 - (ii) Special rule if the accreditation standards described in clause (i) are determined not to be comparable, the foreign medical school shall be required to meet the requirements of section 1001 of this title.
- (C) Failure to release information. The failure of an institution outside the United States to provide, release, or authorize release to the Secretary of such information as may be required by subparagraph (A) shall render such institution ineligible for the purpose of part B of subchapter IV of this chapter.
- (D) Special rule. If, pursuant to this paragraph, an institution loses eligibility to participate in the programs under subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of title 42, then a student enrolled at such institution may, notwithstanding such loss of eligibility, continue to be eligible to receive a loan under part B while attending such institution for the academic year succeeding the academic year in which such loss of eligibility occurred.
- (3) Limitations based on course of study or enrollment. An institution shall not be considered to meet the definition of an institution of higher education in paragraph (1) if such institution—
- (A) Offers more than 50 percent of such institution’s courses by correspondence, unless the institution is an institution that meets the definition in section 2471 (4)(C) of this title;
 - (B) Enrolls 50 percent or more of the institution’s students in correspondence courses, unless the institution is an institution that meets the definition in such section, except that the Secretary, at the request of such institution, may waive the applicability of this subparagraph to such institution for good cause, as determined by the Secretary in the case of an institution of higher education that provides a 2-or 4-year program of instruction (or both) for which the institution awards an associate or baccalaureate degree, respectively;
 - (C) Has a student enrollment in which more than 25 percent of the students are incarcerated, except that the Secretary may waive the limitation contained in this subparagraph for a nonprofit institution that provides a 2-or 4-year program of instruction (or both) for which the institution awards a bachelor’s degree, or an associate’s degree or a postsecondary diploma, respectively; or
 - (D) Has a student enrollment in which more than 50 percent of the students do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and does not provide a 2-or 4-year program of instruction (or both) for which the institution awards a bachelor’s degree or an associate’s degree, respectively, except that the Secretary may waive the

limitation contained in this subparagraph if a nonprofit institution demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the institution exceeds such limitation because the institution serves, through contracts with Federal, State, or local government agencies, significant numbers of students who do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

- (4) Limitations based on management. An institution shall not be considered to meet the definition of an institution of higher education in paragraph (1) if—
 - (A) The institution, or an affiliate of the institution that has the power, by contract or ownership interest, to direct or cause the direction of the management or policies of the institution, has filed for bankruptcy, except that this paragraph shall not apply to a nonprofit institution, the primary function of which is to provide health care educational services (or an affiliate of such an institution that has the power, by contract or ownership interest, to direct or cause the direction of the institution’s management or policies) that files for bankruptcy under chapter 11 of title 11 between July 1, 1998, and December 1, 1998; or
 - (B) The institution, the institution’s owner, or the institution’s chief executive officer has been convicted of, or has pled nolo contendere or guilty to, a crime involving the acquisition, use, or expenditure of funds under subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of title 42, or has been judicially determined to have committed fraud involving funds under subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of title 42.
- (5) Certification. The Secretary shall certify an institution’s qualification as an institution of higher education in accordance with the requirements of subpart 3 of part G of subchapter IV of this chapter.
- (6) Loss of eligibility. An institution of higher education shall not be considered to meet the definition of an institution of higher education in paragraph (1) if such institution is removed from eligibility for funds under subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of title 42 as a result of an action pursuant to part G of subchapter IV of this chapter.

(b) Proprietary institution of higher education

- (1) Principal criteria. For the purpose of this section, the term “proprietary institution of higher education” means a school that—
 - (A) Provides an eligible program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation;
 - (B) Meets the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1001 (a) of this title;
 - (C) Does not meet the requirement of paragraph (4) of section 1001 (a) of this title;
 - (D) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary pursuant to part G of subchapter IV of this chapter;
 - (E) Has been in existence for at least 2 years; and
 - (F) Has at least 10 percent of the school’s revenues from sources that are not derived from funds provided under subchapter IV of this chapter and part C of subchapter I of

chapter 34 of title 42, as determined in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) Additional institutions. The term “proprietary institution of higher education” also includes a proprietary educational institution in any State that, in lieu of the requirement in paragraph (1) of section 1001 (a) of this title, admits as regular students, persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located.

(c) Postsecondary vocational institution.

(1) Principal criteria. For the purpose of this section, the term “postsecondary vocational institution” means a school that—

(A) Provides an eligible program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation;

(B) Meets the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of section 1001 (a) of this title; and

(C) Has been in existence for at least 2 years.

(2) Additional institutions. The term “postsecondary vocational institution” also includes an educational institution in any State that, in lieu of the requirement in paragraph (1) of section 1001 (a) of this title, admits as regular students, persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located.

Chapter 4

APPLICATIONS, WAITING LIST AND TENANT SELECTION

INTRODUCTION

When a family wishes to receive assistance under the HCV program, the family must submit an application that provides DCHA with the information needed to determine the family's eligibility. HUD requires DCHA to place all families that apply for assistance on a waiting list. When HCV assistance becomes available, DCHA must select families from the waiting list in accordance with HUD requirements and DCHA policies as stated in the administrative plan and the annual plan.

DCHA is required to adopt clear policies and procedures for accepting applications, placing families on the waiting list, and selecting families from the waiting list, and must follow these policies and procedures consistently. The actual order in which families are selected from the waiting list can be affected if a family has certain characteristics designated by HUD or DCHA that justify their selection. Examples of this are the selection of families for income targeting and the selection of families that qualify for targeted funding.

HUD regulations require that all families have an equal opportunity to apply for and receive housing assistance, and that DCHA affirmatively further fair housing goals in the administration of the program [24 CFR 982.53, HCV GB p. 4-1]. Adherence to the selection policies described in this chapter ensures that DCHA will be in compliance with all relevant fair housing requirements, as described in Chapter 2.

This chapter describes HUD and DCHA policies for taking applications, managing the waiting list and selecting families for HCV assistance. The policies outlined in this chapter are organized into three sections, as follows:

Part I: The Application Process. This part provides an overview of the application process, and discusses how applicants can obtain and submit applications. It also specifies how DCHA will handle the applications it receives.

Part II: Managing the Waiting List. This part presents the policies that govern how DCHA's waiting list is structured, when it is opened and closed, and how the public is notified of the opportunity to apply for assistance. It also discusses the process DCHA will use to keep the waiting list current.

Part III: Selection for HCV Assistance. This part describes the policies that guide DCHA in selecting families for HCV assistance as such assistance becomes available. It also specifies how in-person interviews will be used to ensure that DCHA has the information needed to make a final eligibility determination.

PART I: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

4-I.A. OVERVIEW

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

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

Families may obtain the initial application online at www.daviscommunityhousing.com. Applicants requiring assistance may apply at DCHA's office using an electronic device with the aid of the Waiting List Coordinator.

Once the online application is completed the applicant will receive a PIN to access the applicant online portal to submit any updates or changes. DCHA will approve or deny any changes made to the application. Applications must be complete in order to be accepted by DCHA for processing.

The second/final application will be mailed when a family has been selected from the waiting list.

4-I.C. ACCESSIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

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

DCHA must take steps to ensure that the application process is accessible to those people who might have difficulty complying with the normal, standard DCHA application process. This could include people with disabilities, certain elderly individuals, as well as persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). DCHA must provide reasonable accommodation to the needs of individuals with disabilities. The application-taking facility and the application process must be fully accessible, or DCHA must provide an alternate approach that provides full access to the application process. Chapter 2 provides a full discussion of DCHA's policies related to providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

Limited English Proficiency

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

4-I.D. PLACEMENT ON THE WAITING LIST

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

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

Ineligible for Placement on the Waiting List

DCHA Policy

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

Eligible for Placement on the Waiting List

DCHA Policy

DCHA will send electronic notification of the preliminary eligibility determination within 10 business days of receiving a complete application.

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

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

PART II: MANAGING THE WAITING LIST

4-II.A. OVERVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA will maintain a single waiting list for the HCV and Mainstream 5-year programs.

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not merge the HCV waiting list with the waiting list for any other program DCHA operates. Mainstream 5-year voucher applicants are selected from the HCV waiting list in accordance with HUD's Mainstream Voucher requirements.

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

Closing the Waiting List

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA will close the waiting list when the estimated waiting period for housing assistance for applicants on the list reaches 24 to 36 months for the most current applicants, dependent upon the budget authority and voucher issuance. Where DCHA has particular preferences or funding criteria that require a specific category of family, DCHA may elect to continue to accept applications from these applicants while closing the waiting list to others.

Reopening the Waiting List

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

DCHA Policy

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

DCHA will give public notice by publishing the relevant information in suitable media outlets including, but not limited to:

Davis County Clipper
Ogden Standard Examiner Newspaper
Davis Community Housing Authority Website

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

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

4-II.E. REPORTING CHANGES IN FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

DCHA Policy

While the family is on the waiting list, the family must immediately inform DCHA of changes in contact information, including current residence, mailing address, and phone number. The changes must be submitted in the Assistance Connect Portal or by contacting the Waiting List Coordinator.

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

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

Purging the Waiting List

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

DCHA Policy

The waiting list will be updated as needed to ensure that all applicants and applicant information is current and timely.

To update the waiting list, DCHA will send an update request via first class mail and/or email to each family on the waiting list to determine whether the family continues to be interested in, and to qualify for, the program. This update request will be sent to the last mailing and/or email address that DCHA has on record for the family. The update request will provide a deadline by which the family must respond and will state that failure to respond will result in the applicant's name being removed from the waiting list.

The family's response must be in writing and may be delivered in person, by mail, by email, or by fax. Responses should be postmarked or received by DCHA not later than 15 business days from the date of the DCHA letter.

If the family fails to respond within 15 business days, the family will be removed from the waiting list without further notice.

If the notice is returned by the post office with no forwarding address, the applicant will be removed from the waiting list without further notice.

If the notice is returned by the post office with a forwarding address, the notice will be re-sent to the address indicated. The family will have 15 business days to respond from the date the letter was re-sent.

If a family is removed from the waiting list for failure to respond, DCHA may reinstate the family if it is determined that the lack of response was due to DCHA error, or to circumstances beyond the family's control, as a result of a family member's disability, or as a direct result of status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, including an adverse factor resulting from such abuse.

Removal from the Waiting List

DCHA Policy

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

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

PART III: SELECTION FOR HCV ASSISTANCE

4-III.A. OVERVIEW

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

The order in which families are selected from the waiting list depends on the selection method chosen by DCHA and is impacted in part by any selection preferences for which the family qualifies. The availability of targeted funding also may affect the order in which families are selected from the waiting list.

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

4-III.B. SELECTION AND HCV FUNDING SOURCES

Special Admissions [24 CFR 982.203]

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

Targeted Funding [24 CFR 982.204(e)]

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA administers the following types of targeted funding:

VASH

Mainstream 5-year

Regular HCV Funding

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

4-III.C. SELECTION METHOD

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the following local preferences:

1. DCHA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding.
2. DCHA will offer a preference to applicant families who live, report to work, have been hired to work or who are attending school in Davis County. Residency preference does not apply to applicants who qualify for Mainstream 5-year Vouchers.
3. DCHA will offer a preference to families that include victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking who have either been referred by a partnering service agency or consortia or are seeking an emergency transfer under VAWA from DCHA's public housing program or other covered housing program operated by DCHA.

DCHA will work with the following partnering service agencies:

Safe Harbor

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

DCHA will first assist families that have been terminated from the HCV program due to insufficient funding then assist families that qualify for the VAWA preference, then to applicants who reside or report to work in Davis County.

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

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

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

DCHA Policy

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

Order of Selection

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

DCHA Policy

Families will be selected from the waiting list based on the targeted funding or selection preference(s) for which they qualify, and in accordance with DCHA's hierarchy of preferences, if applicable. Within each targeted funding or preference category, families will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis according to the date and time their complete application is received by DCHA. Documentation will be maintained by DCHA as to whether families on the list qualify for and are interested in targeted funding. If a higher placed family on the waiting list is not qualified or not interested in targeted funding, there will be a notation maintained so that DCHA does not have to ask higher placed families each time targeted selections are made.

4-III.D. NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION

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

DCHA Policy

DCHA will notify the family by first class mail and/or email when it is selected from the waiting list. The notice will inform the family of the following:

The applicant family is nearing the top of the HCV waiting list and they must respond, in writing, via fax, email, or hand-carried response of their interest in the HCV program assistance.

DCHA will send an application packet once the applicant has responded with interest in the program. The cover letter will include:

- All documents that must be provided at the interview, including information about what constitutes acceptable documentation
- The process to schedule an application interview

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

4-III.E. THE APPLICATION INTERVIEW

HUD recommends that DCHA obtain the information and documentation needed to make an eligibility determination through a face-to-face interview with a DCHA representative [HCV GB, pg. 4-16]. Attending an interview does not constitute admission to the program.

Assistance cannot be provided to the family until all SSN documentation requirements are met. However, if DCHA determines that an applicant family is otherwise eligible to participate in the program, the family may retain its place on the waiting list for a period of time determined by DCHA [Notice PIH 2018-24].

Reasonable accommodation must be made for persons with disabilities who are unable to attend an interview due to their disability.

DCHA Policy

Families selected from the waiting list are required to participate in an eligibility interview.

The head of household and the spouse/cohead will be strongly encouraged to attend the interview together. However, either the head of household or the spouse/cohead may attend the interview on behalf of the family. Verification of information pertaining to adult members of the household not present at the interview will not begin until signed release forms are returned to DCHA.

The head of household or spouse/cohead must provide acceptable documentation of legal identity. (Chapter 7 provides a discussion of proper documentation of legal identity.) If the family representative does not provide the required documentation at the time of the interview, they will be required to provide it within 10 business days.

Pending disclosure and documentation of social security numbers, DCHA will allow the family to retain its place on the waiting list for **90 days**. If not all household members have disclosed their SSNs at the next time DCHA is issuing vouchers, DCHA will issue a voucher to the next eligible applicant family on the waiting list.

The family must provide the information necessary to establish the family's eligibility and determine the appropriate level of assistance, and must complete required forms, provide required signatures, and submit required documentation. If any materials are missing, DCHA will provide the family with a written list of items that must be submitted.

Any required documents or information that the family is unable to provide at the interview must be provided within 10 business days of the interview (Chapter 7 provides details about longer submission deadlines for particular items, including documentation of eligible noncitizen status). If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time frame, the family may request an extension. If the required documents and information are not provided within the required time frame (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of denial (See Chapter 3).

An advocate, interpreter, or other assistant may assist the family with the application and the interview process.

Interviews will be conducted in English. For limited English proficient (LEP) applicants, DCHA does not provide translation services. The applicant is encouraged to bring with them an individual over the age of 18 to provide translation services in the interview.

If the family is unable to attend a scheduled interview, the family should contact DCHA in advance of the interview to schedule a new appointment. In all circumstances, if a family does not attend a scheduled interview, DCHA will send another notification letter with a new interview appointment time. Applicants who fail to attend two scheduled interviews without DCHA approval will be denied assistance based on the family's failure to supply information needed to determine eligibility. A notice of denial will be issued in accordance with policies contained in Chapter 3.

4-III.F. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

DCHA must verify all information provided by the family (see Chapter 7). Based on verified information, DCHA must make a final determination of eligibility (see Chapter 3) and must confirm that the family qualified for any special admission, targeted funding admission, or selection preference that affected the order in which the family was selected from the waiting list.

DCHA Policy

If DCHA determines that the family is ineligible, DCHA will send written notification of the ineligibility determination within 10 business days of the determination. The notice will specify the reasons for ineligibility, and will inform the family of its right to request an informal review (Chapter 16).

If a family fails to qualify for any criteria that affected the order in which it was selected from the waiting list (e.g. targeted funding, local preference, extremely low-income), the family will be returned to the waiting list, taking into account any change in the family's preference status. DCHA will notify the family in writing that it has been returned to the waiting list, and will specify the reasons for it.

If DCHA determines that the family is eligible to receive assistance, DCHA will invite the family to attend a briefing in accordance with the policies in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

BRIEFINGS AND VOUCHER ISSUANCE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the briefing and voucher issuance process. When a family is determined to be eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, DCHA must ensure that the family fully understands the way the program operates and the family's obligations under the program. This is accomplished through both an oral briefing and provision of a briefing packet containing the HUD-required documents and other information the family needs to know in order to lease a unit under the program. Once the family is fully informed of the program's requirements, DCHA issues the family a voucher. The voucher includes the unit size for which the family qualifies based on DCHA's subsidy standards, as well as the issue and expiration date of the voucher. The voucher is the document that authorizes the family to begin its search for a unit, and limits the amount of time the family has to successfully locate an acceptable unit.

This chapter describes HUD regulations and DCHA policies related to these topics in two parts:

Part I: Briefings and Family Obligations. This part details the program's requirements for briefing families orally, and for providing written materials describing the program and its requirements. It includes a particular focus on the family's obligations under the program.

Part II: Subsidy Standards and Voucher Issuance. This part discusses DCHA's standards for determining how many bedrooms a family of a given composition qualifies for, which in turn affects the amount of subsidy the family can receive. It also discusses the policies that dictate how vouchers are issued, and how long families have to locate a unit.

PART I: BRIEFINGS AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

5-I.A. OVERVIEW

HUD regulations require DCHA to conduct mandatory briefings for applicant families who qualify for a voucher. The briefing provides a broad description of owner and family responsibilities, explains DCHA's procedures, and includes instructions on how to lease a unit. This part describes how oral briefings will be conducted, specifies what written information will be provided to families, and lists the family's obligations under the program. DCHA must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access by persons with Limited English proficiency.

5-I.B. BRIEFING [24 CFR 982.301]

Notification of Briefing

Prior to issuance of a voucher, DCHA must give the family an oral briefing and provide the family with a briefing packet containing written information about the program. Families may be briefed in individual face-to-face meetings, through group briefing sessions, or via remote briefing sessions.

DCHA Policy

Families will be notified of their eligibility for assistance at the time they are invited to a briefing. The notice will be sent by first class mail and will also be sent by email if the family has provided a valid email address to DCHA.

The notice will advise the family of the type of briefing, who is required to be present at the briefing, and the date and time of the briefing. The notice will also inform the family of any additional requirements for in-person or remote briefings as addressed in relevant policy elsewhere in this section.

If the notice is returned by the post office with no forwarding address, the applicant will be denied and their name will not be placed back on the waiting list. If the notice is returned by the post office with a forwarding address, the notice will be resent to the address indicated.

In-Person Briefings

At the briefing, DCHA must ensure effective communication in accordance with Section 504 requirements (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and ensure that the briefing site is accessible to individuals with disabilities. For a more thorough discussion of accessibility requirements, refer to Chapter 2.

DCHA Policy

In-person briefings will generally be conducted in group meetings. At the family's written request, DCHA may provide an individual briefing.

Generally, the head of household is required to attend the briefing. If the head of household is unable to attend, DCHA may approve another adult family member to attend the briefing.

Families that attend group briefings and still need individual assistance will be referred to an appropriate DCHA staff person.

Briefings will be conducted in English. For limited English proficient (LEP) applicants, DCHA will not provide interpretation services in accordance with DCHA's LEP plan (See Chapter 2). Applicants may bring an interpreter to the briefing.

Attendance

DCHA Policy

Applicants who fail to attend a scheduled in-person briefing will be scheduled for another briefing automatically. DCHA will notify the family of the date and time of the second scheduled briefing. Applicants who fail to attend two scheduled briefings, without prior DCHA approval, will be denied assistance (see Chapter 3).

Remote Briefings [Notice PIH 2020-32]

Remote briefings may be conducted over the phone, via video conferencing, or through other virtual platforms.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has the sole discretion to require that briefings be conducted remotely in case of local, state, or national physical distancing orders, and in cases of inclement weather or natural disaster. If DCHA schedules a remote briefing, DCHA will conduct a face-to-face briefing upon request of the applicant as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability if safety and health concerns can be reasonably addressed.

In addition, DCHA will conduct a briefing remotely upon request of the applicant as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, if an applicant does not have child care or transportation that would enable them to attend the briefing, or if the applicant believes an in-person briefing would create an undue health risk. DCHA will consider other reasonable requests for a remote briefing on a case-by-case basis.

Accessibility Requirements for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals

As with in-person briefings, the platform for conducting remote briefings must be accessible and the briefing conducted in accordance with Section 504 and accessibility requirements. This includes ensuring any information, websites, emails, digital notifications, and other virtual platforms are accessible for persons with vision, hearing, and other disabilities. Further, providing effective communication in a digital context may require the use of individualized auxiliary aids or services, such as audio description, captioning, sign language and other types of interpreters, keyboard accessibility, accessible documents, screen reader support, and transcripts. Auxiliary aids or services must be provided in accessible formats, in a timely manner, and in such a way to protect the privacy and independence of the individual.

If no method of conducting a remote briefing is available that appropriately accommodates an individual's disability, DCHA may not hold against the individual their inability to participate in the remote briefing, and DCHA should consider whether postponing the remote briefing to a later date is appropriate or whether there is a suitable alternative.

Due to the individualized nature of disability, the appropriate auxiliary aid or service necessary, or reasonable accommodation, will depend on the specific circumstances.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements also apply to remote briefings, including the use of interpretation services and document translation. See Chapter 2 for a more thorough discussion of accessibility and LEP requirements, all of which apply in the context of remote briefings.

Conducting Remote Briefings

DCHA must ensure that the lack of technology or inability to use technology for remote briefings does not pose a disadvantage to families that may not be apparent to DCHA. DCHA must ensure that the family has appropriate technological access in order to fully participate in the remote briefing.

DCHA Policy

At least 10 business days prior to scheduling the remote briefing, DCHA will provide written notification via first class mail and/or email to families participating in the briefing to advise of technological requirements and to request the family notify DCHA of any known barriers. If any family does not respond within five business days, or if the written notification is returned by the post office or the email is rejected, DCHA will contact the family by telephone to identify potential technological barriers and to determine which technology resources are accessible to the family. DCHA will resolve any barriers using the guidance in Section 6 of Notice PIH 2020-32, including offering the family the opportunity to attend an in-person briefing or have a one-on-one briefing over the phone, as appropriate.

DCHA will conduct remote briefings via a video conferencing platform when available. If applicants are unable to adequately access the video conferencing platform, the briefing will be conducted by telephone conferencing call-in. If the family is unable to adequately access the telephone conferencing call-in, the remote briefing will be postponed, and an in-person alternative or one-on-one briefing over the phone will be provided.

DCHA will provide login information and/or conferencing call-in information and an electronic copy of the briefing packet via email at least five business days before the briefing. DCHA will provide a paper copy of the briefing packet upon family request, and may reschedule the briefing to allow adequate time for the family to receive the physical briefing packet.

DCHA will ensure that all electronic information stored or transmitted as part of the briefing meets the requirements for accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with LEP, and is secure, including ensuring personally identifiable information (PII) is protected.

DCHA will ensure that families who participate in remote briefings have the opportunity to ask questions as part of the briefing.

If families lose connectivity during any remote briefing or otherwise feel they were unable to access information presented during the briefing, the family may request a one-on-one briefing over the phone or in person with DCHA.

Oral Briefing [24 CFR 982.301(a)]

Each briefing must provide information on the following subjects:

- How the Housing Choice Voucher program works;
- Family and owner responsibilities;
- Where the family can lease a unit, including renting a unit inside or outside DCHA's jurisdiction;
- An explanation of how portability works. DCHA may not discourage the family from choosing to live anywhere in the DCHA jurisdiction or outside DCHA's jurisdiction under portability, unless otherwise expressly authorized by statute, regulation, PIH Notice, or court order;
- DCHA must inform the family of how portability may affect the family's assistance through screening, subsidy standards, payment standards, and any other elements of the portability process which may affect the family's assistance;
- The advantages of areas that do not have a high concentration of low-income families; and
- For families receiving welfare-to-work vouchers, a description of any local obligations of a welfare-to-work family and an explanation that failure to meet the obligations is grounds for denial of admission or termination of assistance.

In briefing a family that includes a person with disabilities, DCHA must also take steps to ensure effective communication.

Briefing Packet [24 CFR 982.301(b); New HCV GB, *Housing Search and Leasing*, p. 7]

Documents and information provided in the briefing packet must include the following:

- The term of the voucher, voucher suspensions, and DCHA’s policies on any extensions of the term. If DCHA allows extensions, the packet must explain how the family can request an extension.
- A description of the method used to calculate the housing assistance payment for a family, including how DCHA determines the payment standard for a family, how DCHA determines total tenant payment for a family, and information on the payment standard and utility allowance schedule.
- An explanation of how DCHA determines the maximum allowable rent for an assisted unit.
- Where the family may lease a unit and an explanation of how portability works, including information on how portability may affect the family’s assistance through screening, subsidy standards, payment standards, and any other elements of the portability process that may affect the family’s assistance.
- The HUD-required tenancy addendum, which must be included in the lease.
- The form the family must use to request approval of tenancy, and a description of the procedure for requesting approval for a tenancy.
- A statement of DCHA policy on providing information about families to prospective owners.
- DCHA subsidy standards and when DCHA will consider granting exceptions as allowed by 24 CFR 982.402(b)(8), and when exceptions are required as a reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities under Section 504, the Fair Housing Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Materials (e.g., brochures) on how to select a unit and any additional information on selecting a unit that HUD provides (e.g., HUD brochure entitled, “A Good Place to Live”).
- Information on federal, state and local equal opportunity laws and a copy of the housing discrimination complaint form, and information on how to request a reasonable accommodation or modification (including information on requesting exception payment standards as a reasonable accommodation) under Section 504, the Fair Housing Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- A list of landlords known to DCHA who may be willing to lease a unit to the family or other resources (e.g., newspapers, organizations, online search tools) known to DCHA that may assist the family in locating a unit. DCHA must ensure that the list of landlords or other resources covers areas outside of poverty or minority concentration.
- Notice that if the family includes a person with disabilities, DCHA is subject to requirements under 24 CFR 8.28(a)(3) to provide a current listing of accessible units known to DCHA, and if necessary, other assistance in locating an available unit.
- The family obligations under the program.
- DCHA informal hearing procedures including when DCHA is required to offer a participant family the opportunity for an informal hearing, and how to request the hearing.

- An explanation of the advantages of moving to an area that does not have a high concentration of low-income families, which may include access to accessible and high-quality housing, transit, employment opportunities, educational opportunities, recreational facilities, public safety stations, retail services, and health services.
- The HUD pamphlet on lead-based paint entitled, “Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home.” [24 CFR 985.3(g)]:

If A PHA is located in a metropolitan area, the following additional information must be included in the briefing packet in order to receive full points under SEMAP Indicator 7, Expanding Housing Opportunities [24 CFR 985.3(g)]:

- Maps showing areas with housing opportunities outside areas of poverty or minority concentration, both within its jurisdiction and its neighboring jurisdiction
- Information about the characteristics of these areas including job opportunities, schools, transportation, and other services
- An explanation of how portability works, including a list of portability contact persons for neighboring PHAs with names, addresses, and telephone numbers

Additional Items to Be Included in the Briefing Packet

In addition to items required by the regulations, DCHA may wish to include supplemental materials to help explain the program to both participants and owners [HCV GB p. 8-7, Notice PIH 2017-12].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will provide the following additional materials in the briefing packet:

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

Requirements for notifying DCHA of any changes in income or family composition

Information on how to fill out and file a housing discrimination complaint form

The form HUD-5380 domestic violence certification form and the form HUD-5382 notice of occupancy rights, which contain information on VAWA protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking

“Is Fraud Worth It?” (form HUD-1141-OIG), which explains the types of actions a family must avoid and the penalties for program abuse

“What You Should Know about EIV,” a guide to the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system published by HUD as an attachment to Notice PIH 2017-12

5-I.C. FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

Obligations of the family are described in the housing choice voucher (HCV) regulations and on the voucher itself. These obligations include responsibilities the family is required to fulfill, as well as prohibited actions. DCHA must inform families of these obligations during the oral briefing, and the same information must be included in the briefing packet. When the family's unit is approved and the HAP contract is executed, the family must meet those obligations in order to continue participating in the program. Violation of any family obligation may result in termination of assistance, as described in Chapter 12.

Time Frames for Reporting Changes Required by Family Obligations

DCHA Policy

Unless otherwise noted below, when family obligations require the family to respond to a request or notify DCHA of a change, notifying DCHA of the request or change within 10 business days is considered prompt notice.

When a family is required to provide notice to DCHA, the notice must be in writing. The notice may be mailed, emailed, faxed, and/or hand-delivered.

Family Obligations [24 CFR 982.551]

The family obligations of the voucher are listed as follows:

- The family must supply any information that DCHA or HUD determines to be necessary, including submission of required evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status.
- The family must supply any information requested by DCHA or HUD for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition.
- The family must disclose and verify social security numbers and sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
- Any information supplied by the family must be true and complete.
- The family may be held responsible for a breach of housing quality standards caused by the family's failure to pay tenant-provided utilities or appliances, or damages to the dwelling unit or premises beyond ordinary wear and tear caused by any member of the household or guest.

DCHA Policy

Damages beyond normal wear and tear will be considered to be damages which could be assessed against the security deposit under state law or in court practice.

- The family must allow DCHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice, as described in Chapter 8 of this plan.

- The family must not commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will determine if a family has committed serious or repeated violations of the lease based on available evidence, including but not limited to, a court-ordered eviction or an owner's notice to evict, police reports, and affidavits from the owner, neighbors, or other credible parties with direct knowledge.

Serious and repeated lease violations will include, but not be limited to, nonpayment of rent, disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, living or housekeeping habits that cause damage to the unit or premises, and criminal activity. Generally, the criterion to be used will be whether or not the reason for the eviction was the fault of the tenant or guests. Any incidents of, or criminal activity related to, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking will not be construed as serious or repeated lease violations by the victim [see 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(1)].

- The family must notify DCHA and the owner before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease.

DCHA Policy

The family must comply with lease requirements regarding written notice to the owner. The family must provide written notice to DCHA at the same time the owner is notified.

- The family must promptly give DCHA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
- The family must use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be the family's only residence.
- The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by DCHA. The family must promptly notify DCHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child. The family must request DCHA approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit.

DCHA Policy

The request to add a family member must be submitted in writing and approved prior to the person moving into the unit. DCHA will determine eligibility of the new member in accordance with the policies in Chapter 3.

- The family must promptly notify DCHA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit.
- If DCHA has given approval, a foster child or a live-in aide may reside in the unit. DCHA has the discretion to adopt reasonable policies concerning residency by a foster child or a live-in aide, and to define when DCHA consent may be given or denied. For policies related to the request and approval/disapproval of foster children, foster adults, and live-in aides, see Chapter 3 (sections I.K and I.M), and Chapter 11 (section II.B).
- The family must not sublease the unit, assign the lease, or transfer the unit.

DCHA Policy

Subleasing includes receiving payment to cover rent and utility costs by a person living in the unit who is not listed as a family member.

- The family must supply any information requested by DCHA to verify that the family is living in the unit or information related to family absence from the unit.
- The family must promptly notify DCHA when the family is absent from the unit.

DCHA Policy

Notice is required under this provision only when all family members will be absent from the unit for an extended period. An extended period is defined as any period greater than 30 calendar days. Written notice must be provided to DCHA at the start of the extended absence.

- The family must pay utility bills and provide and maintain any appliances that the owner is not required to provide under the lease [Form HUD-52646, Voucher].
- The family must not own or have any interest in the unit, (other than in a cooperative and owners of a manufactured home leasing a manufactured home space).
- Family members must not commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program. (See Chapter 14, Program Integrity for additional information).
- Family members must not engage in drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises. See Chapter 12 for HUD and DCHA policies related to drug-related and violent criminal activity.
- Members of the household must not engage in abuse of alcohol in a way that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises. See Chapter 12 for a discussion of HUD and DCHA policies related to alcohol abuse.
- An assisted family or member of the family must not receive HCV program assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or a different unit under any other federal, state or local housing assistance program.
- A family must not receive HCV program assistance while residing in a unit owned by a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless DCHA has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving rental of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities. [Form HUD-52646, Voucher]

PART II: SUBSIDY STANDARDS AND VOUCHER ISSUANCE

5-II.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA must establish subsidy standards that determine the number of bedrooms needed for families of different sizes and compositions. This part presents the policies that will be used to determine the family unit size (also known as the voucher size) a particular family should receive, and the policies that govern making exceptions to those standards. DCHA must also establish policies related to the issuance of the voucher, to the voucher term, and to any extensions of the voucher term.

5-II.B. DETERMINING FAMILY UNIT (VOUCHER) SIZE [24 CFR 982.402]

For each family, DCHA determines the appropriate number of bedrooms under DCHA subsidy standards and enters the family unit size on the voucher that is issued to the family. The family unit size does not dictate the size of unit the family must actually lease, nor does it determine who within a household will share a bedroom/sleeping room.

The following requirements apply when DCHA determines family unit size:

- The subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding.
- The subsidy standards must be consistent with space requirements under 24 CFR 5.703.
- The subsidy standards must be applied consistently for all families of like size and composition.
- A child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family in determining the family unit size.
- A family that consists of a pregnant woman (with no other persons) must be treated as a two-person family.
- Any live-in aide (approved by DCHA to reside in the unit to care for a family member who is disabled or is at least 50 years of age) must be counted in determining the family unit size;

- Unless a live-in-aide resides with a family, the family unit size for any family consisting of a single person must be either a zero- or one-bedroom unit, as determined under DCHA subsidy standards.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will assign one bedroom for each two persons within the household, except in the following circumstances:

Persons of the opposite sex (other than spouses, and children under age 5) will be allocated separate bedrooms.

Live-in aides will be allocated a separate bedroom.

Single person families will be allocated one bedroom.

DCHA will reference the following chart in determining the appropriate voucher size for a family:

Voucher Size	Persons in Household (Minimum – Maximum)
1 Bedroom	1-2
2 Bedrooms	2-4
3 Bedrooms	3-6
4 Bedrooms	4-8
5 Bedrooms	6-10

5-II.C. EXCEPTIONS TO SUBSIDY STANDARDS

In determining family unit size for a particular family, DCHA may grant an exception to its established subsidy standards if DCHA determines that the exception is justified by the age, sex, health, handicap, or relationship of family members or other personal circumstances [24 CFR 982.402(b)(8)]. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A need for an additional bedroom for medical equipment
- A need for a separate bedroom for reasons related to a family member's disability, medical or health condition

For a single person who is not elderly, disabled, or a remaining family member, an exception cannot override the regulatory limit of a zero or one bedroom [24 CFR 982.402(b)(8)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consider granting an exception for any of the reasons specified in the regulation: the age, sex, health, handicap, or relationship of family members or other personal circumstances.

The family must request any exception to the subsidy standards in writing. The request must explain the need or justification for a larger family unit size, and must include appropriate documentation. Requests based on health-related reasons must be verified by a knowledgeable professional source (e.g., doctor or health professional), unless the disability and the disability-related need for accommodation is readily apparent or otherwise known. The family's continued need for an additional bedroom due to special medical equipment must be re-verified at annual reexamination.

DCHA will notify the family of its determination within 10 business days of receiving the family's request. If a participant family's request is denied, the notice will inform the family of their right to request an informal hearing.

5-II.D. VOUCHER ISSUANCE [24 CFR 982.302]

When a family is selected from the waiting list (or as a special admission as described in Chapter 4), or when a participant family wants to move to another unit, DCHA issues a Housing Choice Voucher, form HUD-52646. This chapter deals only with voucher issuance for applicants. For voucher issuance associated with moves of program participants, please refer to Chapter 10.

The voucher is the family's authorization to search for housing. It specifies the unit size for which the family qualifies, and includes both the date of voucher issuance and date of expiration. It contains a brief description of how the program works and explains the family obligations under the program. The voucher is evidence that DCHA has determined the family to be eligible for the program, and that DCHA expects to have money available to subsidize the family if the family finds an approvable unit. However, DCHA does not have any liability to any party by the issuance of the voucher, and the voucher does not give the family any right to participate in DCHA's housing choice voucher program [Voucher, form HUD-52646]

A voucher can be issued to an applicant family only after DCHA has determined that the family is eligible for the program based on verification of information received within the 60 days prior to issuance [24 CFR 982.201(e)] and after the family has attended an oral briefing [HCV 8-1].

DCHA Policy

Vouchers will be issued to eligible applicants immediately following the mandatory briefing.

DCHA should have sufficient funds to house an applicant before issuing a voucher. If funds are insufficient to house the family at the top of the waiting list, DCHA must wait until it has adequate funds before it calls another family from the list [HCV GB p. 8-10].

DCHA Policy

Prior to issuing any vouchers, DCHA will determine whether it has sufficient funding in accordance with the policies in Part VIII of Chapter 16.

If DCHA determines that there is insufficient funding after a voucher has been issued, DCHA may rescind the voucher and place the affected family back on the waiting list.

5-II.E. VOUCHER TERM AND EXTENSIONS

Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303]

The initial term of a voucher must be at least 60 calendar days. The initial term must be stated on the voucher [24 CFR 982.303(a)]. The initial term of a Mainstream voucher is 120 days (PIH 2024-30)

DCHA Policy

The initial voucher term will be 60 calendar days.

The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 60-day period unless DCHA grants an extension.

Extensions of Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303(b)]

DCHA has the authority to grant extensions of search time, to specify the length of an extension, and to determine the circumstances under which extensions will be granted. The extension, if granted, will be for 30 calendar days. When a voucher has been extended for 120 days total, the family must provide evidence of their search and a written statement concerning the difficulties in finding a unit. When a voucher has reached 180 days searching the voucher will be expired and the family must re-apply to the waiting list, barring verified extenuating circumstances.

DCHA must approve additional search time if needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by a person with disabilities. The extension period must be reasonable for the purpose.

The family must be notified in writing, which may include email notification, of DCHA's decision to approve or deny an extension. DCHA's decision to deny a request for an extension of the voucher term is not subject to informal review [24 CFR 982.554(c)(4)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will automatically approve one 30-day extension upon written request from the family.

DCHA will approve additional extensions only in the following circumstances:

It is necessary as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities.

It is necessary due to reasons beyond the family's control, as determined by DCHA. Following is a list of extenuating circumstances that DCHA may consider in making its decision. The presence of these circumstances does not guarantee that an extension will be granted:

Serious illness or death in the family

Other family emergency

Obstacles due to employment

Whether the family has already submitted requests for tenancy approval that were not approved by DCHA

Whether family size or other special circumstances make it difficult to find a suitable unit

Any request for an additional extension must include the reason(s) an additional extension is necessary. DCHA may require the family to provide documentation to support the request or obtain verification from a qualified third party. A family is required to provide evidence and documentation when a voucher has been extended for 120 calendar days.

All requests for extensions to the voucher term must be made in writing, which may include email notification, and submitted to DCHA prior to the expiration date of the voucher (or extended term of the voucher).

DCHA will decide whether to approve or deny an extension request within 10 business days of the date the request is received, and will immediately provide the family written or emailed notice of its decision.

Suspensions of Voucher Term [24 CFR 982.303(c)]

DCHA must provide for suspension of the initial or any extended term of the voucher from the date the family submits a request for DCHA approval of the tenancy until the date DCHA notifies the family in writing, or by email, whether the request has been approved or denied.

Expiration of Voucher Term

Once a family's housing choice voucher term (including any extensions) expires, the family is no longer eligible to search for housing under the program. If the family still wishes to receive assistance, DCHA may require that the family reapply, or may place the family on the waiting list with a new application date but without requiring reapplication. Such a family does not become ineligible for the program on the grounds that it was unable to locate a unit before the voucher expired [HCV GB p. 8-13].

DCHA Policy

If an applicant family's voucher term or extension expires before DCHA has approved a tenancy, DCHA will require the family to reapply for assistance.

Within 10 business days after the expiration of the voucher term or any extension, DCHA may notify the family in writing, verbally with notations, or through email, that the voucher term has expired and that the family must reapply when the waiting list is open in order to be placed on the waiting list.

Chapter 6.A.

INCOME AND SUBSIDY DETERMINATIONS

[24 CFR Part 5, Subparts E and F; 24 CFR 982]

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is applicable prior to DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date. After this date, DCHA will follow policies as outlined in Chapter 6.B. of the model policy.

The program regulations in the current Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) were updated for HOTMA on January 1, 2024. As a result, pre-HOTMA regulations from 2023 are no longer available on the electronic CFRs. However, since full HOTMA implementation is still pending, the pre-HOTMA regulations continue to apply to some elements of the program, and this chapter makes references to both pre-HOTMA and HOTMA regulations where applicable. Where HOTMA regulations apply, citations in this chapter have been provided indicating that current HOTMA CFRs are applicable. For all other citations, the pre-HOTMA CFRs apply. The federal government archives previous versions of the CFRs, and PHAs may access them here: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/cfr/2023/title24>.

A family's income determines eligibility for assistance and is also used to calculate the family's payment and DCHA's subsidy. DCHA will use the policies and methods described in this chapter to ensure that only eligible families receive assistance and that no family pays more or less than its obligation under the regulations. This chapter describes HUD regulations and DCHA policies related to these topics in three parts as follows:

- Part I: Annual Income. HUD regulations specify the sources of income to include and exclude to arrive at a family's annual income. These requirements and DCHA policies for calculating annual income are found in Part I.
- Part II: Adjusted Income. Once annual income has been established HUD regulations require DCHA to subtract from annual income any of five mandatory deductions for which a family qualifies. These requirements and DCHA policies for calculating adjusted income are found in Part II.
- Part III: Calculating Family Share and DCHA Subsidy. This part describes the statutory formula for calculating total tenant payment (TTP), the use of utility allowances, and the methodology for determining DCHA subsidy and required family payment.

PART I: ANNUAL INCOME

6-I.A. OVERVIEW

5.609 Annual income.

(a) Annual income means all amounts, monetary or not, which:

(1) Go to, or on behalf of, the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or

(2) Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date; and

(3) Which are not specifically excluded in paragraph [5.609(c)].

(4) Annual income also means amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access.

In addition to this general definition, HUD regulations establish policies for treating specific types of income and assets. The full texts of those portions of the regulations are provided in exhibits at the end of this chapter as follows:

- Annual Income Inclusions (Exhibit 6-1)
- Annual Income Exclusions (as updated for HOTMA per Notice PIH 2024-38)(Exhibit 6-2)
- Treatment of Family Assets (Exhibit 6-3)
- The Effect of Welfare Benefit Reduction (Exhibit 6-4)

Sections 6-I.B and 6-I.C discuss general requirements and methods for calculating annual income. The rest of this section describes how each source of income is treated for the purposes of determining annual income. Verification requirements for annual income are discussed in Chapter 7.A.

6-I.B. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION AND INCOME

Income received by all family members must be counted unless specifically excluded by the regulations. It is the responsibility of the head of household to report changes in family composition. The rules on which sources of income are counted vary somewhat by family member. The chart below summarizes how family composition affects income determinations.

Summary of Income Included and Excluded by Person	
Live-in aides	Income from all sources is excluded [24 CFR 5.609(b)(8) as updated for HOTMA].
Foster child or foster adult	Income from all sources is excluded [24 CFR 5.609(b)(8) as updated for HOTMA].
Head, spouse, or cohead Other adult family members	All sources of income not specifically excluded by the regulations are included [24 CFR 5.609(a)].
Minors	Earned income of children under 18 years of age is excluded [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3) as updated for HOTMA]. All sources of income, except those specifically excluded by the regulations, are included.
Full-time students 18 years of age or older (not head, spouse, or cohead)	Earned income in excess of the dependent deduction is excluded [24 CFR 5.609(b)(14) as updated for HOTMA]. All sources of income, except those specifically excluded by the regulations, are included.

Temporarily Absent Family Members

The income of family members approved to live in the unit will be counted, even if the family member is temporarily absent from the unit [HCV GB, p. 5-18].

DCHA Policy

Generally, an individual who is or is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for 180 consecutive days or less is considered temporarily absent and continues to be considered a family member. Generally, an individual who is or is expected to be absent from the assisted unit for more than 180 consecutive days is considered permanently absent and no longer a family member. Exceptions to this general policy are discussed below.

Absent Students

DCHA Policy

When someone who has been considered a family member attends school away from home, the person will continue to be considered a family member unless information becomes available to DCHA indicating that the student has established a separate household or the family declares that the student has established a separate household.

Absences Due to Placement in Foster Care

Children temporarily absent from the home as a result of placement in foster care are considered members of the family [24 CFR 5.403].

DCHA Policy

If a child has been placed in foster care, DCHA will verify with the appropriate agency whether and when the child is expected to be returned to the home. Unless the agency confirms that the child has been permanently removed from the home, the child will be counted as a family member.

Absent Head, Spouse, or Cohead

DCHA Policy

An employed head, spouse, or cohead absent from the unit more than 180 consecutive days due to employment will continue to be considered a family member.

Family Members Permanently Confined for Medical Reasons

If a family member is confined to a nursing home or hospital on a permanent basis, that person is no longer considered a family member and the income of that person is not counted [HCV GB, p. 5-22].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will request verification from a responsible medical professional and will use this determination. If the responsible medical professional cannot provide a determination, the person generally will be considered temporarily absent. The family may present evidence that the family member is confined on a permanent basis and request that the person not be considered a family member.

When an individual who has been counted as a family member is determined permanently absent, the family is eligible for the medical expense deduction only if the remaining head, spouse, or cohead qualifies as an elderly person or a person with disabilities.

Joint Custody of Dependents

DCHA Policy

Dependents that are subject to a joint custody arrangement will be considered a member of the family, if they live with the applicant or participant family 50 percent or more of the time.

When more than one applicant or participant family is claiming the same dependents as family members, the family with primary custody at the time of the initial examination or reexamination will be able to claim the dependents. If there is a dispute about which family should claim them, DCHA will make the determination based on available documents such as court orders, school records, or an IRS return showing which family has claimed the child for income tax purposes.

Caretakers for a Child

DCHA Policy

The approval of a caretaker is at the owner and DCHA's discretion and subject to the owner and DCHA's screening criteria. If neither a parent nor a designated guardian remains in a household receiving HCV assistance, DCHA will take the following actions.

- (1) If a responsible agency has determined that another adult is to be brought into the assisted unit to care for a child for an indefinite period, the designated caretaker will not be considered a family member until a determination of custody or legal guardianship is made.
- (2) If a caretaker has assumed responsibility for a child without the involvement of a responsible agency or formal assignment of custody or legal guardianship, the caretaker will be treated as a visitor for 90 days. After the 90 days has elapsed, the caretaker will be considered a family member unless information is provided that would confirm that the caretaker's role is temporary. In such cases DCHA will extend the caretaker's status as an eligible visitor.
- (3) At any time that custody or guardianship legally has been awarded to a caretaker, the housing choice voucher will be transferred to the caretaker.
- (4) During any period that a caretaker is considered a visitor, the income of the caretaker is not counted in annual income and the caretaker does not qualify the family for any deductions from income.

6-I.C. ANTICIPATING ANNUAL INCOME

DCHA is required to count all income “anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date” [24 CFR 5.609(a)(2)]. Policies related to anticipating annual income are provided below.

Basis of Annual Income Projection

DCHA generally will use current circumstances to determine anticipated income for the coming 12-month period. HUD authorizes DCHA to use other than current circumstances to anticipate income when:

- An imminent change in circumstances is expected [HCV GB, p. 5-17]
- It is not feasible to anticipate a level of income over a 12-month period (e.g., seasonal or cyclic income) [24 CFR 5.609(d)]
- DCHA believes that past income is the best available indicator of expected future income [24 CFR 5.609(d)]

DCHA is required to use HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system in its entirety as a third-party source to verify employment and income information, and to reduce administrative subsidy payment errors in accordance with HUD administrative guidance [24 CFR 5.233(a)(2)].

HUD allows DCHA to use tenant-provided documents (pay stubs) dated within 120 days of the date received by DCHA to project income once EIV data has been received in such cases where the family does not dispute the EIV employer data and where DCHA does not determine it is necessary to obtain additional third-party data. DCHA may also accept a statement dated within the appropriate benefit year for fixed income sources.

DCHA Policy

When EIV is obtained and the family does not dispute the EIV employer data, DCHA will use current tenant-provided documents to project annual income. When the tenant-provided documents are pay stubs, DCHA will make every effort to obtain current and consecutive pay stubs dated within the last 120 days.

DCHA will obtain written and/or oral third-party verification in accordance with the verification requirements and policy in Chapter 7 in the following cases:

If EIV or other UIV data is not available,

If the family disputes the accuracy of the EIV employer data, and/or

If DCHA determines additional information is needed.

In such cases, DCHA will review and analyze current data to anticipate annual income. In all cases, the family file will be documented with a clear record of the reason for the decision, and a clear audit trail will be left as to how DCHA annualized projected income.

When DCHA cannot readily anticipate income based upon current circumstances (e.g., in the case of seasonal employment, unstable working hours, or suspected fraud), DCHA will review and analyze historical data for patterns of employment, paid benefits, and receipt of other income and use the results of this analysis to establish annual income.

Any time current circumstances are not used to project annual income, a clear rationale for the decision will be documented in the file. In all such cases the family may present information and documentation to DCHA to show why the historic pattern does not represent the family's anticipated income.

Known Changes in Income

If DCHA verifies an upcoming increase or decrease in income, annual income will be calculated by applying each income amount to the appropriate part of the 12-month period.

Example: An employer reports that a full-time employee who has been receiving \$8/hour will begin to receive \$8.25/hour in the eighth week after the effective date of the reexamination. In such a case the PHA would calculate annual income as follows: ($\$8/\text{hour} \times 40 \text{ hours} \times 7 \text{ weeks}$) + ($\$8.25 \times 40 \text{ hours} \times 45 \text{ weeks}$).

The family may present information that demonstrates that implementing a change before its effective date would create a hardship for the family. In such cases DCHA will calculate annual income using current circumstances and then require an interim reexamination when the change actually occurs. This requirement will be imposed even if DCHA's policy on reexaminations does not require interim reexaminations for other types of changes.

When tenant-provided third-party documents are used to anticipate annual income, they will be dated within 120 days of the date received by DCHA. Statements dated within the appropriate benefit year will be accepted for fixed income sources.

Projecting Income

In HUD's EIV webcast of January 2008, HUD made clear that PHAs are not to use EIV quarterly wages to project annual income.

6-I.D. EARNED INCOME

Types of Earned Income Included in Annual Income

Wages and Related Compensation [24 CFR 5.609(a); Notice PIH 2023-27; Notice PIH 2024-38]

The earned income of each member of the family who is 18 years of age or older, or who is the head of household or spouse/cohead regardless of age, is included in annual income. Income received as a day laborer or seasonal worker is also included in annual income, even if the source, date, or amount of the income varies [24 CFR 5.609 (b)(24) as updated for HOTMA].

Earned income means income or earnings from wages, tips, salaries, other employee compensation, and net income from self-employment. Earned income does not include any pension or annuity, transfer payments (meaning payments made or income received in which no goods or services are being paid for, such as welfare, social security, and governmental subsidies for certain benefits), or any cash or in-kind benefits [24 CFR 5.100 as updated for HOTMA].

A *day laborer* is defined as an individual hired and paid one day at a time without an agreement that the individual will be hired or work again in the future [24 CFR 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA]. Income earned as a day laborer is not considered nonrecurring income.

A *seasonal worker* is defined as an individual who is hired into a short-term position (e.g., for which the customary employment period for the position is six months or fewer) and the employment begins about the same time each year (such as summer or winter). Typically, the individual is hired to address seasonal demands that arise for the particular employer or industry [24 CFR 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA]. Some examples of seasonal work include employment limited to holidays or agricultural seasons. Seasonal work may include but is not limited to employment as a lifeguard, ballpark vendor, or snowplow driver [Notice PIH 2023-27]. Income earned as a seasonal worker is not considered nonrecurring income.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will include in annual income the gross amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation.

For persons who regularly receive bonuses or commissions, DCHA will verify and then average amounts received for the two years preceding admission or reexamination. If only a one-year history is available, DCHA will use the prior year amounts. In either case the family may provide, and DCHA will consider, a credible justification for not using this history to anticipate future bonuses or commissions. If a new employee has not yet received any bonuses or commissions, DCHA will count only the amount estimated by the employer. The file will be documented appropriately.

Some Types of Military Pay

All regular pay, special pay and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces are counted except for the special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire [24 CFR 5.609(b)(11) as updated for HOTMA].

Types of Earned Income Not Included in Annual Income

Earnings of a Minor [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3) as updated for HOTMA]

A minor is a member of the family, other than the head of household or spouse, who is under 18 years of age. Employment income earned by minors is not included in annual income. All other sources of unearned income, except those specifically excluded by the regulations, are included.

Earned Income of Full-Time Students [24 CFR 5.609(b)(14) as updated for HOTMA]

The earned income of a dependent full-time student in excess of the amount of the dependent deduction is excluded from annual income. All sources of unearned income, except those specifically excluded by the regulations, are included.

A family member other than the head of household or spouse/cohead is considered a full-time student if they are attending school or vocational training on a full-time basis [24 CFR 5.603(b)]. Full-time status is defined by the educational or vocational institution the student is attending [New PH OCC GB, *Lease Requirements*, p. 5].

Income of a Live-in Aide

Income earned by a live-in aide, as defined in [24 CFR 5.403], is not included in annual income [24 CFR 5.609(b)(8) as updated for HOTMA]. (See Eligibility chapter for a full discussion of live-in aides.)

**6-I.E. EARNED INCOME DISALLOWANCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
[24 CFR 5.617; Streamlining Final Rule (SFR) Federal Register 3/8/16; Notice PIH 2023-27]**

HOTMA removed the statutory authority for the EID. The EID is available only to families that are eligible for and participating in the program as of December 31, 2023, or before; no new families may be added on or after January 1, 2024. If a family is receiving the EID prior to or on the effective date of December 31, 2023, they are entitled to the full amount of the benefit for a full 24-month period. The policies below are applicable only to such families. No family will still be receiving the EID after December 31, 2025. The EID will sunset on January 1, 2026, and DCHA policies below will no longer be applicable as of that date or when the last qualifying family exhausts their exclusion period, whichever is sooner.

Calculation of the Disallowance

Calculation of the earned income disallowance for an eligible member of a qualified family begins with a comparison of the member’s current income with their “baseline income.” The family member’s baseline income is their income immediately prior to qualifying for the EID. The family member’s baseline income remains constant throughout the period that they are participating in the EID.

Calculation Method

Initial 12-Month Exclusion

During the initial exclusion period of 12 consecutive months, the full amount (100 percent) of any increase in income attributable to new employment or increased earnings is excluded.

DCHA Policy

The initial EID exclusion period will begin on the first of the month following the date an eligible member of a qualified family is first employed or first experiences an increase in earnings.

Second 12-Month Exclusion

During the second exclusion period of 12 consecutive months, DCHA must exclude at least 50 percent of any increase in income attributable to employment or increased earnings.

DCHA Policy

During the second 12-month exclusion period, DCHA will exclude 100 percent of any increase in income attributable to new employment or increased earnings.

Lifetime Limitation

The EID has a two-year (24-month) lifetime maximum. The two-year eligibility period begins at the same time that the initial exclusion period begins and ends 24 months later. During the 24-month period, an individual remains eligible for EID even if they begin to receive assistance from a different housing agency, move between public housing and Section 8 assistance, or have breaks in assistance. The EID will sunset on January 1, 2026. In no circumstances will a family member’s exclusion period continue past January 1, 2026.

6-I.F. BUSINESS INCOME [24 CFR 5.609(b)(28) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2023-27]

Annual income includes “the net income from the operation of a business or profession. *Net income* is gross income minus business expenses that allows the business to operate. *Gross income* is all income amounts received into the business, prior to the deduction of business expenses.

Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family”.

DCHA Policy

To determine business expenses that may be deducted from gross income, DCHA will use current applicable Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules for determining allowable business expenses [see IRS Publication 535], unless a topic is addressed by HUD regulations or guidance as described below.

Independent Contractors

Income received as an independent contractor is included in annual income, even if the source, date, or amount of the income varies [24 CFR 2.609 (b)(24) as updated for HOTMA].

An *independent contractor* is defined as an individual who qualifies as an independent contractor instead of an employee in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code federal income tax requirements and whose earnings are consequently subject to the self-employment tax. In general, an individual is an independent contractor if the payer has the right to control or direct only the result of the work and not what will be done and how it will be done [24 CFR 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA]. This may include individuals such as third-party delivery and transportation service providers and “gig workers” like babysitters, landscapers, rideshare drivers, and house cleaners. Income earned as an independent contractor is not considered nonrecurring income.

Business Expansion

HUD regulations do not permit DCHA to deduct from gross income expenses for business expansion.

DCHA Policy

Business expansion is defined as any capital expenditures made to add new business activities, to expand current facilities, or to operate the business in additional locations. For example, purchase of a street sweeper by a construction business for the purpose of adding street cleaning to the services offered by the business would be considered a business expansion. Similarly, the purchase of a property by a hair care business to open at a second location would be considered a business expansion.

Capital Indebtedness

HUD regulations do not permit DCHA to deduct from gross income the amortization of capital indebtedness.

DCHA Policy

Capital indebtedness is defined as the principal portion of the payment on a capital asset such as land, buildings, and machinery. This means DCHA will allow as a business expense interest, but not principal, paid on capital indebtedness.

Negative Business Income

If the net income from a business is negative, no business income will be included in annual income; a negative amount will not be used to offset other family income.

Withdrawal of Cash or Assets from a Business

HUD regulations require DCHA to include in annual income the withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession unless the withdrawal reimburses a family member for cash or assets invested in the business by the family.

DCHA Policy

Acceptable investments in a business include cash loans and contributions of assets or equipment. For example, if a member of an assisted family provided an up-front loan of \$2,000 to help a business get started, DCHA will not count as income any withdrawals from the business up to the amount of this loan until the loan has been repaid. Investments do not include the value of labor contributed to the business without compensation.

Co-owned Businesses

DCHA Policy

If a business is co-owned with someone outside the family, the family must document the share of the business it owns. If the family's share of the income is lower than its share of ownership, the family must document the reasons for the difference.

6-I.G. STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)]

Introduction

The treatment of student financial assistance depends on the HUD program, student/household characteristics, and the type of financial assistance received by the student. For public housing residents, all income received under Title IV of the HEA must be excluded from income. Other student financial assistance may be included depending on the students actual covered costs to For Section 8 programs, including HCV, however, for over 10 years HUD appropriations have included a provision that for Section 8 students who are age 23 and under and without dependent children, any amounts received in excess of tuition and any other required fees and charges must be considered income. Under HOTMA, HUD has interpreted this limitation to apply when the student is the head of household or spouse, but not when the student resides with their parents [71 FR 18146].

For any funds from a year where HUD's appropriations continue to include this Section 8 student financial assistance limitation, if the student does not reside with their parents is the head of household, cohead, or spouse, and is under the age of 23 or without dependent children, then both the assistance received under Title IV HEA and other student financial assistance received by the student is included as income to the extent that it exceeds the total of tuition and any other required fees and charges.

In contrast, student financial assistance received by a Section 8 student who is the head of household, spouse, or cohead, and is over the age of 23 with dependent children, or a student who resides with their parents in a Section 8 unit, is governed by the HOTMA student rule, which is described below.

During years in which an appropriations act does not contain this Section 8 student financial assistance limitation (or any other such limitation), then the determination of student financial assistance for all Section 8 students defaults to the methodology for public housing.

HOTMA Student Financial Assistance Requirements [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)]

The regulations under HOTMA distinguish between two categories of student financial assistance paid to both full-time and part-time students. The first category is any assistance to students under section 479B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Title IV of the HEA) which must be excluded from the family's annual income [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(i)]. Examples of assistance under title IV of the HEA include:

- Federal Pell Grants;
- Teach Grants;
- Federal Work Study Programs;
- Federal Perkins Loans;
- Income earned in employment and training programs under section 134 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); or

- Bureau of Indian Affairs/Education student assistance programs
 - The Higher Education Tribal Grant
 - The Tribally Controlled Colleges or Universities Grant Program

The second category is any other grant-in-aid, scholarship, or other assistance amounts an individual receives for the actual covered costs charged by the institute of higher education (not otherwise excluded by the Federally mandated income exclusions) [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(ii)]. Other student financial assistance received by the student that, either by itself or in combination with HEA assistance, exceeds the actual covered costs is included in income.

Actual covered costs are defined as the actual costs of:

- Tuition, books, and supplies;
 - Including supplies and equipment to support students with learning disabilities or other disabilities
- Room and board; and
- Other fees required and charged to a student by the education institution.

For a student who is not the head of household or spouse/cohead, actual covered costs also include the reasonable and actual costs of housing while attending the institution of higher education and not residing in an assisted unit.

Further, to qualify, other student financial assistance must be expressly:

- For tuition, book, supplies, room and board, or other fees required and charged to the student by the educational institution;
- To assist a student with the costs of higher education; or
- To assist a student who is not the head of household or spouse with the reasonable and actual costs of housing while attending the educational institution and not residing in an assisted unit.

The student financial assistance may be paid directly to the student or to the educational institution on the student's behalf. However, any student financial assistance paid to the student must be verified by DCHA.

The financial assistance must be a grant or scholarship received from:

- The Federal government;
- A state, tribal, or local government;
- A private foundation registered as a nonprofit;
- A business entity (such as corporation, general partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, joint venture, business trust, public benefit corporation, or nonprofit entity); or
- An institution of higher education.

Student financial assistance, does not include:

- Financial support provided to the student in the form of a fee for services performed; (e.g., a work study or teaching fellowship that is not excluded under section 479B of the Higher Education Act HEA);
- Gifts, including gifts from family or friends; or
- Any amount of the scholarship or grant that, either by itself or in combination with assistance excluded under the HEA, exceeds the actual covered costs of the student.

Calculating Income from Student Financial Assistance [HOTMA Student Financial Assistance Resource Sheet; Notice PIH 2023-27]

There are two steps required as part of the calculation for Section 8 students. First, determine the student's relationship to the household, age, and whether they have dependent children. Second, calculate whether any excess student financial assistance should be included in the family's income.

If the student does not live with their parents and is the head of household, cohead, or spouse, and is 23 or younger or does not have dependent children, then Title IV HEA assistance is considered when determining the student's total financial aid amount. Subtract the total tuition plus required fees and charges from the total student financial assistance (Title IV HEA assistance and any other student financial assistance). If the total tuition plus required fees and charges is zero or exceeds the amount of total financial assistance from all sources, then no student financial assistance is included in annual income. Any amount of student financial assistance that exceeds the total tuition plus required fees and charges must be included in annual income.

If the student either lives with their parents or is over 23 with dependent children, then the calculation will use the HOTMA methodology for calculating financial assistance, which always begins with deducting the assistance received under 479B of the HEA from the total actual covered costs, because the 479B assistance is intended to pay the student's actual covered costs. When a student receives assistance from both Title IV of the HEA and from other sources, the assistance received under Title IV of the HEA must be applied to the student's actual covered costs first and then other student financial assistance is applied to any remaining actual covered costs. Once actual costs are covered, any remaining student financial assistance is considered income.

DCHA Policy

If the student does not live with their parents and is the head of household, cohead, or spouse, and is 23 or younger or does not have dependent children, then Title IV HEA assistance will be considered when determining the student's total financial assistance to be included in annual income. DCHA will use Notice PIH 2015-21 as a guide to determine the total amount of the student's tuition plus required fees and charges. DCHA will subtract the total tuition plus required fees and charges from the total student financial assistance. If the result is zero or exceeds the amount of total financial assistance from all sources, then no student financial assistance will be included in annual income. Any amount of student financial assistance that exceeds the total tuition plus required fees and charges will be included in annual income.

Example 1

- Tuition and required fees and charges: \$20,000
- Title IV HEA assistance: \$10,000
- Other student financial assistance: \$15,000
- Total student financial assistance: \$10,000 + \$15,000 = \$25,000
- Included income: \$25,000 in financial assistance - \$20,000 tuition and required fees = \$5,000

If a student is head, spouse, or cohead, and is over 23 with dependent children or lives with their parents, the following applies:

If a student only receives financial assistance under Title IV of the HEA and does not receive any other student financial assistance, DCHA will exclude the full amount of the assistance received under Title IV from the family's annual income. DCHA will not calculate actual covered costs in this case.

If the student does not receive any assistance under Title IV of the HEA but does receive assistance from another source, DCHA will first calculate the actual covered costs to the student in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609(b)(ii). DCHA will then subtract the total amount of the student's financial assistance from the student's actual covered costs. DCHA will include any amount of financial assistance in excess of the student's actual covered costs in the family's annual income.

Example 1

- Actual covered costs: \$20,000
- Other student financial assistance: \$25,000
- Excluded income: \$20,000 (\$25,000 in financial assistance - \$20,000 in actual covered costs)
- Included income: \$5,000

When a student receives assistance from both Title IV of the HEA and from other sources, DCHA will first calculate the actual covered costs to the student in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609(b)(ii). The assistance received under Title IV of the HEA will be applied to the student's actual covered costs first and then the other student financial assistance will be applied to any remaining actual covered costs.

If the amount of assistance excluded under Title IV of the HEA equals or exceeds the actual covered costs, none of the assistance included under other student financial assistance" would be excluded from income.

Example 2

- Actual covered costs: \$25,000
- Title IV HEA assistance: \$26,000
- Title IV HEA assistance covers the students entire actual covered costs.
- Other Student Financial Assistance: \$5,000
- Excluded income: The entire Title IV HEA assistance of \$26,000
- Included income: All other financial assistance of \$5,000

If the amount of assistance excluded under Title IV of the HEA is less than the actual covered costs, DCHA will exclude the amount of other student financial assistance up to the amount of the remaining actual covered costs.

Example 3

- Actual covered costs: \$22,000
- Title IV HEA assistance: \$15,000
- The remaining amount not covered by Title IV HEA assistance is \$7,000 (\$22,000 in actual covered costs - \$15,000 in Title IV HEA assistance).
- Other Student Financial Assistance: \$5,000
- \$7,000 in remaining actual covered costs - \$5,000 in other financial assistance
- Excluded income: \$15,000 entire amount of the Title IV HEA Assistance + \$5,000 in other financial assistance
- Included income: \$0

Example 4

- Actual covered costs: \$18,000
- Title IV HEA Assistance: \$15,000
- The remaining amount not covered by Title IV HEA assistance is \$3,000 (\$18,000 in actual covered costs - \$15,000 in Title IV HEA Assistance)
- Other student Financial Assistance: \$5,000
- When other student financial assistance is applied, financial assistance exceeds actual covered costs by \$2,000 (\$3,000 in actual covered costs - \$5,000 in other financial assistance).
- Included income: \$2,000 (the amount by which the financial aid exceeds the student's actual covered costs).

6-I.H. PERIODIC PAYMENTS [Notice PIH 2023-27]

Periodic payments are forms of income received on a regular basis.

Income that will not be repeated beyond the coming year (i.e., the 12 months following the effective date of the certification), based on information provided by the family, is considered nonrecurring income and is excluded from annual income. Income that has a discrete end date and will not be repeated beyond the coming year is excluded from a family's annual income because it is nonrecurring income. For example, a family receives income from a guaranteed income program in their city that has a discrete beginning and end date. While the guaranteed income will be repeated in the coming year, it will end before the family's next annual reexamination. This income is fully excluded from annual income.

However, this does not include unemployment income and other types of periodic payments that are received at regular intervals (such as weekly, monthly, or yearly). Unemployment income and other types of periodic payments are not considered nonrecurring income, unless explicitly excluded from income under 25 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA, and thus they are included in annual income.

Insurance payments and settlements for personal or property losses, including but not limited to payments under health insurance, motor vehicle insurance, and workers' compensation, are excluded from annual income. Any workers' compensation is always excluded from annual income, regardless of the frequency or length of the payments.

Lump-Sum Payments for the Delayed Start of a Periodic Payment [24 CFR 5.609(b)(16) as updated for HOTMA]

Deferred periodic amounts from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts, or any deferred Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts are excluded from annual income.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will include in annual income lump sums received as a result of delays in processing periodic payments (other than those specifically excluded by the regulation), such as unemployment or welfare assistance.

When a delayed-start payment is received that is to be included and the family reports this during the period in which DCHA is processing an annual reexamination, DCHA will adjust the family's rent retroactively for the period the payment was intended to cover.

If the delayed-start payment is received outside of the time DCHA is processing an annual reexamination, then DCHA will consider whether the amount meets the threshold to conduct an interim reexamination. If so, DCHA will conduct an interim in accordance with DCHA policies in Chapter 9. If not, DCHA will consider the amount when processing the family's next annual recertification.

Retirement Accounts [24 CFR 5.609(b)(26) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2023-27]

Income received from any account under a retirement plan recognized as such by the IRS, including individual retirement arrangements (IRAs), employer retirement plans, and retirement plans for self-employed individuals is not considered actual income from assets.

However, any distribution of periodic payments from such accounts is included in annual income at the time they are received by the family.

An asset moved to a retirement account held by a member of the family is not considered to be an asset disposed of for less than fair market value.

Social Security Benefits [Notice PIH 2023-27]

DCHA is required to use the gross benefit amount to calculate annual income from Social Security benefits.

Annually in October, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announces the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) by which federal Social Security and SSI benefits are adjusted to reflect the increase, if any, in the cost of living. The federal COLA does not apply to state-paid disability benefits. Effective the day after the SSA has announced the COLA, DCHA is required to factor in the COLA when determining Social Security and SSI annual income for all annual reexaminations and interim reexaminations of family income that have not yet been completed and will be effective January 1 or later of the upcoming year [Notice PIH 2023-27]. When a family member's benefits are garnished, levied, or withheld to pay restitution, child support, tax debt, student loan debt, or other debts, DCHA must use the gross amount of the income, prior to the reduction, to determine a family's annual income.

DCHA Policy

Annual income includes "all amounts received," not the amount that a family may be legally entitled to receive but which they do not receive. When the SSA overpays an individual, resulting in a withholding or deduction from their benefit amount until the overpayment is paid in full, DCHA must use the reduced benefit amount after deducting only the amount of the overpayment withholding from the gross benefit amount.

6-I.I. NONRECURRING INCOME [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24) as updated for HOTMA and Notice PIH 2023-27]

Nonrecurring income, which is income that will not be repeated beyond the coming year (e.g., 12 months following the effective date of the certification) based on information provided by the family, is excluded from annual income. DCHA may accept a self-certification from the family stating that the income will not be repeated in the coming year. See Chapter 7 for DCHA policies related to verification of nonrecurring income.

Income received as an independent contractor, day laborer, or seasonal worker is not excluded from income as nonrecurring income, even if the source, date, or amount of the income varies.

Income that has a discrete end date and will not be repeated beyond the coming year during the family's upcoming annual reexamination period will be excluded from a family's annual income as nonrecurring income. This exclusion does not include unemployment income and other types of periodic payments that are received at regular intervals (such as weekly, monthly, or yearly).

Income amounts excluded under this category may include, but are not limited to:

- Nonrecurring payments made to the family or to a third party on behalf of the family to assist with utilities;
- Payments for eviction prevention;
- Security deposits to secure housing;
- Payments for participation in research studies (depending on the duration); and
- General one-time payments received by or on behalf of the family.

Nonrecurring income that is excluded under the regulations includes:

- Payments from the U.S. Census Bureau for employment (relating to decennial census or the American Community Survey) lasting no longer than 180 days and not culminating in permanent employment [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(i) as updated for HOTMA].
- Direct federal or state payments intended for economic stimulus or recovery [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(ii) as updated for HOTMA].
- Amounts directly received by the family as a result of state refundable tax credits or state or federal tax refunds at the time they are received [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(iii) and (iv) as updated for HOTMA].
- Gifts for holidays, birthdays, or other significant life events or milestones (e.g., wedding gifts, baby showers, anniversaries) [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(v) as updated for HOTMA].
- Non-monetary, in-kind donations, such as food, clothing, or toiletries, received from a food bank or similar organization [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(vi) as updated for HOTMA]. When calculating annual income, DCHA is prohibited from assigning monetary value to such non-monetary in-kind donations received by the family [Notice PIH 2023-27]. Non-recurring, non-monetary in-kind donations from friends and family are excluded as non-recurring income. However, the value of regular in-kind donations (such as the value of groceries) received by friends and family are included.
- Lump-sum additions to net family assets, including but not limited to lottery or other contest winnings [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(vii) as updated for HOTMA].

6-I.J. STATE PAYMENTS TO ALLOW INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE AT HOME [24 CFR 5.609(b)(19) as updated for HOTMA]

Payments made by or authorized by a state Medicaid agency (including through a managed care entity) or other state or federal agency to an assisted family to enable a member of the assisted family who has a disability to reside in the family's assisted unit are excluded.

Authorized payments may include payments to a member of the assisted family through state Medicaid-managed care systems, other state agencies, federal agencies, or other authorized entities.

The payments must be received for caregiving services a family member provides to enable another member of the assisted family who has a disability to reside in the family's assisted unit. Payments to a family member for caregiving services for someone who is not a member of the assisted family (such as for a relative that resides elsewhere) are not excluded from income.

Furthermore, if the agency is making payments for caregiving services to the family member for an assisted family member and for a person outside of the assisted family, only the payments attributable to the caregiving services for the caregiver's assisted family member would be excluded from income.

6-I.K. CIVIL RIGHTS SETTLEMENTS [24 CFR 5.609(b)(25) as updated for HOTMA; FR Notice 2/14/23]

Regardless of how the settlement or judgment is structured, civil rights settlements or judgments, including settlements or judgments for back pay, are excluded from annual income. This may include amounts received because of litigation or other actions, such as conciliation agreements, voluntary compliance agreements, consent orders, other forms of settlement agreements, or administrative or judicial orders under the Fair Housing Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act, or any other civil rights or fair housing statute or requirement.

While these civil rights settlement or judgment amounts are excluded from income, the settlement or judgment amounts will generally be counted toward the family's net family assets (e.g., if the funds are deposited into the family's savings account or a revocable trust under the control of the family or some other asset that is not excluded from the definition of *net family assets*). Income generated on the settlement or judgment amount after it has become a net family asset is not excluded from income. For example, if the family received a settlement or back pay and deposited the money in an interest-bearing savings account, the interest from that account would be income at the time the interest is received.

Furthermore, if a civil rights settlement or judgment increases the family's net family assets such that they exceed the HUD-published threshold amount (\$50,000 for 2024, and \$51,600 for 2025), then income will be imputed on the net family assets pursuant to 24 CFR 5.609(a)(2). If the imputed income, which HUD considers unearned income, increases the family's annual adjusted income by 10 percent or more, then an interim reexamination of income will be required unless the addition to the family's net family assets occurs within the last three months of the family's income certification period and DCHA or owner chooses not to conduct the examination.

6-I.L. ADDITIONAL EXCLUSIONS FROM ANNUAL INCOME [24 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA; FR Notice 1/31/2024]

Other exclusions contained in 24 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA and FR Notice 1/31/2024 that have not been discussed earlier in this chapter include the following:

- Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults or state or tribal kinship or guardianship care payments [24 CFR 5.609(b)(4) as updated for HOTMA].
- Insurance payments and settlements for personal or property losses, including but not limited to payments through health insurance, motor vehicle insurance, and workers' compensation [24 CFR 5.609(b)(5) as updated for HOTMA]. However, periodic payments paid at regular intervals (such as weekly, monthly, or yearly) for a period of greater than one year that are received in lieu of wages are included in annual income [Notice PIH 2023-27].
- Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of health and medical care expenses for any family member [24 CFR 5.609(b)(6) as updated for HOTMA].
- Any amounts recovered in any civil action or settlement based on a claim of malpractice, negligence, or other breach of duty owed to a family member arising out of law, that resulted in a member of the family becoming disabled [24 CFR 5.609(b)(7) as updated for HOTMA].
- Income and distributions from any Coverdell education savings account under Section 530 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any qualified tuition program under Section 529 of such Code [24 CFR 5.609(b)(10) as updated for HOTMA].
- Income earned by government contributions to, and distributions from, "baby bond" accounts created, authorized, or funded by federal, state, or local government [24 CFR 5.609(b)(10) as updated for HOTMA].
- The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire [24 CFR 5.609(b)(11) as updated for HOTMA].
- Payments related to aid and attendance under 38 U.S.C. 1521 to veterans in need of regular aid and attendance [24 CFR 5.609(b)(17) as updated for HOTMA]. This income exclusion applies only to veterans in need of regular aid and attendance and not to other beneficiaries of the payments, such as a surviving spouse [Notice PIH 2023-27].
- Loan proceeds (the net amount disbursed by a lender to or on behalf of a borrower, under the terms of a loan agreement) received by the family or a third party (e.g., proceeds received by the family from a private loan to enable attendance at an educational institution or to finance the purchase of a car) [24 CFR 5.609(b)(20) as updated for HOTMA]. The loan borrower or co-borrower must be a member of the family for this income exclusion to be applicable [Notice PIH 2023-27].
- Payments received by tribal members as a result of claims relating to the mismanagement of assets held in trust by the United States, to the extent such payments are also excluded from gross income under the Internal Revenue Code or other federal law [24 CFR 5.609(b)(21) as updated for HOTMA]. Generally, payments received by tribal members in excess of the first \$2,000 of per capita shares are included in a family's annual income for purposes of determining eligibility. However, as explained in Notice PIH 2023-27, payments made under the Cobell Settlement, and certain per capita payments under the recent Tribal Trust Settlements, must be excluded from annual income.

- Replacement housing “gap” payments made in accordance with 49 CFR Part 24 that offset increased out of pocket costs of displaced persons that move from one federally subsidized housing unit to another federally subsidized housing unit. Such replacement housing “gap” payments are not excluded from annual income if the increased cost of rent and utilities is subsequently reduced or eliminated, and the displaced person retains or continues to receive the replacement housing “gap” payments [24 CFR 5.609(b)(23) as updated for HOTMA].
- Income earned on amounts placed in a family’s Family Self-Sufficiency account [24 CFR 5.609(b)(27) as updated for HOTMA].
- Amounts received by participants in other publicly assisted programs which are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (e.g., special equipment, clothing, transportation, childcare, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program [24 CFR 5.609(c)(12)(ii) as updated for HOTMA].
- Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS) [(24 CFR 5.609(b)(12)(i) as updated for HOTMA].
- Amounts received under a resident service stipend not to exceed \$200 per month. A resident service stipend is a modest amount received by a resident for performing a service for DCHA or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development [24 CFR 5.600(b)(12)(iii) as updated for HOTMA].
- Incremental earnings and benefits to any family member resulting from participation in qualifying training program funded by HUD or in qualifying federal, state, tribal, or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff are excluded from annual income. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the training program unless those amounts are excluded under 24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(i) [24 CFR 5.609(b)(12)(iv) as updated for HOTMA].

DCHA Policy

DCHA defines *training program* as “a learning process with goals and objectives, generally having a variety of components, and taking place in a series of sessions over a period of time. It is designed to lead to a higher level of proficiency, and it enhances the individual’s ability to obtain employment. It may have performance standards to measure proficiency. Training may include but is not limited to: (1) classroom training in a specific occupational skill, (2) on-the-job training with wages subsidized by the program, or (3) basic education” [expired Notice PIH 98-2, p. 3].

DCHA defines *incremental earnings and benefits* as the difference between (1) the total amount of welfare assistance and earnings of a family member prior to enrollment in a training program and (2) the total amount of welfare assistance and earnings of the family member after enrollment in the program [expired Notice PIH 98-2, pp. 3-4].

In calculating the incremental difference, DCHA will use as the pre-enrollment income the total annualized amount of the family member's welfare assistance and earnings reported on the family's most recently completed HUD-50058.

End of participation in a training program must be reported in accordance with DCHA's interim reporting requirements (see Chapter 9).

- Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era [24 CFR 5.609(b)(13) as updated for HOTMA].
- Adoption assistance payments for a child in excess of the amount of the dependent deduction per adopted child [24 CFR 5.609(b)(15) as updated for HOTMA].
- Refunds or rebates on property taxes paid on the dwelling unit [24 CFR 5.609(b)(20) as updated for HOTMA].
- Amounts that HUD is required by federal statute to exclude from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions set forth in 24 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA apply. HUD will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* to identify the benefits that qualify for this exclusion. Updates will be published when necessary [24 CFR 5.609(b)(22) as updated for HOTMA].

HUD publishes an updated list of these exclusions periodically. The most recent list of exclusions was published in the *Federal Register* on January 31, 2024. It includes:

- (a) The value of the allotment provided to an eligible household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2017 (b)). This exclusion also applies to assets.
- (b) Benefits under Section 1780 of the Richard B. Russell School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Act of 1966, including WIC and reduced-price lunches.
- (c) Payments, including for supportive services and reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, to volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 5044(g), 5058). The exclusion also applies to assets.
 - Except, the exclusion does not apply when the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service determines that the value of all such payments, adjusted to reflect the number of hours such volunteers are serving, is equivalent to or greater than the minimum wage then in effect under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) or the minimum wage, under the laws of the State where such volunteers are serving, whichever is the greater (42 U.S.C. 5044(f)(1)).
- (d) Certain payments received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1626(c)).
- (e) Income derived from certain submarginal land of the United States that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes (25 U.S.C. 5506).

- (f) Payments or allowances made under the Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (42 U.S.C. 8624(f)(1)).
- (g) Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 which was reauthorized as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (29 U.S.C. 3241(a)(2)).
- (h) Deferred disability benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, whether received as a lump sum or in monthly prospective amounts.
- (i) Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians (Pub. L. 94-540, 90 Section 6).
- (j) Payments, funds, or distributions authorized, established, or directed by the Seneca Nation Settlement Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 1774f(b)).
- (k) A lump sum or periodic payment received by an individual Indian pursuant to the Class Action Settlement Agreement in the United States District Court case entitled *Elouise Cobell et al. v. Ken Salazar et al.*, for a period of one year from the time of receipt of that payment as provided in the Claims Resolution Act of 2010.
- (l) The first \$2,000 of per capita shares received from judgment funds awarded by the Indian Claims Commission or the U. S. Claims Court, the interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, including the first \$2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians from funds derived from interests held in such trust or restricted lands (25 U.S.C. 1407-1408). This exclusion does not include proceeds of gaming operations regulated by the Commission (25 U.S.C. 1407–1408).
- (m) Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056(f)).
- (n) Payments received on or after January 1, 1989, from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund or any other fund established pursuant to the settlement in *In Re Agent Orange* product liability litigation, M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.). This exclusion also applies to assets.
- (o) Payments received under 38 U.S.C. 1833(c) to children of Vietnam veterans born with spinal bifida, children of women Vietnam veterans born with certain birth defects, and children of certain Korean and Thailand service veterans born with spinal bifida (42 U.S.C. 12637(d)).
- (p) Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (25 U.S.C. 1721). This exclusion also applies to assets.
- (q) The value of any childcare provided or arranged (or any amount received as payment for such care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care) under the Childcare and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858q).
- (r) Earned income tax credit (EITC) refund payments received on or after January 1, 1991 (26 U.S.C. 32(j)). This exclusion also applies to assets.
- (s) Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation (Pub. L. 95-433). This exclusion also applies to assets.

- (t) Amounts of student financial assistance funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965j, including awards under federal work-study programs or under the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs (20 U.S.C. 1087uu).

For Section 8 programs only, any financial assistance in excess of amounts received by an individual for tuition and any other required fees and charges under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), from private sources, or an institution of higher education (as defined under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), shall be considered income if the individual is over the age of 23 with dependent children (Pub. L. 109–115, section 327 (as amended)).

- (u) Allowances, earnings, and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12637(d)).
- (v) Any amount of crime victim compensation that provides medical or other assistance (or payment or reimbursement of the cost of such assistance) under the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 received through a crime victim assistance program, unless the total amount of assistance that the applicant receives from all such programs is sufficient to fully compensate the applicant for losses suffered as a result of the crime (34 U.S.C. 20102(c)).
- (w) Any amounts in an “individual development account” are excluded from assets and any assistance, benefit, or amounts earned by or provided to the individual development account are excluded from income, as provided by the Assets for Independence Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 604(h)(4)).
- (x) Major disaster and emergency assistance received under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and comparable disaster assistance provided by states, local governments, and disaster assistance organizations. This exclusion also applies to assets.
- (y) Distributions from an ABLÉ account, distributions from and certain contributions to an ABLÉ account established under the ABLÉ Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113–295.), as described in Notice PIH 2019–09 or subsequent or superseding notice is excluded from income and assets.
- (z) The amount of any refund (or advance payment with respect to a refundable credit) issued under the Internal Revenue Code is excluded from income and assets for a period of 12 months from receipt (26 U.S.C. 6409).
- (aa) Assistance received by a household under the Emergency Rental Assistance Program pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Pub. L. 116–260, section 501(j)), and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.
- (ab) Per capita payments made from the proceeds of Indian Tribal Trust Settlements listed in IRS Notice 2013-1 and 2013-55 must be excluded from annual income unless the per capita payments exceed the amount of the original Tribal Trust Settlement proceeds and are made from a Tribe’s private bank account in which the Tribe has deposited the settlement proceeds. Such amounts received in excess of the Tribal Trust Settlement are included in the gross income of the members of the Tribe receiving the per capita payments as described in IRS Notice 2013-1. The first \$2,000 of per capita payments are also excluded from assets unless the per capita payments exceed the amount of the original Tribal Trust Settlement proceeds and are made from a Tribe’s private bank account in which the Tribe has deposited the settlement proceeds (25 U.S.C. 117b(a), 25 U.S.C. 1407).

- (ac) Any amounts (i) not actually received by the family, (ii) that would be eligible for exclusion under 42 U.S.C. 1382b(a)(7), and (iii) received for service-connected disability under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 11 or dependency and indemnity compensation under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 13 (25 U.S.C. 4103(9)(C)) as provided by an amendment by the Indian Veterans Housing Opportunity Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111–269 section 2) to the definition of income applicable to programs under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) (25 U.S.C. 4101 et seq.).

6-I.M. ASSETS [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3); 24 CFR 5.603(b)]

Overview

There is no asset limitation for participation in the HCV program. However, HUD requires that DCHA include in annual income the anticipated “interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property” [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3)]. This section discusses how the income from various types of assets is determined. For most types of assets, DCHA must determine the value of the asset in order to compute income from the asset. Therefore, for each asset type, this section discusses:

- How the value of the asset will be determined
- How income from the asset will be calculated

Exhibit 6-1 provides the regulatory requirements for calculating income from assets [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3)], and Exhibit 6-3 provides the regulatory definition of *net family assets*. This section begins with a discussion of general policies related to assets and then provides HUD rules and DCHA policies related to each type of asset.

Optional policies for family self-certification of assets are found in Chapter 7.

General Policies

Income from Assets

DCHA generally will use current circumstances to determine both the value of an asset and the anticipated income from the asset. As is true for all sources of income, HUD authorizes DCHA to use other than current circumstances to anticipate income when (1) an imminent change in circumstances is expected (2) it is not feasible to anticipate a level of income over 12 months or (3) DCHA believes that past income is the best indicator of anticipated income. For example, if a family member owns real property that typically receives rental income but the property is currently vacant, DCHA can take into consideration past rental income along with the prospects of obtaining a new tenant.

DCHA Policy

Anytime current circumstances are not used to determine asset income, a clear rationale for the decision will be documented in the file. In such cases the family may present information and documentation to DCHA to show why the asset income determination does not represent the family’s anticipated asset income.

Valuing Assets

The calculation of asset income sometimes requires DCHA to make a distinction between an asset’s market value and its cash value.

- The market value of an asset is its worth in the market (e.g., the amount a buyer would pay for real estate or the total value of an investment account).
- The cash value of an asset is its market value less all reasonable amounts that would be incurred when converting the asset to cash.

DCHA Policy

Reasonable costs that would be incurred when disposing of an asset include, but are not limited to, penalties for premature withdrawal, broker and legal fees, and settlement costs incurred in real estate transactions [HCV GB, p. 5-28].

Lump-Sum Additions to Net Family Assets [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(viii) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2023-27]

The regulations exclude income from lump-sum additions to family assets, including lottery or other contest winnings as a type of nonrecurring income.

In addition, lump sums from insurance payments, settlements for personal or property losses, and recoveries from civil actions or settlements based on claims of malpractice, negligence, or other breach of duty owed to a family member arising out of law that resulted in a member of the family becoming a family member with a disability are excluded from income.

Further, deferred periodic amounts from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts, or any deferred Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts are also excluded from income.

However, these amounts may count toward net family assets. DCHA must consider any actual or imputed returns from assets as income at the next applicable income examination. In the case where the lump sum addition to assets would lead to imputed income, which is unearned income, that increases the family's annual adjusted income by 10 percent or more, then the addition of the lump sum to the family's assets will trigger an immediate interim reexamination of income in accordance with Chapter 9. This reexamination of income must take place as soon as the lump sum is added to the family's net family assets unless the addition takes place in the last three months of family's income certification period and DCHA chooses not to conduct the examination.

For a discussion of lump-sum payments that represent the delayed start of a periodic payment, most of which are counted as income, see sections 6-I.H and 6-I.I.

DCHA Policy

Any lump-sum receipts are only counted as assets if they are retained by a family in a form recognizable as an asset. [RHIIP FAQs]. For example, if the family receives a \$1,000 lump sum for lottery winnings, and the family immediately spends the entire amount, the lump sum will not be counted toward net family assets.

Imputing Income from Assets [24 CFR 5.609(b)(3), Notice PIH 2012-29]

When net family assets are \$5,000 or less, DCHA will include in annual income the actual income anticipated to be derived from the assets. When the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, DCHA will include in annual income the greater of (1) the actual income derived from the assets or (2) the imputed income. Imputed income from assets is calculated by multiplying the total cash value of all family assets by an average passbook savings rate as determined by DCHA.

- Note: The HUD field office no longer provides an interest rate for imputed asset income. The "safe harbor" is now for DCHA to establish a passbook rate within 0.75 percent of a national average.
- DCHA must review its passbook rate annually to ensure that it remains within 0.75 percent of the national average.

DCHA Policy

DCHA initially set the imputed asset passbook rate at the national rate established by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

DCHA will review the passbook rate annually. The rate will not be adjusted unless the current DCHA rate is no longer within 0.75 percent of the national rate. If it is no longer within 0.75 percent of the national rate, the passbook rate will be set at the current national rate.

The effective date of changes to the passbook rate will be determined at the time of the review.

Determining Actual Anticipated Income from Assets

It may or may not be necessary for DCHA to use the value of an asset to compute the actual anticipated income from the asset. When the value is required to compute the anticipated income from an asset, the market value of the asset is used. For example, if the asset is a property for which a family receives rental income, the anticipated income is determined by annualizing the actual monthly rental amount received for the property; it is not based on the property's market value. However, if the asset is a savings account, the anticipated income is determined by multiplying the market value of the account by the interest rate on the account.

Withdrawal of Cash or Liquidation of Investments

Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment will be included in income except to the extent that the withdrawal reimburses amounts invested by the family. For example, when a family member retires, the amount received by the family from a retirement investment plan is not counted as income until the family has received payments equal to the amount the family member deposited into the retirement investment plan.

Jointly Owned Assets

The regulation at 24 CFR 5.609(a)(4) specifies that annual income includes "amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access."

DCHA Policy

If an asset is owned by more than one person and any family member has unrestricted access to the asset, DCHA will count the full value of the asset. A family member has unrestricted access to an asset when they can legally dispose of the asset without the consent of any of the other owners.

If an asset is owned by more than one person, including a family member, but the family member does not have unrestricted access to the asset, DCHA will prorate the asset according to the percentage of ownership. If no percentage is specified or provided for by state or local law, DCHA will prorate the asset evenly among all owners.

Assets Disposed of for Less than Fair Market Value [24 CFR 5.603(b)]

HUD regulations require DCHA to count as a current asset any business or family asset that was disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years prior to the effective date of the examination/reexamination, except as noted below.

Minimum Threshold

The *HCV Guidebook* permits DCHA to set a threshold below which assets disposed of for less than fair market value will not be counted [HCV GB, p. 5-27].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not include the value of assets disposed of for less than fair market value unless the cumulative fair market value of all assets disposed of during the past two years exceeds the gross amount received for the assets by more than \$1,000.

When the two-year period expires, the income assigned to the disposed asset(s) also expires. If the two-year period ends between annual recertifications, the family may request an interim recertification to eliminate consideration of the asset(s).

Assets placed by the family in nonrevocable trusts are considered assets disposed of for less than fair market value except when the assets placed in trust were received through settlements or judgments.

Separation or Divorce

The regulation also specifies that assets are not considered disposed of for less than fair market value if they are disposed of as part of a separation or divorce settlement and the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms.

DCHA Policy

All assets disposed of as part of a separation or divorce settlement will be considered assets for which important consideration not measurable in monetary terms has been received. In order to qualify for this exemption, a family member must be subject to a formal separation or divorce settlement agreement established through arbitration, mediation, or court order.

Foreclosure or Bankruptcy

Assets are not considered disposed of for less than fair market value when the disposition is the result of a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale.

Family Declaration

DCHA Policy

Families must sign a declaration form at initial certification and each annual recertification identifying all assets that have been disposed of for less than fair market value or declaring that no assets have been disposed of for less than fair market value. DCHA may verify the value of the assets disposed of if other information available to DCHA does not appear to agree with the information reported by the family.

Types of Assets

Checking and Savings Accounts

For regular checking accounts and savings accounts, *cash value* has the same meaning as *market value*. If a checking account does not bear interest, the anticipated income from the account is zero.

DCHA Policy

In determining the value of checking account and savings accounts, DCHA will use the current balance.

In determining the anticipated income from an interest-bearing checking or savings account, DCHA will multiply the value of the account by the current rate of interest paid on the account.

ABLE Accounts [24 CFR 5.609(b)(10) as updated for HOTMA; Notice PIH 2019-09]

An Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account is a type of tax-advantaged savings account that an eligible individual can use to pay for qualified disability expenses. Section 103 of the ABLE Act mandates that an individual's ABLE account (specifically, its account balance, contributions to the account, and distributions from the account) is excluded when determining the designated beneficiary's eligibility and continued occupancy under certain federal means-tested programs. DCHA must exclude the entire value of the individual's ABLE account from the household's assets. Distributions from the ABLE account are also not considered income. However, all wage income received, regardless of which account the money is paid to, is included as income.

Investment Accounts Such as Stocks, Bonds, Saving Certificates, and Money Market Funds

Interest or dividends earned by investment accounts are counted as actual income from assets even when the earnings are reinvested. The cash value of such an asset is determined by deducting from the market value any broker fees, penalties for early withdrawal, or other costs of converting the asset to cash.

DCHA Policy

In determining the market value of an investment account, DCHA will use the value of the account on the most recent investment report.

How anticipated income from an investment account will be calculated depends on whether the rate of return is known.

For assets that are held in an investment account with a known rate of return (e.g., savings certificates), asset income will be calculated based on that known rate (market value multiplied by rate of earnings).

When the anticipated rate of return is not known (e.g., stocks), DCHA will calculate asset income based on the earnings for the most recent reporting period.

Equity in Real Property or Other Capital Investments

Equity (cash value) in a property or other capital asset is the estimated current market value of the asset less the unpaid balance on all loans secured by the asset and reasonable costs (such as broker fees) that would be incurred in selling the asset [HCV GB, p. 5-25].

DCHA Policy

In determining the equity, DCHA will determine market value by examining recent sales of at least three properties in the surrounding or similar neighborhood that possess comparable factors that affect market value.

DCHA will first use the payoff amount for the loan (mortgage) as the unpaid balance to calculate equity. If the payoff amount is not available, DCHA will use the basic loan balance information to deduct from the market value in the equity calculation.

Equity in real property and other capital investments is considered in the calculation of asset income **except** for the following types of assets:

- Equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs [24 CFR 5.603(b)]
- The value of a home currently being purchased with assistance under the HCV program Homeownership Option for the first 10 years after the purchase date of the home [24 CFR 5.603(b), Notice PIH 2012-3]
- Equity in owner-occupied cooperatives and manufactured homes in which the family lives [HCV GB, p. 5-25]
- Equity in real property when a family member's main occupation is real estate [HCV GB, p. 5-25]. This real estate is considered a business asset, and income related to this asset will be calculated as described in section 6-I.F.
- Interests in Indian Trust lands [24 CFR 5.603(b)]
- Real property and capital assets that are part of an active business or farming operation [HCV GB, p. 5-25]

DCHA must also deduct from the equity the reasonable costs for converting the asset to cash. Using the formula for calculating equity specified above, the net cash value of real property is the market value minus the balance of the loan (mortgage) minus the expenses to convert to cash [Notice PIH 2012-3].

DCHA Policy

For the purposes of calculating expenses to convert to cash for real property, DCHA will use ten percent of the market value of the home.

A family may have real property as an asset in two ways: (1) owning the property itself and (2) holding a mortgage or deed of trust on the property. In the case of a property owned by a family member, the anticipated asset income generally will be in the form of rent or other payment for the use of the property. If the property generates no income, actual anticipated income from the asset will be zero.

In the case of a mortgage or deed of trust held by a family member, the outstanding balance (unpaid principal) is the cash value of the asset. The interest portion only of payments made to the family in accordance with the terms of the mortgage or deed of trust is counted as anticipated asset income.

DCHA Policy

In the case of capital investments owned jointly with others not living in a family's unit, a prorated share of the property's cash value will be counted as an asset unless DCHA determines that the family receives no income from the property and is unable to sell or otherwise convert the asset to cash.

Trusts [24 CFR 5.609(b)(2) as updated for HOTMA]

A *trust* is a legal arrangement generally regulated by state law in which one party (the creator or grantor) transfers property to a second party (the trustee) who holds the property for the benefit of one or more third parties (the beneficiaries).

The basis for determining how to treat trusts relies on information about who has access to either the principal in the account or the income from the account. There are two types of trusts, *revocable* and *irrevocable*.

When the creator sets up an irrevocable trust, the creator has no access to the funds in the account. Typically, special needs trusts are considered irrevocable. Irrevocable trusts not under the control of any member of the family are excluded from net family assets. The value of the trust continues to be excluded from net family assets so long as the fund continues to be held in a trust that is not revocable by, or under the control of, any member of the family or household [24 CFR 5.603(b)(4) as updated for HOTMA]. Further, where an irrevocable trust is excluded from net family assets, DCHA must not consider actual income earned by the trust (e.g., interest earned, rental income if property is held in the trust) for so long as the income from the trust is not distributed.

A *revocable trust* is a trust that the creator of the trust may amend or end (revoke). When there is a revocable trust, the creator has access to the funds in the trust account.

- A revocable trust that is under the control of the family is included in net family assets when the grantor is a member of the assisted family. If a revocable trust is included in the calculation of net family assets, then the actual income earned by the revocable trust is also included in the family's income. For example, interest earned or rental income if the property is held in the trust. DCHA must calculate imputed income on the revocable trust if net family assets are more than the HUD-published threshold amount, which is adjusted annually and listed in HUD's Inflation Adjusted Values tables (\$50,000 for 2024, and \$51,600 for 2025), and actual income from the trust cannot be calculated (e.g., if the trust is comprised of farmland that is not in use).
- A revocable trust that is not under the control of the family is excluded from net family assets. This happens when a member of the assisted family is the beneficiary of a revocable trust, but the grantor is not a member of the assisted family. In this case the beneficiary does not "own" the revocable trust, and the value of the trust is excluded from net family assets. For the revocable trust to be considered excluded from net family assets, no family or household member may be the account's trustee.

For both irrevocable and revocable trusts, if the value of the trust is not considered part of net family assets, then distributions from the trust are treated as follows:

- All distributions from the trust's principal are excluded from income.
- Distributions of income earned by the trust (i.e., interest, dividends, realized gains, or other earnings on the trust's principal), are included as income unless the distribution is used to pay for the health and medical expenses for a minor.

Retirement Accounts

Company Retirement/Pension Accounts

In order to correctly include or exclude as an asset any amount held in a company retirement or pension account by an employed person, DCHA must know whether the money is accessible before retirement [HCV GB, p. 5-26].

While a family member is employed, only the amount the family member can withdraw without retiring or terminating employment is counted as an asset [HCV GB, p. 5-26].

After a family member retires or terminates employment, any amount distributed to the family member is counted as a periodic payment or a lump-sum receipt, as appropriate [HCV GB, p. 5-26], except to the extent that it represents funds invested in the account by the family member. (For more on periodic payments, see section 6-I.H.) The balance in the account is counted as an asset only if it remains accessible to the family member.

IRA, Keogh, and Similar Retirement Savings Accounts

IRA, Keogh, and similar retirement savings accounts are counted as assets even though early withdrawal would result in a penalty [HCV GB, p. 5-25].

Personal Property

Personal property held as an investment, such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antique cars, etc., is considered an asset [HCV GB, p. 5-25].

DCHA Policy

In determining the value of personal property held as an investment, DCHA will use the family's estimate of the value. DCHA may obtain an appraisal to confirm the value of the asset if there is reason to believe that the family's estimated value is off by \$50 or more. The family must cooperate with the appraiser, but cannot be charged any costs related to the appraisal.

Generally, personal property held as an investment generates no income until it is disposed of. If regular income is generated (e.g., income from renting the personal property), the amount that is expected to be earned in the coming year is counted as actual income from the asset.

Necessary items of personal property are not considered assets [24 CFR 5.603(b)].

DCHA Policy

Necessary personal property consists of only those items not held as an investment, and may include clothing, furniture, household furnishings, jewelry, and vehicles, including those specially equipped for persons with disabilities.

Life Insurance

The cash value of a life insurance policy available to a family member before death, such as a whole life or universal life policy, is included in the calculation of the value of the family's assets [HCV GB 5-25]. The cash value is the surrender value. If such a policy earns dividends or interest that the family could elect to receive, the anticipated amount of dividends or interest is counted as income from the asset whether or not the family actually receives it.

6-I.N. WELFARE ASSISTANCE

Overview

Welfare assistance is counted in annual income. Welfare assistance includes Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and any payments to individuals or families based on need that are made under programs funded separately or jointly by federal, state, or local governments [24 CFR 5.603(b)].

Sanctions Resulting in the Reduction of Welfare Benefits [24 CFR 5.615]

DCHA must make a special calculation of annual income when the welfare agency imposes certain sanctions on certain families. The full text of the regulation at 24 CFR 5.615 is provided as Exhibit 6-5. The requirements are summarized below. This rule applies only if a family was receiving HCV assistance at the time the sanction was imposed.

Covered Families

The families covered by 24 CFR 5.615 are those “who receive welfare assistance or other public assistance benefits (‘welfare benefits’) from a State or other public agency (‘welfare agency’) under a program for which Federal, State or local law requires that a member of the family must participate in an economic self-sufficiency program as a condition for such assistance” [24 CFR 5.615(b)]

Imputed Income

When a welfare agency imposes a sanction that reduces a family’s welfare income because the family commits fraud or fails to comply with the agency’s economic self-sufficiency program or work activities requirement, DCHA must include in annual income “imputed” welfare income. DCHA must request that the welfare agency provide the reason for the reduction of benefits and the amount of the reduction of benefits. The imputed welfare income is the amount that the benefits were reduced as a result of the sanction.

This requirement does not apply to reductions in welfare benefits: (1) at the expiration of the lifetime or other time limit on the payment of welfare benefits, (2) if a family member is unable to find employment even though the family member has complied with the welfare agency economic self-sufficiency or work activities requirements, or (3) because a family member has not complied with other welfare agency requirements [24 CFR 5.615(b)(2)].

Offsets

The amount of the imputed welfare income is offset by the amount of additional income the family begins to receive after the sanction is imposed. When the additional income equals or exceeds the imputed welfare income, the imputed income is reduced to zero [24 CFR 5.615(c)(4)].

6-I.O. PERIODIC AND DETERMINABLE ALLOWANCES [24 CFR 5.609(b)(7)]

Annual income includes periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing with an assisted family.

Alimony and Child Support

DCHA must count alimony or child support amounts awarded as part of a divorce or separation agreement.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will count court-awarded amounts for alimony and child support unless DCHA verifies that: (1) the payments are not being made, and (2) the family has made reasonable efforts to collect amounts due, including filing with courts or agencies responsible for enforcing payments [HCV GB, pp. 5-23 and 5-47].

Families who do not have court-awarded alimony and child support awards are not required to seek a court award and are not required to take independent legal action to obtain collection.

PART II: ADJUSTED INCOME

6-II.A. INTRODUCTION

Overview

HUD regulations require DCHA to deduct from annual income any of five mandatory deductions for which a family qualifies. The resulting amount is the family's adjusted income. Mandatory deductions are found in 24 CFR 5.611.

5.611(a) Mandatory deductions. In determining adjusted income, the responsible entity [DCHA] must deduct the following amounts from annual income:

- (1) \$480 for each dependent;
- (2) \$400 for any elderly family or disabled family;
- (3) The sum of the following, to the extent the sum exceeds three percent of annual income:
 - (i) Unreimbursed health and medical care expenses of any elderly family or disabled family;
 - (ii) Unreimbursed reasonable attendant care and auxiliary apparatus expenses for each member of the family who is a person with disabilities, to the extent necessary to enable any member of the family (including the member who is a person with disabilities) to be employed. This deduction may not exceed the earned income received by family members who are 18 years of age or older and who are able to work because of such attendant care or auxiliary apparatus; and
- (4) Any reasonable childcare expenses necessary to enable a member of the family to be employed or to further his or her education.

This part covers policies related to these mandatory deductions. Verification requirements related to these deductions are found in Chapter 7.

Anticipating Expenses

DCHA Policy

Generally, DCHA will use current circumstances to anticipate expenses. When possible, for costs that are expected to fluctuate during the year (e.g., childcare during school and non-school periods and cyclical medical expenses), DCHA will estimate costs based on historic data and known future costs.

If a family has an accumulated debt for medical or disability assistance expenses, DCHA will include as an eligible expense the portion of the debt that the family expects to pay during the period for which the income determination is being made. However, amounts previously deducted will not be allowed even if the amounts were not paid as expected in a preceding period. DCHA may require the family to provide documentation of payments made in the preceding year.

6-II.B. DEPENDENT DEDUCTION

An allowance of \$480 is deducted from annual income for each dependent [24 CFR 5.611(a)(1)]. *Dependent* is defined as any family member other than the head, spouse, or cohead who is under the age of 18 or who is 18 or older and is a person with disabilities or a full-time student. Foster children, foster adults, and live-in aides are never considered dependents [24 CFR 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA].

6-II.C. ELDERLY OR DISABLED FAMILY DEDUCTION

A single deduction of \$400 is taken for any elderly or disabled family [24 CFR 5.611(a)(2)]. An *elderly family* is a family whose head, spouse, cohead, or sole member is 62 years of age or older, and a *disabled family* is a family whose head, spouse, cohead, or sole member is a person with disabilities [24 CFR 5.403].

6-II.D. HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE EXPENSES DEDUCTION [24 CFR 5.611(a)(3)(i) and as updated for HOTMA]

Unreimbursed health and medical care expenses may be deducted to the extent that, in combination with any disability assistance expenses, they exceed three percent of annual income.

The health and medical care expense deduction is permitted only for families in which the head, spouse, or cohead is at least 62 or is a person with disabilities. If a family is eligible for a health and medical expense deduction, the medical expenses of all family members are counted [VG, p. 28].

Definition of *Medical Expenses*

HUD regulations define *health and medical care expenses* at 24 CFR 5.603(b) as updated for HOTMA to mean “any costs incurred in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease or payments for treatments affecting any structure or function of the body. Health and medical care expenses include medical insurance premiums and long-term care premiums that are paid or anticipated during the period for which annual income is computed.” Health and medical care expenses may be deducted from annual income only if they are eligible under this definition and not otherwise reimbursed.

Although HUD revised the definition of *health and medical care expenses* to reflect the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) general definition of medical expenses, HUD is not permitting DCHA to specifically align their policies to IRS Publication 502. DCHA must review each expense to determine whether it is eligible in accordance with HUD’s definition. While DCHA policies may not specifically align with IRS Publication 502, HUD recommends DCHA use it as a standard for determining allowable expenses, and DCHA may list examples of allowable expenses in their policy provided they comply with HUD’s definition at 24 CFR 5.603 as updated for HOTMA. DCHA may not define *health and medical care expenses* more narrowly than the regulation.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the most current IRS Publication 502 as a standard for determining if expenses claimed by eligible families qualify as health and medical care expenses. However, under no circumstances will DCHA deduct any expenses listed in IRS Publication 502 that do not conform with HUD’s definition of *health and medical care expenses*.

Summary of Allowable Medical Expenses from IRS Publication 502	
<p>Services of medical professionals</p> <p>Surgery and medical procedures that are necessary, legal, noncosmetic</p> <p>Services of medical facilities</p> <p>Hospitalization, long-term care, and in-home nursing services</p> <p>Prescription medicines and insulin, but <u>not</u> nonprescription medicines even if recommended by a doctor</p> <p>Improvements to housing directly related to medical needs (e.g., ramps for a wheel chair, handrails)</p> <p>Medical insurance premiums or the cost of a health maintenance organization (HMO)</p> <p>Medicare Part B and Part D premiums</p>	<p>Substance abuse treatment program</p> <p>Psychiatric treatment</p> <p>Ambulance services and some costs of transportation related to medical expenses. DCHA will use the most current medical mileage rate listed in IRS Publication 502.</p> <p>The cost and care of necessary equipment related to a medical condition (e.g., eyeglasses/lenses, hearing aids, crutches, and artificial teeth)</p> <p>The costs of buying, training, and maintaining a guide dog or other service animal to assist a visually impaired or hearing disabled person, or a person with other physical disabilities. In general, this includes any costs, such as food, grooming, and veterinary care, incurred in maintaining the health and vitality of the service animal so that it may perform its duties.</p>
<p>Note: This chart provides a summary of eligible health and medical care expenses only. In all cases, DCHA will consider whether health and medical expenses care expenses claimed by the family are eligible under HUD's definition.</p>	

Families That Qualify for Both Health and Medical Care and Disability Assistance Expenses

DCHA Policy

This policy applies only to families in which the head, spouse, or cohead is 62 or older or is a person with disabilities.

When expenses anticipated by a family could be defined as either health and medical care or disability assistance expenses, DCHA will consider them health and medical expenses unless it is clear that the expenses are incurred exclusively to enable a person with disabilities to work.

6-II.E. DISABILITY ASSISTANCE EXPENSES DEDUCTION [24 CFR 5.603(b) and 24 CFR 5.611(a)(3)(ii)]

Reasonable expenses for attendant care and auxiliary apparatus for a disabled family member may be deducted if they: (1) are necessary to enable a family member 18 years or older to work, (2) are not paid to a family member or reimbursed by an outside source, (3) in combination with any medical expenses, exceed three percent of annual income, and (4) do not exceed the earned income received by the family member who is enabled to work.

Earned Income Limit on the Disability Assistance Expense Deduction

A family can qualify for the disability assistance expense deduction only if at least one family member (who may be the person with disabilities) is enabled to work [24 CFR 5.603(b)].

The disability expense deduction is capped by the amount of “earned income received by family members who are 18 years of age or older and who are able to work” because of the expense [24 CFR 5.611(a)(3)(ii)]. The earned income used for this purpose is the amount verified before any income exclusions are applied.

DCHA Policy

The family must identify the family members enabled to work as a result of the disability assistance expenses. In evaluating the family’s request, DCHA will consider factors such as how the work schedule of the relevant family members relates to the hours of care provided, the time required for transportation, the relationship of the family members to the person with disabilities, and any special needs of the person with disabilities that might determine which family members are enabled to work.

When DCHA determines that the disability assistance expenses enable more than one family member to work, the expenses will be capped by the sum of the family members’ incomes.

Eligible Disability Expenses

Examples of auxiliary apparatus are provided in the *HCV Guidebook* as follows: “Auxiliary apparatus are items such as wheelchairs, ramps, adaptations to vehicles, or special equipment to enable a blind person to read or type, but only if these items are directly related to permitting the disabled person or other family member to work” [HCV GB, p. 5-30].

HUD advises DCHA to further define and describe auxiliary apparatus [VG, p. 30].

Eligible Auxiliary Apparatus

DCHA Policy

Expenses incurred for maintaining or repairing an auxiliary apparatus are eligible. In the case of an apparatus that is specially adapted to accommodate a person with disabilities (e.g., a vehicle or computer), the cost to maintain the special adaptations (but not maintenance of the apparatus itself) is an eligible expense. The cost of service animals trained to give assistance to persons with disabilities, including the cost of acquiring the animal, veterinary care, food, grooming, and other continuing costs of care, will be included.

Eligible Attendant Care

The family determines the type of attendant care that is appropriate for the person with disabilities.

DCHA Policy

Attendant care includes, but is not limited to, reasonable costs for home medical care, nursing services, in-home or center-based care services, interpreters for persons with hearing impairments, and readers for persons with visual disabilities.

Attendant care expenses will be included for the period that the person enabled to work is employed plus reasonable transportation time. The cost of general housekeeping and personal services is not an eligible attendant care expense. However, if the person enabled to work is the person with disabilities, personal services necessary to enable the person with disabilities to work are eligible.

If the care attendant also provides other services to the family, DCHA will prorate the cost and allow only that portion of the expenses attributable to attendant care that enables a family member to work. For example, if the care provider also cares for a child who is not the person with disabilities, the cost of care must be prorated. Unless otherwise specified by the care provider, the calculation will be based upon the number of hours spent in each activity and/or the number of persons under care.

Payments to Family Members

No disability assistance expenses may be deducted for payments to a member of an assisted family [24 CFR 5.603(b)]. However, expenses paid to a relative who is not a member of the assisted family may be deducted if they are not reimbursed by an outside source.

Necessary and Reasonable Expenses

The family determines the type of care or auxiliary apparatus to be provided and must describe how the expenses enable a family member to work. The family must certify that the disability assistance expenses are necessary and are not paid or reimbursed by any other source.

DCHA Policy

DCHA determines the reasonableness of the expenses based on typical costs of care or apparatus in the locality. To establish typical costs, DCHA will collect information from organizations that provide services and support to persons with disabilities. A family may present, and DCHA will consider, the family's justification for costs that exceed typical costs in the area.

Families That Qualify for Both Medical and Disability Assistance Expenses

DCHA Policy

This policy applies only to families in which the head or spouse is 62 or older or is a person with disabilities.

When expenses anticipated by a family could be defined as either medical or disability assistance expenses, DCHA will consider them medical expenses unless it is clear that the expenses are incurred exclusively to enable a person with disabilities to work.

6-II.F. CHILDCARE EXPENSE DEDUCTION

HUD defines *childcare expenses* at 24 CFR 5.603(b) as “amounts anticipated to be paid by the family for the care of children under 13 years of age during the period for which annual income is computed, but only where such care is necessary to enable a family member to actively seek employment, be gainfully employed, or to further his or her education and only to the extent such amounts are not reimbursed. The amount deducted shall reflect reasonable charges for childcare. In the case of childcare necessary to permit employment, the amount deducted shall not exceed the amount of employment income that is included in annual income.”

Clarifying the Meaning of *Child* for This Deduction

Childcare expenses do not include child support payments made to another on behalf of a minor who is not living in an assisted family’s household [VG, p. 26]. However, childcare expenses for foster children that are living in the assisted family’s household are included when determining the family’s childcare expenses [HCV GB, p. 5-29].

Qualifying for the Deduction

Determining Who Is Enabled to Pursue an Eligible Activity

DCHA Policy

The family must identify the family member(s) enabled to pursue an eligible activity. The term *eligible activity* in this section means any of the activities that may make the family eligible for a childcare deduction (seeking work, pursuing an education, or being gainfully employed).

In evaluating the family’s request, DCHA will consider factors such as how the schedule for the claimed activity relates to the hours of care provided, the time required for transportation, the relationship of the family member(s) to the child, and any special needs of the child that might help determine which family member is enabled to pursue an eligible activity.

Seeking Work

DCHA Policy

If the childcare expense being claimed is to enable a family member to seek employment, the family must provide evidence of the family member’s efforts to obtain employment at each reexamination. The deduction may be reduced or denied if the family member’s job search efforts are not commensurate with the childcare expense being allowed by DCHA.

Furthering Education

DCHA Policy

If the childcare expense being claimed is to enable a family member to further their education, the member must be enrolled in school (academic or vocational) or participating in a formal training program. The family member is not required to be a full-time student, but the time spent in educational activities must be commensurate with the childcare claimed.

Being Gainfully Employed

DCHA Policy

If the childcare expense being claimed is to enable a family member to be gainfully employed, the family must provide evidence of the family member's employment during the time that childcare is being provided. Gainful employment is any legal work activity (full- or part-time) for which a family member is compensated.

Earned Income Limit on Childcare Expense Deduction

When a family member looks for work or furthers their education, there is no cap on the amount that may be deducted for childcare – although the care must still be necessary and reasonable. However, when childcare enables a family member to work, the deduction is capped by “the amount of employment income that is included in annual income” [24 CFR 5.603(b)].

The earned income used for this purpose is the amount of earned income verified after any income exclusions are applied.

When the person who is enabled to work is a full-time student whose earned income above \$480 is excluded, childcare costs related to enabling a family member to work may not exceed the portion of the person's earned income that actually is included in annual income.

DCHA must not limit the deduction to the least expensive type of childcare. If the care allows the family to pursue more than one eligible activity, including work, the cap is calculated in proportion to the amount of time spent working [HCV GB, p. 5-30].

DCHA Policy

When the childcare expense being claimed is to enable a family member to work, only one family member's income will be considered for a given period of time. When more than one family member works during a given period, DCHA generally will limit allowable childcare expenses to the earned income of the lowest-paid member. The family may provide information that supports a request to designate another family member as the person enabled to work.

Eligible Childcare Expenses

The type of care to be provided is determined by the assisted family. DCHA may not refuse to give a family the childcare expense deduction because there is an adult family member in the household that may be available to provide childcare [VG, p. 26].

Allowable Childcare Activities

DCHA Policy

For school-age children, costs attributable to public or private school activities during standard school hours are not considered. Expenses incurred for supervised activities after school or during school holidays (e.g., summer day camp, after-school sports league) are allowable forms of childcare.

The costs of general housekeeping and personal services are not eligible. Likewise, childcare expenses paid to a family member who lives in the family's unit are not eligible; however, payments for childcare to relatives who do not live in the unit are eligible.

If a childcare provider also renders other services to a family or childcare is used to enable a family member to conduct activities that are not eligible for consideration, DCHA will prorate the costs and allow only that portion of the expenses that is attributable to childcare for eligible activities. For example, if the care provider also cares for a child with disabilities who is 13 or older, the cost of care will be prorated. Unless otherwise specified by the childcare provider, the calculation will be based upon the number of hours spent in each activity and/or the number of persons under care.

Necessary and Reasonable Costs

Childcare expenses will be considered necessary if: (1) a family adequately explains how the care enables a family member to work, actively seek employment, or further their education, and (2) the family certifies, and the childcare provider verifies, that the expenses are not paid or reimbursed by any other source.

DCHA Policy

Childcare expenses will be considered for the time required for the eligible activity plus reasonable transportation time. For childcare that enables a family member to go to school, the time allowed may include not more than one study hour for each hour spent in class.

To establish the reasonableness of childcare costs, DCHA will use the schedule of childcare costs from a qualified local entity that either subsidizes childcare costs or licenses childcare providers. Families may present, and DCHA will consider, justification for costs that exceed typical costs in the area.

PART III: CALCULATING FAMILY SHARE AND DCHA SUBSIDY

6-III.A. OVERVIEW OF RENT AND SUBSIDY CALCULATIONS

TTP Formula [24 CFR 5.628]

HUD regulations specify the formula for calculating the total tenant payment (TTP) for an assisted family. TTP is the highest of the following amounts, rounded to the nearest dollar:

- 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income (adjusted income is defined in Part II)
- 10 percent of the family's monthly gross income (annual income, as defined in Part I, divided by 12)
- The welfare rent (in as-paid states only)
- A minimum rent between \$0 and \$50 that is established by DCHA

DCHA has authority to suspend and exempt families from minimum rent when a financial hardship exists, as defined in section 6-III.B.

The amount that a family pays for rent and utilities (the family share) will never be less than the family's TTP but may be greater than the TTP depending on the rent charged for the unit the family selects.

Welfare Rent [24 CFR 5.628]

DCHA Policy

Welfare rent does not apply in this locality.

Minimum Rent [24 CFR 5.630]

DCHA Policy

The minimum rent for this locality is \$25.

Family Share [24 CFR 982.305(a)(5)]

If a family chooses a unit with a gross rent (rent to owner plus an allowance for tenant-paid utilities) that exceeds DCHA's applicable payment standard: (1) the family will pay more than the TTP, and (2) at initial occupancy DCHA may not approve the tenancy if it would require the family share to exceed 40 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income. (For a discussion of the application of payment standards, see section 6-III.C.)

DCHA Subsidy [24 CFR 982.505(b)]

DCHA will pay a monthly housing assistance payment (HAP) for a family that is equal to the lower of (1) the applicable payment standard for the family minus the family's TTP or (2) the gross rent for the family's unit minus the TTP. (For a discussion of the application of payment standards, see section 6-III.C.)

Utility Reimbursement [24 CFR 982.514(b); 982.514(c)]

When DCHA subsidy for a family exceeds the rent to owner, the family is due a utility reimbursement. HUD permits DCHA to pay the reimbursement to the family or directly to the utility provider.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will make utility reimbursements to the family.

DCHA may make all utility reimbursement payments to qualifying families on a monthly basis or may make quarterly payments when the monthly reimbursement amount is \$15.00 or less. Reimbursements must be made once per calendar-year quarter and must be prorated if the family leaves the program in advance of its next quarterly reimbursement. DCHA must also adopt hardship policies for families for whom receiving quarterly reimbursement would create a financial hardship.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will issue all utility reimbursements quarterly when the monthly reimbursement amount is \$15.00 or less.

6-III.B. FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS AFFECTING MINIMUM RENT [24 CFR 5.630]

DCHA Policy

The financial hardship rules described below apply in this jurisdiction because DCHA has established a minimum rent of \$25.

Overview

If DCHA establishes a minimum rent greater than zero, DCHA must grant an exemption from the minimum rent if a family is unable to pay the minimum rent because of financial hardship.

The financial hardship exemption applies only to families required to pay the minimum rent. If a family's TTP is higher than the minimum rent, the family is not eligible for a hardship exemption. If DCHA determines that a hardship exists, the family share is the highest of the remaining components of the family's calculated TTP.

HUD-Defined Financial Hardship

Financial hardship includes the following situations:

- (1) The family has lost eligibility for or is awaiting an eligibility determination for a federal, state, or local assistance program. This includes a family member who is a noncitizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act who would be entitled to public benefits but for Title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996.

DCHA Policy

A hardship will be considered to exist only if the loss of eligibility has an impact on the family's ability to pay the minimum rent.

For a family waiting for a determination of eligibility, the hardship period will end as of the first of the month following: (1) implementation of assistance, if approved, or (2) the decision to deny assistance. A family whose request for assistance is denied may request a hardship exemption based upon one of the other allowable hardship circumstances.

- (2) The family would be evicted because it is unable to pay the minimum rent.

DCHA Policy

For a family to qualify under this provision, the cause of the potential eviction must be the family's failure to pay rent to the owner or tenant-paid utilities.

- (3) Family income has decreased because of changed family circumstances, including the loss of employment.

(4) A death has occurred in the family.

DCHA Policy

In order to qualify under this provision, a family must describe how the death has created a financial hardship (e.g., because of funeral-related expenses or the loss of the family member’s income).

(5) The family has experienced other circumstances determined by DCHA.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has not established any additional hardship criteria.

Implementation of Hardship Exemption

Determination of Hardship

When a family requests a financial hardship exemption, DCHA must suspend the minimum rent requirement beginning the first of the month following the family’s request.

DCHA then determines whether the financial hardship exists and whether the hardship is temporary or long-term.

DCHA Policy

DCHA defines temporary hardship as a hardship expected to last 90 days or less. Long-term hardship is defined as a hardship expected to last more than 90 days.

When the minimum rent is suspended, the family share reverts to the highest of the remaining components of the calculated TTP. The example below demonstrates the effect of the minimum rent exemption.

Example: Impact of Minimum Rent Exemption	
Assume DCHA has established a minimum rent of \$50.	
Family Share – No Hardship	Family Share – With Hardship
\$0 30% of monthly adjusted income	\$0 30% of monthly adjusted income
\$15 10% of monthly gross income	\$15 10% of monthly gross income
N/A Welfare rent	N/A Welfare rent
\$50 Minimum rent	\$50 Minimum rent
Minimum rent applies. TTP = \$50	Hardship exemption granted. TTP = \$15

DCHA Policy

To qualify for a hardship exemption, a family must submit a request for a hardship exemption in writing. The request must explain the nature of the hardship and how the hardship has affected the family’s ability to pay the minimum rent.

DCHA will make the determination of hardship within 30 calendar days.

No Financial Hardship

If DCHA determines there is no financial hardship, DCHA will reinstate the minimum rent and require the family to repay the amounts suspended.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will require the family to repay the suspended amount within 30 calendar days of DCHA's notice that a hardship exemption has not been granted.

Temporary Hardship

If DCHA determines that a qualifying financial hardship is temporary, DCHA must suspend the minimum rent for the 90-day period beginning the first of the month following the date of the family's request for a hardship exemption.

At the end of the 90-day suspension period, the family must resume payment of the minimum rent and must repay DCHA the amounts suspended. HUD requires DCHA to offer a reasonable repayment agreement, on terms and conditions established by DCHA. DCHA also may determine that circumstances have changed and the hardship is now a long-term hardship.

DHA Policy

DCHA will enter into a repayment agreement in accordance with the procedures found in Chapter 16 of this plan.

Long-Term Hardship

If DCHA determines that the financial hardship is long-term, DCHA must exempt the family from the minimum rent requirement for so long as the hardship continues. The exemption will apply from the first of the month following the family's request until the end of the qualifying hardship. When the financial hardship has been determined to be long-term, the family is not required to repay the minimum rent.

DCHA Policy

The hardship period ends when any of the following circumstances apply:

- (1) At an interim or annual reexamination, the family's calculated TTP is greater than the minimum rent.
- (2) For hardship conditions based on loss of income, the hardship condition will continue to be recognized until new sources of income are received that are at least equal to the amount lost. For example, if a hardship is approved because a family no longer receives a \$60/month child support payment, the hardship will continue to exist until the family receives at least \$60/month in income from another source or once again begins to receive the child support.
- (3) For hardship conditions based upon hardship-related expenses, the minimum rent exemption will continue to be recognized until the cumulative amount exempted is equal to the expense incurred.

6-III.C. APPLYING PAYMENT STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.505(c) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

Overview

DCHA's schedule of payment standards is used to calculate housing assistance payments for HCV families. This section covers the application of DCHA's payment standards. The establishment and revision of DCHA's payment standard schedule are covered in Chapter 16.

Payment standard is defined as "the maximum monthly assistance payment for a family assisted in the voucher program (before deducting the total tenant payment by the family)" [24 CFR 982.4(b)].

The payment standard for a family is the lower of (1) the payment standard for the family unit size, which is defined as the appropriate number of bedrooms for the family under DCHA's subsidy standards [24 CFR 982.4(b)], or (2) the payment standard for the size of the dwelling unit rented by the family [24 CFR 982.505(c)(1)].

If DCHA has established an exception payment standard for a designated part of an FMR area in accordance with 24 CFR 982.503 and a family's unit is located in the designated area, DCHA must use the appropriate payment standard for the exception area [24 CFR 982.505(c)(2)].

DCHA is required to pay a monthly housing assistance payment (HAP) for a family that is the lower of (1) the payment standard for the family minus the family's TTP or (2) the gross rent for the family's unit minus the TTP.

If during the term of the HAP contract for a family's unit, the owner lowers the rent, DCHA will recalculate the HAP using the lower of the initial payment standard or the gross rent for the unit [HCV GB, p. 7-8].

Changes in Payment Standards

When DCHA revises its payment standards during the term of the HAP contract for a family's unit, it will apply the new payment standards in accordance with HUD regulations. Regulations governing increases and decreases in the payment standard have changed, with a required compliance date of December 3, 2024.

***Decreases* [24 CFR 982.505(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2024-34]**

For new HAP contracts, DCHA applies the payment standard in effect at the time of HAP contract execution.

DCHA must administer decreases in the payment standard amount for the family in accordance with DCHA policy as described in the administrative plan and apply the policy consistently to all families.

If DCHA changes its payment standard schedule, resulting in a lower payment standard amount, during the term of a HAP contract, DCHA is not required to reduce the payment standard used to calculate subsidy for families under HAP contract as long as the HAP contract remains in effect.

Changes effective 12/2/24 and earlier: If DCHA does choose to reduce the payment standard for families currently under HAP contract, the initial reduction to the payment standard may not be applied any earlier than the effective date of the family's second regular reexamination following the effective date of the decrease in the payment standard amount.

Changes effective 12/3/24 and later: If DCHA does choose to reduce the payment standard for families currently under HAP contract, the initial reduction to the payment standard may not be applied any earlier than two years following the effective date of the decrease in the payment standard and only with proper written notice to the family in accordance with 24 CFR 982.505(c)(3)(iii).

At that point, DCHA may either reduce the payment standard to the current amount in effect on DCHA's payment standard schedule or may reduce the payment standard to another amount that is higher than the normally applicable amount on the schedule. DCHA may also establish different policies for designated areas within their jurisdiction (e.g., different zip code areas).

In any case, DCHA must provide the family with at least 12 months' notice that the payment standard is being reduced before the effective date of the change. In the written notice, DCHA must state the new payment standard amount, explain that the family's new payment standard amount will be the greater of the amount listed in the current written notice or the new amount (if any) on DCHA's payment standard schedule at the end of the 12-month period, and make clear where the family will find DCHA's payment standard schedule. DCHA's policy on decreases in the payment standard during the term of the HAP contract apply to all families under HAP contract at the time of the effective date of the decrease in the payment standard within the designated area.

DCHA Policy

If DCHA changes its payment standard schedule resulting in a lower payment standard amount, during the term of a HAP contract, DCHA will not reduce the payment standard used to calculate subsidy for families under HAP contract as long as the HAP contract remains in effect.

DCHA will not establish different policies for decreases in the payment standard for designated areas within their jurisdiction.

Increases [24 CFR 982.505(c)(4) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

For new HAP contracts, DCHA applies the payment standard in effect at the time of HAP contract execution.

Changes effective 12/2/24 and earlier: If the payment standard is increased during the term of the HAP contract, the increased payment standard will be used to calculate the monthly housing assistance payment for the family beginning on the effective date of the family's first regular reexamination on or after the effective date of the increase in the payment standard.

Families requiring or requesting interim reexaminations will not have their HAP payments calculated using the higher payment standard until their next annual reexamination [HCV GB, p. 7-8].

Changes effective 12/3/24 and later: If the payment standard is increased during the term of the HAP contract, the increased payment standard will be applied no later than the earliest of:

- The effective date of an increase in the gross rent that would result in an increase in the family share;
- The family's first regular or interim reexamination; or
- One year following the effective date of the increase in the payment standard amount.

DCHA may adopt a policy to apply a payment standard increase at any time earlier than the date calculated above as long as the policy is included in the administrative plan and applied consistently to all families [24 CFR 982.505(c)(5)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not adopt payment standard increases earlier than the date required by the regulations.

Changes in Family Unit Size (Voucher Size) [24 CFR 982.505(c)(6) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

Changes effective 12/2/24 and earlier: Irrespective of any increase or decrease in the payment standard, if the family unit size increases or decreases during the HAP contract term, the new family unit size must be used to determine the payment standard for the family beginning at the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

Changes effective 12/3/24 and later: Irrespective of any increase or decrease in the payment standard, if the family unit size increases or decreases during the HAP contract term, the new family unit size may be used to determine the payment standard immediately but no later than the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

DCHA Policy

If the family unit size (voucher size) changes during the term of a HAP contract, the new family unit size will be used to determine the payment standard at the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

Moves

If the family moves to a new unit, or a new HAP contract is executed due to changes in the lease (even if the family remains in place) the current payment standard applicable to the family will be used when the new HAP contract is processed.

Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.503(d)(5)]

If a family requires a higher payment standard as a reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities, DCHA is allowed to establish a higher payment standard for the family of not more than 120 percent of the published FMR without HUD approval or prior notification to HUD. DCHA may establish a payment standard greater than 120 percent of the applicable FMR as a reasonable accommodation in accordance with 24 CFR part 8, after requesting and receiving HUD approval. See Chapter 16 for more information.

6-III.D. APPLYING UTILITY ALLOWANCES [24 CFR 982.517]

Overview

A DCHA-established utility allowance schedule is used in determining family share and DCHA subsidy. A family's utility allowance is determined by the size of dwelling unit leased by a family or the voucher unit size for which the family qualifies using DCHA subsidy standards, whichever is the lowest of the two. See Chapter 5 for information on the DCHA's subsidy standards.

For policies on establishing and updating utility allowances, see Chapter 16.

Flat Fees [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(iii)]

DCHA may base its utility allowance payments on actual flat fees charged by an owner for utilities that are billed directly by the owner, but only if the flat fee charged by the owner is no greater than DCHA's applicable utility allowance for the utilities covered by the fee. If the owner charges a flat fee for some but not all utilities, DCHA must pay a separate allowance for any tenant-paid utilities not covered in the flat fee.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not base utility allowance payments on flat fees charged by the owner.

PBV Developments [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(iv)]

If a tenant-based voucher holder resides in a project with project-based voucher (PBV) units and the PBV units use a site-specific utility allowance in accordance with PBV regulations, DCHA must use the project-specific utility allowance schedule.

Reasonable Accommodation and Individual Relief

On request from a family that includes a person with disabilities, DCHA must approve a utility allowance which is higher than the applicable amount on the utility allowance schedule if a higher utility allowance is needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible and usable by the family member with a disability [24 CFR 982.517(e)]. (See Chapter 2 for policies regarding the request and approval of reasonable accommodations.)

Further, DCHA may grant requests for individual relief from charges in excess of the utility allowance on reasonable grounds, such as special factors not within control of the resident, as DCHA deems appropriate. The family must request the higher allowance and provide DCHA an explanation of the need for individual relief and an explanation about the amount of additional allowance required [see HCV GB, p. 18-8].

DCHA should develop criteria for granting individual relief, notify residents about the availability of individual relief, and notify participants about the availability of individual relief programs (sometimes referred to as "Medical Baseline discounts") offered by the local utility company.

DCHA Policy

The family must request the higher allowance and provide DCHA with information about the amount of additional allowance required.

DCHA will consider the following criteria as valid reasons for granting individual relief:

The family's consumption was mistakenly portrayed as excessive due to defects in the meter or errors in the meter reading.

The excessive consumption is caused by a characteristic of the unit or owner-supplied equipment that is beyond the family's control, such as a particularly inefficient refrigerator or inadequate insulation. The allowance should be adjusted to reflect the higher consumption needs associated with the unit until the situation is remedied. The resident should be granted individual relief until the allowance is adjusted.

The excessive consumption is due to special needs of the family that are beyond their control, such as the need for specialized equipment in the case of a family member who is ill, elderly, or who has a disability.

In determining the amount of the reasonable accommodation or individual relief, DCHA will allow a reasonable measure of additional usage as necessary. To arrive at the amount of additional utility cost of specific equipment, the family may provide information from the manufacturer of the equipment, or the family or DCHA may conduct an internet search for an estimate of usage or additional monthly cost.

Information on reasonable accommodation and individual relief for charges in excess of the utility allowance will be provided to all families at admission as part of the information on payment standards and utility allowances in the briefing packet. DCHA will also provide information on utility relief programs or medical discounts (sometimes referred to as "Medical Baseline discounts") that may be available through local utility providers.

At its discretion, DCHA may reevaluate the need for the increased utility allowance at any regular reexamination.

If the excessive consumption is caused by a characteristic of the unit or DCHA-supplied equipment that is beyond the family's control, such as a particularly inefficient refrigerator or inadequate insulation, the individual relief to the resident will cease when the situation is remedied.

Utility Allowance Revisions

At reexamination, DCHA must use the current utility allowance schedule [HCV GB, p. 18-8].

DCHA Policy

Revised utility allowances will be applied to a family's rent and subsidy calculations at the first annual reexamination that is effective after the allowance is adopted.

6-III.E. PRORATED ASSISTANCE FOR MIXED FAMILIES [24 CFR 5.520]

HUD regulations prohibit assistance to ineligible family members. A *mixed family* is one that includes at least one U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant and any number of ineligible family members. DCHA must prorate the assistance provided to a mixed family. DCHA will first determine assistance as if all family members were eligible and then prorate the assistance based upon the percentage of family members that actually are eligible. For example, if DCHA subsidy for a family is calculated at \$500 and two of four family members are ineligible, DCHA subsidy would be reduced to \$250.

EXHIBIT 6-1: ANNUAL INCOME INCLUSIONS

24 CFR 5.609

(a) Annual income means all amounts, monetary or not, which:

- (1) Go to, or on behalf of, the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
- (2) Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date; and
- (3) Which are not specifically excluded in paragraph (c) of this section.
- (4) Annual income also means amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access.

(b) Annual income includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services;
- (2) The net income from the operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income,

except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family;

- (3) Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation is permitted only as authorized in paragraph (b)(2) of this section. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, annual income shall include the greater of the actual income derived from all net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD;
- (4) The full amount of periodic amounts received from Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum amount or prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount (except as provided in paragraph (c)(14) of this section);
- (5) Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment and disability compensation, worker's compensation and severance pay (except as provided in paragraph (c)(3) of this section);

(6) Welfare assistance payments.

(i) Welfare assistance payments made under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program are included in annual income only to the extent such payments:

(A) Qualify as assistance under the TANF program definition at 45 CFR 260.31¹; and

(B) Are not otherwise excluded under paragraph (c) of this section.

(ii) If the welfare assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustment by the welfare assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of welfare assistance income to be included as income shall consist of:

(A) The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus

(B) The maximum amount that the welfare assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this paragraph shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

(7) Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling;

(8) All regular pay, special pay and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces (except as provided in paragraph (c)(7) of this section)

(9) For section 8 programs only and as provided in 24 CFR 5.612, any financial assistance, in excess of amounts received for tuition, that an individual receives under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), from private sources, or from an institution of higher education (as defined under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), shall be considered income to that individual, except that financial assistance described in this paragraph is not considered annual income for persons over the age of 23 with dependent children. For purposes of this paragraph, "financial assistance" does not include loan proceeds for the purpose of determining income.

<p style="text-align: center;">HHS DEFINITION OF "ASSISTANCE"</p>
--

45 CFR: GENERAL TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

260.31 What does the term "assistance" mean?

(a)(1) The term "assistance" includes cash, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs (i.e., for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items, and general incidental expenses).

(2) It includes such benefits even when they are:

(i) Provided in the form of payments by a TANF agency, or other agency on its behalf, to individual recipients; and

(ii) Conditioned on participation in work experience or community service (or any other work activity under 261.30 of this chapter).

¹ Text of 45 CFR 260.31 follows.

(3) Except where excluded under paragraph (b) of this section, it also includes supportive services such as transportation and childcare provided to families who are not employed.

(b) [The definition of “assistance”] excludes: (1) Nonrecurrent, short-term benefits that:

- (i) Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
 - (ii) Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
 - (iii) Will not extend beyond four months.
- (2) Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training);

(3) Supportive services such as childcare and transportation provided to families who are employed;

(4) Refundable earned income tax credits;

(5) Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts;

(6) Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, childcare information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and

(7) Transportation benefits provided under a Job Access or Reverse Commute project, pursuant to section 404(k) of [the Social Security] Act, to an individual who is not otherwise receiving assistance.

EXHIBIT 6-2: ANNUAL INCOME EXCLUSIONS

24 CFR 5.609(b) as updated for HOTMA

(b) Annual income does not include the following:

(1) Any imputed return on an asset when net family assets are less than or equal to the HUD-published threshold amount (which amount HUD will adjust annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers) and no actual income from the net family assets can be determined.

(2) The following types of trust distributions:

(i) For an irrevocable trust or a revocable trust outside the control of the family or household excluded from the definition of net family assets under § 5.603(b):

(A) Distributions of the principal or corpus of the trust; and

(B) Distributions of income from the trust when the distributions are used to pay the costs of health and medical care expenses for a minor.

(ii) For a revocable trust under the control of the family or household, any distributions from the trust; except that any actual income earned by the trust, regardless of whether it is distributed, shall be considered income to the family at the time it is received by the trust.

(3) Earned income of children under the 18 years of age.

(4) Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults, or State or Tribal kinship or guardianship care payments.

(5) Insurance payments and settlements for personal or property losses, including but not limited to payments through health insurance, motor vehicle insurance, and workers' compensation.

(6) Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the

cost of health and medical care expenses for any family member.

(7) Any amounts recovered in any civil action or settlement based on a claim of malpractice, negligence, or other breach of duty owed to a family member arising out of law, that resulted in a member of the family becoming disabled.

(8) Income of a live-in aide, foster child, or foster adult as defined in §§ 5.403 and 5.603, respectively.

(9)

(i) Any assistance that section 479B of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1087uu), requires be excluded from a family's income; and

(ii) Student financial assistance for tuition, books, and supplies (including supplies and equipment to support students with learning disabilities or other disabilities), room and board, and other fees required and charged to a student by an institution of higher education (as defined under Section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) and, for a student who is not the head of household or spouse, the reasonable and actual costs of housing while attending the institution of higher education and not residing in an assisted unit.

(A) Student financial assistance, for purposes of this paragraph (9)(ii), means a grant or scholarship received from—

(1) The Federal government;

(2) A State, Tribe, or local government;

(3) A private foundation registered as a nonprofit under 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3);

(4) A business entity (such as corporation, general partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, joint venture, business

trust, public benefit corporation, or nonprofit entity); or

(5) An institution of higher education.

(B) Student financial assistance, for purposes of this paragraph (9)(ii), does not include—

(1) Any assistance that is excluded pursuant to paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section;

(2) Financial support provided to the student in the form of a fee for services performed (e.g., a work study or teaching fellowship that is not excluded pursuant to paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section);

(3) Gifts, including gifts from family or friends; or

(4) Any amount of the scholarship or grant that, either by itself or in combination with assistance excluded under this paragraph or paragraph (b)(9)(i), exceeds the actual covered costs of the student. The actual covered costs of the student are the actual costs of tuition, books and supplies (including supplies and equipment to support students with learning disabilities or other disabilities), room and board, or other fees required and charged to a student by the education institution, and, for a student who is not the head of household or spouse, the reasonable and actual costs of housing while attending the institution of higher education and not residing in an assisted unit. This calculation is described further in paragraph (b)(9)(ii) of this section.

(C) Student financial assistance, for purposes of this paragraph (b)(9)(ii) must be:

(1) Expressly for tuition, books, room and board, or other fees required and charged to a student by the education institution;

(2) Expressly to assist a student with the costs of higher education; or

(3) Expressly to assist a student who is not the head of household or spouse with the reasonable and actual costs of housing while attending the education institution and not residing in an assisted unit.

(D) Student financial assistance, for purposes of this paragraph (b)(9)(ii), may be paid directly to the student or to the educational institution on the student's behalf. Student financial assistance paid to the student must be verified by the responsible entity as student financial assistance consistent with this paragraph (b)(9)(ii).

(E) When the student is also receiving assistance excluded under paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section, the amount of student financial assistance under this paragraph (b)(9)(ii) is determined as follows:

(1) If the amount of assistance excluded under paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section is equal to or exceeds the actual covered costs under paragraph (b)(9)(ii)(B)(4) of this section, none of the assistance described in this paragraph (b)(9)(ii) of this section is considered student financial assistance excluded from income under this paragraph (b)(9)(ii)(E).

(2) If the amount of assistance excluded under paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section is less than the actual covered costs under paragraph (b)(9)(ii)(B)(4) of this section, the amount of assistance described in paragraph (b)(9)(ii) of this section that is considered student financial assistance excluded under this paragraph is the lower of:

(i) the total amount of student financial assistance received under this paragraph (b)(9)(ii) of this section, or

(ii) Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs which are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (e.g., special equipment, clothing, transportation, childcare, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;

(ii) the amount by which the actual covered costs under paragraph (b)(9)(ii)(B)(4) of this section exceeds the assistance excluded under paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section.

(10) Income and distributions from any Coverdell education savings account under section 530 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any qualified tuition program under section 529 of such Code; and income earned by government contributions to, and distributions from, “baby bond” accounts created, authorized, or funded by Federal, State, or local government.

(11) The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire.

(12)

(i) Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS);

(ii) Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs which are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (e.g., special equipment, clothing, transportation, childcare, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;

(iii) Amounts received under a resident service stipend not to exceed \$200 per month. A resident service stipend is a modest amount received by a resident for performing a service for DCHA or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development.

(iv) Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in training programs funded by HUD or in qualifying Federal, State, Tribal, or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program unless those amounts are excluded under paragraph (b)(9)(i) of this section.

(13) Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era.

(14) Earned income of dependent fulltime students in excess of the amount of the deduction for a dependent in § 5.611.

(15) Adoption assistance payments for a child in excess of the amount of the deduction for a dependent in § 5.611.

(16) Deferred periodic amounts from Supplemental Security Income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts, or any deferred Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.

(17) Payments related to aid and attendance under 38 U.S.C. 1521 to veterans in need of regular aid and attendance.

(18) Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under State or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit.

(19) Payments made by or authorized by a State Medicaid agency (including through a managed care entity) or other State or Federal agency to a family to enable a family member who has a disability to reside in the family's assisted unit. Authorized payments may include payments to a member of the assisted family through the State Medicaid agency (including through a managed care entity) or other State or Federal agency for caregiving services the family member provides to enable a family member who has a disability to reside in the family's assisted unit.

(20) Loan proceeds (the net amount disbursed by a lender to or on behalf of a borrower, under the terms of a loan agreement) received by the family or a third party (e.g., proceeds received by the family from a private loan to enable attendance at an educational institution or to finance the purchase of a car).

(21) Payments received by Tribal members as a result of claims relating to the mismanagement of assets held in trust by the United States, to the extent such payments are also excluded from gross income under the Internal Revenue Code or other Federal law.

(22) Amounts that HUD is required by Federal statute to exclude from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions set forth in paragraph (b) of this section apply. HUD will publish a notice in the Federal Register to identify the benefits that qualify for this exclusion. Updates will be published when necessary.

(23) Replacement housing "gap" payments made in accordance with 49 CFR part 24 that offset increased out of pocket costs of displaced persons that move from one federally subsidized housing unit to another Federally subsidized housing unit. Such replacement housing "gap" payments are not excluded from annual income if the increased cost of rent and utilities is subsequently reduced or eliminated, and the displaced person retains or continues to receive the replacement housing "gap" payments.

(24) Nonrecurring income, which is income that will not be repeated in the coming year based on information provided by the family. Income received as an independent contractor, day laborer, or seasonal worker is not excluded from income under this paragraph, even if the source, date, or amount of the income varies. Nonrecurring income includes:

(i) Payments from the U.S. Census Bureau for employment (relating to decennial census or the American Community Survey) lasting no longer than 180 days and not culminating in permanent employment.

(ii) Direct Federal or State payments intended for economic stimulus or recovery

(iii) Amounts directly received by the family as a result of State refundable tax credits or State tax refunds at the time they are received.

(iv) Amounts directly received by the family as a result of Federal refundable tax credits and Federal tax refunds at the time they are received.

(v) Gifts for holidays, birthdays, or other significant life events or milestones (e.g., wedding gifts, baby showers, anniversaries).

(vi) Non-monetary, in-kind donations, such as food, clothing, or toiletries, received from a food bank or similar organization.

(vii) Lump-sum additions to net family assets, including but not limited to lottery or other contest winnings.

(25) Civil rights settlements or judgments, including settlements or judgments for back pay.

(26) Income received from any account under a retirement plan recognized as such by the Internal Revenue Service, including individual retirement arrangements (IRAs), employer retirement plans, and retirement plans for self-employed individuals; except that any distribution of periodic payments from such accounts shall be income at the time they are received by the family.

(27) Income earned on amounts placed in a family's Family Self Sufficiency Account.

(28) Gross income a family member receives through self-employment or operation of a business; except that the following shall be considered income to a family member:

(i) Net income from the operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations; and

(ii) Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family.

EXHIBIT 6-3: TREATMENT OF FAMILY ASSETS

24 CFR 5.603(b) Net Family Assets

(1) Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and excluding equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles shall be excluded.

(2) In cases where a trust fund has been established and the trust is not revocable by, or under the control of, any member of the family or household, the value of the trust fund will not be considered an asset so long as the fund continues to be held in trust. Any income distributed from the trust fund shall be counted when determining annual income under Sec. 5.609.

(3) In determining net family assets, DCHA or owners, as applicable, shall include the value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value (including a disposition in trust, but not in a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale) during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or reexamination, as applicable, in excess of the consideration received therefor.

In the case of a disposition as part of a separation or divorce settlement, the disposition will not be considered to be for less than fair market value if the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms.

(4) For purposes of determining annual income under Sec. 5.609, the term "net family assets" does not include the value of a home currently being purchased with assistance under part 982, subpart M of this title. This exclusion is limited to the first 10 years after the purchase date of the home.

EXHIBIT 6-4: THE EFFECT OF WELFARE BENEFIT REDUCTION

24 CFR 5.615

Public housing program and Section 8 tenant-based assistance program: How welfare benefit reduction affects family income.

(a) Applicability. This section applies to covered families who reside in public housing (part 960 of this title) or receive Section 8 tenant-based assistance (part 982 of this title).

(b) Definitions. The following definitions apply for purposes of this section:

Covered families. Families who receive welfare assistance or other public assistance benefits ("welfare benefits") from a State or other public agency ("welfare agency") under a program for which Federal, State, or local law requires that a member of the family must participate in an economic self-sufficiency program as a condition for such assistance.

Economic self-sufficiency program. See definition at Sec. 5.603.

Imputed welfare income. The amount of annual income not actually received by a family, as a result of a specified welfare benefit reduction, that is nonetheless included in the family's annual income for purposes of determining rent.

Specified welfare benefit reduction.

(1) A reduction of welfare benefits by the welfare agency, in whole or in part, for a family member, as determined by the welfare agency, because of fraud by a family member in connection with the welfare program; or because of welfare agency sanction against a family member for noncompliance with a welfare agency requirement to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program.

(2) "Specified welfare benefit reduction" does not include a reduction or termination of welfare benefits by the welfare agency:

(i) at expiration of a lifetime or other time limit on the payment of welfare benefits;

(ii) because a family member is not able to obtain employment, even though the family member has complied with welfare agency economic self-sufficiency or work activities requirements; or

(iii) because a family member has not complied with other welfare agency requirements.

(c) Imputed welfare income.

(1) A family's annual income includes the amount of imputed welfare income (because of a specified welfare benefits reduction, as specified in notice to DCHA by the welfare agency), plus the total amount of other annual income as determined in accordance with Sec. 5.609.

(2) At the request of DCHA, the welfare agency will inform DCHA in writing of the amount and term of any specified welfare benefit reduction for a family member, and the reason for such reduction, and will also inform DCHA of any subsequent changes in the term or amount of such specified welfare benefit reduction. DCHA will use this information to determine the amount of imputed welfare income for a family.

(3) A family's annual income includes imputed welfare income in family annual income, as determined at DCHA's interim or regular reexamination of family income and composition, during the term of the welfare benefits reduction (as specified in information provided to DCHA by the welfare agency).

(4) The amount of the imputed welfare income is offset by the amount of additional income a family receives that commences after the time the sanction was imposed. When such additional income from other sources is at least equal to the imputed

(5) DCHA may not include imputed welfare income in annual income if the family was not an assisted resident at the time of sanction.

(d) Review of DCHA decision.

(1) Public housing. If a public housing tenant claims that DCHA has not correctly calculated the amount of imputed welfare income in accordance with HUD requirements, and if DCHA denies the family's request to modify such amount, DCHA shall give the tenant written notice of such denial, with a brief explanation of the basis for the DCHA determination of the amount of imputed welfare income. The DCHA notice shall also state that if the tenant does not agree with the DCHA determination, the tenant may request a grievance hearing in accordance with part 966, subpart B of this title to review the DCHA determination. The tenant is not required to pay an escrow deposit pursuant to Sec. 966.55(e) for the portion of tenant rent attributable to the imputed welfare income in order to obtain a grievance hearing on the DCHA determination.

(2) Section 8 participant. A participant in the Section 8 tenant-based assistance program may request an informal hearing, in accordance with Sec. 982.555 of this title, to review the DCHA determination of the amount of imputed welfare income that must be included in the family's annual income in accordance with this section. If the family claims that such amount is not correctly calculated in accordance with HUD requirements, and if DCHA denies the family's request to modify such amount, DCHA shall give the family written notice of such denial, with a brief explanation of the basis for the

DCHA determination of the amount of imputed welfare income. Such notice shall also state that if the family does not agree with the DCHA determination, the family may request an informal hearing on the determination under the DCHA hearing procedure.

(e) DCHA relation with welfare agency.

(1) DCHA must ask welfare agencies to inform DCHA of any specified welfare benefits reduction for a family member, the reason for such reduction, the term of any such reduction, and any subsequent welfare agency determination affecting the amount or term of a specified welfare benefits reduction. If the welfare agency determines a specified welfare benefits reduction for a family member, and gives DCHA written notice of such reduction, the family's annual incomes shall include the imputed welfare income because of the specified welfare benefits reduction.

(2) DCHA is responsible for determining the amount of imputed welfare income that is included in the family's annual income as a result of a specified welfare benefits reduction as determined by the welfare agency, and specified in the notice by the welfare agency to DCHA. However, DCHA is not responsible for determining whether a reduction of welfare benefits by the welfare agency was correctly determined by the welfare agency in accordance with welfare program requirements and procedures, nor for providing the opportunity for review or hearing on such welfare agency determinations.

(3) Such welfare agency determinations are the responsibility of the welfare agency, and the family may seek appeal of such determinations through the welfare agency's normal due process procedures. DCHA shall be entitled to rely on the welfare agency notice to DCHA of the welfare agency's determination of a specified welfare benefits reduction.

Chapter 7.A.

VERIFICATION

[24 CFR 982.516, 24 CFR 982.551, 24 CFR 5.230, Notice PIH 2018-18]

INTRODUCTION

Prior to DCHA's HOTMA compliance date, DCHA will follow policies as outlined in this chapter. Upon DCHA's HOTMA compliance date, DCHA will follow policies as outlined in Chapter 7.B.

DCHA must verify all information that is used to establish the family's eligibility and level of assistance and is required to obtain written authorization from the family in order to collect the information. Applicants and program participants must cooperate with the verification process as a condition of receiving assistance. DCHA must not pass on the cost of verification to the family.

DCHA will follow the verification guidance provided by HUD in Notice PIH 2018-18 and any subsequent guidance issued by HUD. This chapter summarizes those requirements and provides supplementary DCHA policies.

Part I describes the general verification process. Part II provides more detailed requirements related to family information. Part III provides information on income and assets, and Part IV covers mandatory deductions.

Verification policies, rules and procedures will be modified as needed to accommodate persons with disabilities. All information obtained through the verification process will be handled in accordance with the records management policies of DCHA.

PART I: GENERAL VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

7-I.A. FAMILY CONSENT TO RELEASE OF INFORMATION [24 CFR 982.516 AND 982.551, 24 CFR 5.230; and Notice PIH 2023-27]]

Consent Forms

The family must supply any information that DCHA or HUD determines is necessary to the administration of the program and must consent to DCHA verification of that information [24 CFR 982.551]. All adult family members must sign consent forms as needed to collect information relevant to the family's eligibility and level of assistance. While DCHA must use form HUD-9886-A, this form does not release all the information necessary to the administration of the program. DCHA must also develop its own release forms to cover all other necessary information.

Form HUD-9886-A [24 CFR 5.230(b)(1), b(2), (c)(4), and (c)(5); and Notice PIH 2023-27]

All adult applicants and participants sign form HUD-9886-A, Authorization for Release of Information. All adult family members (and the head and spouse/cohead, regardless of age) are required to sign the Form HUD-9886-A at admission. Participants, prior to January 1, 2024, signed and submitted Form HUD-9886 at each annual reexamination. HOTMA eliminated this requirement and instead required that the Form HUD-9886-A be signed only once. On or after January 1, 2024 (regardless of DCHA's HOTMA compliance date), current program participants must sign and submit a new Form HUD-9886-A at their next interim or annual reexamination. This form will only be signed once. Another Form HUD-9886-A will not be submitted to DCHA except under the following circumstances:

- When any person 18 years or older becomes a member of the family;
- When a current member of the family turns 18; or
- As required by HUD or DCHA in administrative instructions.

DCHA has the discretion to establish policies around when family members must sign consent forms when they turn 18. DCHA must establish these policies stating when family members will be required to sign consent forms at intervals other than at reexamination.

DCHA Policy

Family members turning 18 years of age between annual recertifications will be notified in writing that they are required to sign the required Consent to the Release of Information Form HUD-9886-A within 10 business days of turning 18 years of age.

The purpose of form HUD-9886-A is to facilitate automated data collection and computer matching from specific sources and provides the family's consent only for the specific purposes listed on the form. HUD and DCHA may collect information from State Wage Information Collection Agencies (SWICAs) and current and former employers of adult family members. Only HUD is authorized to collect information directly from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA).

DCHA may obtain any financial record from any financial institution, as the terms financial record and financial institution are defined in the Right to Financial Privacy Act (12 U.S.C. 3401), whenever DCHA discovers the record is needed to determine an applicant's or participant's eligibility for assistance or level of benefits [24 CFR 5.230(c)(4)].

The executed form will remain effective until the family is denied assistance, assistance is terminated, or the family provides written notification to DCHA to revoke consent.

Penalties for Failing to Consent [24 CFR 5.232]

If any family member who is required to sign a consent form fails to do so, DCHA will deny admission to applicants and terminate assistance of participants. The family may request an informal review (applicants) or informal hearing (participants) in accordance with DCHA procedures.

7-I.B. OVERVIEW OF VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Use of Other Programs' Income Determinations [24 CFR 5.609(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2023-27]

DCHA may, but is not required to, determine a family's annual income, including income from assets, prior to the application of any deductions, based on income determinations made within the previous 12-month period, using income determinations from means-tested federal public assistance programs. DCHA is not required to accept or use determinations of income from other federal means-tested forms of assistance. If DCHA adopts a policy to accept this type of verification, DCHA must establish in policy when they will accept Safe Harbor income determinations and from which programs. DCHA must also create policies that outline the course of action when families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable Safe Harbor programs.

Means-tested federal public assistance programs include:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (42 U.S.C. 601, et seq.);
- Medicaid (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) (26 U.S.C. 32);
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program (26 U.S.C. 42);
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) (42 U.S.C. 1786);
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);
- Other programs administered by the HUD Secretary;
- Other means-tested forms of federal public assistance for which HUD has established a memorandum of understanding; and
- Other federal benefit determinations made in other forms of means-tested federal public assistance that the Secretary determines to have comparable reliability and announces through the *Federal Register*.

If DCHA elects to use the annual income determination from one of the above-listed forms of means-tested federal public assistance, then they must obtain the income information by means of a third-party verification. The third-party verification must state the family size, must be for the entire family, and must state the amount of the family's annual income. The annual income need not be broken down by family member or income type. Annual income includes income earned from assets, therefore when using Safe Harbor to verify a family's income, DCHA will neither further inquire about a family's net family assets, nor about the income earned from those assets, except with respect to whether or not the family owns assets that exceed the asset limitation in 24 CFR 5.618. The Safe Harbor documentation will be considered acceptable if any of the following dates fall into the 12-month period prior to the receipt of the documentation by DCHA:

- Income determination effective date;
- Program administrator's signature date;
- Family's signature date;
- Report effective date; or
- Other report-specific dates that verify the income determination date.

The only information that DCHA is permitted to use to determine income under this method is the total income determination made by the federal means-tested program administrator. Other federal programs may provide additional information about income inclusions and exclusions in their award letters; however, these determinations and any other information must not be considered by DCHA. DCHA is not permitted to mix and match Safe Harbor income determinations and other income verifications.

If DCHA is unable to obtain Safe Harbor documentation or if the family disputes the other program's income determination, DCHA must calculate the family's annual income using traditional methods as outlined in Notice PIH 2023-27 and this chapter.

If DCHA uses a Safe Harbor determination to determine the family's income, the family is obligated to report changes in income that meet DCHA's reporting requirement and occur after the effective date of the transaction.

The amounts of unreimbursed reasonable attendant care expenses and childcare expenses deducted from a family's annual income, except for when a family is approved for a childcare expense hardship exemption, must still be capped by the amount earned by any family member who is enabled to work as a result of the expense. DCHA is therefore required to obtain third-party verification of the applicable employment income and cap the respective expense deductions accordingly.

DCHA Policy

When available and applicable, DCHA will accept other programs' Safe Harbor determinations of income at annual reexamination to determine the family's total annual income. DCHA will still require third-party verification of all deductions such as the health and medical care expense or childcare expense deductions. Further, if the family is eligible for and claims the disability assistance expense or childcare expense deductions, where applicable, DCHA will obtain third-party verification of the amount of employment income of the individual(s) enabled to work in order to cap the respective expenses as required.

Prior to using any Safe Harbor determination from another program, DCHA will ask the family if they agree with the income amounts listed. If the family disputes the income amounts on the Safe Harbor determination, DCHA will obtain third-party verification of all sources of income and assets (as applicable).

DCHA will not accept other programs' determinations of income for any new admission or interim reexamination.

With the exception of income determinations made under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, DCHA will accept Safe Harbor determinations from any of the programs listed above.

In order to be acceptable, the income determination must:

- Be dated within 12 months of the dates listed above;

- State the family size

- Be for the entire family (i.e., the family members listed in the documentation must match the family's composition in the assisted unit, except for household members); and

- Must state the amount of the family's annual income.

The determination need not list each source of income individually. If DCHA does not receive any acceptable income determination documentation or is unable to obtain documentation, then DCHA will revert to third-party verification of income for the family.

When families present multiple verifications from the same or different acceptable Safe Harbor programs, DCHA will use the most recent income determination, unless the family presents acceptable evidence that DCHA should consider an alternative verification from a different Safe Harbor source.

When DCHA uses a Safe Harbor income determination from another program, and the family's income subsequently changes, the family is required to report the change to DCHA. Depending on when the change occurred, the change may or may not impact DCHA's calculation of the family's total annual income. Changes that occur between the time DCHA receives the Safe Harbor documentation, and the effective date of the family's annual reexamination will not be considered. If the family has a change in income that occurs after the annual reexamination effective date, DCHA will conduct an interim reexamination if the change meets the requirements for performing an interim reexamination as outlined in Chapter 11. In this case, DCHA will use third-party verification to verify the change.

HUD's Verification Hierarchy [Notice PIH 2018-18]

HUD mandates the use of the EIV system and offers administrative guidance on the use of other methods to verify family information and specifies the circumstances in which each method will be used. In general HUD requires DCHA to use the most reliable form of verification that is available and to document the reasons when DCHA uses a lesser form of verification.

In order of priority, the forms of verification that DCHA will use are:

- Up-front Income Verification (UIV) using HUD's Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system
- Up-front Income Verification (UIV) using a non-HUD system
- Written Third-Party Verification (may be provided by applicant or participant)
- Written Third-party Verification Form
- Oral Third-party Verification
- Self-Certification

Each of the verification methods is discussed in subsequent sections below.

Requirements for Acceptable Documents

DCHA Policy

Any documents used for verification must be the original (not photocopies) and generally must be dated within 120 days of receipt by DCHA. Statements dated within the appropriate benefit year are acceptable for fixed sources of income. The documents must not be damaged, altered or in any way illegible.

Printouts from webpages are considered original documents.

DCHA staff member who views the original document must make a photocopy.

Any family self-certifications must be made in a format acceptable to DCHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

File Documentation

DCHA must document in the file how the figures used in income and rent calculations were determined. All verification attempts, information obtained, and decisions reached during the verification process will be recorded in the family's file in sufficient detail to demonstrate that DCHA has followed all of the verification policies set forth in this plan. The record should be sufficient to enable a staff member or HUD reviewer to understand the process followed and conclusions reached.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will document, in the family file, the following:

- Reported family annual income
- Value of assets
- Expenses related to deductions from annual income
- Other factors influencing adjusted income

When DCHA is unable to obtain third-party verification, DCHA will document in the family file the reason that third-party verification was not available [24 CFR 982.516(a)(2); Notice PIH 2018-18].

7-I.C. UP-FRONT INCOME VERIFICATION (UIV)

Up-front income verification (UIV) refers to DCHA's use of the verification tools available from independent sources that maintain computerized information about earnings and benefits. UIV will be used to the extent that these systems are available to DCHA.

There may be legitimate differences between the information provided by the family and UIV-generated information. If the family disputes the accuracy of UIV data, no adverse action can be taken until DCHA has independently verified the UIV information and the family has been granted an opportunity to contest any adverse findings through the informal review/hearing process of DCHA.

See Chapter 6 for DCHA's policy on the use of UIV/EIV to project annual income.

Upfront Income Verification Using HUD's Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System (Mandatory)

DCHA must use HUD's EIV system in its entirety as a third-party source to verify tenant employment and income information during mandatory reexaminations or recertifications of family composition and income in accordance with 24 CFR 5.236 and administrative guidance issued by HUD. However, DCHA is not required to verify income information in EIV at annual reexam when Safe Harbor verification is used to determine a family's income [Notice PIH 2023-27]. The EIV system contains data showing earned income, unemployment benefits, social security benefits, and SSI benefits for participant families. The following policies apply to the use of HUD's EIV system.

EIV Income and IVT Reports

The data shown on income and income validation tool (IVT) reports is updated quarterly. Data may be between 3 and 6 months old at the time reports are generated.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will obtain income and IVT reports for annual reexaminations on a monthly basis. Reports will be generated as part of the regular reexamination process.

Income and IVT reports will be compared to family-provided information as part of the annual reexamination process. Income reports may be used in the calculation of annual income, as described in Chapter 6-I.C. Income reports may also be used to meet the regulatory requirement for third party verification, as described above. Policies for resolving discrepancies between income reports and family-provided information will be resolved as described in Chapter 6-I.C. and in this chapter.

Income and IVT reports will be used in interim reexaminations to identify any discrepancies between reported income and income shown in the EIV system, and as necessary to verify earned income, and to verify and calculate unemployment benefits, Social Security and/or SSI benefits. EIV will also be used to verify that families claiming zero income are not receiving income from any of these sources.

Income and IVT reports will be retained in participant files with the applicable annual or interim reexamination documents.

When DCHA determines through EIV reports and third-party verification that a family has concealed or under-reported income, corrective action will be taken pursuant to the policies in Chapter 14, Program Integrity.

However, DCHA will not use income information in EIV at annual reexam when Safe Harbor verification is used to determine a family's income.

EIV Identity Verification

The EIV system verifies tenant identities against SSA records. These records are compared to PIC data for a match on social security number, name, and date of birth.

DCHA is required to use EIV's *Identity Verification Report* on a monthly basis to improve the availability of income information in EIV [Notice PIH 2018-18].

When identity verification for a participant fails, a message will be displayed within the EIV system and no income information will be displayed.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will identify participants whose identity verification has failed by reviewing EIV's *Identity Verification Report* on a monthly basis.

DCHA will attempt to resolve PIC/SSA discrepancies by obtaining appropriate documentation from the participant. When DCHA determines that discrepancies exist due to DCHA errors such as spelling errors or incorrect birth dates, the errors will be corrected promptly.

Upfront Income Verification Using Non-HUD Systems (Optional)

In addition to mandatory use of the EIV system, HUD encourages DCHA to utilize other upfront verification sources.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will inform all applicants and participants of its use of the following UIV resources during the admission and reexamination process:

- HUD's EIV system
- Experian Verify
- Office of Recovery Services
- Workforce Services eShare

7-I.D. THIRD-PARTY WRITTEN AND ORAL VERIFICATION

HUD's current verification hierarchy defines two types of written third-party verification. The more preferable form, "written third-party verification," consists of an original document generated by a third-party source, which may be received directly from a third-party source or provided to DCHA by the family. If written third-party verification is not available, DCHA must attempt to obtain a "written third-party verification form." This is a standardized form used to collect information from a third party.

Written Third-Party Verification [Notice PIH 2018-18]

Written third-party verification documents must be original and authentic and may be supplied by the family or received from a third-party source.

Examples of acceptable tenant-provided documents include, but are not limited to: pay stubs, payroll summary reports, employer notice or letters of hire and termination, SSA benefit verification letters, bank statements, child support payment stubs, welfare benefit letters and/or printouts, and unemployment monetary benefit notices.

DCHA is required to obtain, at minimum, two current and consecutive pay stubs for determining annual income from wages.

DCHA may reject documentation provided by the family if the document is not an original, if the document appears to be forged, or if the document is altered, mutilated, or illegible.

Written, third-party verification includes an original or authentic document generated by a third-party source dated within 120 days of the date received by DCHA [Notice PIH 2023-27].

DCHA may accept a statement dated within the appropriate benefit year for fixed income sources [Notice PIH 2023-27].

DCHA Policy

Third-party documents provided by the family must be dated within 120 days of receipt by DCHA. DCHA will accept a statement dated within the appropriate benefit year for fixed income sources.

If DCHA determines that third-party documents provided by the family are not acceptable, DCHA will explain the reason to the family and request additional documentation.

As verification of earned income, DCHA will require the family to provide the two most current, consecutive pay stubs. At the DCHA's discretion, if additional paystubs are needed due to the family's circumstances (e.g., sporadic income, fluctuating schedule, etc.), DCHA may request additional paystubs or a payroll record.

Written Third-Party Verification Form

When upfront verification is not available and the family is unable to provide written third-party documents, DCHA must request a written third-party verification form. HUD's position is that this traditional third-party verification method presents administrative burdens and risks which may be reduced through the use of family-provided third-party documents.

DCHA may mail or email third-party written verification form requests to third-party sources.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will send third-party verification forms directly to the third party.

Third-party verification forms will be sent when third-party verification documents are unavailable or are rejected by DCHA.

Oral Third-Party Verification [Notice PIH 2018-18]

For third-party oral verification, DCHAs contact sources, identified by UIV techniques or by the family, by telephone or in person.

Oral third-party verification is mandatory if neither form of written third-party verification is available.

Third-party oral verification may be used when requests for written third-party verification forms have not been returned within a reasonable time—e.g., 10 business days.

DCHA should document in the file the date and time of the telephone call or visit, the name of the person contacted, the telephone number, as well as the information confirmed.

DCHA Policy

In collecting third-party oral verification, DCHA staff will record in the family's file the name and title of the person contacted, the date and time of the conversation (or attempt), the telephone number used, and the facts provided.

When any source responds verbally to the initial written request for verification DCHA will accept the verbal response as oral verification but will also request that the source complete and return any verification forms that were provided.

When Third-Party Verification is Not Required [Notice PIH 2018-18]

Third-party verification may not be available in all situations. HUD has acknowledged that it may not be cost-effective or reasonable to obtain third-party verification of income, assets, or expenses when these items would have a minimal impact on the family's total tenant payment.

DCHA Policy

If the family cannot provide original documents, DCHA will pay the service charge required to obtain third-party verification, unless it is not cost effective in which case a self-certification will be acceptable as the only means of verification. The cost of verification will not be passed on to the family.

The cost of postage and envelopes to obtain third-party verification of income, assets, and expenses is not an unreasonable cost [VG, p. 18].

Primary Documents

Third-party verification is not required when legal documents are the primary source, such as a birth certificate or other legal documentation of birth.

Imputed Assets

HUD permits DCHA to accept a self-certification from a family as verification of assets disposed of for less than fair market value [HCV GB, p. 5-28].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will accept a self-certification from a family as verification of assets disposed of for less than fair market value.

Value of Assets and Asset Income [24 CFR 982.516(a)]

For families with net assets totaling \$5,000 or less, DCHA may accept the family's declaration of asset value and anticipated asset income. However, DCHA is required to obtain third-party verification of all assets regardless of the amount during the intake process and at least every three years thereafter.

DCHA Policy

For families with net assets totaling \$5,000 or less, DCHA will accept the family's self-certification of the value of family assets and anticipated asset income when applicable. The family's declaration must show each asset and the amount of income expected from that asset. All family members 18 years of age and older must sign the family's declaration.

DCHA will use third-party documentation for assets as part of the intake process, whenever a family member is added to verify the individual's assets, and every three years thereafter.

7-I.E. SELF-CERTIFICATION

When HUD requires third-party verification, self-certification or “tenant declaration,” is used as a last resort when DCHA is unable to obtain third-party verification.

Self-certification, however, is an acceptable form of verification when:

- A source of income is fully excluded
- Net family assets total \$5,000 or less and DCHA has adopted a policy to accept self certification at annual recertification, when applicable
- DCHA has adopted a policy to implement streamlined annual recertifications for fixed sources of income (See Chapter 11)

When DCHA was required to obtain third-party verification but instead relies on a tenant declaration for verification of income, assets, or expenses, the family’s file must be documented to explain why third-party verification was not available.

DCHA Policy

When information cannot be verified by a third party or by review of documents, family members will be required to submit self-certifications attesting to the accuracy of the information they have provided to DCHA.

DCHA may require a family to certify that a family member does not receive a particular type of income or benefit.

The self-certification must be made in a format acceptable to DCHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

PART II: VERIFYING FAMILY INFORMATION

7-II.A. VERIFICATION OF LEGAL IDENTITY

DCHA Policy

DCHA will require families to furnish verification of legal identity for each household member.

Verification of Legal Identity for Adults	Verification of Legal Identity for Children
Certificate of birth, naturalization papers Church issued baptismal certificate Current, valid driver's license or Department of Motor Vehicles identification card U.S. military discharge (DD 214) Current U.S. passport Current government employer identification card with picture	Certificate of birth Adoption papers Custody agreement Health and Human Services ID Certified school records

If a document submitted by a family is illegible for any reason or otherwise questionable, more than one of these documents may be required.

If none of these documents can be provided and at DCHA’s discretion, a third party who knows the person may attest to the person’s identity. The certification must be provided in a format acceptable to DCHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

Legal identity will be verified for all applicants at the time of eligibility determination and in cases where DCHA has reason to doubt the identity of a person representing themselves to be a participant.

7-II.B. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS [24 CFR 5.216, Notice PIH 2018-24]

The family must provide documentation of a valid social security number (SSN) for each member of the household, with the exception of individuals who do not contend eligible immigration status. Exemptions also include existing program participants who were at least 62 years of age as of January 31, 2010, and had not previously disclosed an SSN.

Note that an individual who previously declared to have eligible immigration status may not change their declaration for the purpose of avoiding compliance with the SSN disclosure and documentation requirements or penalties associated with noncompliance with these requirements. Nor may the head of household opt to remove a household member from the family composition for this purpose.

DCHA must accept the following documentation as acceptable evidence of the social security number:

- An original SSN card issued by the Social Security Administration (SSA)
- An original SSA-issued document, which contains the name and SSN of the individual
- An original document issued by a federal, state, or local government agency, which contains the name and SSN of the individual

While DCHA must attempt to gather third-party verification of SSNs prior to admission as listed above, DCHA also has the option of accepting a self-certification and a third-party document (such as a bank statement, utility or cell phone bill, or benefit letter) with the applicant's name printed on it to satisfy the SSN disclosure requirement if DCHA has exhausted all other attempts to obtain the required documentation. If verifying an individual's SSN using this method, DCHA must document why the other SSN documentation was not available [Notice PIH 2023-27].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify an individual's SSN in the situations described above using the method described above as a last resort when no other forms of verification of the individual's SSN are available.

DCHA may only reject documentation of an SSN provided by an applicant or participant if the document is not an original document or if the original document has been altered, mutilated, is illegible, or appears to be forged.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will explain to the applicant or participant the reasons the document is not acceptable and request that the individual obtain and submit acceptable documentation of the SSN to DCHA within 90 days.

In the case of Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy (SRO) individuals, the required documentation must be provided within 90 calendar days from the date of admission into the program. DCHA must grant one additional 90-day extension if it determines that the applicant's failure to comply was due to circumstances that were beyond the applicant's control and could not have been reasonably foreseen.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the participant's control such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency. If the individual fails to comply with SSN disclosure and documentation requirements upon expiration of the provided time period, DCHA will terminate the individual's assistance.

If an applicant family includes a child under 6 years of age who joined the household within the 6 months prior to the date of voucher issuance, an otherwise eligible family may be admitted to the program and the family must provide documentation of the child's SSN within 90 days of the effective date of the initial HAP contract. A 90-day extension will be granted if DCHA determines that the participant's failure to comply was due to unforeseen circumstances and was outside of the participant's control.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the applicant's control, such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency.

When a participant requests to add a new household member who is at least 6 years of age, or who is under the age of 6 and has an SSN, the participant must provide the complete and accurate SSN assigned to each new member at the time of reexamination or recertification, in addition to the documentation required to verify it. DCHA may not add the new household member until such documentation is provided.

When a participant requests to add a new household member who is under the age of 6 and has not been assigned an SSN, the participant must provide the SSN assigned to each new child and the required documentation within 90 calendar days of the child being added to the household. A 90-day extension will be granted if DCHA determines that the participant's failure to comply was due to unforeseen circumstances and was outside of the participant's control. During the period DCHA is awaiting documentation of the SSN, the child will be counted as part of the assisted household.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will grant one additional 90-day extension if needed for reasons beyond the participant's control such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency.

Social security numbers must be verified only once during continuously-assisted occupancy.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify each disclosed SSN by:

Obtaining documentation from applicants and participants that is acceptable as evidence of social security numbers

Making a copy of the original documentation submitted, returning it to the individual, and retaining a copy in the file folder

Once the individual's verification status is classified as "verified," DCHA may, at its discretion, remove and destroy copies of documentation accepted as evidence of social security numbers. The retention of the EIV Summary Report or Income Report is adequate documentation of an individual's SSN.

DCHA Policy

Once an individual's status is classified as "verified" in HUD's EIV system, DCHA will not remove and destroy copies of documentation accepted as evidence of social security numbers.

7-II.C. DOCUMENTATION OF AGE

A birth certificate or other official record of birth is the preferred form of age verification for all family members. For elderly family members an original document that provides evidence of the receipt of social security retirement benefits is acceptable.

DCHA Policy

If an official record of birth or evidence of social security retirement benefits cannot be provided, DCHA will require the family to submit other documents that support the reported age of the family member (e.g., school records, driver's license if birth year is recorded) and to provide a self-certification.

Age must be verified only once during continuously assisted occupancy.

7-II.D. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Applicants and program participants are required to identify the relationship of each household member to the head of household. Definitions of the primary household relationships are provided in the Eligibility chapter.

DCHA Policy

Family relationships are verified only to the extent necessary to determine a family's eligibility and level of assistance. Certification by the head of household normally is sufficient verification of family relationships.

Marriage

DCHA Policy

Certification by the head of household is normally sufficient verification. If DCHA has reasonable doubts about a marital relationship, DCHA will require the family to document the marriage.

A marriage certificate generally is required to verify that a couple is married.

In the case of a common law marriage, the couple must demonstrate that they hold themselves to be married (e.g., by telling the community they are married, calling each other husband and wife, using the same last name, filing joint income tax returns).

Separation or Divorce

DCHA Policy

Certification by the head of household is normally sufficient verification. If DCHA has reasonable doubts about a separation or divorce, DCHA will require the family to provide documentation of the divorce or separation.

A certified copy of a divorce decree, signed by a court officer, is required to document that a couple is divorced.

A copy of a court-ordered maintenance or other court record is required to document a separation.

If no court document is available, documentation from a community-based agency will be accepted.

Absence of Adult Member

DCHA Policy

If an adult member who was formerly a member of the household is reported to be permanently absent, the family must provide evidence to support that the person is no longer a member of the family (e.g., documentation of another address at which the person resides such as a lease or utility bill), if DCHA so requests.

Foster Children and Foster Adults

DCHA Policy

Third-party verification from the state or local government agency responsible for the placement of the individual with the family is required.

7-II.E. VERIFICATION OF STUDENT STATUS

General Requirements

DCHA Policy

DCHA requires families to provide information about the student status of all students who are 18 years of age or older. This information will be verified only if:

The family reports full-time student status for an adult other than the head, spouse, or cohead.

The family reports childcare expenses to enable a family member to further their education.

The family includes a student enrolled in an *institution of higher education*.

Restrictions on Assistance to Students Enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education

This section applies only to students who are seeking assistance on their own, separately from their parents. It does not apply to students residing with parents who are seeking or receiving HCV assistance.

DCHA Policy

In accordance with the verification hierarchy described in section 7-1.B, DCHA will determine whether the student is exempt from the restrictions in 24 CFR 5.612 by verifying any one of the following exemption criteria:

The student is enrolled at an educational institution that does not meet the definition of *institution of higher education* in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (see section Exhibit 3-2).

The student is at least 24 years old.

The student is a veteran, as defined in section 3-II.E.

The student is married.

The student has at least one dependent child, as defined in section 3-II.E.

The student is a person with disabilities, as defined in section 3-II.E, and was receiving assistance prior to November 30, 2005.

If DCHA cannot verify at least one of these exemption criteria, DCHA will conclude that the student is subject to the restrictions on assistance at 24 CFR 5.612. In addition to verifying the student's income eligibility, DCHA will then proceed to verify either the student's parents' income eligibility (see section 7-III.J) or the student's independence from their parents (see below).

Independent Student

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify a student's independence from their parents to determine that the student's parents' income is not relevant for determining the student's eligibility by doing all of the following:

Either reviewing and verifying previous address information to determine whether the student has established a household separate from their parents for at least one year, or reviewing and verifying documentation relevant to determining whether the student meets the U.S. Department of Education's definition of *independent student* (see section 3-II.E)

Reviewing the student's prior year income tax returns to verify the student is independent or verifying the student meets the U.S. Department of Education's definition of *independent student* (see section 3-II.E)

Requesting and obtaining written certification directly from the student's parents identifying the amount of support they will be providing to the student, even if the amount of support is \$0, except in cases in which DCHA determines that the student is a *vulnerable youth* (see section 3-II.E)

7-II.F. DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY

DCHA must verify the existence of a disability in order to allow certain income disallowances and deductions from income. DCHA is not permitted to inquire about the nature or extent of a person's disability [24 CFR 100.202(c)]. DCHA may not inquire about a person's diagnosis or details of treatment for a disability or medical condition. If DCHA receives a verification document that provides such information, DCHA will not place this information in the tenant file. Under no circumstances will DCHA request a participant's medical record(s). For more information on health care privacy laws, see the Department of Health and Human Services' website at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>.

The above cited regulation does not prohibit the following inquiries, provided these inquiries are made of all applicants, whether or not they are persons with disabilities [VG, p. 24]:

- Inquiry into an applicant's ability to meet the requirements of ownership or tenancy
- Inquiry to determine whether an applicant is qualified for a dwelling available only to persons with disabilities or to persons with a particular type of disability
- Inquiry to determine whether an applicant for a dwelling is qualified for a priority available to persons with disabilities or to persons with a particular type of disability
- Inquiring whether an applicant for a dwelling is a current illegal abuser or addict of a controlled substance
- Inquiring whether an applicant has been convicted of the illegal manufacture or distribution of a controlled substance

Family Members Receiving SSA Disability Benefits

Verification of the receipt of disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) is sufficient verification of disability for the purpose of qualifying for waiting list preferences (if applicable) or certain income disallowances and deductions [VG, p. 23].

DCHA Policy

For family members claiming disability who receive disability benefits from the SSA, DCHA will attempt to obtain information about disability benefits through the HUD Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. If documentation from HUD's EIV System is not available, DCHA will request a current (dated within the appropriate benefit year) SSA benefit verification letter from each family member claiming disability status. If the family is unable to provide the document(s), DCHA will ask the family to request a benefit verification letter by either calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213, or by requesting it from www.ssa.gov. Once the applicant or participant receives the benefit verification letter, they will be required to provide it to DCHA.

Family Members Not Receiving SSA Disability Benefits

Receipt of veteran's disability benefits, worker's compensation, or other non-SSA benefits based on the individual's claimed disability are not sufficient verification that the individual meets HUD's definition of disability in 24 CFR 5.403.

DCHA Policy

For family members claiming disability who do not receive disability benefits from the SSA, a knowledgeable professional must provide third-party verification that the family member meets the HUD definition of disability. See the Eligibility chapter for the HUD definition of disability. The knowledgeable professional will verify whether the family member does or does not meet the HUD definition.

7-II.G. CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE IMMIGRATION STATUS [24 CFR 5.508]

Overview

Housing assistance is not available to persons who are not citizens, nationals, or eligible immigrants. Prorated assistance is provided for "mixed families" containing both eligible and ineligible persons. A detailed discussion of eligibility requirements is in the Eligibility chapter. This verifications chapter discusses HUD and DCHA verification requirements related to citizenship status.

The family must provide a certification that identifies each family member as a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, an eligible noncitizen or an ineligible noncitizen and submit the documents discussed below for each family member. Once eligibility to receive assistance has been verified for an individual it need not be collected or verified again during continuously assisted occupancy. [24 CFR 5.508(g)(5)]

U.S. Citizens and Nationals

HUD requires a declaration for each family member who claims to be a U.S. citizen or national. The declaration must be signed personally by any family member 18 or older and by a guardian for minors.

DCHA may request verification of the declaration by requiring presentation of a birth certificate, United States passport or other appropriate documentation.

DCHA Policy

Family members who claim U.S. citizenship or national status will not be required to provide additional documentation unless DCHA receives information indicating that an individual's declaration may not be accurate.

Eligible Immigrants

Documents Required

All family members claiming eligible immigration status must declare their status in the same manner as U.S. citizens and nationals.

The documentation required for eligible noncitizens varies depending upon factors such as the date the person entered the U.S., the conditions under which eligible immigration status has been granted, age, and the date on which the family began receiving HUD-funded assistance. Exhibit 7-1 at the end of this chapter summarizes documents family members must provide.

DCHA Verification [HCV GB, pp. 5-3 and 5-7]

For family members age 62 or older who claim to be eligible immigrants, proof of age is required in the manner described in 7-II.C. of this plan. No further verification of eligible immigration status is required.

For family members under the age of 62 who claim to be eligible immigrants, DCHA must verify immigration status with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

DCHA will follow all USCIS protocols for verification of eligible immigration status.

7-II.H. VERIFICATION OF PREFERENCE STATUS

DCHA must verify any preferences claimed by an applicant that determined placement on the waiting list.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding. DCHA will verify this preference using the DCHA's termination records.

DCHA also offers a preference for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as described in Section 4-III.C. To verify that applicants qualify for the preference, DCHA will follow documentation requirements outlined in Section 16-IX.D.

PART III: VERIFYING INCOME AND ASSETS

Chapter 6, Part I of this plan describes in detail the types of income that are included and excluded and how assets and income from assets are handled. Any assets and income reported by the family must be verified. This part provides DCHA policies that supplement the general verification procedures specified in Part I of this chapter.

7-III.A. EARNED INCOME

Tips

DCHA Policy

Unless tip income is included in a family member's W-2 by the employer, persons who work in industries where tips are standard will be required to sign a certified estimate of tips received for the prior year and tips anticipated to be received in the coming year.

Wages

DCHA Policy

For wages other than tips, the family must provide originals of the two most current, consecutive pay stubs.

7-III.B. BUSINESS AND SELF EMPLOYMENT INCOME

DCHA Policy

Business owners and self-employed persons will be required to provide:

An audited financial statement for the previous fiscal year if an audit was conducted. If an audit was not conducted, a statement of income and expenses must be submitted and the business owner or self-employed person must certify to its accuracy.

All schedules completed for filing federal and local taxes in the preceding year.

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.

DCHA will provide a format for any person who is unable to provide such a statement to record income and expenses for the coming year. The business owner/self-employed person will be required to submit the information requested and to certify to its accuracy at all future reexaminations.

At any reexamination DCHA may request documents that support submitted financial statements such as manifests, appointment books, cash books, or bank statements.

If a family member has been self-employed less than three (3) months, DCHA will accept the family member's certified estimate of income and schedule an interim reexamination in three (3) months. If the family member has been self-employed for three (3) to twelve (12) months DCHA will require the family to provide documentation of income and expenses for this period and use that information to project income.

7-III.C. PERIODIC PAYMENTS AND PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF EARNINGS

For policies governing streamlined income determinations for fixed sources of income, please see Chapter 11.

Social Security/SSI Benefits

Verification requirements for Social Security (SS) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits differ for applicants and participants.

For applicants, since EIV does not contain SS or SSI benefit information, DCHA must ask applicants to provide a copy of their current SS and/or SSI benefit letter (dated within the appropriate benefit year) for each family member that receives SS and/or SSI benefits. If the family is unable to provide the document or documents, DCHA should help the applicant request a benefit verification letter from SSA's website at www.ssa.gov or ask the family to request one by calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213. DCHA must obtain the original benefit letter from the applicant, make a photocopy of the document for the file, and return the original to the family.

For participants, DCHA must obtain information through the HUD EIV system and confirm with the participants that the current listed benefit amount is correct.

- If the participant agrees with the amount reported in EIV, DCHA must use the EIV-reported gross benefit amount to calculate annual income from Social Security. DCHA is required to use the EIV-reported SS and SSI benefit amounts when calculating income unless the tenant disputes the EIV-reported amount. For example, an SSA benefit letter may list the monthly benefit amount as \$450.80 and EIV displays the amount as \$450.00. DCHA must use the EIV-reported amount unless the participant disputes the amount.
- If the participant disputes the EIV-reported benefit amount, or if benefit information is not available in EIV, DCHA must request a current SSA benefit verification letter (dated within the appropriate benefit year) from each family member that receives SS and/or SSI benefits. If the family is unable to provide the document or documents, DCHA should help the participant request a benefit verification letter from SSA's website at www.ssa.gov or ask the family to request one by calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213. DCHA must obtain the original benefit letter from the participant, make a photocopy of the document for the file, and return the original to the family.

Photocopies of social security checks or bank statements are not acceptable forms of verification for SS/SSI benefits.

7-III.D. ALIMONY OR CHILD SUPPORT

DCHA Policy

The methods DCHA will use to verify alimony and child support payments differ depending on whether the family declares that it receives regular payments.

If the family declares that it *receives regular payments*, verification will be obtained in the following order of priority:

Copies of the receipts and/or payment stubs for the 60 days prior to DCHA's request

Third-party verification form from the state or local child support enforcement agency

Third-party verification form from the person paying the support

Family's self-certification of amount received

If the family declares that it *receives irregular or no payments*, in addition to the verification process listed above, the family must provide evidence that it has taken all reasonable efforts to collect amounts due. This may include:

A statement from any agency responsible for enforcing payment that shows the family has requested enforcement and is cooperating with all enforcement efforts

If the family has made independent efforts at collection, a written statement from the attorney or other collection entity that has assisted the family in these efforts

Note: Families are not required to undertake independent enforcement action.

7-III.E. ASSETS AND INCOME FROM ASSETS

Assets Disposed of for Less than Fair Market Value

The family must certify whether any assets have been disposed of for less than fair market value in the preceding two years. DCHA needs to verify only those certifications that warrant documentation [HCV GB, p. 5-28].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify the value of assets disposed of only if:

DCHA does not already have a reasonable estimation of its value from previously collected information, or

The amount reported by the family in the certification appears obviously in error.

Example 1: An elderly participant reported a \$10,000 certificate of deposit at the last annual reexamination and DCHA verified this amount. Now the person reports that she has given this \$10,000 to her son. DCHA has a reasonable estimate of the value of the asset; therefore, reverification of the value of the asset is not necessary.

Example 2: A family member has disposed of its 1/4 share of real property located in a desirable area and has valued her share at approximately \$5,000. Based upon market conditions, this declaration does not seem realistic. Therefore, DCHA will verify the value of this asset.

7-III.F. NET INCOME FROM RENTAL PROPERTY

DCHA Policy

The family must provide:

A current executed lease for the property that shows the rental amount or certification from the current tenant

A self-certification from the family members engaged in the rental of property providing an estimate of expenses for the coming year and the most recent IRS Form 1040 with Schedule E (Rental Income).

If schedule E was not prepared, DCHA will require the family members involved in the rental of property to provide a self-certification of income and expenses for the previous year and may request documentation to support the statement including: tax statements, insurance invoices, bills for reasonable maintenance and utilities, and bank statements or amortization schedules showing monthly interest expense.

7-III.G. RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

DCHA Policy

DCHA will accept written third-party documents supplied by the family as evidence of the status of retirement accounts.

The type of original document that will be accepted depends upon the family member's retirement status.

Before retirement, DCHA will accept an original document from the entity holding the account dated within the appropriate benefit year.

Upon retirement, DCHA will accept an original document dated within the appropriate benefit year from the entity holding the account that reflects any distributions of the account balance, any lump sums taken and any regular payments.

After retirement, DCHA will accept an original document from the entity holding the account dated within the appropriate benefit year that reflects any distributions of the account balance, any lump sums taken and any regular payments.

7-III.H. INCOME FROM EXCLUDED SOURCES

A detailed discussion of excluded income is provided in Chapter 6, Part I.

HUD guidance on verification of excluded income draws a distinction between income which is fully excluded and income which is only partially excluded.

For fully excluded income, DCHA is **not** required to follow the verification hierarchy, document the reason third-party verification is not available, or report the income on the 50058. Fully excluded income is defined as income that is entirely excluded from the annual income determination (for example, food stamps, earned income of a minor, or foster care funds) [Notice PIH 2013-04].

DCHA may accept a family's signed application or reexamination form as self-certification of fully excluded income. They do not have to require additional documentation. However, if there is any doubt that a source of income qualifies for full exclusion, DCHA has the option of requiring additional verification.

For partially excluded income, DCHA **is** required to follow the verification hierarchy and all applicable regulations, and to report the income on the 50058. Partially excluded income is defined as income where only a certain portion of what is reported by the family qualifies to be excluded and the remainder is included in annual income (for example, the income of an adult full-time student).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will accept the family's self-certification as verification of fully excluded income. DCHA may request additional documentation if necessary to document the income source.

DCHA will verify the source and amount of partially excluded income as described in Part 1 of this chapter.

7-III.I. ZERO INCOME FAMILIES [Notice PIH 2023-27]

DCHA has discretion to establish reasonable procedures to manage the risk of unreported income, such as asking families to complete a zero-income worksheet at admission or periodically after admission to determine if they have any sources of unreported income or searching any UIV sources for unreported income.

In calculating annual income, DCHA must not assign monetary value to nonmonetary in-kind donations from a food bank or similar organization received by the family [24 CFR 5.609(b)(24)(vi)].

DCHA may accept a self-certification of zero income from the family without taking any additional steps to verify zero reported income. HUD does not require such self-certifications be notarized.

If DCHA performs zero income reviews it must update local discretionary policies, procedures, and forms. Families who begin receiving income which does not trigger an interim reexamination should no longer be considered zero income even though the family's income is not reflected on the Form HUD-50058.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will check UIV sources and/or may request information from third-party sources to verify that certain forms of income such as unemployment benefits, TANF, SS, SSI, earned income, child support, etc., are not being received by families claiming to have zero annual income.

DCHA will also require that each family member who claims zero income status complete a zero-income form. If any sources of income are identified on the form, DCHA will verify the income in accordance with the policies in this chapter prior to including the income in the family's annual income. DCHA will conduct interims in accordance with DCHA policy in Chapter 11.

7-III.J. STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9) as updated for HOTMA

The regulations under HOTMA distinguish between two categories of student financial assistance paid to both full-time and part-time students. Any other grant-in-aid, scholarship, or other assistance amounts and individual received for the actual covered costs mandated income exclusions are included [24 CFR 5.609(b)(9)(ii)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will request written third-party verification of both the source and the amount of student financial assistance. Family-provided documents from the educational institution attended by the student will be requested, as well as documents generated by any other person or entity providing such assistance, as reported by the student.

In addition, unless the student's only source of assistance is assistance under Title IV of HEA, DCHA will request written verification of the cost of the student's tuition, books, supplies, room and board, and other required fees and charges to the student from the educational institution.

If DCHA is unable to obtain third -party written verification of the requested information, DCHA will pursue other forms of verification following the verification hierarchy in section 7-I.B.

7-III.K. PARENTAL INCOME OF STUDENTS SUBJECT TO ELIGIBILITY RESTRICTIONS

If a student enrolled at an institution of higher education is under the age of 24, is not a veteran, is not married, does not have a dependent child, and is not a person with disabilities receiving HCV assistance as of November 30, 2005, the income of the student's parents must be considered when determining income eligibility, unless the student is determined independent from their parents or a *vulnerable youth* in accordance with DCHA policy [24 CFR 5.612, FR Notice 4/10/06, p. 18146, and FR Notice 9/21/16].

This provision does not apply to students residing with parents who are seeking or receiving HCV assistance. It is limited to students who are seeking or receiving assistance on their own, separately from their parents.

DCHA Policy

If DCHA is required to determine the income eligibility of a student's parents, DCHA will request an income declaration and certification of income from the appropriate parent(s) (as determined in section 3-II.E). DCHA will send the request directly to the parents, who will be required to certify to their income under penalty of perjury. The parents will be required to submit the information directly to DCHA. The required information must be submitted (postmarked) within 10 business days of the date of DCHA's request or within any extended timeframe approved by DCHA.

DCHA reserves the right to request and review supporting documentation at any time if it questions the declaration or certification. Supporting documentation may include, but is not limited to, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax returns, consecutive and original pay stubs, bank statements, pension benefit statements, benefit award letters, and other official and authentic documents from a federal, state, or local agency.

PART IV: VERIFYING MANDATORY DEDUCTIONS

7-IV.A. DEPENDENT AND ELDERLY/DISABLED HOUSEHOLD DEDUCTIONS

The dependent and elderly/disabled family deductions require only that DCHA verify that the family members identified as dependents or elderly/disabled persons meet the statutory definitions. No further verifications are required.

Dependent Deduction

See Chapter 6 (6-II.B.) for a full discussion of this deduction. DCHA must verify that:

- Any person under the age of 18 for whom the dependent deduction is claimed is not the head, spouse, or cohead of the family and is not a foster child
- Any person age 18 or older for whom the dependent deduction is claimed is not a foster adult or live-in aide, and is a person with a disability or a full-time student

Elderly/Disabled Family Deduction

See Eligibility chapter for a definition of elderly and disabled families and Chapter 6 (6-II.C.) for a discussion of the deduction. DCHA must verify that the head, spouse, or cohead is 62 years of age or older or a person with disabilities.

7-IV.B. HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE EXPENSE DEDUCTION

Policies related to health medical care expenses are found in 6-II.D. The amount of the deduction will be verified following the standard verification procedures described in Part I.

Amount of Expense

DCHA Policy

Health and medical care expenses will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as pharmacy printouts or receipts.

DCHA will make a best effort to determine what expenses from the past are likely to continue to occur in the future. DCHA will also accept evidence of monthly payments or total payments that will be due for health and medical care expenses during the upcoming 12 months.

Written third-party verification forms, if the family is unable to provide acceptable documentation.

If third-party or document review is not possible, written family certification as to costs anticipated to be incurred during the upcoming 12 months.

In addition, DCHA must verify that:

- The household is eligible for the deduction.
- The costs to be deducted are qualified medical expenses.
- The expenses are not paid for or reimbursed by any other source.
- Costs incurred in past years are counted only once.

Eligible Household

The health and medical care expense deduction is permitted only for households in which the head, spouse, or cohead is at least 62, or a person with disabilities. DCHA must verify that the family meets the definition of an elderly or disabled family provided in the Eligibility chapter and as described in Chapter 7 (7-IV.A.) of this plan.

Qualified Expenses

To be eligible for the health and medical care expenses deduction, the costs must qualify as health and medical care expenses. See Chapter 6 (6-II.D.) for DCHA's policy on what counts as a health and medical care expense.

Unreimbursed Expenses

To be eligible for the health and medical care expenses deduction, the costs must not be reimbursed by another source.

DCHA Policy

The family will be required to certify that the health and medical care expenses are not paid or reimbursed to the family from any source. If health and medical care expenses are verified through a third party, the third party must certify that the expenses are not paid or reimbursed from any other source.

Expenses Incurred in Past Years

DCHA Policy

When anticipated costs are related to on-going payment of medical bills incurred in past years, DCHA will verify:

The anticipated repayment schedule

The amounts paid in the past, and

Whether the amounts to be repaid have been deducted from the family's annual income in past years

7-IV.C. DISABILITY ASSISTANCE EXPENSES

Policies related to disability assistance expenses are found in 6-II.E. The amount of the deduction will be verified following the standard verification procedures described in Part I.

Amount of Expense

Attendant Care

DCHA Policy

DCHA will accept written third-party documents provided by the family.

If family-provided documents are not available, DCHA will provide a third-party verification form directly to the care provider requesting the needed information.

Expenses for attendant care will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as receipts or cancelled checks.

Third-party verification form signed by the provider, if family-provided documents are not available.

If third-party verification is not possible, written family certification as to costs anticipated to be incurred for the upcoming 12 months.

Auxiliary Apparatus

DCHA Policy

Expenses for auxiliary apparatus will be verified through:

Written third-party documents provided by the family, such as billing statements for purchase of auxiliary apparatus, or other evidence of monthly payments or total payments that will be due for the apparatus during the upcoming 12 months.

Third-party verification form signed by the provider, if family-provided documents are not available.

If third-party verification is not possible, written family certification of estimated apparatus costs for the upcoming 12 months.

In addition, DCHA must verify that:

- The family member for whom the expense is incurred is a person with disabilities (as described in 7-II.F above).
- The expense permits a family member, or members, to work (as described in 6-II.E.).
- The expense is not reimbursed from another source (as described in 6-II.E.).

Family Member is a Person with Disabilities

To be eligible for the disability assistance expense deduction, the costs must be incurred for attendant care or auxiliary apparatus expense associated with a person with disabilities. DCHA will verify that the expense is incurred for a person with disabilities (See 7-II.F.).

Family Member(s) Permitted to Work

DCHA must verify that the expenses claimed actually enable a family member, or members, (including the person with disabilities) to work.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will request third-party verification from a rehabilitation agency or knowledgeable medical professional indicating that the person with disabilities requires attendant care or an auxiliary apparatus to be employed, or that the attendant care or auxiliary apparatus enables another family member, or members, to work (See 6-II.E.). This documentation may be provided by the family.

If third-party verification has been attempted and is either unavailable or proves unsuccessful, the family must certify that the disability assistance expense frees a family member, or members (possibly including the family member receiving the assistance), to work.

Unreimbursed Expenses

To be eligible for the disability expenses deduction, the costs must not be reimbursed by another source.

DCHA Policy

The family will be required to certify that attendant care or auxiliary apparatus expenses are not paid by or reimbursed to the family from any source.

7-IV.D. CHILDCARE EXPENSES

Policies related to childcare expenses are found in Chapter 6 (6-II.F). The amount of the deduction will be verified following the standard verification procedures described in Part I of this chapter. In addition, DCHA must verify that:

- The child is eligible for care (12 or younger).
- The costs claimed are not reimbursed.
- The costs enable a family member to work, actively seek work, or further their education.
- The costs are for an allowable type of childcare.
- The costs are reasonable.

Eligible Child

To be eligible for the childcare deduction, the costs must be incurred for the care of a child under the age of 13. DCHA will verify that the child being cared for (including foster children) is under the age of 13 (See 7-II.C.).

Unreimbursed Expense

To be eligible for the childcare deduction, the costs must not be reimbursed by another source.

DCHA Policy

The family (and the care provider) will be required to certify that the childcare expenses are not paid or reimbursed to the family from any source.

Pursuing an Eligible Activity

DCHA must verify that the family member(s) that the family has identified as being enabled to seek work, pursue education, or be gainfully employed, are actually pursuing those activities.

DCHA Policy

Information to be Gathered

DCHA will verify information about how the schedule for the claimed activity relates to the hours of care provided, the time required for transportation, the time required for study (for students), the relationship of the family member(s) to the child, and any special needs of the child that might help determine which family member is enabled to pursue an eligible activity.

Seeking Work

Whenever possible DCHA will use documentation from a state or local agency that monitors work-related requirements (e.g., welfare or unemployment). In such cases DCHA will request family-provided verification from the agency of the member's job seeking efforts to date, and require the family to submit to DCHA any reports provided to the other agency.

In the event third-party verification is not available, DCHA will provide the family with a form on which the family member must record job search efforts. DCHA will review this information at each subsequent reexamination for which this deduction is claimed.

Furthering Education

DCHA will request third-party documentation to verify that the person permitted to further their education by the childcare is enrolled and provide information about the timing of classes for which the person is registered. The documentation may be provided by the family.

Gainful Employment

DCHA will seek third-party verification of the work schedule of the person who is permitted to work by the childcare. In cases in which two or more family members could be permitted to work, the work schedules for all relevant family members may be verified. The documentation may be provided by the family.

Allowable Type of Childcare

The type of care to be provided is determined by the family, but must fall within certain guidelines, as discussed in Chapter 6.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will verify that the type of childcare selected by the family is allowable, as described in Chapter 6 (6-II.F).

DCHA will verify that the fees paid to the childcare provider cover only childcare costs (e.g., no housekeeping services or personal services) and are paid only for the care of an eligible child (e.g., prorate costs if some of the care is provided for ineligible family members).

DCHA will verify that the childcare provider is not an assisted family member. Verification will be made through the head of household's declaration of family members who are expected to reside in the unit.

Reasonableness of Expenses

Only reasonable childcare costs can be deducted.

DCHA Policy

The actual costs the family incurs will be compared with the DCHA's established standards of reasonableness for the type of care in the locality to ensure that the costs are reasonable.

If the family presents a justification for costs that exceed typical costs in the area, DCHA will request additional documentation, as required, to support a determination that the higher cost is appropriate.

**EXHIBIT 7-1: SUMMARY OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR NONCITIZENS [HCV GB, pp. 5-9 and 5-10]**

- All noncitizens claiming eligible status must sign a declaration of eligible immigrant status on a form acceptable to DCHA.
- Except for persons 62 or older, all noncitizens must sign a verification consent form
- Additional documents are required based upon the person's status.

Elderly Noncitizens

- A person 62 years of age or older who claims eligible immigration status also must provide proof of age such as birth certificate, passport, or documents showing receipt of SS old-age benefits.

All other Noncitizens

- Noncitizens that claim eligible immigration status also must present the applicable USCIS document. Acceptable USCIS documents are listed below.

- Form I-551 Alien Registration Receipt Card (for permanent resident aliens)
- Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record annotated with one of the following:
 - “Admitted as a Refugee Pursuant to Section 207”
 - “Section 208” or “Asylum”
 - “Section 243(h)” or “Deportation stayed by Attorney General”
 - “Paroled Pursuant to Section 221 (d)(5) of the USCIS”

- Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record with no annotation accompanied by:
 - A final court decision granting asylum (but only if no appeal is taken);
 - A letter from a USCIS asylum officer granting asylum (if application is filed on or after 10/1/90) or from a USCIS district director granting asylum (application filed before 10/1/90);
 - A court decision granting withholding of deportation; or
 - A letter from an asylum officer granting withholding or deportation (if application filed on or after 10/1/90).

- Form I-688 Temporary Resident Card annotated “Section 245A” or Section 210”.

Form I-688B Employment Authorization Card annotated “Provision of Law 274a. 12(11)” or “Provision of Law 274a.12”.

- A receipt issued by the USCIS indicating that an application for issuance of a replacement document in one of the above listed categories has been made and the applicant’s entitlement to the document has been verified; or
- Other acceptable evidence. If other documents are determined by the USCIS to constitute acceptable evidence of eligible immigration status, they will be announced by notice published in the *Federal Register*

Chapter 8.A.

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS AND RENT REASONABLENESS DETERMINATIONS

[24 CFR 982 Subpart I and 24 CFR 982.507]

INTRODUCTION

Owners must maintain all units occupied by families receiving Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance in accordance with housing quality standards. Units assisted under the program must comply with HUD's National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) regulations and standards no later than October 1, 2025. Until such time, DCHA may continue using the HQS inspection standards.

All units must pass an HQS inspection prior to the approval of a lease and at least once every 24 months during the term of the contract, and at other times as needed, to determine that the unit meets HQS. HUD also requires DCHA to determine that rents for units under the program are reasonable when compared to comparable unassisted units in the market area.

This chapter explains HUD and DCHA requirements related to housing quality and rent reasonableness as follows:

Part I. Physical Standards. This part discusses the physical standards required of units occupied by HCV-assisted families and identifies decisions about the acceptability of the unit that may be made by the family based upon the family's preference. It also identifies life-threatening conditions that must be addressed on an expedited basis.

Part II. The Inspection Process. This part describes the types of inspections DCHA will make and the steps that will be taken when units do not meet HQS.

Part III. Rent Reasonableness Determinations. This part discusses the policies DCHA will use to make rent reasonableness determinations.

Special HQS requirements for homeownership, manufactured homes, and other special housing types are discussed in Chapter 15 to the extent that they apply in this jurisdiction.

NSPIRE AND HQS

Even once the HQS inspection standard has sunset, the regulations at 24 CFR Part 982 and 983 governing the HCV and PBV programs will continue to the terms *HQS* and *housing quality standards* rather than *NSPIRE*. This is because the definition of *housing quality standards (HQS)* at 24 CFR 982.4 means the minimum quality standards developed by HUD in accordance with 24 CFR 5.703 for the HCV program, including any variations approved by HUD for DCHA. As such, the model policy uses the term *housing quality standards* whenever applicable regulations use this term. Except in the chapter describing HQS, the acronym *HQS* is not used in the model policy in order to avoid confusion between the umbrella term meaning housing standards and the specific inspection protocol. The model policy only uses the term *NSPIRE* when referring to specific NSPIRE standards

PART I: PHYSICAL STANDARDS

8-I.A. GENERAL HUD REQUIREMENTS

HUD Performance and Acceptability Standards

HUD's performance and acceptability standards for HCV-assisted housing are provided in 24 CFR 982.401. These standards cover the following areas:

- Sanitary facilities
- Food preparation and refuse disposal
- Space and security
- Thermal environment
- Illumination and electricity
- Structure and materials
- Interior air quality
- Water supply
- Lead-based paint
- Access
- Site and neighborhood
- Sanitary condition
- Smoke detectors

A summary of HUD performance criteria is provided in Exhibit 8-1. Additional guidance on these requirements is found in the following HUD resources:

- Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook, Chapter 10.
- HUD Housing Inspection Manual for Section 8 Housing
- HUD Inspection Form, form HUD-52580 (3/01) and Inspection Checklist, form HUD-52580-A (9/00)
- HUD Notice 2003-31, Accessibility Notice: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Fair Housing Act of 1988.

NSPIRE Standards Applicable to HQS [HUD Letter 6/14/24]

Even if DCHA is still under the HQS inspection standard, DCHA must apply the following requirements under NSPIRE:

The NSPIRE standard for carbon monoxide alarms are currently applicable even if DCHA has not yet transitioned to NSPIRE;

- DCHA is required to comply with the NSPIRE Smoke Alarm Standard prior to December 3, 2024; and
- The Visual Assessment Standard for Potential Lead-Based Paint Hazard in 24 CFR Part 35 Subparts M and H apply.

Tenant Preference Items

HUD requires DCHA to enforce minimum HQS but also recognizes that certain judgments about the acceptability of the unit are left to the family. For example, DCHA must ensure that the unit contains the required sanitary facilities, but the family decides whether the cosmetic appearance of the facilities is acceptable. Exhibit 8-2 summarizes those items that are considered tenant preferences.

Modifications to Provide Accessibility

Under the Fair Housing Act of 1988 an owner must not refuse the request of a family that contains a person with a disability to make necessary and reasonable modifications to the unit. Such modifications are at the family's expense. The owner may require restoration of the unit to its original condition if the modification would interfere with the owner or next occupant's full enjoyment of the premises. The owner may not increase a customarily required security deposit. However, the landlord may negotiate a restoration agreement that requires the family to restore the unit and, if necessary to ensure the likelihood of restoration, may require the tenant to pay a reasonable amount into an interest-bearing escrow account over a reasonable period of time. The interest in any such account accrues to the benefit of the tenant. The owner may also require reasonable assurances that the quality of the work will be acceptable and that any required building permits will be obtained. [24 CFR 100.203; Notice 2003-31].

Modifications to units to provide access for a person with a disability must meet all applicable HQS requirements and conform to the design, construction, or alteration of facilities contained in the UFAS and the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) [28 CFR 35.151(c) and Notice 2003-31] See Chapter 2 of this plan for additional information on reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.

DCHA Policy

Any owner that intends to negotiate a restoration agreement or require an escrow account must submit the agreement(s) to DCHA for review.

8-I.B. ADDITIONAL LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

DCHA may impose variations to the HQS as long as the additional criteria are not likely to adversely affect the health or safety of participant families or severely restrict housing choices for families. HUD approval is required for variations to the HQS. HUD approval is not required if the variations are clarifications of HUD's acceptability criteria or performance standards [24 CFR 982.401(a)(4)].

Thermal Environment [HCV GB p.10-7]

DCHA must define a "healthy living environment" for the local climate. This may be done by establishing a temperature that the heating system must be capable of maintaining, that is appropriate for the local climate.

DCHA Policy

The heating system must be capable of maintaining an interior temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit between October 1 and May 1.

Clarifications of HUD Requirements

DCHA Policy

As permitted by HUD, DCHA has adopted the following specific requirements that elaborate on HUD standards.

Walls

In areas where plaster or drywall is sagging, severely cracked, or otherwise damaged, it must be repaired or replaced.

Windows

Window sashes must be in good condition, solid and intact, and properly fitted to the window frame. Damaged or deteriorated sashes must be replaced.

Windows must be weather-stripped as needed to ensure a weather-tight seal.

Window screens must be in good condition (applies only if screens are present).

Doors

All exterior doors must be weather-tight to avoid any air or water infiltration, be lockable, have no holes, have all trim intact, and have a threshold.

All interior doors must have no holes, have all trim intact, and be openable without the use of a key.

Floors

All wood floors must be sanded to a smooth surface and sealed. Any loose or warped boards must be resecured and made level. If they cannot be leveled, they must be replaced.

All floors must be in a finished state. Raw wood or unsealed concrete is not permitted.

All floors should have some type of base shoe, trim, or sealing for a "finished look." Vinyl base shoe is permitted.

Sinks

All sinks and commode water lines must have shut off valves, unless faucets are wall mounted.

All sinks must have functioning stoppers.

Toilets

All worn or cracked toilet seats and tank lids must be replaced and toilet tank lid must fit properly.

Security

If window security bars or security screens are present on emergency exit windows, they must be equipped with a quick release system. The owner is responsible for ensuring that the family is instructed on the use of the quick release system.

8-I.C. LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS [24 CFR 982.404(a); FR Notice 1/18/17]

HUD requires DCHA to define life-threatening conditions and to notify the owner or the family (whichever is responsible) of the corrections required. The responsible party must correct life-threatening conditions within 24 hours of DCHA notification.

DCHA Policy

The following are considered life-threatening conditions:

Any condition that jeopardizes the security of the unit

Major plumbing leaks or flooding, waterlogged ceiling or floor in imminent danger of falling

Natural or LP gas or fuel oil leaks

A fuel storage vessel, fluid line, valve, or connection that supplies fuel to a HVAC unit is leaking or a strong odor is detected with potential for explosion or fire or that results in a health risk if inhaled

Any electrical problem or condition that could result in shock or fire

A light fixture is readily accessible, is not securely mounted to the ceiling or wall, and electrical connections or wires are exposed

A light fixture is hanging by its wires

A light fixture has a missing or broken bulb, and the open socket is readily accessible to the tenant during the day-to-day use of the unit

A receptacle (outlet) or switch is missing or broken and electrical connections or wires are exposed

An open circuit breaker position is not appropriately blanked off in a panel board, main panel board, or other electrical box that contains circuit breakers or fuses

A cover is missing from any electrical device box, panel box, switch gear box, control panel, etc., and there are exposed electrical connections

Any nicks, abrasions, or fraying of the insulation that exposes conducting wire

Exposed bare wires or electrical connections

Any condition that results in openings in electrical panels or electrical control device enclosures

Water leaking or ponding near any electrical device

Any condition that poses a serious risk of electrocution or fire and poses an immediate life-threatening condition

Absence of a working heating system when outside temperature is below 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Utilities not in service, including no running hot water

Conditions that present the imminent possibility of injury

Obstacles that prevent safe entrance or exit from the unit

Any components that affect the function of the fire escape are missing or damaged

Stored items or other barriers restrict or prevent the use of the fire escape in the event of an emergency

The building's emergency exit is blocked or impeded, thus limiting the ability of occupants to exit in a fire or other emergency

Absence of a functioning toilet in the unit

Inoperable or missing smoke detectors

Missing or inoperable carbon monoxide detector

Missing, damaged, discharged, overcharged, or expired fire extinguisher (where required)

Gas/oil-fired water heater or heating, ventilation, or cooling system with missing, damaged, improper, or misaligned chimney venting

The chimney or venting system on a fuel-fired water heater is misaligned, negatively pitched, or damaged, which may cause improper or dangerous venting or gases

A gas dryer vent is missing, damaged, or is visually determined to be inoperable, or the dryer exhaust is not vented to the outside

A fuel-fired space heater is not properly vented or lacks available combustion air

A non-vented space heater is present

Safety devices on a fuel-fired space heater are missing or damaged

The chimney or venting system on a fuel-fired heating, ventilation, or cooling system is misaligned, negatively pitched, or damaged, which may cause improper or dangerous venting of gas

Deteriorating paint as defined at 24 CFR 35.110 in a unit built before 1978 that is to be occupied by a family with a child under six years of age if it would prevent the family from moving into the unit.

If an owner fails to correct life-threatening conditions as required by DCHA, DCHA will enforce the HQS in accordance with HUD requirements. See 8-II-G.

If a family fails to correct a family-caused life-threatening condition as required by DCHA, DCHA will enforce the family obligations. See 8-II.H.

The owner will be required to repair an inoperable smoke detector unless DCHA determines that the family has intentionally disconnected it (by removing batteries or other means). In this case, the family will be required to repair the smoke detector within 24 hours.

8-I.D. OWNER AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES [24 CFR 982.404]

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:

Family Responsibilities

The family is responsible for correcting the following HQS deficiencies:

- Tenant-paid utilities not in service
- Failure to provide or maintain appliances owned by the family
- Damage to the unit or premises caused by a household member or guest beyond ordinary wear and tear that result in a breach of the HQS. *Ordinary wear and tear* is defined as items which could not be charged against the tenant's security deposit under state law or court practice.
- **Owner Responsibilities**

The owner is responsible for all HQS violations not listed as a family responsibility above, even if the violation is caused by the family's living habits (e.g., vermin infestation). However, if the family's actions constitute a serious or repeated lease violation, the owner may take legal action to evict the family.

DCHA Policy

The owner is responsible for all housing quality violations not listed as a family responsibility above, even if the violation is caused by the family's living habits (e.g., vermin infestation). However, if the family's actions constitute a serious or repeated lease violation, the owner may take legal action to evict the family.

The owner will be required to repair an inoperable smoke detector unless DCHA determines that the family has intentionally disconnected it (by removing batteries or other means). In this case, the family will be required to repair the smoke detector within 24 hours.

If an owner fails to correct life-threatening conditions as required by DCHA, DCHA will enforce the housing quality standards in accordance with HUD requirements. See 8-II.G.

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024 or later:

Owner Obligation

The owner must maintain the unit in accordance with housing quality standards. A unit is not in compliance with housing quality standards if DCHA or other inspector authorized by the state or local government determines that the unit has housing quality standards deficiencies based upon an inspection, notifies the owner in writing of the deficiencies, and the deficiencies are not remedied within the appropriate time frame.

In the case of a housing quality standards deficiency that DCHA determines is caused by the tenant, any member of the household, or any guest or other person under the tenant's control (other than damage resulting from ordinary use), DCHA may waive the owner's responsibility to remedy the violation. The HAP to the owner may not be withheld or abated if the owner responsibility has been waived. However, if the family's actions constitute a serious or repeated lease violation, the owner may take legal action to evict the family. In addition, DCHA may terminate the family's assistance because of a housing quality standards breach (beyond damage resulting from ordinary use) caused by any member of the household, guest, or other person under the tenant's control.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will waive the owner's responsibility for housing quality standards deficiencies that have been caused by the tenant, any member of the household, or any guest or other person under the tenant's control, to the extent the tenant can be held responsible for ensuring that the deficiencies are corrected: the tenant must take all necessary steps permissible under the lease and state and local law to remedy the deficiency. This may include paying the owner for the cost of the necessary repairs in accordance with the lease.

Family Responsibilities

The family may be held responsible for a breach of housing quality standards caused by any of the following:

- Tenant-paid utilities not in service;
- Failure to provide or maintain appliances owned by the family; and
- Damage to the dwelling unit or premises cause by a household member or guest beyond ordinary wear and tear.

DCHA Policy

Damages beyond ordinary wear and tear will be considered to be damages which could be assessed against the security deposit under state law or in court practice. If DCHA has waived the owner's responsibility to remedy the violation as outlined under the owner obligations above, the following applies:

- If the housing quality standards breach caused by the family is life-threatening, the family must take all steps permissible under the lease and state and local law to ensure the deficiency is corrected within 24 hours of notification.
- For other family-caused deficiencies, the family must take all steps permissible under the lease and state and local law to ensure the deficiency is corrected within 30 calendar days of notification (or DCHA-approved extension).

If the family has caused a breach of the HQS, DCHA must take prompt and vigorous action to enforce the family obligations. DCHA may terminate assistance for the family in accordance with 24 CFR 982.552.

8-I.E. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL [24 CFR 35.1225; FR Notice 1/13/17; Notice PIH 2017-13]

If DCHA is notified by a public health department or other medical health care provider, or verifies information from a source other than a public health department or medical health care provider, that a child of less than six years of age, living in an HCV-assisted unit has been identified as having an elevated blood lead level, DCHA must complete an environmental investigation of the dwelling unit within 15 calendar days after being notified by a public health department or other medical health care provider. The environmental investigation must be completed in accordance with program requirements, and the result of the environmental investigation must be immediately provided to the owner of the dwelling unit. In cases where the public health department has already completed an evaluation of the unit, this information must be provided to the owner.

Within 30 days after receiving the environmental investigation report from DCHA, or the evaluation from the public health department, the owner is required to complete the reduction of identified lead-based paint hazards in accordance with the lead-based paint regulations [24 CFR 35.1325 and 35.1330; 40 CFR 745.227]. If the owner does not complete the “hazard reduction” as required, the dwelling unit is in violation of HQS and DCHA will take action in accordance with Section 8-II.G.

DCHA reporting requirements, and data collection and record keeping responsibilities related to children with an elevated blood lead level are discussed in Chapter 16.

8-I.F. VIOLATION OF HQS SPACE STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.401, 24 CFR 982.403]

A dwelling unit must:

- Provide adequate space and security for the family
- Have at least one bedroom or living/sleeping room for each two persons

A unit that does not meet these HQS space standards is defined as *overcrowded*.

A living room may be used as sleeping (bedroom) space, but no more than two persons may occupy the space [HCV GB p. 10-6]. A bedroom or living/sleeping room must have at least:

- One window
- Two electrical outlets in proper operating condition (permanent overhead or wall-mounted light fixtures may count as one of the required electrical outlets)

If DCHA determines that a unit is overcrowded because of an increase in family size or a change in family composition, DCHA must issue the family a new voucher, and the family and DCHA must try to find an acceptable unit as soon as possible. If an acceptable unit is available for rental by the family, DCHA must terminate the HAP contract in accordance with its terms.

PART II: THE INSPECTION PROCESS

8-II.A. OVERVIEW [24 CFR 982.405]

Types of Inspections

DCHA conducts the following types of inspections as needed. Each type of inspection is discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

- *Initial Inspections.* DCHA conducts initial inspections in response to a request from the family to approve a unit for participation in the HCV program.
- *Periodic Inspections.* HUD requires DCHA to inspect each unit under lease at least annually or biennially, depending on DCHA policy, to confirm that the unit still meets HQS. The inspection may be conducted in conjunction with the family's annual reexamination but also may be conducted separately.
- *Interim Inspections.* A special inspection may be requested by the owner, the family, or a third party as a result of problems identified with a unit between annual inspections.
- *Supervisory Quality Control Inspections.* HUD requires that a sample of units be inspected by a supervisor or other qualified individual to evaluate the work of the inspector(s) and to ensure that inspections are performed in compliance with the HQS.

Inspection of DCHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)]

DCHA must obtain the services of an independent entity to perform all HQS inspections in cases where an HCV family is receiving assistance in a DCHA-owned unit as defined in 24 CFR 982.4. The independent entity must communicate the results of each inspection to the family and DCHA. The independent agency must be approved by HUD, and may be the unit of general local government for DCHA jurisdiction (unless DCHA is itself the unit of general local government or an agency of such government).

DCHA must inform the family, both orally and in writing, that the family has the right to select any eligible unit available for lease. DCHA-owned unit is freely selected by the family, without DCHA pressure or steering.

For information on the inspection of DCHA-owned units in the PBV program, see Chapters 17 and 18.

Inspection Costs [Notice PIH 2016-05; 24 CFR 5.705(h)]

DCHA may not charge the family for unit inspections or re-inspections [24 CFR 982.405(ge)]. In the case of inspections of DCHA-owned units, DCHA may compensate the independent agency from ongoing administrative fees (including fees credited to the administrative fee reserve) for inspections performed. DCHA and the independent agency may not charge the family any fee or charge for the inspection [24 CFR.982.352(b)].

DCHA may not charge the owner for the inspection of the unit prior to the initial term of the lease or for a first inspection during assisted occupancy of the unit. However, DCHA may charge a reasonable fee to owners for reinspection if an owner notifies DCHA that a repair has been made or the allotted time for repairs has elapsed and a reinspection reveals that any deficiency cited in the previous inspection that the owner is responsible for repairing, pursuant to 24 CFR 982.404(a), was not corrected. Fees may not be imposed for tenant-caused damages, for cases in which the inspector could not gain access to the unit, or for new deficiencies discovered during a reinspection.

The owner may not pass the cost of a reinspection fee to the family. Reinspection fees must be added to DCHA's administrative fee reserves and may only be used for activities related to the provision of tenant-based assistance.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not charge a fee for failed reinspections.

Remote Video Inspections (RVIs) [Notice PIH 2020-31]

As an alternative to some or all on-site inspections, DCHA may, but is not required to, perform HQS inspections from a remote location using video streaming technology and a proxy at the inspection site. Since there may be some circumstances in which the application of technology provides insufficient information or evidence to allow DCHA to make appropriate determinations about whether a condition violates HQS, Notice PIH 2020-31 requires that if DCHA chooses to implement RVIs, DCHA should have policies and procedures in place to address such limitations.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not conduct any HQS inspection using RVI.

Notice and Scheduling

The family must allow DCHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times with reasonable notice [24 CFR 982.551(d)].

DCHA Policy

Both the family and the owner will be given reasonable notice of all inspections. Except in the case of a life-threatening emergency, reasonable notice is considered to be not less than 48 hours. Inspections may be scheduled between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Generally, inspections will be conducted on business days only. In the case of a life-threatening emergency, DCHA will give as much notice as possible, given the nature of the emergency.

Owner and Family Inspection Attendance

HUD permits DCHA to set policy regarding family and owner presence at the time of inspection [HCV GB p. 10-27].

DCHA Policy

When a family occupies the unit at the time of inspection an authorized adult must be present for the inspection. The presence of the owner or the owner's representative is encouraged but is not required.

At initial inspection of a vacant unit, DCHA will inspect the unit in the presence of the owner or owner's representative. The presence of a family representative is permitted but is not required.

8-II.B. INITIAL HQS INSPECTION [24 CFR 982.405(a)]

HUD regulations require that units assisted under the HCV program be inspected to determine that the units meet housing quality standards before DCHA approves assisted tenancy. However, DCHA has two options for bringing units under HAP contract (or, in the case of PBV, approving occupancy and the execution of a lease) more quickly. DCHA may, but is not required to approve assisted tenancy and start the HAP if the unit:

- Failed the initial inspection, but only if no life-threatening deficiencies are identified; and/or
- Passed an alternative inspection in the last 24 months.

If DCHA adopts the alternative inspection option in combination with the non-life-threatening deficiencies option, DCHA must follow family and owner notification requirements listed at 24 CFR 982.406(f). Otherwise, if neither of the above provisions are adopted, DCHA must determine that the unit the family selects meets NSPIRE standards prior to approving tenancy.

Approving Units with Non-Life-Threatening Deficiencies [FR Notice 1/18/17; Notice PIH 2017-20; FR Notice 5/7/24; and 24 CFR 982.405(j)]

DCHA may approve assisted tenancy, execute a HAP contract, and begin paying HAP if a unit fails an initial inspection, but only if the deficiencies identified are non-life threatening. This is known as the "NLT option." If DCHA implements the NLT option they may apply the option to all of DCHA's initial inspections or may limit it to certain units. If the NLT option is adopted, DCHA must follow requirements listed at 24 CFR 982.405(j) for family and owner notification.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not use the NLT option. All units must pass the initial inspection on or before the effective date of the HAP contract.

Approving Units Using Alternative Inspections [FR Notice 1/18/17; Notice PIH 2017-20; FR Notice 5/7/24; and 24 CFR 982.406]

DCHA may approve assisted tenancy, execute a HAP contract, and begin paying HAP if a unit passed an alternative inspection (i.e., an inspection conducted for another housing program) conducted in the last 24 months provided DCHA is able to obtain the results of the alternative inspection, the property received a “pass” score (if applicable), and the inspection meets the requirements at 24 CFR 982.406(c) and (d). DCHA may implement the use of alternative inspections for both initial and periodic inspections or may limit the use of alternative inspections to either initial or periodic inspection or may limit the use of alternative inspections to either initial or periodic inspections. If alternative inspections are used, DCHA must follow requirements listed at 24 CFR 982.406(e)(2) for family and owner notification.

DCHA Policy

The unit must pass the initial inspection on or before the effective date of the HAP contract.

DCHA will not rely on alternative inspections and will conduct an initial inspection for each unit prior to executing a HAP contract with the owner.

Timing of Initial Inspections [24 CFR 982.305(b)(2)(i)]

Unless DCHA relies on alternative inspections, DCHA will complete the initial inspection, determine whether the unit satisfies HQS, and notify the owner and the family of the determination within 15 days of submission of the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA). Since HUD requires agencies with fewer than 1,250 budgeted units [982.305(b)(2)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will complete the initial inspection, determine whether the unit satisfies HQS, and notify the owner and the family of the determination within 15 days of submission of the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA).

Inspection Results and Reinspections

DCHA Policy

If any HQS violations are identified, the owner will be notified of the deficiencies and be given a time frame to correct them. If requested by the owner, the time frame for correcting the deficiencies may be extended by DCHA for good cause. DCHA will reinspect the unit within five business days of the date the owner notifies DCHA that the required corrections have been made.

If the time period for correcting the deficiencies (or any DCHA-approved extension) has elapsed, or the unit fails HQS at the time of the reinspection, DCHA will notify the owner and the family that the unit has been rejected and that the family must search for another unit. DCHA may agree to conduct a second reinspection, for good cause, at the request of the family and owner.

Following a failed reinspection, the family may submit a new Request for Tenancy Approval for the same unit after the owner has made repairs, if they are unable to locate another suitable unit.

Utilities

Generally, at initial lease-up the owner is responsible for demonstrating that all utilities are in working order including those utilities that the family will be responsible for paying.

DCHA Policy

If utility service is not available for testing at the time of the initial inspection, DCHA will allow the utilities to be placed in service after the unit has met all other HQS requirements. DCHA will reinspect the unit to confirm that utilities are operational before the HAP contract is executed by DCHA

Appliances [Form HUD-52580]

DCHA Policy

If the family is responsible for supplying the stove and/or refrigerator, DCHA will allow the stove and refrigerator to be placed in the unit after the unit has met all other HQS requirements. The required appliances must be in place before the HAP contract is executed by the DCHA. DCHA will execute the HAP contract based upon a certification from the family that the appliances have been installed and are working. A confirmatory inspection will be scheduled within 30 days of HAP contract approval.

8-II.C. PERIODIC HQS INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(B) and Notice PIH 2016-05

DCHA Policy

Each unit under HAP contract must be inspected biennially within 24 months of the last full HQS inspection. DCHA reserves the right to require annual inspections of any unit or owner at any time.

DCHA will not rely on alternative inspection standards.

Scheduling the Inspection

DCHA Policy

If an adult cannot be present on the scheduled date, the family should request that DCHA reschedule the inspection. DCHA and the family will agree on a new inspection date that generally should take place within five business days of the originally scheduled date. DCHA may schedule an inspection more than five business days after the original date for good cause.

If the family misses the first scheduled appointment without requesting a new inspection date, DCHA will automatically schedule a second inspection. If the family misses two scheduled inspections without DCHA approval, DCHA will consider the family to have violated its obligation to make the unit available for inspection. This may result in termination of the family's assistance in accordance with Chapter 12.

8-II.D. INTERIM INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(dg)]

If a participant or government official notifies DCHA of a potential deficiency, the following applies:

- If the reported deficiency is life-threatening, DCHA must, within 24 hours of notification, both inspect the housing unit and notify the owner if the life-threatening deficiency is confirmed. The owner must then make the repairs within 24 hours of DCHA notification.
- If the reported deficiency is non-life-threatening, DCHA must, within 15 days of notification, both inspect the unit and notify the owner if the deficiency is confirmed. The owner must then make the repairs within 30 days of notification from DCHA or within any DCHA-approved extension.

DCHA Policy

During an interim inspection, DCHA generally will inspect only those deficiencies that were reported. However, the inspector will record any additional HQS deficiencies that are observed and will require the responsible party to make the necessary repairs.

If the periodic inspection has been scheduled or is due within 90 days of the date the interim inspection is scheduled DCHA may elect to conduct a full inspection.

8-II.E. SUPERVISORY QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTIONS [24 CFR 982.405(b); 24 CFR 985.3(e); HCV GB, p. 10-32]

HUD requires a DCHA supervisor or other qualified person to conduct quality control inspections of a sample of units to ensure that each inspector is conducting accurate and complete inspections and that there is consistency in the application of the HQS.

The unit sample must include only units that have been inspected within the preceding three months. The selected sample should be drawn to represent a cross section of neighborhoods and the work of a cross section of inspectors.

8-II.F. INSPECTION RESULTS AND REINSPECTIONS FOR UNITS UNDER HAP CONTRACT

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 4, 2024, or earlier:

Notification of Corrective Actions

The owner and the family will be notified in writing of the results of all inspections. When an inspection identifies HQS failures, DCHA will determine (1) whether or not the failure is a life-threatening condition and (2) whether the family or owner is responsible.

DCHA Policy

When life-threatening conditions are identified, DCHA will immediately notify both parties by telephone or email. The notice will specify who is responsible for correcting the violation. The corrective actions must be taken within 24 hours of DCHA's notice.

When failures that are not life-threatening are identified, DCHA will send the owner and the family a written notification of the inspection results within five business days of the inspection. The written notice will specify who is responsible for correcting the violation, and the time frame within which the failure must be corrected. Generally, not more than 30 days will be allowed for the correction.

The notice of inspection results will inform the owner that if life-threatening conditions are not corrected within 24 hours, and non-life-threatening conditions are not corrected within the specified time frame (or any DCHA-approved extension), the owner's HAP will be abated in accordance with DCHA policy (see 8-II.G.).

Likewise, in the case of family caused deficiencies, the notice will inform the family that if corrections are not made within the specified time frame (or any DCHA-approved extension, if applicable) the family's assistance will be terminated in accordance with DCHA policy (see Chapter 12).

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024 or later:

Notification of Corrective Actions [24 CFR 982.404(d)(1)]

The owner must maintain the unit in accordance with housing quality standards. The unit is in noncompliance with housing quality standards if:

- The DCHA or authorized inspector determines the unit has housing quality standards deficiencies based upon an inspection
- DCHA notified the owner in writing of the unit housing quality standards deficiencies; and
- The unit's housing quality standards deficiencies are not corrected within the required timeframes.

DCHA may withhold assistance payments for units that have deficiencies once the owner has been notified in writing of the deficiencies. DCHA's administrative plan identifies the conditions under which DCHA will withhold HAP. In this case, if the unit is brought into compliance during the applicable cure period, DCHA must resume assistance payments and provide payments to cover the time period for which payments were withheld.

DCHA must abate the HAP, including amounts that had been withheld, if the owner fails to make the repairs within the applicable cure period. In this case, DCHA must notify the family and the owner that it is abating payments and, if the unit does not meet housing quality standards within 60 days (or a reasonable longer period established by DCHA), DCHA will terminate the HAP contract for the unit and the family will have to move to receive continued assistance. In this case, DCHA must issue the family its voucher to move at least 30 days prior to the termination of the HAP contract.

DCHA Policy

The owner and the family will be notified in writing of the results of all inspection. When an inspection identifies housing quality standards failures, DCH will determine (1) whether or not the failure is a life-threatening condition and (2) whether the family or owner is responsible.

DCHA will not withhold assistance payments upon notification of the deficiencies to the owner.

When life-threatening conditions are identified, DCHA will immediately notify both parties by telephone or email. The notice will specify who is responsible for correcting the violation. The corrective actions must be taken within 24 hours of DCHA's notice.

When failures that are not life-threatening are identified, DCHA will send the owner and the family a written notification of the inspection results within five business days of the inspection. The written notice will specify who is responsible for correcting the violation, and the time frame within which the failure must be corrected. Generally, not more than 30 days will be allowed for the correction.

If the owner is responsible for correcting the deficiency, the notice of inspection results will inform the owner that if life-threatening conditions are not corrected within 24 hours, and non-life-threatening conditions are not corrected within the specified time frame (or any DCHA-approved extension), the owner's HAP contract will be abated in accordance with DCHA policy (see 8-II.G.).

Likewise, if the family is responsible for correcting the deficiency, the notice will inform the family that if corrections are not made within the specified time frame (or any DCHA-approved extension, if applicable) the family's assistance will be terminated in accordance with DCHA policy (see Chapter 12).

Extensions

For conditions that are life-threatening, DCHA cannot grant an extension to the 24-hour corrective action period. For conditions that are not life-threatening, DCHA may grant an exception to the required time frames for correcting the violation, if DCHA determines that an extension is appropriate [24 CFR 982.404].

DCHA Policy

Extensions will be granted in cases where DCHA has determined that the owner has made a good faith effort to correct the deficiencies and is unable to for reasons beyond the owner's control. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A repair cannot be completed because required parts or services are not available.
- A repair cannot be completed because of weather conditions.
- A reasonable accommodation is needed because the family includes a person with disabilities.

The length of the extension will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but will not exceed 60 days, except in the case of delays caused by weather conditions. In the case of weather conditions, extensions may be continued until the weather has improved sufficiently to make repairs possible. The necessary repairs must be made within 15 calendar days, once the weather conditions have subsided.

Reinspections [24 CFR 982.405(i)]

When DCHA must verify correction of a deficiency, DCHA may use verification methods other than another on-site inspection. DCHA may use different verification methods for initial and non-initial inspections for different deficiencies. Upon either an inspection for initial occupancy or reinspection DCHA may accept photographic evidence or other reliable evidence from the owner to verify that a deficiency has been corrected.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct a reinspection immediately following the end of the corrective period, or any DCHA approved extension. Depending on the extent of the repairs to be made, DCHA will accept photographic evidence or other reliable evidence from the owner to verify that a deficiency has been corrected

The family and owner will be given reasonable notice of the reinspection appointment. If the deficiencies have not been corrected by the time of the reinspection, DCHA will send a notice of abatement to the owner, or in the case of family caused violations, a notice of termination to the family, in accordance with DCHA policies. If DCHA is unable to gain entry to the unit in order to conduct the scheduled reinspection, DCHA will consider the family to have violated its obligation to make the unit available for inspection. This may result in termination of the family's assistance in accordance with Chapter 12.

DCHA will not accept self-certification of HQS repairs.

8-II.G. ENFORCING OWNER COMPLIANCE

If the owner fails to maintain the dwelling unit in accordance with HQS, DCHA must take prompt and vigorous action to enforce the owner obligations.

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:

HAP Abatement

If an owner fails to correct HQS deficiencies by the time specified by DCHA, HUD requires DCHA to abate housing assistance payments no later than the first of the month following the specified correction period (including any approved extension) [24 CFR 985.3(f)]. No retroactive payments will be made to the owner for the period of time the rent was abated. Owner rents are not abated as a result of HQS failures that are the family's responsibility.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will make all HAP abatements effective the first of the month following the expiration of DCHA specified correction period (including any extension).

DCHA will inspect abated units within five business days of the owner's notification that the work has been completed. Payment will resume effective on the day the unit passes inspection.

During any abatement period the family continues to be responsible for its share of the rent. The owner must not seek payment from the family for abated amounts and may not use the abatement as cause for eviction.

HAP Contract Termination

DCHA must decide how long any abatement period will continue before the HAP contract will be terminated. DCHA should not terminate the contract until the family finds another unit, provided the family does so in a reasonable time [HCV GB p. 10-29] and must give the owner reasonable notice of the termination. DCHA will issue a voucher to permit the family to move to another unit as described in Chapter 10.

DCHA Policy

The maximum length of time that HAP may be abated is 90 days. However, if the owner completes corrections and notifies DCHA before the termination date of the HAP contract, DCHA may rescind the termination notice if (1) the family still resides in the unit and wishes to remain in the unit and (2) the unit passes inspection.

Reasonable notice of HAP contract termination by DCHA is 30 days.

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:

HAP withholding [24 CFR 982.404(d)(1)]

DCHA may withhold assistance payments for units that have housing quality standards deficiencies once DCHA has notified the owner in writing of the deficiencies. DCHA's

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not withhold assistance payments upon notification to the owner of the deficiencies.

HAP Abatement [24 CFR 982.404(d)(2)]

DCHA must abate the HAP, including amounts that had been withheld, if the owner fails to make repairs within the applicable cure period. In this case DCHA must notify the family and the owner that it is abating payments and, if the unit does not meet housing quality standards within 60 days (or a reasonable longer period established by DCHA). DCHA will terminate the HAP contract for the unit and the family will have to move to receive continued assistance. In this case, DCHA must issue the family its voucher to move at least 30 days prior to the termination of the HAP contract.

The owner may not terminate the tenancy of any family due to the withholding or abatement of assistance.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will make all HAP abatements effective the first month following the expiration of the DCHA-specified correction period (including any extension).

DCHA will inspect abated units within five business days of the owner's notification that the work has been completed. Payments will resume effective on the day the unit passes inspection.

During any abatement period the family continues to be responsible for its share of the rent. For DCHA policies on family moves when units are in abatement and termination of the HAP contract when a family moves due to deficiencies, see Section 10-I.B.

HAP Contract Termination

DCHA will not terminate the contract until the family finds another unit, provided the family does so in a reasonable time [HCV GB p. 10-29] and must give the owner reasonable notice of the termination. DCHA will issue a voucher to permit the family to move to another unit as described in Chapter 10.

DCHA Policy

The maximum length of time that HAP may be abated is 60 days. However, if the owner completes corrections and notifies DCHA before the termination date of the HAP contract, DCHA may rescind the termination notice if (1) the family still resides in the unit and wishes to remain in the unit and (2) the unit passes inspection.

Reasonable notice of HAP contract termination by DCHA is 30 days. DCHA will issue a voucher to permit the family to move to another unit as described in Chapter 10.

8-II.H. ENFORCING FAMILY COMPLIANCE WITH HQS [24 CFR 982.404(b)]

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 5, 2024, or earlier:

Families are responsible for correcting any HQS violations listed in paragraph 8.I.D. If the family fails to correct a violation within the period allowed by DCHA (and any extensions), DCHA will terminate the family's assistance, according to the policies described in Chapter 12.

If the owner carries out a repair for which the family is responsible under the lease, the owner may bill the family for the cost of the repair.

The following is applicable to HAP contracts executed or renewed June 6, 2024, or later:

If DCHA waived the landlord responsibility for housing quality standards deficiencies that have been determined to have been caused by the tenant, any member of the household, or any guest or other person under the tenant's control (see section 8-I.D), the family is responsible for correcting any housing quality standards violations listed in paragraph 8.I.D. If the family fails to correct a violation within the period allowed by DCHA (and any extensions), DCHA will terminate the family's assistance, according to the policies described in Chapter 12.

If the owner carries out a repair for which the family is responsible under the lease, the owner may bill the family for the cost of the repair and may enter into a repayment agreement with the family.

PART III: RENT REASONABLENESS [24 CFR 982.507]

8-III.A. OVERVIEW

Except in the case of certain LIHTC- and HOME-assisted units, no HAP contract can be approved until DCHA has determined that the rent for the unit is reasonable. The purpose of the rent reasonableness test is to ensure that a fair rent is paid for each unit rented under the HCV program.

HUD regulations define a reasonable rent as one that does not exceed the rent charged for comparable, unassisted units in the same market area. HUD also requires that owners not charge more for assisted units than for comparable units on the premises. This part explains the method used to determine whether a unit's rent is reasonable.

DCHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)]

In cases where an HCV family is receiving assistance in a DCHA-owned unit, DCHA must obtain the services of an independent entity to determine rent reasonableness in accordance with program requirements, and to assist the family in negotiating the contract rent when the family requests assistance. A DCHA-owned unit is defined as a unit that is owned by DCHA that administers the assistance under the consolidated ACC (including a unit owned by an entity substantially controlled by DCHA). The independent agency must communicate the results of the rent reasonableness determination to the family and DCHA. The independent agency must be approved by HUD, and may be the unit of general local government for DCHA jurisdiction (unless DCHA is itself the unit of general local government or an agency of such government).

8-III.B. WHEN RENT REASONABLENESS DETERMINATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Owner-Initiated Rent Determinations

DCHA must make a rent reasonableness determination at initial occupancy and whenever the owner requests a rent adjustment.

The owner and family first negotiate the rent for a unit. DCHA (or independent agency in the case of DCHA-owned units) will assist the family with the negotiations upon request. At initial occupancy DCHA must determine whether the proposed rent is reasonable before a HAP Contract is signed. The owner must not change the rent during the initial lease term. Subsequent requests for rent adjustments must be consistent with the lease between the owner and the family. Rent increases will not be approved unless any failed items identified by the most recent HQS inspection have been corrected.

DCHA Policy

After the initial occupancy period, the owner may request a rent adjustment in accordance with the owner's lease. For rent increase requests after initial lease-up, DCHA may request owners to provide information about the rents charged for other units on the premises, if the premises include more than 4 units. In evaluating the proposed rents in comparison to other units on the premises DCHA will consider unit size and length of tenancy in the other units.

DCHA will determine whether the requested increase is reasonable within 10 business days of receiving the request from the owner. The owner will be notified of the determination in writing.

All rents adjustments will be effective the first of the month following 60 days after DCHA's receipt of the owner's request or on the date specified by the owner, whichever is later.

DCHA and HUD-Initiated Rent Reasonableness Determinations

HUD requires DCHA to make a determination of rent reasonableness (even if the owner has not requested a change) if there is a 10 percent decrease in the fair market rent that goes into effect at least 60 days before the contract anniversary date. HUD also may direct DCHA to make a determination at any other time. DCHA may decide that a new determination of rent reasonableness is needed at any time.

DCHA Policy

In addition to the instances described above, DCHA will make a determination of rent reasonableness at any time after the initial occupancy period if: (1) DCHA determines that the initial rent reasonableness determination was in error or (2) DCHA determines that the information provided by the owner about the unit or other units on the same premises was incorrect.

LIHTC and HOME-Assisted Units [24 CFR 982.507(c)]

For units receiving low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) or units assisted under HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, a rent comparison with unassisted units is not required if the voucher rent does not exceed the rent for other LIHTC- or HOME-assisted units in the project that are not occupied by families with tenant-based assistance.

For LIHTCs, if the rent requested by the owner does exceed the LIHTC rents for non-voucher families, DCHA must perform a rent comparability study in accordance with program regulations. In such cases, the rent shall not exceed the lesser of: (1) the reasonable rent as determined from the rent comparability study; or (2) the payment standard established by DCHA for the unit size involved.

8-III.C. HOW COMPARABILITY IS ESTABLISHED

Factors to Consider

HUD requires DCHA to take into consideration the factors listed below when determining rent comparability. DCHA may use these factors to make upward or downward adjustments to the rents of comparison units when the units are not identical to the HCV-assisted unit.

- Location and age
- Unit size including the number of rooms and square footage of rooms
- The type of unit including construction type (e.g., single family, duplex, garden, low-rise, high-rise)
- The quality of the units including the quality of the original construction, maintenance and improvements made
- Amenities, services, and utilities included in the rent

Units that Must Not Be Used as Comparables

Comparable units must represent unrestricted market rents. Therefore, units that receive some form of federal, state, or local assistance that imposes rent restrictions cannot be considered comparable units. These include units assisted by HUD through any of the following programs: Section 8 project-based assistance, Section 236 and Section 221(d)(3) Below Market Interest Rate (BMIR) projects, HOME or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program-assisted units in which the rents are subsidized; units subsidized through federal, state, or local tax credits; units subsidized by the Department of Agriculture rural housing programs, and units that are rent-controlled by local ordinance [Notice PIH 2002-22, Notice PIH 2005-20, and Notice PIH 2020-19].

Note: Notice PIH 2020-19, issued August 21, 2020, provides further guidance on the issue of what constitutes an assisted unit.

Rents Charged for Other Units on the Premises

The Request for Tenancy Approval (HUD-52517) requires owners to provide information, on the form itself, about the rent charged for other unassisted comparable units on the premises if the premises include more than 4 units.

By accepting the DCHA payment each month the owner certifies that the rent is not more than the rent charged for comparable unassisted units on the premises. If asked to do so, the owner must give DCHA information regarding rents charged for other units on the premises.

8-III.D. DCHA RENT REASONABLENESS METHODOLOGY

How Market Data Is Collected

DCHA Policy

DCHA will collect and maintain data on market rents in DCHA's jurisdiction. Information sources include newspapers, realtors, market surveys, inquiries of owners and other available sources. The data will be maintained by bedroom size and market areas. Market areas may be defined by zip codes, census tract, neighborhood, and identifiable natural or man-made boundaries. The data will be updated on an ongoing basis and rent information that is more than 12 months old will be eliminated from the database.

DCHA utilizes an outside rent reasonableness contractor in gathering rent data.

How Rents Are Determined

DCHA Policy

The rent for a unit proposed for HCV assistance will be compared to the rent charged for comparable units in the same market area. DCHA will develop a range of prices for comparable units by bedroom size within defined market areas. Units proposed for HCV assistance will be compared to the units within this rent range. Because units may be similar, but not exactly like the unit proposed for HCV assistance, DCHA may make adjustments to the range of prices to account for these differences.

The adjustment must reflect the local market. Not all differences in units require adjustments (e.g., the presence or absence of a garbage disposal may not affect the rent in some market areas).

Adjustments may vary by unit type (e.g., a second bathroom may be more valuable in a three-bedroom unit than in a two-bedroom).

The adjustment must reflect the rental value of the difference—not its construction costs (e.g., it might cost \$20,000 to put on a new roof, but the new roof might not make any difference in what a tenant would be willing to pay because rental units are presumed to have functioning roofs).

When a comparable project offers rent concessions (e.g., first month rent-free, or reduced rent) reported monthly rents will be adjusted accordingly. For example, if a comparable project reports rents of \$500/month but new tenants receive the first month's rent free, the actual rent for the unit would be calculated as follows: $\$500 \times 11 \text{ months} = 5500/12 \text{ months} = \text{actual monthly rent of } \488 .

DCHA will notify the owner of the rent DCHA can approve based upon its analysis of rents for comparable units. The owner may submit information about other comparable units in the market area. DCHA will confirm the accuracy of the information provided and consider this additional information when making rent determinations. The owner must submit any additional information within five business days of DCHA's request for information or the owner's request to submit information.

EXHIBIT 8-1: OVERVIEW OF HUD HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

Note: This document provides an overview of HQS. For more detailed information see the following documents:

- 24 CFR 982.401, Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook, Chapter 10.
- HUD Housing Inspection Manual for Section 8 Housing
- HUD Inspection Form, form HUD-52580 (3/01) and Inspection Checklist, form HUD-52580-A (9/00)

Sanitary Facilities

The dwelling unit must include sanitary facilities within the unit. The sanitary facilities must be usable in privacy and must be in proper operating condition and adequate for personal cleanliness and disposal of human waste.

Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal

The dwelling unit must have space and equipment suitable for the family to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.

Space and Security

The dwelling unit must provide adequate space and security for the family. This includes having at least one bedroom or living/sleeping room for each two persons.

Thermal Environment

The unit must have a safe system for heating the dwelling unit. Air conditioning is not required but if provided must be in proper operating condition. The dwelling unit must not contain unvented room heaters that burn gas, oil, or kerosene. Portable electric room heaters or kitchen stoves with built-in heating units are not acceptable as a primary source of heat for units located in climatic areas where permanent heat systems are required.

Illumination and Electricity

Each room must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of occupants. The dwelling unit must have sufficient electrical sources so occupants can use essential electrical appliances. Minimum standards are set for different types of rooms. Once the minimum standards are met, the number, type and location of electrical sources are a matter of tenant preference.

Structure and Materials

The dwelling unit must be structurally sound. Handrails are required when four or more steps (risers) are present, and protective railings are required when porches, balconies, and stoops are thirty inches or more off the ground. The elevator servicing the unit must be working [if there is one]. Manufactured homes must have proper tie-down devices capable of surviving wind loads common to the area.

Interior Air Quality

The dwelling unit must be free of air pollutant levels that threaten the occupants' health. There must be adequate air circulation in the dwelling unit. Bathroom areas must have one openable window or other adequate ventilation. Any sleeping room must have at least one window. If a window was designed to be opened, it must be in proper working order.

Water Supply

The dwelling unit must be served by an approved public or private water supply that is sanitary and free from contamination. Plumbing fixtures and pipes must be free of leaks and threats to health and safety.

Lead-Based Paint

Lead-based paint requirements apply to dwelling units built prior to 1978 that are occupied or can be occupied by families with children under six years of age, excluding zero-bedroom dwellings. Owners must:

- Disclose known lead-based paint hazards to prospective tenants before the lease is signed,
- provide all prospective families with "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home",
- Stabilize deteriorated painted surfaces and conduct hazard reduction activities within 30 days when identified by DCHA
- Notify tenants each time such an activity is performed
- Conduct all work in accordance with HUD safe practices
- As part of ongoing maintenance ask each family to report deteriorated paint
- Maintain covered housing without deteriorated paint if there is child under six in the family

For units occupied by elevated blood lead level (lead poisoned) children under six years of age, an environmental investigation must be conducted (paid for by DCHA). If lead hazards are identified during the environmental investigation, the owner must complete hazard reduction activities within 30 days.

See HCV GB p. 10-15 for a detailed description of these requirements. For additional information on lead-based paint requirements see 24 CFR 35, Subparts A, B, M, and R.

Access

Use and maintenance of the unit must be possible without unauthorized use of other private properties. The building must provide an alternate means of exit in case of fire.

Site and Neighborhood

The site and neighborhood must be reasonably free from disturbing noises and reverberations, excessive trash or vermin, or other dangers to the health, safety, and general welfare of the occupants.

Sanitary Condition

The dwelling unit and its equipment must be in sanitary condition and free of vermin and rodent infestation. The unit must have adequate barriers to prevent infestation.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors must be installed in accordance with and meet the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association Standard (NFPA) 74 (or its successor standards). If the dwelling unit is occupied by any person with a hearing impairment, smoke detectors must have an appropriate alarm system as specified in NFPA 74 (or successor standards).

Hazards and Heath/Safety

The unit, interior and exterior common areas accessible to the family, the site, and the surrounding neighborhood must be free of hazards to the family's health and safety.

<p style="text-align: center;">EXHIBIT 8-2: SUMMARY OF TENANT PREFERENCE AREAS RELATED TO HOUSING QUALITY</p>
--

Note: This document provides an overview of unit and site characteristics and conditions for which the family determines acceptability. For more detailed information see the following documents:

- Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook, Chapter 10.
- HUD Housing Inspection Manual for Section 8 Housing
- HUD Inspection Form, form HUD-52580 (3/01) and Inspection Checklist, form HUD-52580-A (9/00)

Provided the minimum housing quality standards have been met, HUD permits the family to determine whether the unit is acceptable with regard to the following characteristics.

- *Sanitary Facilities.* The family may determine the adequacy of the cosmetic condition and quality of the sanitary facilities, including the size of the lavatory, tub, or shower; the location of the sanitary facilities within the unit; and the adequacy of the water heater.
- *Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal.* The family selects size and type of equipment it finds acceptable. When the family is responsible for supplying cooking appliances, the family may choose to use a microwave oven in place of a conventional oven, stove, or range. When the owner is responsible for providing cooking appliances, the owner may offer a microwave oven in place of an oven, stove, or range only if other subsidized and unsubsidized units on the premises are furnished with microwave ovens only. The adequacy of the amount and type of storage space, the cosmetic conditions of all equipment, and the size and location of the kitchen are all determined by the family.
- *Space and Security.* The family may determine the adequacy of room sizes and room locations. The family is also responsible for deciding the acceptability of the type of door and window locks.
- *Energy conservation items.* The family may determine whether the amount of insulation, presence or absence of storm doors and windows and other energy conservation items are acceptable.
- *Illumination and Electricity.* The family may determine whether the location and the number of outlets and fixtures (over and above those required to meet HQS standards) are acceptable or if the amount of electrical service is adequate for the use of appliances, computers, or stereo equipment.
- *Structure and Materials.* Families may determine whether minor defects, such as lack of paint, or worn flooring or carpeting will affect the livability of the unit.
- *Indoor Air.* Families may determine whether window and door screens, filters, fans, or other devices for proper ventilation are adequate to meet the family's needs. However, if screens are present they must be in good condition.
- *Sanitary Conditions.* The family determines whether the sanitary conditions in the unit, including minor infestations, are acceptable.
- *Neighborhood conditions.* Families may determine whether neighborhood conditions such as the presence of drug activity, commercial enterprises, and convenience to shopping will affect the livability of the unit.

Families have no discretion with respect to lead-based paint standards and smoke detectors.

Chapter 9

GENERAL LEASING POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 9 covers the lease-up process from the family's submission of a Request for Tenancy Approval to execution of the HAP contract.

In order for DCHA to assist a family in a particular dwelling unit, or execute a Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract with the owner of a dwelling unit, DCHA must determine that all the following program requirements are met:

- The unit itself must qualify as an eligible unit [24 CFR 982.305(a)]
- The unit must be inspected by DCHA and pass applicable housing quality standards [24 CFR 982.305(a)]
- The lease offered by the owner must be approvable and must include the required Tenancy Addendum [24 CFR 982.305(a)]
- The rent to be charged by the owner for the unit must be reasonable [24 CFR 982.305(a)]
- The owner must be an eligible owner, approvable by DCHA, with no conflicts of interest [24 CFR 982.306]
- For families initially leasing a unit only: Where the gross rent of the unit exceeds the applicable payment standard for the family, the share of rent to be paid by the family cannot exceed 40 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income [24 CFR 982.305(a)]

9-I.A. TENANT SCREENING

DCHA has no liability or responsibility to the owner or other persons for the family's behavior or suitability for tenancy [24 CFR 982.307(a)(1)].

DCHA may elect to screen applicants for family behavior or suitability for tenancy. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of DCHA's policies with regard to screening applicant families for program eligibility [24 CFR 982.307(a)(1)].

The owner is responsible for screening and selection of the family to occupy the owner's unit. At or before DCHA approval of the tenancy, DCHA must inform the owner that screening and selection for tenancy is the responsibility of the owner [24 CFR 982.307(a)(2)]. DCHA must also inform the owner or manager of their rights and obligations under the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) [24 CFR 5.2005(a)(2)].

DCHA must provide the owner with the family's current and prior address (as shown in DCHA records) and the name and address (if known to DCHA) of the landlord at the family's current and prior address [24 CFR 982.307(b)(1)].

DCHA is permitted, but not required, to offer the owner other information in DCHA's possession about the tenancy history or drug trafficking of family members [24 CFR 982.307(b)(2)].

DCHA's policy on providing information to the owner must be included in the family's briefing packet [24 CFR 982.307(b)(3)].

DCHA may not disclose to the owner any confidential information provided by the family in response to a DCHA request for documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, except at the written request or with the written consent of the individual providing the documentation [see 24 CFR 5.2007(b)(4)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not screen applicants for family behavior or suitability for tenancy.

DCHA will not provide additional screening information to the owner.

9-I.B. REQUESTING TENANCY APPROVAL [Form HUD-52517 and 24 CFR 982.302]

After the family is issued a voucher, the family must locate an eligible unit, with an owner or landlord willing to participate in the voucher program. Once a family finds a suitable unit and the owner is willing to lease the unit under the program, the owner and the family must request DCHA to approve the assisted tenancy in the selected unit.

The owner and the family must submit two documents to DCHA:

- Completed Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) – Form HUD-52517
- Copy of the proposed lease, including the HUD-prescribed Tenancy Addendum – Form HUD-52641-A

The RTA contains important information about the rental unit selected by the family, including the unit address, number of bedrooms, structure type, year constructed, utilities included in the rent, and the requested beginning date of the lease, necessary for DCHA to determine whether to approve the assisted tenancy in this unit.

Owners must certify to the most recent amount of rent charged for the unit and provide an explanation for any difference between the prior rent and the proposed rent.

Owners must certify that they are not the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless DCHA has granted a request for reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities who is a member of the tenant household.

For units constructed prior to 1978, owners must either 1) certify that the unit, common areas, and exterior have been found to be free of lead-based paint by a certified inspector; or 2) attach a lead-based paint disclosure statement.

Both the RTA and the proposed lease must be submitted no later than the expiration date stated on the voucher. [HCV GB p.8-15].

DCHA Policy

The RTA must be signed by both the family and the owner.

The owner may submit the RTA on behalf of the family.

Completed RTA (including the proposed dwelling lease) must be submitted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by email.

The family may not submit, and DCHA will not process, more than one RTA at a time.

When the family submits the RTA DCHA will review the RTA for completeness.

If the RTA is incomplete (including lack of signature by family, owner, or both), or if the dwelling lease is not submitted with the RTA, DCHA will notify the family and the owner of the deficiencies.

Missing information and/or missing documents will only be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by email. DCHA will not accept missing information over the phone.

When the family submits the RTA and proposed lease, DCHA will also review the terms of the RTA for consistency with the terms of the proposed lease.

If the terms of the RTA are not consistent with the terms of the proposed lease, DCHA will notify the family and the owner of the discrepancies.

Corrections to the terms of the RTA and/or the proposed lease will only be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by email. DCHA will not accept corrections by phone.

Because of the time sensitive nature of the tenancy approval process, DCHA will attempt to communicate with the owner and family by phone or email. DCHA will use mail when the parties cannot be reached by phone or email.

9-I.C. OWNER PARTICIPATION

DCHA does not formally approve an owner to participate in the HCV program. However, there are a number of criteria where DCHA may deny approval of an assisted tenancy based on past owner behavior, conflict of interest, or other owner-related issues. There are also criteria for which DCHA must disapprove an owner. No owner has a right to participate in the HCV program [24 CFR 982.306(e)]

See Chapter 13 for a full discussion of owner qualification to participate in the HCV program.

9-I.D. ELIGIBLE UNITS

There are a number of criteria that a dwelling unit must meet in order to be eligible for assistance under the voucher program. Generally, a voucher-holder family may choose any available rental dwelling unit on the market in DCHA's jurisdiction. This includes the dwelling unit they are currently occupying.

Ineligible Units [24 CFR 982.352(a)]

DCHA may not assist a unit under the voucher program if the unit is a public housing or Indian housing unit; a unit receiving project-based assistance under section 8 of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437f); nursing homes, board and care homes, or facilities providing continual psychiatric, medical, or nursing services; college or other school dormitories; units on the grounds of penal, reformatory, medical, mental, and similar public or private institutions; a unit occupied by its owner or by a person with any interest in the unit.

DCHA-Owned Units [24 CFR 982.352(b)]

DCHA-owned units as defined in 24 CFR 982.4 may also be leased in the voucher program. In order for a DCHA-owned unit to be leased under the voucher program, the unit must not be ineligible housing and DCHA must inform the family, both orally and in writing, that the family has the right to select any eligible unit available for lease and that the family is free to select a DCHA-owned unit without any pressure or steering by DCHA. DCHA must obtain the services of an independent entity to perform certain functions as described in 24 CFR 982.352(b)(v)(A).

DCHA Policy

DCHA has owned units available for leasing under the voucher program.

Special Housing Types [24 CFR 982 Subpart M]

HUD regulations permit, but do not generally require, DCHA to permit families to use voucher assistance in a number of special housing types in accordance with the specific requirements applicable to those programs. These special housing types include single room occupancy (SRO) housing, congregate housing, group home, shared housing, manufactured home space (where the family owns the manufactured home and leases only the space), cooperative housing and homeownership option. See Chapter 15 for specific information and policies on any of these housing types that DCHA has chosen to allow.

The regulations do require DCHA to permit use of any special housing type if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

Duplicative Assistance [24 CFR 982.352(c)]

A family may not receive the benefit of HCV tenant-based assistance while receiving the benefit of any of the following forms of other housing subsidy, for the same unit or for a different unit:

- Public or Indian housing assistance;
- Other Section 8 assistance (including other tenant-based assistance);
- Assistance under former Section 23 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (before amendment by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974);
- Section 101 rent supplements;
- Section 236 rental assistance payments;
- Tenant-based assistance under the HOME Program;
- Rental assistance payments under Section 521 of the Housing Act of 1949 (a program of the Rural Development Administration);
- Any local or State rent subsidy;
- Section 202 supportive housing for the elderly;
- Section 811 supportive housing for persons with disabilities; (11) Section 202 projects for non-elderly persons with disabilities (Section 162 assistance); or
- Any other duplicative federal, State, or local housing subsidy, as determined by HUD. For this purpose, 'housing subsidy' does not include the housing component of a welfare payment, a social security payment received by the family, or a rent reduction because of a tax credit.

Initial Inspection

In order to be eligible, the dwelling unit must be in safe and habitable condition and pass applicable housing quality standards. See Chapter 8 for a full discussion of inspection standards, as well as the process for inspection at initial lease-up.

Unit Size

In order to be eligible, the dwelling unit must be appropriate for the number of persons in the household. A family must be allowed to lease an otherwise acceptable dwelling unit with fewer bedrooms than the number of bedrooms stated on the voucher issued to the family, provided the unit meets the applicable space requirements [24 CFR 5.703(d)(5)]. The family must be allowed to lease an otherwise acceptable dwelling unit with more bedrooms than the number of bedrooms stated on the voucher issued to the family. See Chapter 5 for a full discussion of subsidy standards.

Rent Reasonableness [24 CFR 982.305 and 24 CFR 982.507]

In order to be eligible, the dwelling unit must have a reasonable rent. The rent must be reasonable in relation to comparable unassisted units in the area and must not be in excess of rents charged by the owner for comparable, unassisted units on the premises. See Chapter 8 for a full discussion of rent reasonableness and the rent reasonableness determination process.

Rent Burden [24 CFR 982.508]

Where a family is initially leasing a unit and the gross rent of the unit exceeds the applicable payment standard for the family, the family share cannot exceed 40 percent of the family's adjusted monthly income. The term "family share" refers to the amount the family pays toward rent and utilities. The gross rent for the unit minus the total housing assistance payment (HAP) for the unit equals the family share. See Chapter 6 for a discussion of calculation of gross rent, the use of payment standards, and calculation of family income, family share of rent and HAP.

9-I.E. LEASE AND TENANCY ADDENDUM

The family and the owner must execute a written dwelling lease agreement for the assisted unit. This written lease is a contract between the tenant family and the owner; DCHA is not a party to this contract.

The tenant must have legal capacity to enter a lease under State and local law. 'Legal capacity' means that the tenant is bound by the terms of the lease and may enforce the terms of the lease against the owner [24 CFR 982.308(a)]

Lease Form and Tenancy Addendum [24 CFR 982.308]

If the owner uses a standard lease form for rental to unassisted tenants in the locality or the premises, the lease must be in such standard form. If the owner does not use a standard lease form for rental to unassisted tenants, the owner may use another form of lease. The HAP contract prescribed by HUD contains the owner's certification that if the owner uses a standard lease form for rental to unassisted tenants, the lease for the assisted tenants is in such standard form.

All provisions in the HUD-required Tenancy Addendum must be added word-for-word to the owner's standard lease form. The Tenancy Addendum includes the HUD requirements for the tenancy. Because it is a part of the lease, the tenant shall have the right to enforce the Tenancy Addendum against the owner. If there is a conflict between the owner's lease and the Tenancy Addendum, the terms of the Tenancy Addendum shall prevail over any other provisions of the lease.

DCHA Policy

DCHA does not provide a model or standard dwelling lease for owners to use in the HCV program.

Lease Information [24 CFR 982.308(d)]

The assisted dwelling lease must contain all of the required information as listed below:

- The names of the owner and the tenant:
- The unit rented (address, apartment number, and any other information needed to identify the contract unit)
- The term of the lease (initial term and any provisions for renewal)
- The amount of the monthly rent to owner
- A specification of what utilities and appliances are to be supplied by the owner, and what utilities and appliances are to be supplied by the family

Term of Assisted Tenancy

The initial term of the assisted dwelling lease must be for at least one year [24 CFR 982.309]. The initial lease term is also stated in the HAP contract.

The HUD program regulations permit DCHA to approve a shorter initial lease term if certain conditions are met.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not approve an initial lease term of less than one (1) year unless the tenant is in a current lease and they are remaining in the rental unit.

During the initial term of the lease, the owner may not raise the rent to owner [24 CFR 982.309].

Any provisions for renewal of the dwelling lease will be stated in the dwelling lease [HCV Guidebook, pg. 8-22]. There are no HUD requirements regarding any renewal extension terms, except that they must be stated in the dwelling lease if they exist.

DCHA may execute the HAP contract even if there is less than one year remaining from the beginning of the initial lease term to the end of the last expiring funding increment under the consolidated ACC. [24 CFR 982.309(b)].

Security Deposit [24 CFR 982.313 (a) and (b)]

The owner may collect a security deposit from the tenant. DCHA may prohibit security deposits in excess of private market practice, or in excess of amounts charged by the owner to unassisted tenants. However, if DCHA chooses to do so, language to this effect must be added to Part A of the HAP contract [Form HUD-52641].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will allow the owner to collect any security deposit amount the owner determines is appropriate. Therefore, no modifications to the HAP contract will be necessary.

Separate Non-Lease Agreements between Owner and Tenant

Owners may not demand or accept any rent payment from the family in excess of the rent to the owner as approved by DCHA minus DCHA's housing assistance payments to the owner [24 CFR 982.451(b)(4)].

The owner may not charge the tenant extra amounts for items customarily included in rent in the locality, or provided at no additional cost to unsubsidized tenants in the premises [24 CFR 982.510(c)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA permits owners and families to execute separate, non-lease agreements for services, appliances (other than range and refrigerator) and other items that are not included in the lease.

Any items, appliances, or other services that are customarily provided to unassisted families as part of the dwelling lease with those families, or are permanently installed in the dwelling unit must be included in the dwelling lease for the assisted family. These items, appliances or services cannot be placed under a separate non-lease agreement between the owner and family. Side payments for additional rent, or for items, appliances or services customarily provided to unassisted families as part of the dwelling lease for those families, are prohibited.

Any items, appliances, or other services that are not customarily provided to unassisted families as part of the dwelling lease with those families, are not permanently installed in the dwelling unit and where the family has the sole option of not utilizing the item, appliance or service, may be included in a separate non-lease agreement between the owner and the family.

The family is not liable and cannot be held responsible under the terms of the assisted dwelling lease for any charges pursuant to a separate non-lease agreement between the owner and the family. Non-payment of any charges pursuant to a separate non-lease agreement between the owner and the family cannot be a cause for eviction or termination of tenancy under the terms of the assisted dwelling lease.

Separate non-lease agreements that involve additional items, appliances or other services may be considered amenities offered by the owner and may be taken into consideration when determining the reasonableness of the rent for the property.

DCHA Review of Lease

DCHA will review the dwelling lease for compliance with all applicable requirements.

DCHA Policy

If the dwelling lease is incomplete or incorrect, DCHA will notify the family and the owner of the deficiencies. Missing and corrected lease information will only be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by email. DCHA will not accept missing and corrected information over the phone.

Because the initial leasing process is time-sensitive, DCHA will attempt to communicate with the owner and family by phone or email. DCHA will use mail when the parties can't be reached by phone or email.

DCHA is permitted, but is not required, to review the lease to determine if the lease complies with State and local law and is permitted to decline to approve the tenancy if DCHA determines that the lease does not comply with State or local law [24 CFR 982.308(c)]

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not review the owner's lease for compliance with state/local law.

9-I.F. TENANCY APPROVAL [24 CFR 982.305]

After receiving the family's Request for Tenancy Approval, with proposed dwelling lease, DCHA must promptly notify the family and owner whether the assisted tenancy is approved.

Prior to approving the assisted tenancy and execution of a HAP contract, DCHA must ensure that all required actions and determinations, discussed in Part I of this chapter have been completed.

These actions include ensuring that the unit is eligible; the unit has been inspected by DCHA and meets housing quality standards; the lease offered by the owner is approvable and includes the required Tenancy Addendum; the rent to be charged by the owner for the unit must be reasonable; where the family is initially leasing a unit and the gross rent of the unit exceeds the applicable payment standard for the family, the share of rent to be paid by the family does not exceed 40 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income [24 CFR 982.305(a)]; the owner is an eligible owner, not disapproved by DCHA, with no conflicts of interest [24 CFR 982.306]; the family and the owner have executed the lease, including the Tenancy Addendum, and the lead-based paint disclosure information [24 CFR 982.305(b)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will complete its determination within 10 business days of receiving all required information.

If the terms of the RTA/proposed lease are changed for any reason, including but not limited to negotiation with DCHA, DCHA will obtain corrected copies of the RTA and proposed lease, signed by the family and the owner.

Corrections to the RTA/proposed lease will only be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by email. DCHA will not accept corrections over the phone.

If DCHA determines that the tenancy cannot be approved for any reason, the owner and the family will be notified in writing and given the opportunity to address any reasons for disapproval. DCHA will instruct the owner and family of the steps that are necessary to obtain approval of the tenancy.

Where the tenancy is not approvable because the unit is not approvable, the family must continue to search for eligible housing within the timeframe of the issued voucher.

If the tenancy is not approvable due to rent affordability or rent reasonableness, DCHA will attempt to negotiate the rent with the owner. If a new, approvable rent is negotiated, the tenancy will be approved. If the owner is not willing to negotiate an approvable rent, the family must continue to search for eligible housing within the timeframe of the issued voucher.

9-I.G. HAP CONTRACT EXECUTION [24 CFR 982.305]

The HAP contract is a written agreement between DCHA and the owner of the dwelling unit. Under the HAP contract, DCHA agrees to make housing assistance payments to the owner on behalf of the family, and the owner agrees to comply with all program requirements as stated in the HAP contract.

The HAP contract form is prescribed by HUD.

If DCHA has given approval for the family of the assisted tenancy, the owner and DCHA must execute the HAP contract.

The term of the HAP contract must be the same as the term of the lease [24 CFR 982.451(a)(2)].

DCHA is permitted to execute a HAP contract even if the funding currently available does not extend for the full term of the HAP contract.

DCHA must make a best effort to ensure that the HAP contract is executed before the beginning of the lease term. Regardless, the HAP contract must be executed no later than 60 calendar days from the beginning of the lease term. Any HAP contract executed after the 60-day period is void, and DCHA may not pay any housing assistance payment to the owner, unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent or prevented DCHA from meeting the 60-day deadline—then DCHA may submit to the HUD field office a request for an extension no later than two weeks after the 60-day deadline.

DCHA may not pay any housing assistance payment to the owner until the HAP contract has been executed. If the HAP contract is executed during the period of 60 calendar days from the beginning of the lease term, DCHA will pay housing assistance payments after execution of the HAP contract (in accordance with the terms of the HAP contract), to cover the portion of the lease term before execution of the HAP contract (a maximum of 60 days).

Any HAP contract executed after the 60-day period is void, and DCHA may not pay any housing assistance payment to the owner.

DCHA Policy

Owners who have not previously participated in the HCV program must attend a meeting with DCHA in which the terms of the Tenancy Addendum and the HAP contract will be explained. DCHA may waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis, if it determines that the owner is sufficiently familiar with the requirements and responsibilities under the HCV program.

The owner and the assisted family will execute the dwelling lease and the owner must provide a copy to DCHA. DCHA will ensure that both the owner and the assisted family receive copies of the dwelling lease.

The owner and DCHA will execute the HAP contract. DCHA will not execute the HAP contract until the owner has submitted IRS form W-9. DCHA will ensure that the owner receives a copy of the executed HAP contract.

As required under VAWA, once the HAP contract and lease have been executed and the family has been admitted to the program, DCHA will notify families of their rights under VAWA by providing all families with a copy of the domestic violence certification form (HUD-5382) as well as the VAWA notice of occupancy rights (form HUD-5380).

See Chapter 13 for a discussion of the HAP contract and contract provisions.

9-I.H. CHANGES IN LEASE OR RENT [24 CFR 982.308]

If the tenant and the owner agree to any changes in the lease, such changes must be in writing, and the owner must immediately give DCHA a copy of such changes. The lease, including any changes, must remain in accordance with the requirements of this chapter.

Generally, DCHA approval of tenancy and execution of a new HAP contract are not required for changes in the lease. However, under certain circumstances, the execution of a new lease and HAP contract are required. These circumstances include:

- Changes in lease requirements governing tenant or owner responsibilities for utilities or appliances
- Changes in lease provisions governing the term of the lease
- The family moves to a new unit, even if the unit is in the same building or complex

In these cases, if the HCV assistance is to continue, the family must submit a new Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) along with a new dwelling lease containing the proposed changes. A new tenancy must then be approved in accordance with this chapter.

Where the owner is changing the amount of the rent to owner, the owner must notify DCHA at least 60 days before any such changes go into effect [24 CFR 982.308(g)(4)]. DCHA will agree to such an increase only if the amount of the rent to owner is considered reasonable according to the rent reasonableness standards discussed in Chapter 8. If the requested rent is not found to be reasonable, the owner must either reduce the requested rent increase, or terminate the tenancy in accordance with the terms of the lease.

No rent increase is permitted during the initial term of the lease [24 CFR 982.309(a)(3)].

DCHA Policy

Where the owner is requesting a rent increase, DCHA will determine whether the requested increase is reasonable within 10 business days of receiving the request from the owner. The owner will be notified of the determination in writing.

Rent increases will go into effect on the first of the month following the 60-day period after the owner notifies DCHA of the rent change or on the date specified by the owner, whichever is later.

Chapter 10

MOVING WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE AND PORTABILITY

INTRODUCTION

Freedom of housing choice is a hallmark of the housing choice voucher (HCV) program. In general, HUD regulations impose few restrictions on where families may live or move with HCV assistance. This chapter sets forth HUD regulations and DCHA policies governing moves within or outside DCHA's jurisdiction in two parts:

Part I: Moving with Continued Assistance. This part covers the general rules that apply to all moves by a family assisted under DCHA's HCV program, whether the family moves to another unit within DCHA's jurisdiction or to a unit outside the PHA's jurisdiction under portability.

Part II: Portability. This part covers the special rules that apply to moves by a family under portability, whether the family moves out of or into DCHA's jurisdiction. This part also covers the special responsibilities that DCHA has under portability regulations and procedures.

PART I: MOVING WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE

10-I.A. ALLOWABLE MOVES

HUD lists six regulatory conditions under which an assisted family is allowed to move to a new unit with continued assistance. Permission to move is subject to the restrictions set forth in section 10-I.B.

- The family has a right to terminate the lease on notice to the owner (for the owner's breach or otherwise) and has given a notice of termination to the owner in accordance with the lease [24 CFR 982.354(b)(3)]. If the family terminates the lease on notice to the owner, the family must give DCHA a copy of the notice at the same time [24 CFR 982.354(d)(1)].
- The lease for the family's unit has been terminated by mutual agreement of the owner and the family [24 CFR 982.354(b)(1)(ii)].

DCHA Policy

If the family and the owner mutually agree to terminate the lease for the family's unit, the family must give DCHA a copy of the termination agreement.

- The owner has given the family a notice to vacate, has commenced an action to evict the family, or has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the family [24 CFR 982.354(b)(2)]. The family must give DCHA a copy of any owner eviction notice [24 CFR 982.551(g)].
- The family or a member of the family is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and the move is needed to protect the health or safety of the family or family member [see 24 CFR 982.354(b)(4)]. This condition applies even when the family has moved out of its unit in violation of the lease, with or without prior notification to DCHA, if the family or family member who is the victim reasonably believed that they were imminently threatened by harm from further violence if they remained in the unit [24 CFR 982.354(b)(4), 24 CFR 982.353(b)]. DCHA must adopt an emergency transfer plan as required by regulations at 24 CFR 5.2007(e).

DCHA Policy

If a family requests permission to move with continued assistance or for an external transfer to another covered housing program operated by DCHA based on a claim that the move is necessary to protect the health or safety of a family member who is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, DCHA will request that the resident request the emergency transfer using form HUD-5383, and DCHA will request documentation in accordance with section 16-IX.D of this plan.

DCHA reserves the right to waive the documentation requirement if it determines that a statement or other corroborating evidence from the family or family member will suffice. In such cases DCHA will document the waiver in the family's file.

DCHA may choose to provide a voucher to facilitate an emergency transfer of the victim without first terminating the assistance of the perpetrator.

Before granting an emergency transfer, DCHA will ensure the victim is eligible to receive continued assistance based on the citizenship or immigration status of the victim.

DCHA has adopted an emergency transfer plan, which is included as Exhibit 16-3 to this plan and discusses external transfers to other covered housing programs.

- DCHA has terminated the HAP contract for the family's unit for the owner's breach [24 CFR 982.354(b)(1)(i)].
- DCHA determines that the family's current unit does not meet space standards because of an increase in family size or a change in family composition. In such cases, DCHA must issue the family a new voucher, and the family and DCHA must try to find an acceptable unit as soon as possible. If an acceptable unit is available for the family, DCHA must terminate the HAP contract for the family's old unit in accordance with the HAP contract terms and must notify both the family and the owner of the termination. The HAP contract terminates at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which DCHA gives notice to the owner. [24 CFR 982.403(a) and (c)]

10.I.B. FAMILY MOVES DUE TO UNIT DEFICIENCIES

Units in Abatement [24 CFR 982.404(d)(3)]

An owner may not terminate the tenancy of a family due to DCHA withholding or abating HAP for housing quality standards deficiencies that are not repaired timely. During the period that assistance is abated, the family may terminate tenancy by notifying the owner and DCHA. If the family chooses to terminate tenancy, the HAP contract will automatically terminate on the effective date of tenancy termination or the date the family vacates the unit, whichever is earlier. DCHA must promptly issue the family its voucher to move.

DCHA Policy

Upon receipt of a family's written notification that it wishes to move, DCHA will issue a voucher within 10 business days of DCHA's written approval to move. No briefing is required for these families. DCHA will follow the policies set forth in Chapter 5 on voucher term, extension, and expiration.

Termination of HAP Contract and Family Moves [24 CFR 982.404(e)]

For HAP contracts executed or renewed on or after June 6, 2024, if an owner failed to make required repairs within 60 days (or a reasonable longer period established by DCHA) of the notice of abatement, DCHA must terminate the HAP contract. In this case, DCHA must issue the family its voucher at least 30 days prior to the termination of the HAP contract. The family must be provided at least 90 days following the termination of the HAP contract to lease a new unit, although DCHA may provide a longer period as DCHA determines is reasonably necessary.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will issue a family, whose HAP contract is being terminated due to an owner failing to make required repairs within the required time frame, a voucher no later than 30 days prior to the termination of the HAP contract. The initial term of the voucher will be 120 calendar days. No briefing is required for these families.

To continue under the tenant-based HCV program, the family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 120-day period unless DCHA grants an extension. DCHA will follow the policies set forth in Chapter 5 on voucher extension and expiration.

Offer of Public Housing [24 CFR 982.404(e)(2)]

If the family is unable to lease a new unit within the term of the voucher and DCHA owns or operates public housing, DCHA must offer, and if accepted, provide the family a selection preference for an appropriate-sized public housing unit that first becomes available for occupancy after the time period expires.

DCHA Policy

DCHA does operate a public housing program and will provide a preference for HCV families whose HAP contract is being terminated due to an owner failing to make required repairs within the required time frame, and who were unable to lease a new unit within the term of the voucher.

Thirty days prior to the expiration date of the voucher, DCHA will provide written notice to the family stating that DCHA does provide such a preference and providing an estimation of availability for the appropriate-sized public housing unit.

Relocation Assistance [24 CFR 982.404(e)(3)]

DCHA may assist families relocating due to the HAP contract being terminated as a result of the owner failing to make required repairs within the required time frame in finding a new unit, including using up to two months of the withheld and abated assistance payments for costs directly associated with relocating to a new unit, such as security deposits, temporary housing costs, or other reasonable moving costs as determined by DCHA based on their locality.

DCHA must assist families with disabilities with locating available accessible units in accordance with 24 CFR 8.28(a)(3).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will assist families with disabilities with locating available accessible units in accordance with program requirements.

DCHA will use up to two months of withheld and abated payment to assist with any required security deposit at the new unit. Funds will not be used for any other relocation assistance.

If the family receives a refund of a security deposit for the new unit, DCHA will not require any amount to be remitted to DCHA.

10-I.C. RESTRICTIONS ON MOVES

A family's right to move is generally contingent upon the family's compliance with program requirements [24 CFR 982.1(b)(2)]. HUD specifies two conditions under which DCHA may deny a family permission to move and two ways in which DCHA may restrict moves by a family.

Denial of Moves

HUD regulations permit DCHA to deny a family permission to move under the following conditions:

Insufficient Funding

DCHA may deny a family permission to move either within or outside DCHA's jurisdiction if DCHA does not have sufficient funding for continued assistance [24 CFR 982.354(e)(1)]. However, Notice PIH 2016-09 significantly restricts the ability of DCHA to deny permission to move due to insufficient funding and places further requirements on DCHA regarding moves denied due to lack of funding. The requirements found in this notice are mandatory.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will deny a family permission to move on grounds that DCHA does not have sufficient funding for continued assistance if (a) the move is initiated by the family, not the owner or DCHA; (b) DCHA can demonstrate that the move will, in fact, result in higher subsidy costs (c) DCHA can demonstrate, in accordance with the policies in Part VIII of Chapter 16, that it does not have sufficient funding in its annual budget to accommodate the higher subsidy costs; and (d) for portability moves, the receiving PHA is not absorbing the voucher.

If DCHA does not have sufficient funding for continued assistance, but the family must move from their unit (e.g., the unit failed inspection), the family may move to a higher cost unit if the move is within DCHA's jurisdiction. DCHA, however, will not allow the family to move under portability in this situation if the family wishes to move to a higher cost area.

For both moves within DCHA's jurisdiction and outside under portability, DCHA will not deny a move due to insufficient funding if DCHA previously approved the move and subsequently experienced a funding shortfall if the family cannot remain in their current unit. DCHA will rescind the voucher in this situation if the family will be allowed to remain in their current unit.

DCHA will create a list of families whose moves have been denied due to insufficient funding. DCHA will keep the family's request open indefinitely, and when funds become available, the families on this list will take precedence over families on the waiting list. DCHA will use the same procedures for notifying families with open requests to move when funds become available as it uses for notifying families on the waiting list (see section 4-III.D).

DCHA will inform the family of its policy regarding moves denied due to insufficient funding in a letter to the family at the time the move is denied.

Grounds for Denial or Termination of Assistance

DCHA may deny a family permission to move if it has grounds for denying or terminating the family's assistance [24 CFR 982.354(e)(2)].

DCHA Policy

If DCHA has grounds for denying or terminating a family's assistance, DCHA will act on those grounds in accordance with the regulations and policies set forth in Chapters 3 and 12, respectively. In general, it will not deny a family permission to move for this reason; however, it retains the discretion to do so under special circumstances.

Restrictions on Elective Moves [24 CFR 982.354(c)]

HUD regulations permit DCHA to prohibit any elective move by a participant family during the family's initial lease term. They also permit DCHA to prohibit more than one elective move by a participant family during any 12-month period. However, such prohibitions, if adopted, do not apply when the family or a member of the family is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and the move is needed to protect the health or safety of the family or family member. (For the policy on documentation of abuse, see section 10-I.A.) In addition, DCHA may not establish a policy permitting moves only at reexamination [Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will deny a family permission to make an elective move during the family's initial lease term. This policy applies to moves within DCHA's jurisdiction or outside it under portability.

DCHA will also deny a family permission to make more than one elective move during any 12-month period. This policy applies to all assisted families residing in DCHA's jurisdiction.

DCHA will consider exceptions to these policies for the following reasons: to protect the health or safety of a family member (e.g., lead-based paint hazards, domestic violence, witness protection programs), to accommodate a change in family circumstances (e.g., new employment, school attendance in a distant area), or to address an emergency situation over which a family has no control.

In addition, DCHA will allow exceptions to these policies for purposes of reasonable accommodation of a family member who is a person with disabilities (see Chapter 2).

10-I.D. MOVING PROCESS

Notification

If a family wishes to move to a new unit, the family must notify DCHA and the owner before moving out of the old unit or terminating the lease on notice to the owner [24 CFR 982.354(d)(2)]. If the family wishes to move to a unit outside DCHA's jurisdiction under portability, the notice to DCHA must specify the area where the family wishes to move [24 CFR 982.354(d)(2)]. The notices must be in writing [24 CFR 982.5].

Approval

DCHA Policy

Upon receipt of a family's notification that it wishes to move, DCHA will determine whether the move is approvable in accordance with the regulations and policies set forth in sections 10-I.A and 10-I.B. DCHA will notify the family in writing of its determination within 10 business days following receipt of the family's notification.

Reexamination of Family Income and Composition

DCHA Policy

For families approved to move to a new unit within DCHA's jurisdiction, DCHA will perform a new annual reexamination in accordance with the policies set forth in Chapter 11 of this plan.

For families moving into or families approved to move out of DCHA's jurisdiction under portability, DCHA will follow the policies set forth in Part II of this chapter.

Voucher Issuance and Briefing

DCHA Policy

For families approved to move to a new unit within DCHA's jurisdiction, DCHA will issue a new voucher within 10 business days of DCHA's written approval to move. No briefing is required for these families. DCHA will follow the policies set forth in Chapter 5 on voucher term, extension, and expiration. If a family does not locate a new unit within the term of the voucher and any extensions, the family may remain in its current unit with continued voucher assistance if the owner agrees and DCHA approves. Otherwise, the family will lose its assistance.

For families moving into or families approved to move out of DCHA's jurisdiction under portability, DCHA will follow the policies set forth in Part II of this chapter.

For families moving due to an owner failing to make required repairs timely, resulting in DCHA terminating the HAP contract, DCHA will follow the policies set forth earlier in this section and in Chapter 8, Part II.

Housing Assistance Payments [24 CFR 982.311(d)]

When a family moves out of an assisted unit, DCHA may not make any housing assistance payment to the owner for any month **after** the month the family moves out. The owner may keep the housing assistance payment for the month when the family moves out of the unit.

If a participant family moves from an assisted unit with continued tenant-based assistance, the term of the assisted lease for the new assisted unit may begin during the month the family moves out of the first assisted unit. Overlap of the last housing assistance payment (for the month when the family moves out of the old unit) and the first assistance payment for the new unit, is not considered to constitute a duplicative housing subsidy.

Zero HAP Families Who Wish to Move [24 CFR 982.455]

A participant who is not receiving any subsidy, but whose HAP contract is still in force, may request a voucher to move to a different unit. DCHA must issue a voucher to move unless it has grounds to deny assistance under the program regulations. However, if DCHA determines no subsidy would be paid at the new unit, DCHA may refuse to enter into a HAP contract on behalf of the family.

DCHA Policy

If a zero HAP family requests to move to a new unit, the family may request a voucher to move. However, if no subsidy will be paid at the unit to which the family requests to move, DCHA will not enter into a HAP contract on behalf of the family for the new unit.

PART II: PORTABILITY

10-II.A. OVERVIEW

Within the limitations of the regulations and this plan, a participant family or an applicant family that has been issued a voucher has the right to use tenant-based voucher assistance to lease a unit anywhere in the United States providing that the unit is located within the jurisdiction of a PHA administering a tenant-based voucher program [24 CFR 982.353(b)]. The process by which a family obtains a voucher from one PHA and uses it to lease a unit in the jurisdiction of another PHA is known as portability. The PHA that issues the voucher is called the **initial PHA**. The PHA that has jurisdiction in the area to which the family wants to move is called the **receiving PHA**.

The receiving PHA has the option of administering the family's voucher for the initial PHA or absorbing the family into its own program. Under the first option, the receiving PHA provides all housing services for the family and bills the initial PHA for the family's housing assistance payments and the fees for administering the family's voucher. Under the second option, the receiving PHA pays for the family's assistance with its own program funds, and the initial PHA has no further relationship with the family. The initial PHA must contact the receiving PHA via email or other confirmed delivery method to determine whether the receiving PHA will administer or absorb the initial PHA's voucher. Based on the receiving PHA's response, the initial PHA must determine whether they will approve or deny the portability request [Notice PIH 2016-09].

PHAs commonly act as both the initial and receiving PHA because families may move into or out of their jurisdiction under portability. Each role involves different responsibilities. The PHA will follow the rules and policies in section 10-II.B when it is acting as the initial PHA for a family. It will follow the rules and policies in section 10-II.C when it is acting as the receiving PHA for a family.

In administering portability, the initial PHA and the receiving PHA must comply with financial procedures required by HUD, including the use of HUD-required forms [24 CFR 982.355(e)(5)].

PHAs must also comply with billing and payment deadlines. HUD may reduce an administrative fee to an initial or receiving PHA if the PHA does not comply with HUD portability requirements [24 CFR 982.355(e)(7)].

10-II.B. INITIAL PHA ROLE

Allowable Moves under Portability

A family may move with voucher assistance only to an area where there is at least one PHA administering a voucher program [24 CFR 982.353(b)]. If there is more than one PHA in the area, DCHA provides the family with the contact information for the receiving PHAs that serve the area, and the family selects the receiving PHA. The family must inform DCHA which receiving PHA it has selected. If the family prefers not to select the receiving PHA, DCHA will select the receiving PHA on behalf of the family [24 CFR 982.255(b)].

Applicant families that have been issued vouchers as well as participant families may qualify to lease a unit outside the PHA's jurisdiction under portability. HUD regulations and PHA policy determine whether a family qualifies.

Applicant Families

Under HUD regulations, most applicant families qualify to lease a unit outside DCHA's jurisdiction under portability. However, HUD gives DCHA discretion to deny a portability move by an applicant family for the same two reasons that it may deny any move by a participant family: insufficient funding and grounds for denial or termination of assistance. If DCHA intends to deny a family permission to move under portability due to insufficient funding, DCHA must notify HUD within 10 business days of the determination to deny the move [24 CFR 982.355(e)].

DCHA Policy

In determining whether or not to deny an applicant family permission to move under portability because DCHA lacks sufficient funding or has grounds for denying assistance to the family, DCHA will follow the policies established in section 10-I.B of this chapter. If DCHA does deny the move due to insufficient funding, DCHA will notify HUD in writing within 10 business days of DCHA's determination to deny the move.

In addition, DCHA may establish a policy denying the right to portability to nonresident applicants during the first 12 months after they are admitted to the program [24 CFR 982.353(c)].

DCHA Policy

If neither the head of household nor the spouse/cohead of an applicant family had a domicile (legal residence) in DCHA's jurisdiction at the time that the family's initial application for assistance was submitted, the family must lease a unit within DCHA's jurisdiction for at least 12 months before requesting portability.

DCHA will consider exceptions to this policy for purposes of reasonable accommodation (see Chapter 2) or reasons related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.

Participant Families

DCHA must not provide portable assistance for a participant if a family has moved out of its assisted unit in violation of the lease [24 CFR 982.353(b)]. The Violence against Women Act (VAWA) creates an exception to this prohibition for families who are otherwise in compliance with program obligations but have moved to protect the health or safety of a family member who is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and who reasonably believed they were imminently threatened by harm from further violence if they remained in the unit [see 24 CFR 982.353(b)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will determine whether a participant family may move out of DCHA's jurisdiction with continued assistance in accordance with the regulations and policies set forth here and in sections 10-I.A and 10-I.B of this chapter. DCHA will notify the family of its determination in accordance with the approval policy set forth in section 10-I.C of this chapter.

Determining Income Eligibility

Applicant Families

An applicant family may lease a unit in a particular area under portability only if the family is income eligible for admission to the voucher program in that area [24 CFR 982.353(d)(1)]. The family must specify the area to which the family wishes to move [24 CFR 982.355(c)(1)].

The initial PHA is responsible for determining whether the family is income eligible in the area to which the family wishes to move [24 CFR 982.353(d)(1), 24 CFR 982.355(9)]. If the applicant family is not income eligible in that area, the PHA must inform the family that it may not move there and receive voucher assistance [Notice PIH 2016-09].

Participant Families

The income eligibility of a participant family is not redetermined if the family moves to a new jurisdiction under portability [24 CFR 982.353(d)(2)].

Reexamination of Family Income and Composition

No new reexamination of family income and composition is required for an applicant family.

DCHA Policy

For a participant family approved to move out of its jurisdiction under portability, DCHA generally will conduct a reexamination of family income and composition only if the family's annual reexamination must be completed on or before the initial billing deadline specified on form HUD-52665, Family Portability Information.

DCHA will make any exceptions to this policy necessary to remain in compliance with HUD regulations.

Briefing

The regulations and policies on briefings set forth in Chapter 5 of this plan require DCHA to provide information on portability to all applicant families that qualify to lease a unit outside DCHA's jurisdiction under the portability procedures. Therefore, no special briefing is required for these families.

DCHA Policy

No formal briefing will be required for a participant family wishing to move outside DCHA's jurisdiction under portability. However, DCHA will provide the family with the same oral and written explanation of portability that it provides to applicant families selected for admission to the program (see Chapter 5).

DCHA will provide the name, address, and phone of the contact for the PHAs in the jurisdiction to which they wish to move. If there is more than one PHA with jurisdiction over the area to which the family wishes to move, DCHA will advise the family that the family selects the receiving PHA and notify DCHA of which receiving PHA was selected. DCHA will provide the family with contact information for all of the receiving PHAs that serve the area. DCHA will not provide any additional information about receiving PHAs in the area. DCHA will further inform the family that if the family prefers not to select the receiving PHA, DCHA will select the receiving PHA on behalf of the family. In this case, DCHA will not provide the family with information for all receiving PHAs in the area.

DCHA will advise the family that they will be under the receiving PHA's policies and procedures, including screening, subsidy standards, voucher extension policies, and payment standards.

Voucher Issuance and Term

An applicant family has no right to portability until after the family has been issued a voucher [24 CFR 982.353(b)]. In issuing vouchers to applicant families, DCHA will follow the regulations and procedures set forth in Chapter 5.

DCHA Policy

For participating families approved to move under portability, DCHA will issue a new voucher within 10 business days of DCHA's written approval to move.

The initial term of the voucher will be 60 days.

However, if the move is due to the HAP contract being terminated due to an owner failing to make required repairs within the required time frame, DCHA will issue the family a voucher not later than 30 days prior to the termination of the HAP contract. The initial term of the voucher will be 120 calendar days.

Voucher Extensions and Expiration

DCHA Policy

DCHA will approve **no** extensions to a voucher issued to an applicant or participant family porting out of DCHA's jurisdiction except under the following circumstances: (a) the initial term of the voucher will expire before the portable family will be issued a voucher by the receiving PHA, (b) the family decides to return to DCHA's jurisdiction and search for a unit there, or (c) the family decides to search for a unit in a third PHA's jurisdiction. In such cases, the policies on voucher extensions set forth in Chapter 5, section 5-II.E, of this plan will apply, including the requirement that the family apply for an extension in writing prior to the expiration of the initial voucher term.

Preapproval Contact with the Receiving PHA

Prior to approving a family's request to move under portability, DCHA must contact the receiving PHA via email or other confirmed delivery method to determine whether the receiving PHA will administer or absorb the family's voucher. Based on the receiving PHA's response, DCHA must determine whether it will approve or deny the move [24 CFR 982.355(c)(3)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use email, when possible, to contact the receiving PHA regarding whether the receiving PHA will administer or absorb the family's voucher.

Initial Notification to the Receiving PHA

After approving a family's request to move under portability, the initial PHA must promptly notify the receiving PHA via email or other confirmed delivery method to expect the family [24 CFR 982.355(c)(3); 24 CFR 982.355(c)(7)]. The initial PHA must also advise the family how to contact and request assistance from the receiving PHA [24 CFR 982.355(c)(6)].

DCHA Policy

Because the portability process is time-sensitive, DCHA will notify the receiving PHA by phone or email to expect the family. DCHA will also ask the receiving PHA to provide any information the family may need upon arrival, including the name, email address, and telephone number of the staff person responsible for business with incoming portable families and procedures related to appointments for voucher issuance. DCHA will pass this information along to the family. DCHA will also ask for the name, address, telephone number, and email of the person responsible for processing the billing information.

Sending Documentation to the Receiving PHA

The initial PHA is required to send the receiving PHA the following documents:

- Form HUD-52665, Family Portability Information, with Part I filled out [Notice PIH 2016-09]
- A copy of the family's voucher [Notice PIH 2016-09]
- A copy of the family's most recent form HUD-50058, Family Report, or, if necessary in the case of an applicant family, family and income information in a format similar to that of form HUD-50058 [24 CFR 982.355(c)(7), Notice PIH 2016-09]
- Copies of the income verifications backing up the form HUD-50058, including a copy of the family's current EIV data [24 CFR 982.355(c)(7), Notice PIH 2016-09]

DCHA Policy

In addition to these documents, DCHA will provide the following information, if available, to the receiving PHA:

Social security numbers (SSNs)

Documentation of SSNs for all nonexempt household members whose SSNs have not been verified through the EIV system

Documentation of legal identity

Documentation of citizenship or eligible immigration status

Documentation of participation in a family self-sufficiency (FSS) program

If applicable, information related to the family's health and medical care and disability assistance expense phased-in hardship exemption, including what stage the family is in and how many months remain in that phase-in stage

DCHA will notify the family in writing regarding any information provided to the receiving PHA [HCV GB, p. 13-3].

Initial Billing Deadline [Notice PIH 2016-09]

The deadline for submission of initial billing is 90 days following the expiration date of the voucher issued to the family by the initial PHA. In cases where suspension of the voucher delays the initial billing submission, the receiving PHA must notify the initial PHA of delayed billing before the billing deadline and document the delay is due to the suspension. In this case, the initial PHA must extend the billing deadline by 30 days.

If the initial PHA does not receive a billing notice by the deadline and does not intend to honor a late billing submission, it must notify the receiving PHA in writing. The initial PHA may report to HUD the receiving PHA's failure to comply with the deadline.

If the initial PHA will honor the late billing, no action is required.

DCHA Policy

DCHA's decision as to whether to accept late billing will be based on internal DCHA factors, including DCHA's leasing or funding status. If DCHA has not received an initial billing notice from the receiving PHA within the billing deadline and does not intend to honor the late billing, it will contact the receiving PHA to inform them that it will not honor a late billing submission and will return any subsequent billings that it receives on behalf of the family. In this case, DCHA will send the receiving PHA a written confirmation of its decision by mail.

Among other considerations as to whether to accept late billing will be if the family includes a person with disabilities and the late billing is a result of a reasonable accommodation granted to the family by the receiving PHA.

Monthly Billing Payments [24 CFR 982.355(e), Notice PIH 2016-09]

If the receiving PHA is administering the family's voucher, the receiving PHA bills the initial PHA for housing assistance payments and administrative fees. When reimbursing for administrative fees, the initial PHA must promptly reimburse the receiving PHA for the lesser of 80 percent of the initial PHA ongoing administrative fee or 100 percent of the receiving PHA's ongoing administrative fee for each program unit under contract on the first day of the month for which the receiving PHA is billing the initial PHA under portability. If the administrative fees are prorated for the HCV program, the proration will apply to the amount of the administrative fee for which the receiving PHA may bill [24 CFR 982.355(e)(2)].

The initial PHA is responsible for making billing payments in a timely manner. The first billing amount is due within 30 calendar days after the initial PHA receives Part II of form HUD-52665 from the receiving PHA. Subsequent payments must be **received** by the receiving PHA no later than the fifth business day of each month. The payments must be provided in a form and manner that the receiving PHA is able and willing to accept.

The initial PHA may not terminate or delay making payments under existing portability billing arrangements as a result of overleasing or funding shortfalls. The PHA must manage its tenant-based program in a manner that ensures that it has the financial ability to provide assistance for families that move out of its jurisdiction under portability and are not absorbed by receiving PHAs as well as for families that remain within its jurisdiction.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not utilize direct deposit to ensure that the payment is received by the deadline. If DCHA extends the term of the voucher, the receiving PHA's voucher will expire 30 calendar days from the new expiration date of DCHA's voucher.

Annual Updates of Form HUD-50058

If the initial PHA is being billed on behalf of a portable family, it should receive an updated form HUD-50058 each year from the receiving PHA. If the initial PHA fails to receive an updated 50058 by the family's annual reexamination date, the initial PHA should contact the receiving PHA to verify the status of the family. The initial PHA must continue paying the receiving PHA based on the last form HUD-50058 received, unless instructed otherwise by HUD. The initial PHA may seek absorption of the vouchers by following steps outlined in Notice PIH 2016-09.

Denial or Termination of Assistance [24 CFR 982.355(c)(17)]

At any time, either the initial PHA or the receiving PHA may make a determination to deny or terminate assistance with the family in accordance with 24 CFR 982.552 and 24 CFR 982.553. (For PHA policies on denial and termination, see Chapters 3 and 12, respectively.)

10-II.C. RECEIVING PHA ROLE

If a family has a right to lease a unit in the receiving PHA's jurisdiction under portability, the receiving PHA must provide assistance for the family [24 CFR 982.355(10)]. HUD may determine in certain instances that a PHA is not required to accept incoming portable families, such as a PHA in a declared disaster area. However, the PHA must have approval in writing from HUD before refusing any incoming portable families [24 CFR 982.355(b)].

Administration of the voucher must be in accordance with the receiving PHA's policies. This requirement also applies to policies of Moving to Work agencies. The receiving PHA procedures and preferences for selection among eligible applicants do not apply to the family, and the receiving PHA waiting list is not used [24 CFR 982.355(c)(10)]. The family's unit, or voucher, size is determined in accordance with the subsidy standards of the receiving PHA [24 CFR 982.355(c)(12)], and the receiving PHA's policies on extensions of the voucher term apply [24 CFR 982.355(c)(14)].

Responding to Initial PHA's Request [24 CFR 982.355(c)]

The receiving PHA must respond via email or other confirmed delivery method to the initial PHA's inquiry to determine whether the family's voucher will be billed or absorbed [24 CFR 982.355(c)(3)]. If the receiving PHA informs the initial PHA that it will be absorbing the voucher, the receiving PHA cannot reverse its decision at a later date without consent of the initial PHA (24 CFR 982.355(c)(4)).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use email, when possible, to notify the initial PHA whether it will administer or absorb the family's voucher.

Initial Contact with Family

When a family moves into the PHA's jurisdiction under portability, the family is responsible for promptly contacting the PHA and complying with the PHA's procedures for incoming portable families. The family's failure to comply may result in denial or termination of the receiving PHA's voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(8)].

If the voucher issued to the family by the initial PHA has expired, the receiving PHA must contact the initial PHA to determine if it will extend the voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(13)]. An informal hearing is not required when a voucher has expired without the family leasing a unit.

If for any reason the receiving PHA refuses to process or provide assistance to a family under the portability procedures, the family must be given the opportunity for an informal review or hearing [Notice PIH 2016-09]. (For more on this topic, see later under "Denial or Termination of Assistance.")

Briefing

HUD allows the receiving PHA to require a briefing for an incoming portable family as long as the requirement does not unduly delay the family's search [Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not require the family to attend a briefing. DCHA will provide the family with a briefing packet (as described in Chapter 5) and, in an individual briefing, will orally inform the family about DCHA's payment and subsidy standards, procedures for requesting approval of a unit, the unit inspection process, and the leasing process. DCHA will suggest that the family attend a full briefing at a later date.

Income Eligibility and Reexamination

The receiving PHA does not redetermine eligibility for a portable family that was already receiving assistance in the initial PHA's voucher program [24 CFR 982.355(c)(9)]. If the receiving PHA opts to conduct a new reexamination for a current participant family, the receiving PHA may not delay issuing the family a voucher or otherwise delay approval of a unit [24 CFR 982.355(c)(11)].

DCHA Policy

For any family moving into its jurisdiction under portability, DCHA will conduct a new reexamination of family income and composition. However, DCHA will not delay issuing the family a voucher for this reason. Nor will DCHA delay approving a unit for the family until the reexamination process is complete unless the family is an applicant and DCHA cannot otherwise confirm that the family is income eligible for admission to the program in the area where the unit is located.

In conducting its own reexamination, DCHA will rely upon any verifications provided by the initial PHA to the extent that they (a) accurately reflect the family's current circumstances and (b) were obtained within the last 120 days. Any new information may be verified by documents provided by the family and adjusted, if necessary, when third party verification is received.

Voucher Issuance

When a family moves into its jurisdiction under portability, the receiving PHA is required to issue the family a voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(13)]. The family must submit a request for tenancy approval to the receiving PHA during the term of the receiving PHA's voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(15)].

Timing of Voucher Issuance

HUD expects the receiving PHA to issue the voucher within two weeks after receiving the family's paperwork from the initial PHA if the information is in order, the family has contacted the receiving PHA, and the family complies with the receiving PHA's procedures [Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

When a family ports into its jurisdiction, DCHA will issue the family a voucher based on the paperwork provided by the initial PHA unless the family's paperwork from the initial PHA is incomplete, the family's voucher from the initial PHA has expired or the family does not comply with the PHA's procedures. DCHA will update the family's information when verification has been completed.

Voucher Term

The term of the receiving PHA's voucher may not expire before 30 calendar days from the expiration of the initial PHA's voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(13)]. If the initial PHA extends the term of the voucher, the receiving PHA's voucher may not expire before 30 days from the new expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher [Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

The receiving PHA's voucher will expire 30 calendar days from the expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher. If the initial PHA extends the term of the voucher, the receiving PHA's voucher will expire 30 calendar days from the new expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher.

Voucher Extensions [24 CFR 982.355(c)(14), Notice 2016-09]

Once the receiving PHA issues the portable family a voucher, the receiving PHA's policies on extensions of the voucher term apply. The receiving PHA must inform the initial PHA of any extension granted to the term of the voucher. It must also bear in mind the billing deadline provided by the initial PHA. Unless willing and able to absorb the family, the receiving PHA should ensure that any voucher expiration date would leave sufficient time to process a request for tenancy approval, execute a HAP contract, and deliver the initial billing to the initial PHA.

DCHA Policy

DCHA generally will not extend the term of the voucher that it issues to an incoming portable family unless DCHA plans to absorb the family into its own program, in which case it will follow the policies on voucher extension set forth in section 5-II.E.

DCHA will consider an exception to this policy as a reasonable accommodation to a person with disabilities (see Chapter 2).

Voucher Suspensions [24 CFR 982.303, 24 CFR 982.355(c)(15)]

If the family submits a request for tenancy approval during the term of the receiving PHA's voucher, the PHA must suspend the term of that voucher. The term of the voucher stops from the date that the family submits a request for PHA approval of the tenancy until the date the PHA notifies the family in writing whether the request has been approved or denied [24 CFR 982.4(b)] (see Section 5-II.E).

Notifying the Initial PHA

The receiving PHA must promptly notify the initial PHA if the family has leased an eligible unit under the program or if the family fails to submit a request for tenancy approval for an eligible unit within the term of the receiving PHA's voucher [24 CFR 982.355(c)(16)]. The receiving PHA is required to use Part II of form HUD-52665, Family Portability Information, for this purpose [Notice PIH 2016-09]. (For more on this topic and the deadline for notification, see below under "Administering a Portable Family's Voucher.")

If an incoming portable family ultimately decides not to lease in the jurisdiction of the receiving PHA but instead wishes to return to the initial PHA's jurisdiction or to search in another jurisdiction, the receiving PHA must refer the family back to the initial PHA. In such a case the voucher of record for the family is once again the voucher originally issued by the initial PHA. Any extension of search time provided by the receiving PHA's voucher is only valid for the family's search in the receiving PHA's jurisdiction [Notice PIH 2016-09].

Administering a Portable Family's Voucher

Portability Billing [24 CFR 982.355(e)]

To cover assistance for a portable family that was not absorbed, the receiving PHA bills the initial PHA for housing assistance payments and administrative fees. The amount of the housing assistance payment for a portable family in the receiving PHA's program is determined in the same manner as for other families in the receiving PHA's program.

The receiving PHA may bill the initial PHA for the lesser of 80 percent of the initial PHA's ongoing administrative fee or 100 percent of the receiving PHA's ongoing administrative fee for each program unit under contract on the first day of the month for which the receiving PHA is billing the initial PHA under portability. If the administrative fees are prorated for the HCV program, the proration will apply to the amount of the administrative fee for which the receiving PHA may bill (i.e., the receiving PHA may bill for the lesser of 80 percent of the initial PHA's prorated ongoing administrative fee or 100 percent of the receiving PHA's ongoing administrative fee).

If both PHAs agree, the PHAs may negotiate a different amount of reimbursement.

DCHA Policy

Unless DCHA negotiates a different amount of reimbursement with the initial PHA, DCHA will bill the initial PHA the maximum amount of administrative fees allowed, ensuring any administrative fee proration has been properly applied.

Initial Billing Deadline

If a portable family's search for a unit is successful and the receiving PHA intends to administer the family's voucher, the receiving PHA must submit its initial billing notice (Part II of form HUD-52665) in time that the notice will be **received** no later than 90 days following the expiration date of the family's voucher issued by the initial PHA [Notice PIH 2016-09]. This deadline may be extended for 30 additional days if the delay is due to suspension of the voucher's term (see Initial Billing Section). A copy of the family's form HUD-50058, Family Report, completed by the receiving PHA must be attached to the initial billing notice. The receiving PHA may send these documents by mail or email.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will send its initial billing notice by email, if necessary, to meet the billing deadline but will also send the notice by regular mail.

If the receiving PHA fails to send the initial billing by the deadline, it is required to absorb the family into its own program unless (a) the initial PHA is willing to accept the late submission or (b) HUD requires the initial PHA to honor the late submission (e.g., because the receiving PHA is overleased) [Notice PIH 2016-09].

Ongoing Notification Responsibilities [Notice PIH 2016-09, HUD-52665]

Annual Reexamination. The receiving PHA must send the initial PHA a copy of a portable family's updated form HUD-50058 after each annual reexamination for the duration of time the receiving PHA is billing the initial PHA on behalf of the family, regardless of whether there is a change in the billing amount.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will send a copy of the updated HUD-50058 by regular mail no later than 10 business days after the effective date of the reexamination.

Change in Billing Amount. The receiving PHA is required to notify the initial PHA, using form HUD-52665, of any change in the billing amount for the family as a result of:

- A change in the HAP amount (because of a reexamination, a change in the applicable payment standard, a move to another unit, etc.)
- An abatement or subsequent resumption of the HAP payments
- Termination of the HAP contract
- Payment of a damage/vacancy loss claim for the family
- Termination of the family from the program

The timing of the notice of the change in the billing amount should correspond with the notification to the owner and the family in order to provide the initial PHA with advance notice of the change. Under no circumstances should the notification be later than 10 business days following the effective date of the change in the billing amount. If the receiving PHA fails to send Form HUD-52665 within 10 days of effective date of billing changes, the initial PHA is not responsible for any increase prior to notification. If the change resulted in a decrease in the monthly billing amount, the initial PHA will offset future monthly payments until the difference is reconciled.

Late Payments [Notice PIH 2016-09]

If the initial PHA fails to make a monthly payment for a portable family by the fifth business day of the month, the receiving PHA must promptly notify the initial PHA in writing of the deficiency. The notice must identify the family, the amount of the billing payment, the date the billing payment was due, and the date the billing payment was received (if it arrived late). The receiving PHA must send a copy of the notification to the Office of Public Housing (OPH) in the HUD area office with jurisdiction over the receiving PHA. If the initial PHA fails to correct the problem by the second month following the notification, the receiving PHA may request by memorandum to the director of the OPH with jurisdiction over the receiving PHA that HUD transfer the unit in question. A copy of the initial notification and any subsequent correspondence between the PHAs on the matter must be attached. The receiving PHA must send a copy of the memorandum to the initial PHA. If the OPH decides to grant the transfer, the billing arrangement on behalf of the family ceases with the transfer, but the initial PHA is still responsible for any outstanding payments due to the receiving PHA.

Overpayments [Notice PIH 2016-09]

In all cases where the receiving PHA has received billing payments for billing arrangements no longer in effect, the receiving PHA is responsible for returning the full amount of the overpayment (including the portion provided for administrative fees) to the initial PHA.

In the event that HUD determines billing payments have continued for at least three months because the receiving PHA failed to notify the initial PHA that the billing arrangement was terminated, the receiving PHA must take the following steps:

- Return the full amount of the overpayment, including the portion provided for administrative fees, to the initial PHA.
- Once full payment has been returned, notify the Office of Public Housing in the HUD area office with jurisdiction over the receiving PHA of the date and the amount of reimbursement to the initial PHA.

At HUD's discretion, the receiving PHA will be subject to the sanctions spelled out in Notice PIH 2016-09.

Denial or Termination of Assistance

At any time, the receiving PHA may make a determination to deny or terminate assistance to a portable family for family action or inaction [24 CFR 982.355(c)(17)].

In the case of a termination, the PHA should provide adequate notice of the effective date to the initial PHA to avoid having to return a payment. In no event should the receiving PHA fail to notify the initial PHA later than 10 business days following the effective date of the termination of the billing arrangement [HUD-52665; Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

If DCHA elects to deny or terminate assistance for a portable family, DCHA will notify the initial PHA within 10 business days after the informal review or hearing if the denial or termination is upheld. DCHA will base its denial or termination decision on the policies set forth in Chapter 3 or Chapter 12, respectively. The informal review or hearing will be held in accordance with the policies in Chapter 16. The receiving PHA will furnish the initial PHA with a copy of the review or hearing decision.

Absorbing a Portable Family

The receiving PHA may absorb an incoming portable family into its own program when the PHA executes a HAP contract on behalf of the family or at any time thereafter providing that the PHA has funding available under its annual contributions contract (ACC) [24 CFR 982.355(d)(1), Notice PIH 2016-09].

If the receiving PHA absorbs a family from the point of admission, the admission will be counted against the income targeting obligation of the receiving PHA [24 CFR 982.201(b)(2)(vii)].

If the receiving PHA absorbs a family after providing assistance for the family under a billing arrangement with the initial PHA, the receiving PHA must send an updated form HUD-52665 to the initial PHA no later than 10 business days following the effective date of the termination of the billing arrangement [Notice PIH 2016-09].

DCHA Policy

If DCHA decides to absorb a portable family upon the execution of a HAP contract on behalf of the family, DCHA will notify the initial PHA by the initial billing deadline specified on form HUD-52665. The effective date of the HAP contract will be the effective date of the absorption.

If DCHA decides to absorb a family after that, it will provide the initial PHA with 30 days' advance notice, but no later than 10 business days following the effective date of the termination of the billing arrangement.

Following the absorption of an incoming portable family, the family is assisted with funds available under the consolidated ACC for the receiving PHA's voucher program [24 CFR 982.355(d)], and the receiving PHA becomes the initial PHA in any subsequent moves by the family under portability [24 CFR 982.355(e)(4)].

Chapter 11.A.

REEXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is applicable until DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date. After this date, DCHA will follow policies as outlined in Chapter 11.B. of the model policy.

DCHA is required to reexamine each family's income and composition at least annually, and to adjust the family's level of assistance accordingly. Interim reexaminations are also needed in certain situations. This chapter discusses both annual and interim reexaminations, and the recalculation of family share and subsidy that occurs as a result. HUD regulations and DCHA policies concerning reexaminations are presented in three parts:

Part I: Annual Reexaminations. This part discusses the process for conducting annual reexaminations.

Part II: Interim Reexaminations. This part details the requirements for families to report changes in family income and composition between annual reexaminations.

Part III: Recalculating Family Share and Subsidy Amount. This part discusses the recalculation of family share and subsidy amounts based on the results of annual and interim reexaminations.

Policies governing reasonable accommodation, family privacy, required family cooperation, and program abuse, as described elsewhere in this plan, apply to both annual and interim reexaminations.

PART I: ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS [24 CFR 982.516]

11-I.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA must conduct a reexamination of family income and composition at least annually. This includes gathering and verifying current information about family composition, income, and expenses. Based on this updated information, the family's income and rent must be recalculated. This part discusses the schedule for annual reexaminations, the information to be collected and verified, and annual reexamination effective dates. DCHA also has the option of using a Safe Harbor income verification from another federal means-tested program to verify gross annual income. Chapter 7 contains DCHA's policies related to use of Safe Harbor income verifications.

**11-I.B. STREAMLINED ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS [24 CFR 982.516(b);
New HCV GB, Reexaminations]**

HUD permits DCHA to streamline the income determination process for family members with fixed sources of income. While third-party verification of all income sources must be obtained during the intake process and every three years thereafter, in the intervening years DCHA may determine income from fixed sources by applying a verified cost of living adjustment (COLA) or rate of interest. DCHA may, however, obtain third-party verification of all income, regardless of the source. Further, upon request of the family, DCHA must perform third-party verification of all income sources.

Fixed sources of income include Social Security and SSI benefits, pensions, annuities, disability or death benefits, and other sources of income subject to a COLA or rate of interest. The determination of fixed income may be streamlined even if the family also receives income from other non-fixed sources.

Two streamlining options are available, depending upon the percentage of the family's income that is received from fixed sources. If at least 90 percent of the family's income is from fixed sources, DCHA may streamline the verification of fixed income but is not required to verify non-fixed income amounts. If the family receives less than 90 percent of its income from fixed sources, DCHA may streamline the verification of fixed income and must verify non-fixed income annually.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will streamline the annual reexamination process by applying the verified COLA or interest rate to fixed-income sources. DCHA will document in the file how the determination that a source of income was fixed was made.

If a family member with a fixed source of income is added, DCHA will use third-party verification of all income amounts for that family member.

If verification of the COLA or rate of interest is not available, DCHA will obtain third-party verification of income amounts.

Third-party verification of fixed sources of income will be obtained during the intake process and at least once every three years thereafter.

Third-party verification of non-fixed income will be obtained annually regardless of the percentage of family income received from fixed sources.

11-I.C. SCHEDULING ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS

DCHA must establish a policy to ensure that the annual reexamination for each family is completed *within* a 12-month period and may require reexaminations more frequently [HCV GB p. 12-1].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will begin the annual reexamination process 120 days in advance of its scheduled effective date. Generally, DCHA will schedule annual reexamination effective dates to coincide with the family's anniversary date.

Anniversary date is defined as 12 months from the effective date of the family's last annual reexamination or, during a family's first year in the program, from the effective date of the family's initial examination (admission).

If the family moves to a new unit, DCHA will perform a new annual reexamination unless a reexamination has been processed three months prior to the move.

DCHA also may schedule an annual reexamination for completion prior to the anniversary date for administrative purposes.

Notification of and Participation in the Annual Reexamination Process

DCHA is required to obtain the information needed to conduct annual reexaminations. How that information will be collected is left to the discretion of DCHA. However, DCHA should give tenants who were not provided the opportunity the option to complete Form HUD-92006 at this time [Notice PIH 2009-36].

DCHA Policy

Families may request to participate in an annual reexamination interview, which must be attended by the head of household, spouse, or cohead. If participation in an in-person interview poses a hardship because of a family member's disability, the family should contact DCHA to request a reasonable accommodation (see Chapter 2).

11-I.D. CONDUCTING ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS

As part of the annual reexamination process, families are required to provide updated information to DCHA regarding the family's income, expenses, and composition [24 CFR 982.551(b)].

DCHA Policy

Families will be asked to return all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) to DCHA. The required information will include a DCHA-designated reexamination form, an Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, as well as supporting documents or forms related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time frame, the family may request an extension.

If the family does not provide the required documents or information within the required time period (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of termination (See Chapter 12).

Additionally, HUD recommends that at annual reexaminations DCHA asks whether the tenant, or any member of the tenant's household, is subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement in any state [Notice PIH 2012-28].

DCHA Policy

At the annual reexamination, DCHA will use the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender database to verify the information provided by the tenant.

If DCHA proposes to terminate assistance based on lifetime sex offender registration information, DCHA must notify the household of the proposed action and must provide the subject of the record and the tenant a copy of the record and an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the information prior to termination. [24 CFR 5.903(f) and 5.905(d)]. (See Chapter 12.)

The information provided by the family generally must be verified in accordance with the policies in Chapter 7. Unless the family reports a change, or DCHA has reason to believe a change has occurred in information previously reported by the family, certain types of information that are verified at admission typically do not need to be re-verified on an annual basis. These include:

- Legal identity
- Age
- Social security numbers
- A person's disability status
- Citizenship or immigration status

If adding a new family member to the unit causes overcrowding according to the housing quality standards (HQS) (see Chapter 8), DCHA must issue the family a new voucher, and the family and DCHA must try to find an acceptable unit as soon as possible. If an acceptable unit is available for rental by the family, DCHA must terminate the HAP contract in accordance with its terms [24 CFR 982.403].

11-I.E. DETERMINING ONGOING ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN STUDENTS [24 CFR 982.552(b)(5)]

Section 327 of Public Law 109-115 established new restrictions on the ongoing eligibility of certain students (both part- and full-time) who are enrolled in institutions of higher education.

If a student enrolled in an institution of higher education is under the age of 24, is not a veteran, is not married, does not have a dependent child, and is not a person with disabilities receiving HCV assistance as of November 30, 2005, the student's eligibility must be reexamined along with the income eligibility of the student's parents on an annual basis. In these cases, both the student and the student's parents must be income eligible for the student to continue to receive HCV assistance. If, however, a student in these circumstances is determined independent from their parents or is considered a *vulnerable youth* in accordance DCHA policy, the income of the student's parents will not be considered in determining the student's ongoing eligibility.

Students who reside with parents in an HCV assisted unit are not subject to this provision. It is limited to students who are receiving assistance on their own, separately from their parents.

DCHA Policy

During the annual reexamination process, DCHA will determine the ongoing eligibility of each student who is subject to the eligibility restrictions in 24 CFR 5.612 by reviewing the student's individual income as well as the income of the student's parents. If the student has been determined "independent" from their parents or is considered a *vulnerable youth* based on the policies in Sections 3-II.E and 7-II.E, the parents' income will not be reviewed.

If the student is no longer income eligible based on their own income or the income of their parents, the student's assistance will be terminated in accordance with the policies in Section 12-I.D.

If the student continues to be income eligible based on their own income and the income of their parents (if applicable), DCHA will process a reexamination in accordance with the policies in this chapter.

11-I.F. EFFECTIVE DATES

DCHA has established policies concerning the effective date of changes that result from an annual reexamination [24 CFR 982.516].

DCHA Policy

In general, an *increase* in the family share of the rent that results from an annual reexamination will take effect on the family's anniversary date, and the family will be notified at least 30 days in advance.

If less than 30 days remain before the scheduled effective date, the increase will take effect on the first of the month following the end of the 30-day notice period.

If a family moves to a new unit, the increase will take effect on the effective date of the new lease and HAP contract, and no 30-day notice is required.

If DCHA chooses to schedule an annual reexamination for completion prior to the family's anniversary date for administrative purposes, the effective date will be determined by DCHA, but will always allow for the 30-day notice period.

If the family causes a delay in processing the annual reexamination, *increases* in the family share of the rent will be applied retroactively, to the scheduled effective date of the annual reexamination. The family will be responsible for any overpaid subsidy and may be offered a repayment agreement in accordance with the policies in Chapter 16.

In general, a *decrease* in the family share of the rent that results from an annual reexamination will take effect on the family's anniversary date.

If a family moves to a new unit, the decrease will take effect on the effective date of the new lease and HAP contract.

If DCHA chooses to schedule an annual reexamination for completion prior to the family's anniversary date for administrative purposes, the effective date will be determined by DCHA.

If the family causes a delay in processing the annual reexamination, *decreases* in the family share of the rent will be applied prospectively, from the first day of the month following completion of the reexamination processing.

Delays in reexamination processing are considered to be caused by the family if the family fails to provide information requested by DCHA by the date specified, and this delay prevents DCHA from completing the reexamination as scheduled.

PART II: INTERIM REEXAMINATIONS [24 CFR 982.516]

11-II.A. OVERVIEW

Family circumstances may change between annual reexaminations. HUD and DCHA policies dictate what kinds of information about changes in family circumstances must be reported, and under what circumstances DCHA must process interim reexaminations to reflect those changes. HUD regulations also permit DCHA to conduct interim reexaminations of income or family composition at any time. When an interim reexamination is conducted, only those factors that have changed are verified and adjusted [HCV GB, p. 12-10].

In addition to specifying what information the family must report, HUD regulations permit the family to request an interim determination if other aspects of the family's income or composition changes. DCHA must complete the interim reexamination within a reasonable time after the family's request.

This part includes HUD and DCHA policies describing what changes families are required to report, what changes families may choose to report, and how DCHA will process both DCHA- and family-initiated interim reexaminations.

11-II.B. CHANGES IN FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

The family is required to report all changes in family composition. DCHA must adopt policies prescribing when and under what conditions the family must report changes in income and family composition. However, due to family obligations under the program, DCHA has limited discretion in this area.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct interim reexaminations to account for any changes in household composition that occur between annual reexaminations.

New Family Members Not Requiring DCHA Approval

The addition of a family member as a result of birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody does not require DCHA approval. However, the family is required to promptly notify DCHA of the addition [24 CFR 982.551(h)(2)].

DCHA Policy

The family must inform DCHA of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child within 10 business days.

New Family and Household Members Requiring Approval

With the exception of children who join the family as a result of birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody, a family must request DCHA approval to add a new family member [24 CFR 982.551(h)(2)] or other household member (live-in aide or foster child) [24 CFR 982.551(h)(4)].

Although DCHA must verify aspects of program eligibility when any new family member is added, the Streamlining Final Rule removed the requirement that DCHA conduct a reexamination of income whenever a new family member is added. DCHA may state in policy that an income reexamination will be conducted.

If a change in family size causes a violation of Housing Quality Standards (HQS) space standards (see Chapter 8), DCHA must issue the family a new voucher, and the family and DCHA must try to find an acceptable unit as soon as possible. If an acceptable unit is available for rental by the family, DCHA must terminate the family's HAP contract in accordance with its terms [24 CFR 982.403].

DCHA Policy

Families must request DCHA approval to add a new family member, live-in aide, foster child, or foster adult. This includes any person not on the lease who is expected to stay in the unit for more than 30 consecutive days or 90 cumulative days within a 12-month period and therefore no longer qualifies as a "guest." Requests must be made in writing and approved by DCHA prior to the individual moving into the unit.

DCHA will not approve the addition of a new family or household member unless the individual meets DCHA's eligibility criteria (see Chapter 3) and documentation requirements (see Chapter 7, Part II).

DCHA will not approve the addition of a foster child or foster adult if it will cause a violation of HQS space standards.

If DCHA determines an individual meets DCHA's eligibility criteria and documentation requirements, DCHA will provide written approval to the family. If the approval of a new family member or live-in aide will cause overcrowding according to HQS standards, the approval letter will explain that the family will be issued a voucher and will be required to move.

If DCHA determines that an individual does not meet DCHA's eligibility criteria or documentation requirements, DCHA will notify the family in writing of its decision to deny approval of the new family or household member and the reasons for the denial.

DCHA will make its determination within 10 business days of receiving all information required to verify the individual's eligibility.

Departure of a Family or Household Member

Families must promptly notify DCHA if any family member no longer lives in the unit [24 CFR 982.551(h)(3)]. Because household members are considered when determining the family unit (voucher) size [24 CFR 982.402], DCHA also needs to know when any live-in aide, foster child, or foster adult ceases to reside in the unit.

DCHA Policy

If a household member ceases to reside in the unit, the family must inform DCHA within 10 business days. This requirement also applies to a family member who has been considered temporarily absent at the point that the family concludes the individual is permanently absent.

Changes in Family Unit Size (Voucher Size) [24 CFR 982.505(c)(6)]

Changes effective 12/2/24 and earlier: Irrespective of any increase or decrease in the payment standard, if the family unit size increases or decreases during the HAP contract term, the new family unit size must be used to determine the payment standard for the family beginning at the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

Changes effective 12/3/24 and later: Irrespective of any increase or decrease in the payment standard, if the family unit size increases or decreases during the HAP contract term, the new family unit size may be used to determine the payment standard immediately or at the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

DCHA Policy

If the family unit size (voucher size) changes during the term of a HAP contract, the new family unit size will be used to determine the payment standard at the family's first regular reexamination following the change in family unit size.

11-II.C. CHANGES AFFECTING INCOME OR EXPENSES

Interim reexaminations can be scheduled either because DCHA has reason to believe that changes in income or expenses may have occurred, or because the family reports a change. When a family reports a change, DCHA may take different actions depending on whether the family reported the change voluntarily, or because it was required to do so.

DCHA-Initiated Interim Reexaminations

DCHA-initiated interim reexaminations are those that are scheduled based on circumstances or criteria defined by DCHA. They are not scheduled because of changes reported by the family.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct interim reexaminations in each of the following instances:

For families receiving the Earned Income Disallowance (EID), DCHA will conduct an interim reexamination at the conclusion of the 24-month eligibility period.

If the family has reported zero income, DCHA will conduct an interim reexamination every 3 months as long as the family continues to report that they have no income.

If at the time of the annual reexamination, it is not feasible to anticipate a level of income for the next 12 months (e.g. seasonal or cyclic income), DCHA will schedule an interim reexamination to coincide with the end of the period for which it is feasible to project income.

If at the time of the annual reexamination, tenant declarations were used on a provisional basis due to the lack of third-party verification, and third-party verification becomes available, DCHA will conduct an interim reexamination.

DCHA may conduct an interim reexamination at any time in order to correct an error in a previous reexamination, or to investigate a tenant fraud complaint.

Family-Initiated Interim Reexaminations

DCHA has adopted policies prescribing when and under what conditions the family must report changes in family income or expenses [24 CFR 982.516(c)]. In addition, HUD regulations require that the family be permitted to obtain an interim reexamination any time the family has experienced a change in circumstances since the last determination [24 CFR 982.516(b)(2)].

Required Reporting

HUD regulations give DCHA the freedom to determine the circumstances under which families will be required to report changes affecting income.

DCHA Policy

Families are required to report all increases in earned income, including new employment, within 10 business days of the date the change takes effect.

DCHA will note the information in the tenant file but will not conduct an interim reexamination.

Families are not required to report any other changes in income or expenses.

Optional Reporting

The family may request an interim reexamination any time the family has experienced a change in circumstances since the last determination [24 CFR 982.516(b)(2)]. DCHA must process the request if the family reports a change that will result in a reduced family income [HCV GB, p. 12-9].

If a family reports a decrease in income from the loss of welfare benefits due to fraud or non-compliance with a welfare agency requirement to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, the family's share of the rent will not be reduced [24 CFR 5.615]. For more information regarding the requirement to impute welfare income see Chapter 6.

DCHA Policy

If a family reports a change that it was not required to report and that would result in an increase in the family share of the rent, DCHA will note the information in the tenant file, but will not conduct an interim reexamination.

If a family reports a change that it was not required to report and that would result in a decrease in the family share of rent, DCHA will conduct an interim reexamination. See Section 11-II.D. for effective dates.

Families may report changes in income or expenses at any time.

11-II.D. PROCESSING THE INTERIM REEXAMINATION

Method of Reporting

DCHA Policy

The family may notify DCHA of changes either orally or in writing. If the family provides oral notice, DCHA may also require the family to submit the changes in writing.

Generally, the family will not be required to attend an interview for an interim reexamination. However, if DCHA determines that an interview is warranted, the family may be required to attend.

Based on the type of change reported, DCHA will determine the documentation the family will be required to submit. The family must submit any required information or documents within 10 business days of receiving a request from DCHA. This time frame may be extended for good cause with DCHA approval. DCHA will accept required documentation by mail, by email, or in person.

Effective Dates

DCHA must establish the time frames in which any changes that result from an interim reexamination will take effect [24 CFR 982.516(d)]. The changes may be applied either retroactively or prospectively, depending on whether there is to be an increase or a decrease in the family share of the rent, and whether the family reported any required information within the required time frames [HCV GB, p. 12-10].

DCHA Policy

If the family share of the rent is to *increase*:

The increase generally will be effective on the first of the month following 30 days' notice to the family.

If a family fails to report a change within the required time frames, or fails to provide all required information within the required time frames, the increase will be applied retroactively, to the date it would have been effective had the information been provided on a timely basis. The family will be responsible for any overpaid subsidy and may be offered a repayment agreement in accordance with the policies in Chapter 16.

If the family share of the rent is to *decrease*:

The decrease will be effective on the first day of the month following the month in which the change was reported and all required documentation was submitted. In cases where the change cannot be verified until after the date the change would have become effective, the change will be made retroactively.

PART III: RECALCULATING FAMILY SHARE AND SUBSIDY AMOUNT

11-III.A. OVERVIEW

After gathering and verifying required information for an annual or interim reexamination, DCHA must recalculate the family share of the rent and the subsidy amount and notify the family and owner of the changes [24 CFR 982.516(d)(2), HCV 12-6 and 12-10]. While the basic policies that govern these calculations are provided in Chapter 6, this part lays out policies that affect these calculations during a reexamination.

11-III.B. CHANGES IN PAYMENT STANDARDS AND UTILITY ALLOWANCES

In order to calculate the family share of the rent and HAP amount correctly, changes in payment standards, subsidy standards, or utility allowances may need to be updated and included in DCHA's calculations.

Specific policies governing how subsidy standards, payment standards, and utility allowances are applied are discussed below.

Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.505 and FR Notice 5/7/24]

The family share of the rent and HAP calculations must use the correct payment standard for the family, taking into consideration the family unit size, the size of unit, and the area in which the unit is located [HCV GB, p. 12-5]. See Chapter 6 for information on how to select the appropriate payment standard when DCHA changes its payment standard or when there is a change in family composition.

Subsidy Standards [24 CFR 982.505(c)(4)]

If there is a change in the family unit size that would apply to a family during the HAP contract term, either due to a change in family composition, or a change in DCHA's subsidy standards (see Chapter 5), the new family unit size must be used to determine the payment standard amount for the family immediately or at the family's *first annual* reexamination following the change in family unit size.

Utility Allowances [24 CFR 982.517(d)]

The family share of the rent and HAP calculations must reflect any changes in the family's utility arrangement with the owner, or in DCHA's utility allowance schedule [HCV GB, p. 12-5]. Chapter 16 discusses how utility allowance schedules are established.

When there are changes in the utility arrangement with the owner, DCHA must use the utility allowances in effect at the time the new lease and HAP contract are executed.

At reexamination, DCHA must use the DCHA current utility allowance schedule [HCV GB, p. 18-8].

DCHA Policy

Revised utility allowances will be applied to a family's rent and subsidy calculations at the first annual reexamination after the allowance is adopted.

11-III.C. NOTIFICATION OF NEW FAMILY SHARE AND HAP AMOUNT

DCHA must notify the owner and family of any changes in the amount of the HAP payment [HUD-52641, HAP Contract]. The notice must include the following information [HCV GB, p. 12-6]:

- The amount and effective date of the new HAP payment
- The amount and effective date of the new family share of the rent
- The amount and effective date of the new tenant rent to owner

The family must be given an opportunity for an informal hearing regarding DCHA's determination of their annual or adjusted income, and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment [24 CFR 982.555(a)(1)(i)] (see Chapter 16).

DCHA Policy

The notice to the family will include the annual and adjusted income amounts that were used to calculate the family share of the rent and the housing assistance payment.

The notice will state the family has the right to request an explanation of how the assistance was calculated and if the family disagrees, they have the right to informal hearing. The notice will include the procedures for requesting an informal hearing.

11-III.D. DISCREPANCIES

During an annual or interim reexamination, DCHA may discover that information previously reported by the family was in error, or that the family intentionally misrepresented information. In addition, DCHA may discover errors made by DCHA. When errors resulting in the overpayment or underpayment of subsidy are discovered, corrections will be made in accordance with the policies in Chapter 1.

Chapter 12

TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE AND TENANCY

HUD regulations specify mandatory and optional grounds for which DCHA can terminate a family's assistance. They also specify the circumstances under which an owner may terminate the tenancy of an assisted family. This chapter describes the policies that govern mandatory and optional terminations of assistance, and termination of tenancy by the owner. It is presented in three parts:

Part I: Grounds for Termination of Assistance. This part describes the various circumstances under which assistance under the program can be terminated by the family or by DCHA.

Part II: Approach to Termination of Assistance. This part describes the policies and the process that DCHA will use in evaluating decisions on whether to terminate assistance due to actions or inactions of the family where termination is an option. It specifies the alternatives that DCHA may consider in lieu of termination, the criteria DCHA will use when deciding what action to take, and the steps DCHA must take when terminating a family's assistance.

Part III: Termination of Tenancy by the Owner. This part describes the HUD policies that govern the owner's right to terminate an assisted tenancy.

PART I: GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

12-I.A. OVERVIEW

HUD requires DCHA to terminate assistance for certain actions and inactions of the family and when the family no longer requires assistance due to increases in family income. HUD permits DCHA to terminate assistance for certain other actions or inactions of the family. In addition, a family may decide to withdraw from the program and terminate their HCV assistance at any time by notifying DCHA.

12-I.B. FAMILY NO LONGER REQUIRES ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 982.455]

As a family's income increases, the amount of the housing assistance payment decreases. If the amount of assistance provided by DCHA is reduced to zero, the family's assistance terminates automatically 180 days after the last HAP payment.

DCHA Policy

If a participating family receiving zero assistance experiences a change in circumstances that would result in a HAP payment to the owner, the family must notify DCHA of the change and request an interim reexamination before the expiration of the 180-day period.

12-I.C. FAMILY CHOOSES TO TERMINATE ASSISTANCE

The family may request that DCHA terminate housing assistance payments on behalf of the family at any time.

DCHA Policy

The request to terminate assistance should be made in writing and signed by the head of household, and spouse or cohead if applicable. Before terminating the family's assistance, DCHA will follow the notice requirements in Section 12-II.F.

12-I.D. MANDATORY TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

HUD requires DCHA to terminate assistance in the following circumstances.

Eviction [24 CFR 982.552(b)(2), 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(1)]

DCHA must terminate assistance whenever a family is evicted from a unit assisted under the HCV program for a serious or repeated violation of the lease. As discussed further in section 12-II.E, incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking may not be construed as serious or repeated violations of the lease by the victim or threatened victim of such violence or stalking.

DCHA Policy

A family will be considered *evicted* if the family moves after a legal eviction order has been issued, whether or not physical enforcement of the order was necessary.

If a family moves after the owner has given the family an eviction notice for serious or repeated lease violations but before a legal eviction order has been issued, termination of assistance is not mandatory. In such cases DCHA will determine whether the family has committed serious or repeated violations of the lease based on available evidence and may terminate assistance or take any of the alternative measures described in section 12-II.C. In making its decision, DCHA will consider the factors described in sections 12-II.D and 12-II.E. Upon consideration of such factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate assistance.

Serious and repeated lease violations will include, but not be limited to, nonpayment of rent, disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, or living or housekeeping habits that cause damage to the unit or premises and criminal activity. Generally, the criterion to be used will be whether or not the reason for the eviction was the fault of the tenant or guests.

Failure to Provide Consent [24 CFR 982.552(b)(3)]

DCHA must terminate assistance if any family member fails to sign and submit any consent form they are required to sign for a regular or interim reexamination. See Chapter 7 for a complete discussion of consent requirements.

Upon DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date, the below policy on failure to provide consent is added:

DCHA Policy

DCHA will also terminate assistance if the family revokes consent for DCHA to collect information from financial institutions.

Failure to Document Citizenship [24 CFR 982.552(b)(4) and [24 CFR 5.514(c)]

DCHA must terminate assistance if (1) a family fails to submit required documentation within the required timeframe concerning any family member's citizenship or immigration status; (2) a family submits evidence of citizenship and eligible immigration status in a timely manner, but United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) primary and secondary verification does not verify eligible immigration status of the family; or (3) a family member, as determined by DCHA, has knowingly permitted another individual who is not eligible for assistance to reside (on a permanent basis) in the unit.

For (3) above, such termination must be for a period of at least 24 months. This does not apply to ineligible noncitizens already in the household where the family's assistance has been prorated. See Chapter 7 for a complete discussion of documentation requirements.

Failure to Disclose and Document Social Security Numbers [24 CFR 5.218(c), Notice PIH 2018-24]

DCHA must terminate assistance if a participant family fails to disclose the complete and accurate social security numbers of each household member and the documentation necessary to verify each social security number.

However, if the family is otherwise eligible for continued program assistance, and DCHA determines that the family's failure to meet the SSN disclosure and documentation requirements was due to circumstances that could not have been foreseen and were outside of the family's control, DCHA may defer the family's termination and provide the opportunity to comply with the requirement within a period not to exceed 90 calendar days from the date DCHA determined the family to be noncompliant.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will defer the family's termination and provide the family with the opportunity to comply with the requirement for a period of 90 calendar days for circumstances beyond the participant's control such as delayed processing of the SSN application by the SSA, natural disaster, fire, death in the family, or other emergency, if there is a reasonable likelihood that the participant will be able to disclose an SSN by the deadline.

Methamphetamine Manufacture or Production [24 CFR 982.553(b)(1)(ii)]

DCHA must terminate assistance if any household member has ever been convicted of the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.

Lifetime Registered Sex Offenders [Notice PIH 2012-28]

Should DCHA discover that a member of an assisted household was subject to a lifetime registration requirement at admission and was erroneously admitted after June 25, 2001, DCHA must immediately terminate assistance for the household member.

In this situation, DCHA must offer the family the opportunity to remove the ineligible family member from the household. If the family is unwilling to remove that individual from the household, DCHA must terminate assistance for the household.

Failure of Students to Meet Ongoing Eligibility Requirements [24 CFR 982.552(b)(5) and FR 4/10/06]

If a student enrolled at an institution of higher education is under the age of 24, is not a veteran, is not married, does not have dependent children, is not residing with their parents in an HCV assisted household, and is not a person with disabilities receiving HCV assistance as of November 30, 2005, DCHA must terminate the student's assistance if, at the time of reexamination, either the student's income or the income of the student's parents (if applicable) exceeds the applicable income limit.

If a participant household consists of both eligible and ineligible students, the eligible students shall not be terminated, but must be issued a voucher to move with continued assistance in accordance with program regulations and DCHA policies or must be given the opportunity to lease in place if the terminated ineligible student members elect to move out of the assisted unit.

Death of the Sole Family Member [24 CFR 982.311(d) and Notice PIH 2010-9]

DCHA must immediately terminate program assistance for deceased single member households.

12-I.E. MANDATORY POLICIES AND OTHER AUTHORIZED TERMINATIONS

Mandatory Policies [24 CFR 982.553(b) and 982.551(I)]

HUD requires DCHA to establish policies that permit DCHA to terminate assistance if DCHA determines that:

- Any household member is currently engaged in any illegal use of a drug, or has a pattern of illegal drug use that interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
- Any household member's abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
- Any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in any drug-related criminal activity
- Any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in violent criminal activity

Use of Illegal Drugs and Alcohol Abuse

DCHA Policy

DCHA will terminate a family's assistance if any household member is currently engaged in any illegal use of a drug or has a pattern of illegal drug use that interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

DCHA will terminate assistance if any household member's abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

Currently engaged in is defined as any use of illegal drugs during the previous three months.

DCHA will consider all credible evidence, including but not limited to, any record of arrests, convictions, or eviction of household members related to the use of illegal drugs or abuse of alcohol.

A record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis for the termination or proof that the participant engaged in disqualifying criminal activity.

In making its decision to terminate assistance, DCHA will consider alternatives as described in Section 12-II.C and other factors described in Sections 12-II.D and 12-II.E. Upon consideration of such alternatives and factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate assistance.

Drug-Related and Violent Criminal Activity [24 CFR 5.100]

Drug means a controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

Drug-related criminal activity is defined by HUD as the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug.

Violent criminal activity means any criminal activity that has as one of its elements the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force substantial enough to cause, or be reasonably likely to cause, serious bodily injury or property damage.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will terminate a family's assistance if any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in any drug-related or violent criminal activity during participation in the HCV program.

DCHA will consider all credible evidence, including but not limited to, any record of arrests and/or convictions of household members related to drug-related or violent criminal activity, and any eviction or notice to evict based on drug-related or violent criminal activity.

A record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis for the termination or proof that the participant engaged in disqualifying criminal activity.

In making its decision to terminate assistance, DCHA will consider alternatives as described in Section 12-II.C and other factors described in Sections 12-II.D and 12-II.E. Upon consideration of such alternatives and factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate assistance.

**Other Authorized Reasons for Termination of Assistance
[24 CFR 982.552(c), 24 CFR 5.2005(c), 24 CFR 984.101(d)]**

HUD permits DCHA to terminate assistance under a number of other circumstances. It is left to the discretion of DCHA whether such circumstances in general warrant consideration for the termination of assistance. As discussed further in section 12-II.E, the Violence against Women Act prohibits DCHA from considering incidents of, or criminal activity directly related to, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking as reasons for terminating the assistance of a victim of such abuse.

Additionally, per 24 CFR 984.101(d), DCHA is no longer permitted to terminate assistance to a family due to the family's failure to meet its obligations under the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) contract of participation.

DCHA Policy

DCHA **will** terminate a family's assistance if:

The family has failed to comply with any family obligations under the program. See Exhibit 12-1 for a listing of family obligations and related DCHA policies.

Any family member has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last three years.

Any family member has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program.

The family currently owes rent or other amounts to any PHA in connection with Section 8 or public housing assistance under the 1937 Act.

The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts the PHA paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease.

The family has breached the terms of a repayment agreement entered into with DCHA.

A family member has engaged in or threatened violent or abusive behavior toward DCHA personnel.

Abusive or violent behavior towards DCHA personnel includes verbal as well as physical abuse or violence. Use of racial epithets, or other language, written or oral, that is customarily used to intimidate may be considered abusive or violent behavior.

Threatening refers to oral or written threats or physical gestures that communicate intent to abuse or commit violence.

In making its decision to terminate assistance, DCHA will consider alternatives as described in Section 12-II.C and other factors described in Sections 12-II.D and 12-II.E. Upon consideration of such alternatives and factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate assistance.

Family Absence from the Unit [24 CFR 982.312]

The family may be absent from the unit for brief periods. DCHA has established a policy on how long the family may be absent from the assisted unit. However, the family may not be absent from the unit for a period of more than 180 consecutive calendar days for any reason. Absence in this context means that no member of the family is residing in the unit.

DCHA Policy

If the family is absent from the unit for more than 180 consecutive calendar days, the family's assistance will be terminated. Notice of termination will be sent in accordance with Section 12-II.F.

Upon the DCHA's HOTMA 102/104 compliance date, the below section on the asset limitation is added:

Asset Limitation [24 CFR 5.618; Notice PIH 2023-27]

DCHA has discretion with respect to the application of the asset limitation at annual and interim reexamination. DCHA may adopt a written policy of total nonenforcement, enforcement, or limited enforcement as well as adopting exception policies.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has adopted a policy of total nonenforcement of the asset limitation for all program participants. The asset limitation only applies to initial eligibility determinations for new admissions to DCHA's HCV program.

Insufficient Funding [24 CFR 982.454]

DCHA may terminate HAP contracts if DCHA determines, in accordance with HUD requirements, that funding under the consolidated ACC is insufficient to support continued assistance for families in the program. DCHA must identify in the administrative plan, in the event of insufficient funding, taking into account any cost saving measures taken by DCHA, a description of the factors DCHA will consider when determining which HAP contracts to terminate first [24 CFR 982.54(d)(26)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will determine whether there is sufficient funding to pay for currently assisted families according to the policies in Part VIII of Chapter 16. If DCHA determines there is a shortage of funding, prior to terminating any HAP contracts, DCHA will determine if any other actions can be taken to reduce program costs.

In the event that DCHA decides to stop issuing vouchers as a result of a funding shortfall, and DCHA is not assisting the required number of special purpose vouchers (NED families, HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) families, and family unification program (FUP) families), when DCHA resumes issuing vouchers, DCHA will issue vouchers first to the special purpose voucher families on its waiting list until it has reached the required number of special purpose vouchers, when applicable.

If after implementing all reasonable cost cutting measures there is not enough funding available to provide continued assistance for current participants, DCHA will terminate HAP contracts as a last resort.

Prior to terminating any HAP contracts, DCHA will inform the local HUD field office. DCHA will terminate the minimum number needed in order to reduce HAP costs to a level within DCHA's annual budget authority.

If DCHA must terminate HAP contracts due to insufficient funding, DCHA will do so in accordance with the following criteria and instructions:

Families who have been assisted in the HCV program the longest will be the first to be terminated, excluding families that include elderly or disabled family members.

Families comprising the required number of special purpose vouchers, including nonelderly disabled (NED), HUD-Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), and family unification program (FUP) will be the last to be terminated.

PART II: APPROACH TO TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

12-II.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA is required by regulation to terminate a family's assistance for certain actions or inactions of the family. For other types of actions or inactions of the family, the regulations give DCHA the authority to either terminate the family's assistance or to take another action. This part discusses the various actions DCHA may choose to take when it has discretion and outlines the criteria DCHA will use to make its decision about whether or not to terminate assistance. It also specifies the requirements for the notification to the family of DCHA's intent to terminate assistance.

12-II.B. METHOD OF TERMINATION [24 CFR 982.552(a)(3)]

Termination of assistance for a participant may include any or all of the following:

- Terminating housing assistance payments under a current HAP contract,
- Refusing to enter into a new HAP contract or approve a lease, or
- Refusing to process a request for or to provide assistance under portability procedures.

12-II.C. ALTERNATIVES TO TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE

Change in Household Composition

As a condition of continued assistance, DCHA may require that any household member who participated in or was responsible for an offense no longer resides in the unit [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(ii)].

DCHA Policy

As a condition of continued assistance, the head of household must certify that the culpable family member has vacated the unit and will not be permitted to visit or to stay as a guest in the assisted unit. The family must present evidence of the former family member's current address upon DCHA request.

Repayment of Family Debts

DCHA Policy

If a family owes amounts to DCHA, as a condition of continued assistance, DCHA will require the family to repay the full amount or to enter into a repayment agreement, within 30 days of receiving notice from DCHA of the amount owed. See Chapter 16 for policies on repayment agreements.

12-II.D. CRITERIA FOR DECIDING TO TERMINATE ASSISTANCE

Evidence

For criminal activity, HUD permits DCHA to terminate assistance if a *preponderance of the evidence* indicates that a household member has engaged in the activity, regardless of whether the household member has been arrested or convicted [24 CFR 982.553(c)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the concept of the preponderance of the evidence as the standard for making all termination decisions.

Preponderance of the evidence is defined as evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence which as a whole conveys that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.

Preponderance of the evidence may not be determined by the number of witnesses, but by the greater weight of all evidence

Use of Criminal Conviction Records after Admission [24 CFR 5.903]

The regulation at 24 CFR 5.903 governs DCHA's access to and use of criminal conviction records obtained from a "law enforcement agency" such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), police departments, and other law enforcement agencies that hold criminal conviction records. While the regulatory listing of permitted uses for these records includes DCHA screening of applicants for admission to the HCV program, it specifically excludes the use of records for lease enforcement and eviction of HCV participants and excludes by omission a DCHA's use of records to terminate assistance for participants. While DCHA has regulatory authority to use criminal conviction records for the purpose of applicant screening for admission, there is no corresponding authority to use these records to check for criminal and illegal drug activity by participants, and therefore, DCHA may not use records for this purpose. The limitations, however, do not apply to criminal conviction information searches from non-federal sources (i.e., sources other than the "law enforcement agencies" defined in 24 CFR 5.902(b)). There is no prohibition that bars DCHA from using non-federal sources to conduct criminal background checks of program participants.

Consideration of Circumstances [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(i)]

DCHA is permitted, but not required, to consider all relevant circumstances when determining whether a family's assistance should be terminated.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consider the following facts and circumstances when making its decision to terminate assistance:

The seriousness of the case, especially with respect to how it would affect other residents' safety or property

The effects that termination of assistance may have on other members of the family who were not involved in the action or failure to act

The extent of participation or culpability of individual family members, including whether the culpable family member is a minor or a person with disabilities or (as discussed further in section 12-II.E) a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking

The length of time since the violation occurred, including the age of the individual at the time of the conduct, as well as the family's recent history and the likelihood of favorable conduct in the future

While a record or records of arrest will not be used as the sole basis for termination, an arrest may, however, trigger an investigation to determine whether the participant actually engaged in disqualifying criminal activity. As part of its investigation, DCHA may obtain the police report associated with the arrest and consider the reported circumstances of the arrest. DCHA may also consider:

- Any statements made by witnesses or the participant not included in the police report

- Whether criminal charges were filed

- Whether, if filed, criminal charges were abandoned, dismissed, not prosecuted, or ultimately resulted in an acquittal

- Any other evidence relevant to determining whether or not the participant engaged in disqualifying activity

Evidence of criminal conduct will be considered if it indicates a demonstrable risk to safety and/or property

In the case of drug or alcohol abuse, whether the culpable household member is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully

DCHA will require the participant to submit evidence of the household member's current participation in or successful completion of a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, or evidence of otherwise having been rehabilitated successfully.

In the case of program abuse, the dollar amount of the overpaid assistance and whether or not a false certification was signed by the family (see Chapter 16-IV.b. Repayment Policy, Criminal Prosecution for Program Fraud/Abuse).

Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.552(c)(2)(iv)]

If the family includes a person with disabilities, DCHA's decision to terminate the family's assistance is subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation in accordance with 24 CFR Part 8.

DCHA Policy

If a family indicates that the behavior of a family member with a disability is the reason for a proposed termination of assistance, DCHA will determine whether the behavior is related to the disability. If so, upon the family's request, DCHA will determine whether alternative measures are appropriate as a reasonable accommodation. DCHA will only consider accommodations that can reasonably be expected to address the behavior that is the basis of the proposed termination of assistance. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of reasonable accommodation.

12-II.E. TERMINATIONS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, STALKING, OR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

This section describes the protections against termination of assistance that the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) provides for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. For general VAWA requirements, key VAWA definitions, and DCHA policies pertaining to notification, documentation, and confidentiality, see section 16-IX of this plan.

VAWA Protections against Termination

VAWA provides four specific protections against termination of HCV assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. (*Note:* The second, third, and fourth protections also apply to terminations of tenancy or occupancy by owners participating in the HCV program, as do the limitations discussed under the next heading.)

- Although the VAWA 2022 statute does not specifically include human trafficking in the list of victims protected under VAWA, in 2022 HUD began including human trafficking as part of the list of victims protected under VAWA (as seen in Notices PIH 2022-06, PIH 2022-22, and PIH 2022-24). In the absence of a final rule implementing VAWA 2022 and to mirror HUD's recent usage, this policy includes human trafficking in addition to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking anywhere such a list appears.

First, VAWA provides that DCHA may not terminate assistance to a family that moves out of an assisted unit in violation of the lease, with or without prior notification to DCHA, if the move occurred to protect the health or safety of a family member who is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and who reasonably believed they were imminently threatened by harm from further violence if they remained in the unit [see 24 CFR 982.354(b)(4)].

Second, it provides that an incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking may not be construed either as a serious or repeated lease violation by the victim or as good cause to terminate the assistance of the victim [see 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(1)].

Third, it provides that criminal activity directly related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking may not be construed as cause for terminating the assistance of a tenant if a member of the tenant's household, a guest, or another person under the tenant's control is the one engaging in the criminal activity and the tenant or affiliated individual or other individual is the actual or threatened victim of the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking [see 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(2)].

Fourth, it gives DCHA the authority to terminate assistance to any tenant or lawful occupant who engages in criminal acts of physical violence against family members or others without terminating assistance to, or otherwise penalizing, the victim of the violence [24 CFR 5.2009(a)].

DCHA and owners may not coerce, intimidate, threaten, interfere with, or retaliate against any person who exercises or assists or encourages a person to exercise any rights or protections under VAWA [FR Notice 1/4/23].

Limitations on VAWA Protections [24 CFR 5.2005(d) and (e)]

VAWA does not limit the authority of DCHA to terminate the assistance of a victim of abuse for reasons unrelated to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking so long as DCHA does not subject the victim to a more demanding standard than it applies to other program participants [24 CFR 5.2005(d)(1)].

Likewise, VAWA does not limit the authority of DCHA to terminate the assistance of a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking if DCHA can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing service to the assisted property if the victim is not terminated from assistance [24 CFR 5.2005(d)(2)].

HUD regulations define *actual and imminent threat* to mean words, gestures, actions, or other indicators of a physical threat that (a) is real, (b) would occur within an immediate time frame, and (c) could result in death or serious bodily harm [24 CFR 5.2005(d)(2) and (e)]. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include:

- The duration of the risk
- The nature and severity of the potential harm
- The likelihood that the potential harm will occur
- The length of time before the potential harm would occur [24 CFR 5.2005(e)]

In order to demonstrate an actual and imminent threat, DCHA must have objective evidence of words, gestures, actions, or other indicators. Even when a victim poses an actual and imminent threat, however, HUD regulations authorize DCHA to terminate the victim's assistance "only when there are no other actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat" [24 CFR 5.2005(d)(3)].

DCHA Policy

In determining whether a program participant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking is an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing service to a property, DCHA will consider the following, and any other relevant, factors:

Whether the threat is toward an employee or tenant other than the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking

Whether the threat is a physical danger beyond a speculative threat

Whether the threat is likely to happen within an immediate time frame

Whether the threat to other tenants or employees can be eliminated in some other way, such as by helping the victim relocate to a confidential location or seeking a legal remedy to prevent the perpetrator from acting on the threat

If the participant wishes to contest the DCHA's determination that they are an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or employees, the participant may do so as part of the informal hearing.

Documentation of Abuse [24 CFR 5.2007]

DCHA Policy

When an individual facing termination of assistance for reasons related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking claims protection under VAWA, DCHA will request that the individual provide documentation supporting the claim in accordance with the policies in section 16-IX.D of this plan.

DCHA reserves the right to waive the documentation requirement if it determines that a statement or other corroborating evidence from the individual will suffice. In such cases DCHA will document the waiver in the individual's file.

Terminating the Assistance of a Domestic Violence Perpetrator

Although VAWA provides protection against termination of assistance for victims of domestic violence, it does not provide such protection for perpetrators. VAWA gives DCHA the explicit authority to “terminate assistance to any individual who is a tenant or lawful occupant and who engages in criminal acts of physical violence against family members or others” without terminating assistance to “or otherwise penalizing the victim of such violence who is also a tenant or lawful occupant” [24 CFR 5.2009(a)]. This authority is not dependent on a bifurcated lease or other eviction action by an owner against an individual family member. Further, this authority supersedes any local, state, or other federal law to the contrary. However, if DCHA chooses to exercise this authority, it must follow any procedures prescribed by HUD or by applicable local, state, or federal law regarding termination of assistance. This means that DCHA must follow the same rules when terminating assistance to an individual as it would when terminating the assistance of an entire family [FR Notice 3/16/07].

If the perpetrator remains in the unit, DCHA continues to pay the owner until DCHA terminates the perpetrator from the program. DCHA must not stop paying HAP until 30 days after the owner bifurcates the lease to evict the perpetrator. DCHA may pay HAP for the full month if the 30-day period will end mid-month [Notice PIH 2017-08].

If the perpetrator is the only participant eligible to receive assistance, DCHA will provide any remaining participant a chance to establish eligibility for the program. If the remaining participant cannot do so, DCHA will provide them with 30 days to establish eligibility for another housing program prior to termination of the HAP contract.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will terminate assistance to a family member if DCHA determines that the family member has committed criminal acts of physical violence against other family members or others. This action will not affect the assistance of the remaining, nonculpable family members.

In making its decision, DCHA will consider all credible evidence, including, but not limited to, a signed certification (form HUD-5382) or other documentation of abuse submitted to DCHA by the victim in accordance with this section and section 16-IX.D. DCHA will also consider the factors in section 12-II.D. Upon such consideration, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate the assistance of the culpable family member.

If DCHA does terminate the assistance of the culpable family member, it will do so in accordance with applicable law, HUD regulations, and the policies in this plan.

12-II.F. TERMINATION NOTICE

HUD regulations require DCHA to provide written notice of termination of assistance to a family only when the family is entitled to an informal hearing. However, since the family's HAP contract and lease will also terminate when the family's assistance terminates [form HUD-52641], it is a good business practice to provide written notification to both owner and family anytime assistance will be terminated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily.

DCHA Policy

Whenever a family's assistance will be terminated, DCHA will send a written notice of termination to the family and to the owner. DCHA will also send a form HUD-5382 and form HUD-5380 to the family with the termination notice. The notice will state the date on which the termination will become effective. This date generally will be at least 30 calendar days following the date of the termination notice, but exceptions will be made whenever HUD rules, other DCHA policies, or the circumstances surrounding the termination require.

When DCHA notifies an owner that a family's assistance will be terminated, DCHA will, if appropriate, advise the owner of their right to offer the family a separate, unassisted lease.

If a family whose assistance is being terminated is entitled to an informal hearing, the notice of termination that DCHA sends to the family must meet the additional HUD and DCHA notice requirements discussed in section 16-III.C of this plan. VAWA requires DCHA to provide notice of VAWA rights and the HUD 5382 form when DCHA terminates a household's housing benefits.

DCHA Policy

Whenever DCHA decides to terminate a family's assistance because of the family's action or failure to act, DCHA will include in its termination notice the VAWA information described in section 16-IX.C of this plan and a form HUD-5382 and form HUD-5380. DCHA will request in writing that a family member wishing to claim protection under VAWA notify DCHA within 14 business days.

Still other notice requirements apply in two situations:

- If a criminal record is the basis of a family's termination, DCHA must provide a copy of the record to the subject of the record and the tenant so that they have an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the record [24 CFR 982.553(d)(2)].
- If immigration status is the basis of a family's termination, as discussed in section 12-I.D, the special notice requirements in section 16-III.D must be followed.

PART III: TERMINATION OF TENANCY BY THE OWNER

12-III.A. OVERVIEW

Termination of an assisted tenancy is a matter between the owner and the family; DCHA is not directly involved. However, the owner is under some constraints when terminating an assisted tenancy. Termination of tenancy for certain reasons will also result in termination of assistance as discussed in this section.

12-III.B. GROUNDS FOR OWNER TERMINATION OF TENANCY [24 CFR 982.310, 24 CFR 5.2005(c), and Form HUD-52641-A, Tenancy Addendum]

During the term of the lease, the owner is not permitted to terminate the tenancy except for serious or repeated violations of the lease, certain violations of state or local law, or other good cause.

Serious or Repeated Lease Violations

The owner is permitted to terminate the family's tenancy for serious or repeated violations of the terms and conditions of the lease, except when the violations are related to incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking and the victim is protected from eviction by the Violence against Women Act (see section 12-II.E). A serious lease violation includes failure to pay rent or other amounts due under the lease. However, DCHA's failure to make a HAP payment to the owner is not a violation of the lease between the family and the owner.

Violation of Federal, State, or Local Law

The owner is permitted to terminate the tenancy if a family member violates federal, state, or local law that imposes obligations in connection with the occupancy or use of the premises.

Criminal Activity or Alcohol Abuse

The owner may terminate tenancy during the term of the lease if any *covered person*—meaning any member of the household, a guest, or another person under the tenant's control—commits any of the following types of criminal activity (for applicable definitions see 24 CFR 5.100):

- Any criminal activity that threatens the health or safety of, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by, other residents (including property management staff residing on the premises)
- Any criminal activity that threatens the health or safety of, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of their residences by, persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises
- Any violent criminal activity on or near the premises
- Any drug-related criminal activity on or near the premises

However, in the case of criminal activity directly related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking if the tenant or an affiliated individual is the victim, the criminal activity may not be construed as cause for terminating the victim's tenancy (see section 12-II.E).

The owner may terminate tenancy during the term of the lease if any member of the household is:

- Fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement after conviction for a crime or an attempt to commit a crime that is a felony under the laws of the place from which the individual flees, or that, in the case of the State of New Jersey, is a high misdemeanor; or
- Violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under federal or state law.

The owner may terminate tenancy during the term of the lease if any member of the household has engaged in abuse of alcohol that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

Evidence of Criminal Activity

The owner may terminate tenancy and evict by judicial action a family for criminal activity by a covered person if the owner determines the covered person has engaged in the criminal activity, regardless of whether the covered person has been arrested or convicted for such activity and without satisfying the standard of proof used for a criminal conviction. This is the case except in certain incidents where the criminal activity directly relates to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and the tenant or an affiliated individual is the victim or threatened victim of the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking.

Other Good Cause

During the initial lease term, the owner may not terminate the tenancy for “other good cause” unless the owner is terminating the tenancy because of something the family did or failed to do. During the initial lease term or during any extension term, other good cause includes the disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, or living or housekeeping habits that cause damage to the unit or premises.

After the initial lease term, “other good cause” for termination of tenancy by the owner includes:

- Failure by the family to accept the offer of a new lease or revision
- The owner’s desire to use the unit for personal or family use, or for a purpose other than as a residential rental unit
- A business or economic reason for termination of the tenancy (such as sale of the property, renovation of the unit, or desire to lease the unit at a higher rent)

After the initial lease term, the owner may give the family notice at any time, in accordance with the terms of the lease.

If a property is subject to foreclosure, during the term of the lease, the new owner of the property does not have good cause to terminate the tenant’s lease, unless the new owner will occupy the unit as their primary residence and has provided the tenant with at least a 90-day notice. In that case, the lease may be terminated effective on the date of sale, although the tenant is still entitled to a 90-day notice to vacate. See Section 13-II.G for a discussion of DCHA policies relating to units in foreclosure.

12-III.C. EVICTION [24 CFR 982.310(e) and (f) and Form HUD-52641-A, Tenancy Addendum]

The owner must give the tenant a written notice that specifies the grounds for termination of tenancy during the term of the lease. The tenancy does not terminate before the owner has given this notice, and the notice must be given at or before commencement of the eviction action.

The notice of grounds may be included in, or may be combined with, any owner eviction notice to the tenant.

Owner eviction notice means a notice to vacate, or a complaint or other initial pleading used under state or local law to commence an eviction action. The owner may only evict the tenant from the unit by instituting a court action. The owner must give DCHA a copy of any eviction notice at the same time the owner notifies the family. The family is also required to give DCHA a copy of any eviction notice (see Chapter 5).

DCHA Policy

If the eviction action is finalized in court, the owner must provide DCHA with documentation related to the eviction, including notice of the eviction date, as soon as possible, but no later than 5 business days following the court-ordered eviction.

12-III.D. DECIDING WHETHER TO TERMINATE TENANCY [24 CFR 982.310(h), 24 CFR 982.310(h)(4)]

An owner who has grounds to terminate a tenancy is not required to do so, and may consider all of the circumstances relevant to a particular case before making a decision. These might include:

- The nature of the offending action
- The seriousness of the offending action;
- The effect on the community of the termination, or of the owner's failure to terminate the tenancy;
- The extent of participation by the leaseholder in the offending action;
- The effect of termination of tenancy on household members not involved in the offending activity;
- The demand for assisted housing by families who will adhere to lease responsibilities;
- The extent to which the leaseholder has shown personal responsibility and taken all reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate the offending action;
- The effect of the owner's action on the integrity of the program.

The owner may require a family to exclude a household member in order to continue to reside in the assisted unit, where that household member has participated in or been culpable for action or failure to act that warrants termination.

In determining whether to terminate tenancy for illegal use of drugs or alcohol abuse by a household member who is no longer engaged in such behavior, the owner may consider whether such household member is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully (42 U.S.C. 13661). For this purpose, the owner may require the tenant to submit evidence of the household member's current participation in, or successful completion of, a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or evidence of otherwise having been rehabilitated successfully.

The owner's termination of tenancy actions must be consistent with the fair housing and equal opportunity provisions in 24 CFR 5.105.

An owner's decision to terminate tenancy for incidents related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking is limited by the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) and the conforming regulations in 24 CFR Part 5, Subpart L. (See section 12-II.E.)

12-III.E. EFFECT OF TENANCY TERMINATION ON THE FAMILY'S ASSISTANCE

If a termination is not due to a serious or repeated violation of the lease, and if DCHA has no other grounds for termination of assistance, DCHA may issue a new voucher so that the family can move with continued assistance (see Chapter 10).

EXHIBIT 12-1: STATEMENT OF FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

Following is a listing of a participant family's obligations under the HCV program:

- The family must supply any information that the DCHA or HUD determines to be necessary, including submission of required evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status.
- The family must supply any information requested by DCHA or HUD for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition.
- The family must disclose and verify social security numbers and sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
- Any information supplied by the family must be true and complete.
- The family may be held responsible for a breach of housing quality standards caused by the family's failure to pay tenant-provided utilities or appliances or damages to the dwelling unit or premises beyond ordinary wear and tear caused by any member of the household or guest.

DCHA Policy

Damages beyond ordinary wear and tear will be considered to be damages which could be assessed against the security deposit under state law or in court practice.

- The family must allow DCHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice, as described in Chapter 8 of this plan.
- The family must not commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will determine if a family has committed serious or repeated violations of the lease based on available evidence, including but not limited to, a court-ordered eviction or an owner's notice to evict, police reports, and affidavits from the owner, neighbors, or other credible parties with direct knowledge.

Serious and repeated lease violations will include, but not be limited to, nonpayment of rent, disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, living or housekeeping habits that cause damage to the unit or premises, and criminal activity. Generally, the criterion to be used will be whether or not the reason for the eviction was the fault of the tenant or guests. Any incidents of, or criminal activity related to, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking will not be construed as serious or repeated lease violations by the victim [see 24 CFR 5.2005(c)(1)].

- The family must notify DCHA and the owner before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease.

DCHA Policy

The family must comply with lease requirements regarding written notice to the owner. The family must provide written notice to DCHA at the same time the owner is notified.

- The family must promptly give DCHA a copy of any owner eviction notice.

- The family must use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be the family's only residence.
- The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by DCHA. The family must promptly notify DCHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child. The family must request DCHA approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit.

DCHA Policy

The request to add a family member must be submitted in writing and approved prior to the person moving into the unit. DCHA will determine eligibility of the new member in accordance with the policies in Chapter 3.

- The family must promptly notify DCHA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit.
- If DCHA has given approval, a foster child or a live-in aide may reside in the unit. DCHA has the discretion to adopt reasonable policies concerning residency by a foster child or a live-in aide, and to define when DCHA consent may be given or denied. For policies related to the request and approval/disapproval of foster children, foster adults, and live-in aides, see Chapter 3 (Sections I.K and I.M), and Chapter 11 (Section II.B).
- The family must not sublease the unit, assign the lease, or transfer the unit.

DCHA Policy

Subleasing includes receiving payment to cover rent and utility costs by a person living in the unit who is not listed as a family member.

- The family must supply any information requested by DCHA to verify that the family is living in the unit or information related to family absence from the unit.
- The family must promptly notify DCHA when the family is absent from the unit.

DCHA Policy

Notice is required under this provision only when all family members will be absent from the unit for an extended period. An extended period is defined as any period greater than 30 calendar days. Written notice must be provided to DCHA at the start of the extended absence.

- The family must pay utility bills and provide and maintain any appliances that the owner is not required to provide under the lease [Form HUD-52646, Voucher].
- The family must not own or have any interest in the unit, (other than in a cooperative and owners of a manufactured home leasing a manufactured home space).
- Family members must not commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program. (See Chapter 14, Program Integrity for additional information).

- Family members must not engage in drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity or other criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises. See Chapter 12 for HUD and DCHA policies related to drug-related and violent criminal activity.
- Members of the household must not engage in abuse of alcohol in a way that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises. See Chapter 12 for a discussion of HUD and DCHA policies related to alcohol abuse.
- An assisted family or member of the family must not receive HCV program assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or a different unit under any other federal, state or local housing assistance program.
- A family must not receive HCV program assistance while residing in a unit owned by a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless DCHA has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving rental of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities. [Form HUD-52646, Voucher]

Chapter 13

OWNERS

INTRODUCTION

Owners play a major role in the HCV program by supplying decent, safe, and sanitary housing for participating families.

The term “owner” refers to any person or entity with the legal right to lease or sublease a unit to a participant in the HCV program [24 CFR 982.4(b)]. The term “owner” includes a principal or other interested party [24 CFR 982.453; 24 CFR 982.306(f)], such as a designated agent of the owner.

Owners have numerous responsibilities under the program, including screening and leasing to families, maintaining the dwelling unit, enforcing the lease, and complying with various contractual obligations.

The chapter is organized in two parts:

Part I: Owners in the HCV Program. This part discusses the role of an owner in DCHA’s HCV program and highlights key owner rights and responsibilities.

Part II: HAP Contracts. This part explains provisions of the HAP contract and the relationship between DCHA and the owner as expressed in the HAP contract.

For detailed information about HCV program responsibilities and processes, including DCHA policies in key areas, owners will need to refer to several other chapters in this plan. Where appropriate, Chapter 13 will reference the other chapters.

PART I. OWNERS IN THE HCV PROGRAM

13-I.A. OWNER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION [HCV GB, pp. 2-4 to 2-6; HCV Landlord Strategy Guidebook for PHAs]

Education and Outreach

DCHA is responsible for ensuring that very low-income families have access to all types and ranges of affordable housing in DCHA's jurisdiction, particularly housing outside areas of poverty or minority concentration. A critical element in fulfilling this responsibility is for DCHA to ensure that a sufficient number of owners, representing all types and ranges of affordable housing in DCHA's jurisdiction, are willing to participate in the HCV program.

To accomplish this objective, DCHA must identify and recruit new owners to participate in the program. DCHA can provide education and outreach in a variety of ways. Some strategies include hosting or attending events targeted to landlords or affordable housing providers. Education and outreach can include activities like newsletters, presentations, briefings to community groups, one-on-one appointments, or other ways of sharing information or creating relationships between DCHA and owners. DCHA may also provide monetary incentives and reimbursements to encourage participation in the program.

If DCHA will be conducting outreach events, DCHA must ensure that notices and communications during outreach events are provided in a manner that is effective for persons with hearing, visual, and other communications-related disabilities. DCHA must also take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs to persons with limited English proficiency.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct owner outreach to ensure that owners are familiar with the program and its advantages. DCHA will actively recruit property owners with property located outside areas of poverty and minority concentration. These outreach strategies will include:

- Distributing printed material about the program to property owners and managers

- Contacting property owners and managers by phone or in-person

- Holding owner recruitment/information meetings at least once a year

- Participating in community-based organizations comprised of private property and apartment owners and managers

- Developing working relationships with owners, apartment associations, industry investor groups, and real estate brokers associations

- To the extent practical, partnering with and attending events hosted by other area agencies to deliver information about the HCV program

Outreach strategies will be monitored for effectiveness and adapted accordingly.

Retention

In addition to recruiting owners to participate in the HCV program, DCHA must also provide the kind of customer service that will encourage participating owners to remain active in the program. See the “Landlord-Focused Customer Service” chapter of the *HCV Landlord Strategies Guidebook* for more information.

DCHA Policy

All DCHA activities that may affect an owner’s ability to lease a unit will be processed as rapidly as possible, in order to minimize vacancy losses for owners.

DCHA will provide owners with a handbook that explains the program, including HUD and DCHA policies and procedures, in easy-to-understand language.

DCHA will give special attention to helping new owners succeed through activities such as:

- Providing the owner with a designated DCHA contact person.

- Coordinating inspection and leasing activities between DCHA, the owner, and the family.

- Initiating telephone contact with the owner to explain the inspection process and providing an inspection booklet and other resource materials about HUD housing quality standards.

- Providing other written information about how the program operates through a landlord handbook, including answers to frequently asked questions.

- Contacting owners via emails or texts to disseminate information.

Additional services may be undertaken on an as-needed basis, and as resources permit.

13-I.B. BASIC HCV PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

HUD requires DCHA to assist families in their housing search by providing the family with a list of landlords or other parties known to DCHA who may be willing to lease a unit to the family, or to help the family find a unit. As part of the briefing packet, DCHA is also required to provide a current listing of accessible units known to DCHA. Although DCHA cannot maintain a list of owners that are pre-qualified to participate in the program, owners may indicate to DCHA their willingness to lease a unit to an eligible HCV family, or to help the HCV family find a unit [24 CFR 982.301(b)(11)].

DCHA Policy

Owners that wish to indicate their willingness to lease a unit to an eligible HCV family or to help the HCV family find a unit must notify DCHA. DCHA will maintain a listing of such owners and provide this listing to the HCV family as part of the informational briefing packet.

When a family approaches an owner to apply for tenancy, the owner is responsible for screening the family and deciding whether to lease to the family, just as the owner would with any potential unassisted tenant. DCHA has no liability or responsibility to the owner or other persons for the family's behavior or suitability for tenancy. See Chapters 3 and 9 for more detail on tenant family screening policies and process.

If the owner is willing, the family and the owner must jointly complete a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA, Form HUD-52517), which constitutes the family's request for assistance in the specified unit, and which documents the owner's willingness to lease to the family and to follow the program's requirements. When submitted to DCHA, this document is the first step in the process of obtaining approval for the family to receive the financial assistance it will need in order to occupy the unit. Also submitted with the RTA is a copy of the owner's proposed dwelling lease, including the HUD-required Tenancy Addendum (Form HUD-52641-A). See Chapter 9 for more detail on request for tenancy approval policies and process.

HUD regulations stipulate requirements for the approval of an assisted tenancy.

The owner must be qualified to participate in the program [24 CFR 982.306]. Some owners are precluded from participating in the program, or from renting to a particular family, either because of their past history with this or another federal housing program, or because of certain conflicts of interest. Owner qualifications are discussed later in this chapter.

The selected unit must be of a type that is eligible for the program [24 CFR 982.305(a)]. Certain types of dwelling units cannot be assisted under the HCV program. Other types may be assisted under certain conditions. See Chapter 9 for more detail on unit eligibility policies and process.

The selected unit must pass housing quality standards [24 CFR 982.305(a)(2)]. DCHA will inspect the owner's dwelling unit at least biennially to ensure that the unit continues to meet inspection requirements. See Chapter 8 for a discussion of the inspection standards and policies for inspections at initial lease-up and throughout the family's tenancy.

DCHA must determine that the proposed rent for the unit is reasonable [24 CFR 982.305(a)]. The rent must be reasonable in relation to comparable unassisted units in the area and must not be in excess of rents charged by the owner for comparable, unassisted units on the premises. See Chapter 8 for a discussion of requirements and policies on rent reasonableness, rent comparability and the rent reasonableness determination process.

At initial lease-up of a unit, if the gross rent exceeds the applicable payment standard, DCHA must ensure that the family share does not exceed 40 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income [24 CFR 982.305(a)]. See Chapter 6 for a discussion of the calculation of family income, family share of rent and HAP.

The dwelling lease must comply with all program requirements [24 CFR 982.308]. Owners are encouraged to use their standard leases when renting to an assisted family. The HUD Tenancy Addendum (Form HUD-52641-A) includes the HUD requirements governing the tenancy and must be added word-for-word to the owner's lease. See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the dwelling lease and tenancy addendum, including lease terms and provisions.

DCHA and the owner must execute a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract (Form HUD-52641). The HAP contract format is prescribed by HUD. See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the HUD requirements for execution of the HAP contract.

13-I.C. OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES [24 CFR 982.452]

The basic owner responsibilities in the HCV program are outlined in the regulations as follows:

- Complying with all of the owner's obligations under the housing assistance payments (HAP) contract and the lease
- Performing all management and rental functions for the assisted unit, including selecting a voucher-holder to lease the unit, and deciding if the family is suitable for tenancy of the unit
- Maintaining the unit in accordance with housing quality standards, including performing of ordinary and extraordinary maintenance
 - A unit is not in compliance with housing quality standards if DCHA or other inspector authorized by the state or local government determines that the unit has deficiencies based upon an inspection, the agency or inspector notifies the owner in writing of the deficiencies, and the deficiencies are not remedied in the appropriate timeframe.
- Complying with equal opportunity requirements
- Preparing and furnishing to DCHA information required under the HAP contract
- Collecting the security deposit, the tenant rent, and any charges for unit damage by the family
- Enforcing tenant obligations under the dwelling lease
- Paying for utilities and services that are not the responsibility of the family as specified in the lease
- Allowing reasonable modifications to a dwelling unit occupied or to be occupied by a disabled person [24 CFR 100.203]
- Complying with the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) when screening prospective HCV tenants or terminating the tenancy of an HCV family [see 24 CFR Part 5, Subpart L; 24 CFR 982.310(h)(4); 24 CFR 982.452(b)(1); and FR Notice 1/4/23]

13-I.D. OWNER QUALIFICATIONS

DCHA does not formally approve an owner to participate in the HCV program. However, there are a number of criteria where DCHA may deny approval of an assisted tenancy based on past owner behavior, conflict of interest, or other owner-related issues. No owner has a right to participate in the HCV program [24 CFR 982.306(e)].

Owners Barred from Participation [24 CFR 982.306(a) and (b)]

DCHA must not approve the assisted tenancy if DCHA has been informed that the owner has been debarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation under 24 CFR part 24. HUD may direct DCHA not to approve a tenancy request if a court or administrative agency has determined that the owner violated the Fair Housing Act or other federal equal opportunity requirements, or if such an action is pending.

Leasing to Relatives [24 CFR 982.306(d), HCV GB p. 11-2]

DCHA must not approve a tenancy if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother of any member of the family. DCHA may make an exception as a reasonable accommodation for a family member with a disability. The owner is required to certify that no such relationship exists. This restriction applies at the time that the family receives assistance under the HCV program for occupancy of a particular unit. Current contracts on behalf of owners and families that are related may continue, but any new leases or contracts for these families may not be approved.

Conflict of Interest [24 CFR 982.161; HCV GB p. 8-19; Form HUD-52641, Section 13]

DCHA must not approve a tenancy in which any of the following classes of persons has any interest, direct or indirect, during tenure or for one year thereafter:

- Any present or former member or officer of DCHA (except a participant commissioner)
- Any employee of DCHA, or any contractor, subcontractor or agent of DCHA, who formulates policy or who influences decisions with respect to the programs
- Any public official, member of a governing body, or State or local legislator, who exercises functions or responsibilities with respect to the programs
- Any member of the Congress of the United States

Such “covered individual” may not have any direct or indirect interest in the HAP contract or in any benefits or payments under the contract (including the interest of an immediate family member of such covered individual) while such person is a covered individual or for one year thereafter.

Immediate family member means the spouse, parent (including a stepparent), child (including a stepchild), grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother (including a stepsister or stepbrother) of any covered individual.

HUD may waive the conflict-of-interest requirements, except for members of Congress, for good cause. DCHA must submit a waiver request to the appropriate HUD Field Office for determination.

Any waiver request submitted by DCHA must include the following [HCV Guidebook pp.11-2 and 11-3]:

- Complete statement of the facts of the case;
- Analysis of the specific conflict of interest provision of the HAP contract and justification as to why the provision should be waived;
- Analysis of and statement of consistency with state and local laws. The local HUD office, DCHA, or both parties may conduct this analysis. Where appropriate, an opinion by the state's attorney general should be obtained;
- Opinion by the local HUD office as to whether there would be an appearance of impropriety if the waiver were granted;
- Statement regarding alternative existing housing available for lease under the HCV program or other assisted housing if the waiver is denied;
- If the case involves a hardship for a particular family, statement of the circumstances and discussion of possible alternatives;
- If the case involves a public official or member of the governing body, explanation of their duties under state or local law, including reference to any responsibilities involving the HCV program;
- If the case involves employment of a family member by DCHA or assistance under the HCV program for an eligible DCHA employee, explanation of the responsibilities and duties of the position, including any related to the HCV program;
- If the case involves an investment on the part of a member, officer, or employee of DCHA, description of the nature of the investment, including disclosure/divestiture plans.

Where DCHA has requested a conflict-of-interest waiver, DCHA may not execute the HAP contract until HUD has made a decision on the waiver request.

DCHA Policy

In considering whether to request a conflict of interest waiver from HUD, DCHA will consider certain factors such as consistency of the waiver with state and local laws, the existence of alternative housing available to families, the individual circumstances of a particular family, the specific duties of individuals whose positions present a possible conflict of interest, the nature of any financial investment in the property and plans for disclosure/divestiture, and the possible appearance of impropriety.

Owner Actions That May Result in Disapproval of a Tenancy Request [24 CFR 982.306(c)]

HUD regulations permit DCHA to disapprove a request for tenancy for various actions and inactions of the owner.

If DCHA disapproves a request for tenancy because an owner is not qualified, it may not terminate the HAP contract for any assisted families that are already living in the owner's properties unless the owner has violated the HAP contract for those units [HCV GB p. 11-4].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will refuse to approve a request for tenancy if DCHA becomes aware that any of the following are true:

The owner has violated obligations under a HAP contract under Section 8 of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437f);

The owner has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program;

The owner has engaged in any drug-related criminal activity or any violent criminal activity;

The owner has a history or practice of noncompliance with inspection standards for units leased under the tenant-based programs, or with applicable housing standards for units leased with project-based Section 8 assistance or leased under any other federal housing program;

The owner has a history or practice of failing to terminate tenancy of tenants of units assisted under Section 8 or any other federally assisted housing program for activity engaged in by the tenant, any member of the household, a guest or another person under the control of any member of the household that:

- (i) Threatens the right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents;
- (ii) Threatens the health or safety of other residents, of employees of DCHA, or of owner employees or other persons engaged in management of the housing;
- (iii) Threatens the health or safety of, or the right to peaceful enjoyment of their residences, by persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises; or
- (iv) Is drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity;

The owner has a history or practice of renting units that fail to meet state or local housing codes; or

The owner has not paid state or local real estate taxes, fines, or assessment.

In considering whether to disapprove owners for any of the discretionary reasons listed above, DCHA will consider any mitigating factors. Such factors may include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the violation in relation to program requirements, the impact on the ability of families to lease units under the program, health and safety of participating families, among others. Upon consideration of such circumstances, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose to approve an owner.

Legal Ownership of Unit

The following represents DCHA policy on legal ownership of a dwelling unit to be assisted under the HCV program.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will only enter into a contractual relationship with the legal owner of a qualified unit. No tenancy will be approved without acceptable documentation of legal ownership (e.g., deed of trust, proof of taxes for most recent year).

13-I.E. NON-DISCRIMINATION [HAP Contract – Form HUD-52641]

The owner must not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, or disability, in connection with any actions or responsibilities under the HCV program and the HAP contract with DCHA.

The owner must cooperate with DCHA and with HUD in conducting any equal opportunity compliance reviews and complaint investigations in connection with the HCV program and the HAP contract with DCHA.

See Chapter 2 for a more thorough discussion of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity requirements in the HCV program.

PART II. HAP CONTRACTS

13-II.A. OVERVIEW

The HAP contract (Form HUD-52641) represents a written agreement between DCHA and the owner of the dwelling unit occupied by a HCV assisted family. The contract spells out the owner's responsibilities under the program, as well as DCHA's obligations. Under the HAP contract, DCHA agrees to make housing assistance payments to the owner on behalf of the family approved by DCHA to occupy the unit.

The HAP contract is used for all HCV tenant-based program tenancies except for assistance under the Section 8 homeownership program, and assistance to families that own a manufactured home and use their assistance to lease the space for the manufactured home. See Chapter 15 for a discussion of any special housing types included in DCHA's HCV program.

When DCHA has determined that the unit meets program requirements and the tenancy is approvable, DCHA and owner must execute the HAP contract. See Chapter 9 for a discussion of the leasing process, including provisions for execution of the HAP contract.

13-II.B. HAP CONTRACT CONTENTS

The HAP contract format is required by HUD, specifically Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract, Form HUD-52641.

The HAP contract contains three parts.

Part A of the contract includes basic contract information: the names of the tenant and all household members, the address of the contract unit, start and end dates of initial lease term, the amount of initial monthly rent to owner, the amount of initial housing assistance payment, the utilities and appliances to be supplied by owner and tenant, and the signatures of DCHA representative and owner [HCV Guidebook, pp. 11-10 and 11-11].

In general, the HAP contract cannot be modified. However, DCHA does have the discretion to add language to Part A of the HAP contract which prohibits the owner from collecting a security deposit in excess of private market practices or in excess of amounts charged to unassisted tenants. DCHA policy on the amount of security deposit an owner may collect is found in Chapter 9.

DCHA also has the discretion to add language to Part A of the HAP contract that defines when the housing assistance payment by DCHA is deemed received by the owner (e.g., upon mailing by DCHA or actual receipt by the owner).

DCHA Policy

DCHA has not adopted a policy that defines when the housing assistance payment by DCHA is deemed received by the owner. Therefore, no modifications to the HAP contract will be necessary.

Part B is the body of the contract. It describes in detail program requirements affecting the owner and owner roles and responsibilities under the HCV program. Most of the requirements contained in Part B of the HAP contract are outlined elsewhere in this plan. Topics addressed in Part B include:

- Lease of Contract Unit
- Maintenance, Utilities, and Other Services
- Term of HAP Contract
- Provision and Payment of Utilities and Appliances
- Rent to Owner: Reasonable Rent
- DCHA Payment to Owner
- Prohibition of Discrimination
- Owner's Breach of HAP Contract
- DCHA and HUD Access to Premises and Owner's Records
- Exclusion of Third-Part Rights
- Conflict of Interest
- Assignment of the HAP Contract
- Written Notices
- Entire Agreement Interpretation

Part C of the contract includes the Tenancy Addendum (Form HUD-52641-A). The addendum sets forth the tenancy requirements for the program and the composition of the household, as approved by DCHA. The tenant has the right to enforce the Tenancy Addendum against the owner. The terms of the Tenancy Addendum prevail over any other provisions of the lease.

13-II.C. HAP CONTRACT PAYMENTS

General

During the term of the HAP contract, and subject to the provisions of the HAP contract, DCHA must make monthly HAP payments to the owner on behalf of the family at the beginning of each month. If a lease term begins after the first of the month, the HAP payment for the first month is prorated for a partial month.

The amount of the HAP payment is determined according to the policies described in Chapter 6 and is subject to change during the term of the HAP contract. DCHA must notify the owner and the family in writing of any changes in the HAP payment.

HAP payments can be made only during the lease term, and only while the family is residing in the unit.

The monthly HAP payment by DCHA is credited toward the monthly rent to owner under the family's lease. The total of the rent paid by the tenant and the HAP payment is equal to the rent to owner as specified in the lease.

The family is not responsible for payment of the HAP payment, and DCHA is not responsible for payment of the family share of rent.

The family's share of the rent cannot be more than the difference between the rent to owner and the HAP payment. The owner may not demand or accept any rent payment from the tenant in excess of this maximum [24 CFR 982.451(b)(4)]. The owner may not charge the tenant extra amounts for items customarily included in rent in the locality or provided at no additional cost to unsubsidized tenants in the premises [24 CFR 982.510(c)]. See Chapter 9 for a discussion of separate, non-lease agreements for services, appliances and other items that are not included in the lease.

If the owner receives any excess HAP from DCHA, the excess amount must be returned immediately. If DCHA determines that the owner is not entitled to all or a portion of the HAP, DCHA may deduct the amount of overpayment from any amounts due to the owner, including amounts due under any other Section 8 HCV contract. See Chapter 16 for additional detail on owner reimbursement of HAP overpayments.

Owner Certification of Compliance

Unless the owner complies with all provisions of the HAP contract, the owner is not entitled to receive housing assistance payments under the HAP contract [HAP Contract – Form HUD-52641].

By accepting the monthly check from DCHA, the owner certifies to compliance with the terms of the HAP contract. This includes certification that the owner is maintaining the unit and premises in accordance with housing quality standards; that the contract unit is leased to the tenant family and, to the best of the owner's knowledge, the family resides in the unit as the family's only residence; the rent to owner does not exceed rents charged by the owner for comparable unassisted units on the premises; and that the owner does not receive (other than rent to owner) any additional payments or other consideration for rent of the contract unit during the HAP term.

Late HAP Payments [24 CFR 982.451(a)(5)]

DCHA is responsible for making HAP payments promptly when due to the owner, in accordance with the terms of the HAP contract. After the first two calendar months of the HAP contract term, the HAP contract provides for late penalties if DCHA fails to make the HAP payment on time.

Penalties for late HAP payments can only be imposed if 1) the penalties are in accordance with generally accepted local rental market practices and law governing penalties for late payment by tenants; 2) it is the owner's normal business practice to charge late payment penalties for both assisted and unassisted families; and 3) the owner charges the assisted family for late payment of the family's share of the rent.

DCHA is not required to pay a late payment penalty if HUD determines that the payment is late for reasons beyond DCHA's control. In addition, late payment penalties are not required if the DCHA intentionally delays or denies payment as a remedy to an owner breach of the HAP contract [HCV Guidebook p. 11-7].

Termination of HAP Payments [24 CFR 982.311(b)]

DCHA must continue making housing assistance payments to the owner in accordance with the HAP contract as long as the tenant continues to occupy the unit and the HAP contract is not violated.

HAP payments terminate when the HAP contract terminates or when the tenancy is terminated in accordance with the terms of the lease.

If the owner has initiated eviction proceedings against the family and the family continues to reside in the unit, DCHA must continue to make housing assistance payments to the owner until the owner has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the tenant.

DCHA Policy

The owner must inform DCHA when the owner has initiated eviction proceedings against the family and the family continues to reside in the unit.

The owner must inform DCHA when the owner has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the tenant and provide DCHA with a copy of such judgment or determination.

After the owner has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the tenant, DCHA will continue to make HAP payments to the owner until the family actually moves from the unit or until the family is physically evicted from the unit, whichever is earlier. The owner must inform DCHA of the date when the family actually moves from the unit or the family is physically evicted from the unit.

13-II.D. BREACH OF HAP CONTRACT [24 CFR 982.453]

Any of the following actions by the owner constitutes a breach of the HAP contract:

- If the owner violates any obligations under the HAP contract including failure to maintain the unit in accordance with housing quality standards
- If the owner has violated any obligation under any other HAP contract under Section 8
- If the owner has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program
- For projects with mortgages insured by HUD or loans made by HUD, if the owner has failed to comply with the regulation for the applicable program; or if the owner has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the mortgage or loan
- If the owner has engaged in drug-related criminal activity
- If the owner has committed any violent criminal activity

If DCHA determines that a breach of the HAP contract has occurred, DCHA must take enforcement action in accordance with 24 CFR 982.404.

The DCHA rights and remedies against the owner under the HAP contract include recovery of any HAP overpayment, withholding or abatement of housing assistance payments, termination of the payment, or termination of the HAP contract. DCHA may also obtain additional relief by judicial order or action.

DCHA must notify the owner of its determination and provide in writing the reasons for the determination. The notice may require the owner to take corrective action by an established deadline. DCHA must provide the owner with written notice of any reduction in housing assistance payments or the termination of the HAP contract.

DCHA Policy

Before DCHA invokes a remedy against an owner, DCHA will evaluate all information and documents available to determine if the contract has been breached.

If relevant, DCHA will conduct an audit of the owner's records pertaining to the tenancy or unit.

If it is determined that the owner has breached the contract, DCHA will consider all of the relevant factors including the seriousness of the breach, the effect on the family, the owner's record of compliance and the number and seriousness of any prior HAP contract violations.

13-II.E. HAP CONTRACT TERM AND TERMINATIONS

The term of the HAP contract runs concurrently with the term of the dwelling lease [24 CFR 982.451(a)(2)], beginning on the first day of the initial term of the lease and terminating on the last day of the term of the lease, including any lease term extensions.

The HAP contract and the housing assistance payments made under the HAP contract terminate if [HCV Guidebook pp.11-4 and 11-5, pg. 15-3]:

- The owner or the family terminates the lease.
- The lease expires.
- DCHA terminates the HAP contract.
- DCHA terminates assistance for the family.
- The family moves from the assisted unit. In this situation, the owner is entitled to keep the housing assistance payment for the month when the family moves out of the unit.
- 180 calendar days have elapsed since DCHA made the last housing assistance payment to the owner.
- The family is absent from the unit for longer than the maximum period permitted by DCHA.
- The Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) between DCHA and HUD expires.
- DCHA elects to terminate the HAP contract.

DCHA Policy

DCHA may elect to terminate the HAP contract in each of the following situations:

Available program funding is not sufficient to support continued assistance for families in the program [24 CFR 982.454];

The unit does not meet size requirements due to change in family composition [24 CFR 982.403] – see Chapter 8;

The unit does not meet housing quality standards [24 CFR 982.404] – see Chapter 8;

The family breaks up [HUD Form 52641] – see Chapter 3;

The owner breaches the HAP contract [24 CFR 982.453(b)] – see Section 13-II.D.

If DCHA terminates the HAP contract, DCHA must give the owner and the family written notice. The notice must specify the reasons for the termination and the effective date of the termination. Once a HAP contract is terminated, no further HAP payments may be made under that contract [HCV Guidebook pg.15-4].

DCHA Policy

Generally, the HAP contract terminates at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which DCHA gives written notice to the owner.

DCHA cannot make any HAP payment for any month after the month the family vacates the unit.

The owner is not entitled to any housing assistance payment after this period and must return to DCHA any housing assistance payment received after this period.

If the family moves from the assisted unit into a new unit, even if the new unit is in the same building or complex as the assisted unit, the HAP contract for the assisted unit terminates. A new HAP contract would be required [HCV GB, p. 11-17].

When the family moves from an assisted unit into a new unit, the term of the HAP contract for the new unit may begin in the same month in which the family moves out of its old unit. This is not considered a duplicative subsidy [HCV GB, p. 8-22].

13-II.F. CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP / ASSIGNMENT OF THE HAP CONTRACT [HUD-52641]

The HAP contract cannot be assigned to a new owner without the prior written consent of DCHA.

An owner under a HAP contract must notify DCHA in writing prior to a change in the legal ownership of the unit. The owner must supply all information as requested by DCHA.

Prior to approval of assignment to a new owner, the new owner must agree to be bound by and comply with the HAP contract. The agreement between the new owner and the former owner must be in writing and in a form that DCHA finds acceptable. The new owner must provide DCHA with a copy of the executed agreement.

DCHA Policy

Assignment of the HAP contract will be approved only if the new owner is qualified to become an owner under the HCV program according to the policies in Section 13-I.D. of this chapter.

DCHA must receive a signed, written request from the existing owner stating the name and address of the new HAP payee and the effective date of the assignment in order to change the HAP payee under an outstanding HAP contract.

Within 10 business days of receiving the owner's request, DCHA will inform the current owner in writing whether the assignment may take place.

The new owner must provide a written certification to DCHA that includes:

- A copy of the escrow statement or other document showing the transfer of title and recorded deed;
- A copy of the owner's IRS Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, or the social security number of the new owner;
- The effective date of the HAP contract assignment;
- A written agreement to comply with the terms of the HAP contract; and
- A certification that the new owner is not a prohibited relative.

If the new owner does not agree to an assignment of the HAP contract, or fails to provide the necessary documents, DCHA will terminate the HAP contract with the old owner. If the new owner wants to offer the family a new lease, and the family elects to stay with continued assistance, DCHA will process the leasing in accordance with the policies in Chapter 9.

13-II.G. FORECLOSURE [Notice PIH 2010-49]

Families receiving HCV assistance are entitled to certain protections set forth under the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act (PTFA). During the term of the lease, the new owner of the property does not have good cause to terminate the tenant's lease, unless the new owner will occupy the unit as their primary residence and has provided the tenant with at least a 90-day notice. In that case, the lease may be terminated effective on the date of sale, although the tenant is still entitled to a 90-day notice to vacate. Further, the new owner assumes interest in the lease between the prior owner and the tenant and to the HAP contract.

Any state or local law that provides longer time periods or other additional protections for tenants also applies.

DCHA Policy

If a property is in foreclosure, DCHA will make all reasonable efforts to determine the status of the foreclosure and ownership of the property and will continue to make payments to the original owner until ownership legally transfers in accordance with the HAP contract.

DCHA will attempt to obtain a written acknowledgement of the assignment of the HAP contract from the successor in interest. This will include a request for owner information, including a tax identification number and payment instructions from the new owner. Even if the new owner does not acknowledge the assignment of the HAP contract in writing, the assignment is still effective by operation of law.

DCHA will inform the tenant that they must continue to pay rent in accordance with the lease, and if the new owner refuses to accept payment or cannot be identified, the tenant should pay rent into escrow. Failure to pay rent may constitute an independent ground for eviction.

In the event that DCHA is unable to make HAP payments to the new owner due to an action or inaction by the new owner that prevents such payments (e.g., rejection of payments or failure to maintain the property according to housing quality standards), or due to an inability to identify the new owner, DCHA will either use the funds to pay:

The utilities that are the owner's responsibility after taking reasonable steps to notify the owner; except that if the unit has been or will be rendered uninhabitable due to termination or threat of termination of service, prior notice is not required. In the latter case, DCHA shall notify the owner within a reasonable time after making the utility payment; or

For the family's reasonable moving costs, including security deposit costs.

DCHA will also refer the tenant, as needed, to the local legal aid office in order to ensure adequate protection of the tenant's rights and enforcement of the successor in interest's performance under the HAP contract.

See Section 12-III.B for a discussion of foreclosure as it pertains to owner termination of tenancy.

Chapter 14

PROGRAM INTEGRITY

INTRODUCTION

DCHA is committed to ensuring that subsidy funds made available to DCHA are spent in accordance with HUD requirements.

This chapter covers HUD and DCHA policies designed to prevent, detect, investigate, and resolve instances of program abuse or fraud. It also describes the actions that will be taken in the case of unintentional errors and omissions.

Part I: Preventing, Detecting, and Investigating Errors and Program Abuse.

This part presents DCHA policies related to preventing, detecting, and investigating errors and program abuse.

Part II: Corrective Measures and Penalties. This part describes the corrective measures DCHA must and may take when errors or program abuses are found.

PART I: PREVENTING, DETECTING, AND INVESTIGATING ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE

14-I.A. PREVENTING ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE

HUD created the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system to provide PHAs with a powerful tool for preventing errors and detecting program abuse. PHAs are required to use the EIV system at annual reexamination in accordance with HUD administrative guidance [24 CFR 5.233].

PHAs are further required to:

- Provide applicants and participants with form HUD-52675, “Debts Owed to PHAs and Terminations”
- Require all adult members of an applicant or participant family to acknowledge receipt of form HUD-52675 by signing a copy of the form for retention in the family file

DCHA Policy

To ensure that DCHA’s HCV program is administered according to the highest ethical and legal standards, DCHA will employ a variety of techniques to ensure that both errors and intentional program abuse are rare.

DCHA will discuss program compliance and integrity issues during the voucher briefing sessions described in Chapter 5.

DCHA will provide each applicant and participant with a copy of “Is Fraud Worth It?” (form HUD-1141-OIG), which explains the types of actions a family must avoid and the penalties for program abuse.

DCHA will provide each applicant and participant with a copy of “What You Should Know about EIV,” a guide to the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system published by HUD as an attachment to Notice PIH 2017-12. In addition, DCHA will require the head of each household to acknowledge receipt of the guide by signing a copy for retention in the family file.

DCHA will place a warning statement about the penalties for fraud (as described in 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 1010) on key DCHA forms and form letters that request information from a family or owner.

DCHA staff will be required to review and explain the contents of all HUD- and DCHA-required forms prior to requesting family member signatures.

At every regular reexamination, DCHA staff will explain any changes in HUD regulations or DCHA policy that affect program participants.

DCHA will require first-time owners (or their agents) to participate in a briefing session on HAP contract requirements.

DCHA will provide owners with ongoing information about the program, with an emphasis on actions and situations to avoid.

DCHA will provide each DCHA employee with the necessary training on program rules and the organization’s standards of conduct and ethics.

For purposes of this chapter the term *error* refers to an unintentional error or omission. *Program abuse or fraud* refers to a single act or pattern of actions that constitute a false statement, omission, or concealment of a substantial fact, made with the intent to deceive or mislead.

14-I.B. DETECTING ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE

In addition to taking steps to prevent errors and program abuse, DCHA will use a variety of activities to detect errors and program abuse.

Quality Control and Analysis of Data

Under the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), HUD requires DCHA to review a random sample of tenant records annually to determine if the records conform to program requirements and to conduct quality control inspections of a sample of units to ensure compliance with applicable housing quality standards [24 CFR, Part 985]. (See Chapter 16 for additional information about SEMAP requirements).

DCHA Policy

In addition to the SEMAP quality control requirements, DCHA will employ a variety of methods to detect errors and program abuse.

DCHA routinely will use HUD and other non-HUD sources of up-front income verification. This includes The Work Number and any other private or public databases available to DCHA.

At each annual or interim reexamination, current information provided by the family will be compared to information provided at the most recent reexamination to identify inconsistencies and incomplete information.

DCHA will compare family-reported income and expenditures to detect possible unreported income.

Independent Audits and HUD Monitoring

OMB Circular A-133 requires all PHAs that expend \$750,000 or more in federal awards annually to have an independent audit (IPA). In addition, HUD conducts periodic on-site and automated monitoring of DCHA activities and notifies DCHA of errors and potential cases of program abuse.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the results reported in any IPA or HUD monitoring reports to identify potential program abuses as well as to assess the effectiveness of DCHA's error detection and abuse prevention efforts.

Individual Reporting of Possible Errors and Program Abuse

DCHA Policy

DCHA will encourage staff, program participants, and the public to report possible program abuse.

14-I.C. INVESTIGATING ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE

When DCHA Will Investigate

DCHA Policy

DCHA will review all referrals, specific allegations, complaints, and tips from any source including other agencies, companies, and individuals, to determine if they warrant investigation. In order for DCHA to investigate, the allegation must contain at least one independently verifiable item of information, such as the name of an employer or the name of an unauthorized household member.

DCHA will investigate when inconsistent or contradictory information is detected through file reviews and the verification process.

Consent to Release of Information [24 CFR 982.516]

DCHA may investigate possible instances of error or abuse using all available DCHA and public records. If necessary, DCHA will require HCV families to sign consent forms for the release of additional information.

Analysis and Findings

DCHA Policy

DCHA will base its evaluation on a preponderance of the evidence collected during its investigation.

Preponderance of the evidence is defined as evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence that as a whole indicates that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.

Preponderance of evidence may not be determined by the number of witnesses, but by the greater weight of all evidence.

For each investigation DCHA will determine (1) whether an error or program abuse has occurred, (2) whether any amount of money is owed DCHA, and (3) what corrective measures or penalties will be assessed.

Consideration of Remedies

All errors and instances of program abuse must be corrected prospectively. Whether the DCHA will enforce other corrective actions and penalties depends upon the nature of the error or program abuse.

DCHA Policy

In the case of family-caused errors or program abuse, DCHA will take into consideration (1) the seriousness of the offense and the extent of participation or culpability of individual family members, (2) any special circumstances surrounding the case, (3) any mitigating circumstances related to the disability of a family member, (4) the effects of a particular remedy on family members who were not involved in the offense.

In the case of owner-caused errors or program abuse, DCHA will take into consideration (1) the seriousness of the offense, (2) the length of time since the violation has occurred, and (3) the effects of a particular remedy on family members who were not involved in the offense.

Notice and Appeals

DCHA Policy

DCHA will inform the relevant party in writing of its findings and remedies within 10 business days of the conclusion of the investigation. The notice will include (1) a description of the error or program abuse, (2) the basis on which DCHA determined the error or program abuses, (3) the remedies to be employed, and (4) the family's right to appeal the results through the informal review or hearing process, if applicable (see Chapter 16).

PART II: CORRECTIVE MEASURES AND PENALTIES

14-II.A. SUBSIDY UNDER- OR OVERPAYMENTS

A subsidy under- or overpayment includes (1) an incorrect housing assistance payment to the owner, (2) an incorrect family share established for the family, and (3) an incorrect utility reimbursement to a family.

Corrections

Whether the incorrect subsidy determination is an overpayment or underpayment of subsidy, the DCHA must promptly correct the HAP, family share, and any utility reimbursement prospectively.

DCHA Policy

Increases in the family share will be implemented on the first of the month following a written 30-day notice.

Any decreases in family share will become effective the first of the month following the discovery of the error.

Reimbursement

Whether the family or owner is required to reimburse DCHA or DCHA is required to make retroactive subsidy payments to the owner or family depends upon which party is responsible for the incorrect subsidy payment and whether the action taken was an error or program abuse. Policies regarding reimbursement are discussed in the three sections that follow.

14-II.B. FAMILY-CAUSED ERRORS AND PROGRAM ABUSE

Family obligations and general administrative requirements for participating in the program are discussed throughout this plan. This section deals specifically with errors and program abuse by family members.

An incorrect subsidy determination caused by a family generally would be the result of incorrect reporting of family composition, income, assets, or expenses, but also would include instances in which the family knowingly allows the DCHA to use incorrect information provided by a third party.

Family Reimbursement to DCHA [HCV GB pp. 22-12 to 22-13]

DCHA Policy

In the case of family-caused errors or program abuse, the family will be required to repay any excess subsidy received. DCHA may, but is not required to, offer the family a repayment agreement in accordance with Chapter 16. If the family fails to repay the excess subsidy, DCHA will terminate the family's assistance in accordance with the policies in Chapter 12.

DCHA Reimbursement to Family [HCV GB p. 22-12]

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not reimburse the family for any underpayment of assistance when the underpayment clearly is caused by the family.

Prohibited Actions

An applicant or participant in the HCV program must not knowingly:

- Make a false statement to DCHA [Title 18 U.S.C. Section 1001].
- Commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program [24 CFR 982.552(c)(iv)].

DCHA Policy

Any of the following will be considered evidence of family program abuse:

Payment to the owner in excess of amounts authorized by DCHA for rent, security deposit, and additional services

Offering bribes or illegal gratuities to DCHA Board of Commissioners, employees, contractors, or other DCHA representatives

Offering payments or other incentives to the owner or a third party as an inducement for the third party to make false or misleading statements to DCHA on the family's behalf

Use of a false name or the use of falsified, forged, or altered documents

Intentional misreporting of family information or circumstances (e.g. income, family composition)

Omitted facts that were obviously known by a family member (e.g., not reporting employment income)

Admission of program abuse by an adult family member

DCHA may determine other actions to be program abuse based upon a preponderance of the evidence, as defined earlier in this chapter.

Penalties for Program Abuse

In the case of program abuse caused by a family DCHA may, at its discretion, impose any of the following remedies.

- DCHA may require the family to repay excess subsidy amounts paid by DCHA, as described earlier in this section.
- DCHA may require, as a condition of receiving or continuing assistance, that a culpable family member not reside in the unit. See policies in Chapter 3 (for applicants) and Chapter 12 (for participants).
- DCHA may deny or terminate the family's assistance following the policies set forth in Chapter 3 and Chapter 12 respectively.
- DCHA may refer the family for state or federal criminal prosecution as described in section 14-II.E.

14-II.C. OWNER-CAUSED ERROR OR PROGRAM ABUSE

Owner requirements that are part of the regular process of offering, leasing, and maintaining a unit (e.g., housing quality standards compliance, fair housing) are addressed in the appropriate chapters of this plan. This section focuses on errors and program abuse by owners.

An incorrect subsidy determination caused by an owner generally would be the result of an incorrect owner statement about the characteristics of the assisted unit (e.g., the number of bedrooms, which utilities are paid by the family). It also includes accepting duplicate housing assistance payments for the same unit in the same month, or after a family no longer resides in the unit.

Owner Reimbursement to DCHA

In all cases of overpayment of subsidy caused by the owner, the owner must repay to DCHA any excess subsidy received. DCHA may recover overpaid amounts by withholding housing assistance payments due for subsequent months, or if the debt is large, DCHA may allow the owner to pay in installments over a period of time [HCV GB p. 22-13].

DCHA Policy

In cases where the owner has received excess subsidy, DCHA will require the owner to repay the amount owed in accordance with the policies in Section 16-IV.B.

Prohibited Owner Actions

An owner participating in the HCV program must not:

- Make any false statement to DCHA [Title 18 U.S.C. Section 1001].
- Commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program [24 CFR 982.453(a)(3)] including:

DCHA Policy

Any of the following will be considered evidence of owner program abuse:

Charging the family rent above or below the amount specified by DCHA

Charging a security deposit other than that specified in the family's lease

Charging the family for services that are provided to unassisted tenants at no extra charge

Knowingly accepting housing assistance payments for any month(s) after the family has vacated the unit

Knowingly accepting incorrect or excess housing assistance payments

Offering bribes or illegal gratuities to the DCHA Board of Commissioners, employees, contractors, or other DCHA representatives

Offering payments or other incentives to an HCV family as an inducement for the family to make false or misleading statements to DCHA

Residing in the unit with an assisted family

Committing sexual or other harassment, either quid pro quo or hostile environment, based on the protected classes defined in Chapter 2

Retaliating against any applicant or participant reporting/alleging sexual or other harassment, either quid pro quo or hostile environment, based on the protected classes defined in Chapter 2

Remedies and Penalties

When DCHA determines that the owner has committed program abuse, DCHA may take any of the following actions:

- Require the owner to repay excess housing assistance payments, as discussed earlier in this section and in accordance with the policies in Chapter 16.
- Terminate the HAP contract (See Chapter 13).
- Bar the owner from future participation in any DCHA programs.
- Refer the case to state or federal officials for criminal prosecution as described in section 14-II.E.

14-II.D. DCHA-CAUSED ERRORS OR PROGRAM ABUSE

The responsibilities and expectations of DCHA staff with respect to normal program administration are discussed throughout this plan. This section specifically addresses actions of a DCHA staff member that are considered errors or program abuse related to the HCV program. Additional standards of conduct may be provided in the DCHA personnel policy.

DCHA-caused incorrect subsidy determinations include (1) failing to correctly apply HCV rules regarding family composition, income, assets, and expenses, (2) assigning the incorrect voucher size to a family, and (3) errors in calculation.

De Minimis Errors [24 CFR 5.609(c)(4)]

DCHA will not be considered out of compliance when making annual income determinations solely due to de minimis errors in calculating family income. A de minimis error is an error where the DCHA determination of family income deviates from the correct income determination by no more than \$30 per month in monthly adjusted income (\$360 in annual adjusted income) per family.

DCHA must take corrective action to credit or repay a family if the family was overcharged rent, including when DCHA makes de minimis errors in the income determination. Families will not be required to repay DCHA in instances where DCHA miscalculated income resulting in a family being undercharged for rent.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will reimburse a family for any family overpayment of rent, regardless of whether the overpayment was the result of staff-caused error, staff program abuse, or a de minimis error.

Prohibited Activities

DCHA Policy

Any of the following will be considered evidence of program abuse by DCHA staff:

Failing to comply with any HCV program requirements for personal gain

Failing to comply with any HCV program requirements as a result of a conflict-of-interest relationship with any applicant, participant, or owner

Seeking or accepting anything of material value from applicants, participating families, vendors, owners, contractors, or other persons who provide services or materials to DCHA

Disclosing confidential or proprietary information to outside parties

Gaining profit as a result of insider knowledge of DCHA activities, policies, or practices

Misappropriating or misusing HCV funds

Destroying, concealing, removing, or inappropriately using any records related to the HCV program

Committing any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program

14-II.E. CRIMINAL PROSECUTION

DCHA Policy

When DCHA determines that program abuse by an owner, family, or DCHA staff member has occurred and the amount of overpaid subsidy meets or exceeds the threshold for prosecution under local or state law, DCHA will refer the matter to the appropriate entity for prosecution. When the amount of overpaid assistance meets or exceeds the federal threshold, the case will also be referred to the HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Other criminal violations related to the HCV program will be referred to the appropriate local, state, or federal entity.

14-II.F. FRAUD AND PROGRAM ABUSE RECOVERIES

DCHA may retain a portion of program fraud losses that DCHA recovers from a family or owner through litigation, court order, or a repayment agreement [24 CFR 982.163].

DCHA must be the principal party initiating or sustaining the action to recover amounts due from tenants that are due as a result of fraud and abuse. 24 CFR 792.202 permits DCHA to retain the greater of:

- 50 percent of the amount it actually collects from a judgment, litigation (including settlement of a lawsuit) or an administrative repayment agreement, or
- Reasonable and necessary costs that DCHA incurs related to the collection including costs of investigation, legal fees, and agency collection fees.

The family must be afforded the opportunity for an informal hearing in accordance with requirements in 24 CFR 982.555.

If HUD incurs costs on behalf of DCHA related to the collection, these costs must be deducted from the amount retained by DCHA.

Chapter 15

SPECIAL HOUSING TYPES

[24 CFR 982 Subpart M; New HCV GB, *Special Housing Types*]

INTRODUCTION

DCHA may permit a family to use any of the special housing types discussed in this chapter. However, DCHA is not required to permit families receiving assistance in its jurisdiction to use these housing types, except that DCHA must permit use of any special housing type if needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, and DCHA must permit a family to lease a manufactured home and space with assistance under the program. DCHA also may limit the number of families who receive HCV assistance in these housing types and cannot require families to use a particular housing type. No special funding is provided for special housing types. Unless specifically modified by the regulations, housing quality standards apply to special housing types (Single Room Occupancy, Congregate Housing, Group Homes, Shared Housing, Manufactured Homes, Homeownership units) [Notice PIH 2023-28].

DCHA Policy

Families will not be permitted to use any special housing types, with the following exceptions:

If needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to a person with disabilities; and

DCHA must permit a family to lease a manufactured home and space with assistance under the program.

Policy language is included in this chapter where relevant in the event DCHA does grant use as a reasonable accommodation or when a family leases a manufactured home and space.

Special housing types include single room occupancy (SRO), congregate housing, group homes, shared housing, cooperative housing, manufactured homes where the family owns the home and leases the space, and homeownership [24 CFR 982.601]. A single unit cannot be designated as more than one type of special housing. DCHA cannot give preference to households that wish to live in any of these types of housing and cannot require households to select any of these types of housing [New HCV GB, *Special Housing Types*, p. 3].

This chapter consists of the following seven parts. Each part contains a description of the housing type and any special requirements associated with it. Except as modified by this chapter, the general requirements of the HCV program apply to special housing types.

Part I: Single Room Occupancy

Part II: Congregate Housing

Part III: Group Homes

Part IV: Shared Housing

Part V: Cooperative Housing

Part VI: Manufactured Homes (including manufactured home space rental)

Part VII: Homeownership

PART I: SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY

[24 CFR 982.602 through 982.605; Form HUD-52641; New HCV GB,
Special Housing Types, p. 4]

15-I.A. OVERVIEW

A single room occupancy (SRO) unit provides living and sleeping space for the exclusive use of the occupant but requires the occupant to share sanitary and/or food preparation facilities with others. More than one person may not occupy an SRO unit. HCV regulations do not limit the number of units in an SRO facility, but the size of a facility may be limited by local ordinances.

When providing HCV assistance in an SRO unit, a separate lease and HAP contract are executed for each assisted person. The standard form of the HAP contract is used (Form HUD-52641) with the special housing type specified in Part A of the HAP contract, as follows: “This HAP contract is used for the following special housing type under HUD regulations for the Section 8 voucher program: Single room occupancy (SRO) housing.”

15-I.B. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE, AND HAP CALCULATION

The payment standard for SRO housing is 75 percent of the zero-bedroom payment standard amount on DCHA’s payment standard schedule.

The utility allowance for an assisted person residing in SRO housing is 75 percent of the zero-bedroom utility allowance.

The HAP for an assisted occupant in an SRO facility is the lower of the SRO payment standard amount minus the TTP or the gross rent for the unit minus the TTP.

15-I.C. SRO: HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.605(A)]

Housing quality standards requirements described in the applicable portions of Chapter 8 apply to SRO housing except that sanitary facilities, and space and security characteristics must meet local code standards for SRO housing. In the absence of applicable local code standards for SRO housing, the following standards apply:

Access: Access doors to the SRO unit must have working locks for privacy. The occupant must be able to access the unit without going through any other unit. Each unit must have immediate access to two or more approved means of exit from the building, appropriately marked and leading to safe and open space at ground level. The SRO unit must also have any other means of exit required by State or local law.

- *Fire Safety:* All SRO facilities must have a sprinkler system that protects major spaces. “Major spaces” are defined as hallways, large common areas, and any other areas specified in local fire, building, or safety codes. SROs must also have hard-wired smoke detectors, and any other fire and safety equipment required by state or local law.

Sanitary facilities and space and security standards must meet local code requirements for SRO housing. In the absence of local code standards, the requirements discussed below apply [24 CFR 982.605].

- *Sanitary Facilities:* At least one flush toilet that can be used in privacy, a lavatory basin, and a bathtub or shower in proper operating condition must be provided for each six persons (or fewer) residing in the SRO facility. If the SRO units are leased only to males, flush urinals may be substituted for up to one half of the required number of toilets. Sanitary facilities must be reasonably accessible from a common hall or passageway to all persons sharing them and may not be located more than one floor above or below the SRO unit. They may not be located below grade unless the SRO units are located on that level.
- *Space and Security:* An SRO unit must contain at least 110 square feet of floor space, and at least four square-feet of closet space with an unobstructed height of at least five feet, for use by the occupant. If the closet space is less than four square feet, the habitable floor space in the SRO unit must be increased by the amount of the deficiency. Exterior doors and windows accessible from outside the SRO unit must be lockable.

For SRO housing, 24 CFR 5.703(d) only applies to the extent that the SRO unit contains the room or facility referenced in 24 CFR 5.703(d). Because no children live in SRO housing, the housing quality standards applicable to lead-based paint do not apply.

PART II: CONGREGATE HOUSING

[24 CFR 982.606 through 982.609; Form HUD-52641; New HCV GB,
Special Housing Types, p. 6]

15-II.A. OVERVIEW

Congregate housing is intended for use by elderly persons or persons with disabilities. A congregate housing facility contains a shared central kitchen and dining area and a private living area for the individual household that includes at least a living room, bedroom and bathroom. Food service for residents must be provided.

If approved by DCHA, a family member or live-in aide may reside with the elderly person or person with disabilities. DCHA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

When providing HCV assistance in congregate housing, a separate lease and HAP contract are executed for each assisted family. The standard form of the HAP contract is used (Form HUD-52641) with the special housing type specified in Part A of the HAP contract, as follows: "This HAP contract is used for the following special housing type under HUD regulations for the Section 8 voucher program: Congregate housing."

15-II.B. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE, AND HAP CALCULATION

The payment standard for an individual unit in a congregate housing facility is based on the number of rooms in the private living area for the assisted family. If there is only one room in the unit (not including the bathroom or the kitchen, if a kitchen is provided), DCHA must use the payment standard for a zero-bedroom unit. If the unit has two or more rooms (other than the bathroom and the kitchen), DCHA must use the one-bedroom payment standard.

The HAP for an assisted occupant in a congregate housing facility is the lower of the applicable payment standard minus the TTP or the gross rent for the unit minus the TTP.

The gross rent for the unit for the purpose of calculating HCV assistance is the shelter portion (including utilities) of the resident's monthly housing expense only. The residents' costs for food service should not be included in the rent for a congregate housing unit.

15-II.C. CONGREGATE HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

Housing quality standards requirements as described in Chapter 8 apply to congregate housing except for the requirements stated below. Congregate housing is not subject to the requirement that the dwelling unit must have a kitchen area. In place of the housing quality standards related to food preparation and refuse disposal, congregate housing must have a refrigerator of appropriate size in the private living area of each resident, a central kitchen and dining facilities located within the premises and accessible to the residents, and food service for the residents, that is not provided by the residents themselves.

The congregate housing must contain adequate facilities and services for the sanitary disposal of food waste and refuse, including facilities for temporary storage where necessary.

The housing quality standards applicable to lead-based paint do not apply unless a child under the age of six is expected to reside in the unit.

PART III: GROUP HOME

[24 CFR 982.610 through 982.614; Form HUD-52641; New HCV GB,
Special Housing Types, p. 8]

15-III.A. OVERVIEW

A group home is a state-approved (licensed, certified, or otherwise approved in writing by the state) facility intended for occupancy by elderly persons and/or persons with disabilities. Except for live-in aides, all persons living in a group home, whether assisted or not, must be elderly persons or persons with disabilities. Persons living in a group home must not require continuous medical or nursing care.

A group home consists of bedrooms for residents, which can be shared by no more than two people, and a living room, kitchen, dining area, bathroom, and other appropriate social, recreational, or community space that may be shared with other residents. No more than 12 persons may reside in a group home including assisted and unassisted residents and any live-in aides.

If approved by DCHA, a live-in aide may live in the group home with a person with disabilities. DCHA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

When providing HCV assistance in a group home, a separate lease and HAP contract is executed for each assisted family. The standard form of the HAP contract is used (Form HUD-52641) with the special housing type specified in Part A of the HAP contract, as follows: "This HAP contract is used for the following special housing type under HUD regulations for the Section 8 voucher program: Group home."

15-III.B. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE, AND HAP CALCULATION

Unless there is a live-in aide, the family unit size (voucher size) for an assisted occupant of a group home must be zero- or one-bedroom. If there is a live-in aide, the aide must be counted in determining the household's unit size.

The payment standard used to calculate the HAP is the lower of the payment standard for the family unit size or the pro rata share of the payment standard for the group home size. The pro rata share is calculated by dividing the number of persons in the assisted household by the number of persons (assisted and unassisted) living in the group home. The number of persons in the assisted household equals one assisted person plus any DCHA-approved live-in aide.

The HAP for an assisted occupant in a group home is the lower of the payment standard minus the TTP or the gross rent minus the TTP.

The utility allowance for an assisted occupant in a group home is the pro rata share of the family unit size to the utility allowance for the group home.

The rents paid for participants residing in group homes are subject to generally applicable standards for rent reasonableness. The rent for an assisted person must not exceed the pro rata portion of the reasonable rent for the group home. In determining reasonable rent, DCHA must consider whether sanitary facilities and facilities for food preparation and service are common facilities or private facilities.

15-III.C. GROUP HOME HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

The entire unit must comply with housing quality requirements described in Chapter 8, except for the standards that relate to sanitary facilities, food preparation and refuse disposal, space and security, structure and materials, and site and neighborhood as stated below.

- *Sanitary Facilities:* A group home must have at least one bathroom in the facility, with a flush toilet that can be used in privacy, a fixed basin with hot and cold running water, and a shower or bathtub with hot and cold running water. A group home may contain private or common bathrooms. However, no more than four residents can be required to share a bathroom.
- *Food Preparation and Service:* Group home units must contain a kitchen and dining area with adequate space to store, prepare, and serve food. The facilities for food preparation and service may be private or may be shared by the residents. The kitchen must contain a range, an oven, a refrigerator, and a sink with hot and cold running water. The sink must drain into an approvable public or private disposal system.
- *Space and Security:* Group homes must contain at least one bedroom of appropriate size for every two people, and a living room, kitchen, dining area, bathroom, and other appropriate social, recreational, or community space that may be shared with other residents. Doors and windows accessible from outside the unit must be lockable.
- *Structure and Material:* To avoid any threat to the health and safety of the residents, group homes must be structurally sound. Elevators must be in good condition. Group homes must be accessible to and usable by residents with disabilities.

- *Site and Neighborhood:* Group homes must be located in a residential setting. The site and neighborhood should be reasonably free from disturbing noises and reverberations, and other hazards to the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents, and should not be subject to serious adverse conditions, such as:
 - Dangerous walks or steps
 - Instability
 - Flooding, poor drainage
 - Septic tank back-ups, sewage hazards
 - Mud slides
 - Abnormal air pollution
 - Smoke or dust
 - Excessive noise
 - Vibrations or vehicular traffic
 - Excessive accumulations of trash
 - Vermin or rodent infestation, and
 - Fire hazards.

The housing quality standards applicable to lead-based paint do not apply unless a child under the age of six is expected to reside in the unit.

PART IV: SHARED HOUSING

[24 CFR 982.615 through 982.618; Form HUD-52641; Notice PIH 2021-05;
New HCV GB, *Special Housing Types*, p. 11]

15-IV.A. OVERVIEW

Families in markets with tight rental conditions or with a prevalence of single-family housing may determine a shared housing living arrangement to be a useful way to secure affordable housing. Since DCHA offers shared housing as a housing solution DCHA may also experience some reduction in the average per-unit-cost (PUC) paid on behalf of assisted families.

Shared housing is a single housing unit occupied by an assisted family and another resident or residents. The unit may be a house or an apartment. The shared unit consists of both common space for use by the occupants of the unit and separate private space for each assisted family.

An assisted family may share a unit with other persons assisted under the HCV program or with other unassisted persons.

Shared housing may be offered in a number of ways, including for-profit co-living (such as a boarding house, single bedroom with common living room/kitchen/dining room) run by a private company [Notice PIH 2021-05].

The owner of a shared housing unit may reside in the unit, but housing assistance may not be paid on behalf of the owner. The resident owner may not be related by blood or marriage to the assisted family.

If approved by DCHA, a live-in aide may reside with the family to care for a person with disabilities. DCHA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

When shared housing is offered as a housing option, HUD encourages DCHA to consider ways in which the families may be assisted in finding shared housing, including for-profit shared housing matching (such as roommates or single-family homes) and online sites that charge a fee for their matching services, or nonprofit shared housing matching services. HUD further encourages DCHA to include information about this housing possibility in the family's voucher briefing.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will provide information to families regarding the shared housing option, including a listing to families of any known for-profit or nonprofit shared housing matching services in the community at briefing, and upon request. Families will be advised they can conduct their own internet search. Families will be cautioned to not enter into any rental agreement or pay any deposit or rental payment until the tenancy is approved by DCHA.

DCHA should be aware of potential local legal barriers to HCV participants using shared housing, which can create additional obstacles for shared housing:

- Municipalities may have occupancy limits for the number of unrelated persons who may share a housing unit.
- Local zoning codes for single family housing may restrict occupancy in certain areas to households whose family members are related by blood.

DCHA should work with local jurisdictions to find solutions that encourage affordable housing and are consistent with the Fair Housing Act, Title VI, and other federal, state, and local fair housing laws. DCHA should inform HUD if they encounter barriers to shared housing that may conflict with fair housing laws.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will work with local jurisdictions as necessary to identify solutions consistent with fair housing laws and will inform HUD if DCHA encounters barriers to shared housing that conflict with fair housing laws.

When providing HCV assistance in shared housing, a separate lease and HAP contract are executed for each assisted family. The standard form of the HAP contract is used (Form HUD-52641) with the special housing type specified in Part A of the HAP contract, as follows: “This HAP contract is used for the following special housing type under HUD regulations for the Section 8 voucher program: Shared housing.”

15-IV.B. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE AND HAP CALCULATION

The payment standard for a family in shared housing is the lower of the payment standard for the family unit size (voucher size) or the pro rata share of the payment standard for the shared housing unit size.

The pro rata share is calculated by dividing the number of bedrooms available for occupancy by the assisted family in the private, non-shared space by the total number of bedrooms in the unit.

Example: Family holds a two-bedroom voucher.
Shared housing unit size: bedrooms available to assisted family = 2
Total bedrooms in the unit: 3
2 Bedrooms for assisted family
÷ 3 Bedrooms in the unit
.667 pro rata share
2 BR payment standard: \$1200
3 BR payment standard: \$1695 $\$1695 \times .667$ (pro rata share) = \$1131 \$1131 is
lower than the \$1200 payment standard for the 2 BR family unit size \$1131 is
the payment standard used to calculate the HAP

The HAP for a family in shared housing is the lower of the payment standard minus the TTP or the gross rent minus the TTP.

The utility allowance for an assisted family living in shared housing is the pro rata share of the utility allowance for the shared housing unit.

Example: A family holds a 2-bedroom voucher. The family decides to occupy 3 out of 4 bedrooms available in the unit.

The utility allowance for a 4-bedroom unit equals \$200
The utility allowance for a 2-bedroom unit equals \$100
The pro rata share of the utility allowance is \$150 (3/4 of \$200)
DCHA will use the 2-bedroom utility allowance of \$100.

The rents paid for families living in shared housing are subject to generally applicable standards for rent reasonableness. The rent paid to the owner for the assisted family must not exceed the pro rata portion of the reasonable rent for the shared unit. In determining reasonable rent, DCHA may consider whether sanitary and food preparation areas are private or shared.

15-IV.C. SHARED HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

DCHA may not give approval to reside in shared housing unless the entire unit, including the portion of the unit available for use by the assisted family under its lease, meets the housing quality standards.

Housing quality requirements described in Chapter 8 apply to shared housing except for the requirements stated below.

- *Facilities Available for the Family*: Facilities available to the assisted family, whether shared or private, must include a living room, a bathroom, and food preparation and refuse disposal facilities.
- *Space and Security*: The entire unit must provide adequate space and security for all assisted and unassisted residents. The private space for each assisted family must contain at least one bedroom for each two persons in the family. The number of bedrooms in the private space of an assisted family must not be less than the family unit size (voucher size). A zero-bedroom or one-bedroom unit may not be used for shared housing.

PART V: COOPERATIVE HOUSING

[24 CFR 982.619; New HCV GB, *Special Housing Types*, p. 14]

15-V.A. OVERVIEW

This part applies to rental assistance for a cooperative member residing in cooperative housing. It does not apply to assistance for a cooperative member who has purchased membership under the HCV homeownership option, or to rental assistance for a family that leases a cooperative housing unit from a cooperative member.

A cooperative is a form of ownership (nonprofit corporation or association) in which the residents purchase memberships in the ownership entity. Rather than being charged “rent” a cooperative member is charged a “carrying charge.” The monthly carrying charge includes the member’s share of the cooperative debt service, operating expenses, and necessary payments to cooperative reserve funds. It does not include down payments or other payments to purchase the cooperative unit or to amortize a loan made to the family for this purpose.

The occupancy agreement or lease and other appropriate documents must provide that the monthly carrying charge is subject to Section 8 limitations on rent to owner, and the rent must be reasonable as compared to comparable unassisted units.

When providing HCV assistance in cooperative housing, the standard form of the HAP contract is used with the special housing type specified in Part A of the HAP contract, as follows: “This HAP contract is used for the following special housing type under HUD regulations for the Section 8 voucher program: Cooperative housing.”

15-V.B. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE AND HAP CALCULATION

The payment standard and utility allowance are determined according to regular HCV program requirements.

The HAP for a cooperative housing unit is the lower of the payment standard minus the TTP or the gross rent (monthly carrying charge for the unit, plus any utility allowance) minus the TTP. The monthly carrying charge includes the member’s share of the cooperative debt service, operating expenses, and necessary payments to cooperative reserve funds. The carrying charge does not include down payments or other payments to purchase the cooperative unit or to amortize a loan made to the family for this purpose.

15-V.C. COOPERATIVE HOUSING STANDARDS

All housing quality standard requirements apply to cooperative housing units. There are no additional requirements. DCHA remedies described in 24 CFR 982.404 do not apply. Rather, if the unit and premises are not maintained in accordance with housing quality standards, DCHA may exercise all available remedies regardless of whether the family or cooperative is responsible for the breach of housing quality standards.

No housing assistance payment can be made unless unit meets housing quality standards and the defect is corrected within the period as specified by DCHA and DCHA verifies correction (see Chapter 8).

In addition to regular deficiencies, breaches of housing quality standards by the family include failure to perform any maintenance for which the family is responsible in accordance with the terms of the cooperative occupancy agreement [HCV GB].

PART VI: MANUFACTURED HOMES

[24 CFR 982.620 through 982.624; FR Notice 1/18/17; New HCV GB,
Special Housing Types, p. 15;]

15-VI.A. OVERVIEW

A manufactured home is a manufactured structure, transportable in one or more parts, that is built on a permanent chassis, and designed for use as a principal place of residence. HCV-assisted families may occupy manufactured homes in three different ways.

- (1) A family may choose to rent a manufactured home already installed on a space and DCHA must permit it. In this instance program rules are the same as when a family rents any other residential housing, except that there are special housing quality requirements as provided in 15-VI.D. below.
- (2) A family can purchase a manufactured home under the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership program.
- (3) HUD also permits an otherwise eligible family that owns a manufactured home to rent a space for the manufactured home and receive HCV assistance with the rent for the space as well as certain other housing expenses. DCHA may, but is not required to, provide assistance for such families.

15-VI.B. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MANUFACTURED HOME OWNERS WHO LEASE A SPACE

Family Income

In determining the annual income of families leasing manufactured home spaces, the value of the family's equity in the manufactured home in which the family resides is not counted as a family asset.

Lease and HAP Contract

There is a designated HAP Contract (Form HUD-52642) and designated Tenancy Addendum (Form HUD-52642-A) for this special housing type.

15.VI.C. PAYMENT STANDARD, UTILITY ALLOWANCE AND HAP CALCULATION

Payment Standards

The payment standard for manufactured homes is determined in accordance with 24 CFR 982.505 and is the payment standard used for the DCHA's HCV program. It is based on the applicable FMR for the area in which the manufactured home space is located.

The payment standard for the family is the lower of the family unit size (voucher size) or the payment standard for the number of bedrooms in the manufactured home.

Utility Allowance [24 CFR 982.624]

DCHA must establish utility allowances for manufactured home space rental. For the first 12 months of the initial lease term only, the allowance must include a reasonable amount for a utility hook-up charge if the family actually incurred a hook-up charge because of a move. This allowance will not be given to a family that leases in place. Utility allowances for manufactured home space must not include the costs of digging a well or installing a septic system.

Space Rent [24 CFR 982.622]

Rent to owner for rental of a manufactured home space includes payment for maintenance and services that the owner must provide to the tenant under the lease for the space. Rent to the owner does not include the costs of utilities and trash collection for the manufactured home. However, the owner may charge the family a separate fee for the cost of utilities or trash collection provided by the owner.

Amortization Costs

The monthly payment made by the family to amortize the cost of purchasing the manufactured home is the debt service established at the time of application to a lender for financing the purchase of the manufactured home if monthly payments are still being made. Any increase in debt service due to refinancing after purchase of the home may not be included in the amortization cost. Debt service for set-up charges incurred by a family may be included in the monthly amortization payments made by the family. In addition, set-up charges incurred before the family became an assisted family may be included in the amortization cost if monthly payments are still being made to amortize the charges.

Housing Assistance Payment [24 CFR 982.623(a)]

The HAP for a manufactured home space under the housing choice voucher program is the lower of the payment standard minus the TTP or the family's eligible housing expenses minus the TTP.

Eligible Housing Expenses [24 CFR 982.623(b)]

The family's eligible housing expenses are the total of:

- The rent charged by the owner for the manufactured home space.
- Charges for the maintenance and management the space owner must provide under the lease.
- The monthly payment made by the family to amortize the cost of purchasing the manufactured home established at the time of application to a lender for financing the purchase of the manufactured home if monthly payments are still being made, including any required insurance and property taxes included in the loan payment to the lender.
 - Any increase in debt service or term due to refinancing after purchase of the home may not be included in the amortization cost.
 - Debt service for installation charges incurred by a family may be included in the monthly amortization payments. Installation charges incurred before the family became and assisted family may be included in the amortization cost if monthly payments are still being made to amortize the charges.
- The applicable allowances for tenant-paid utilities, as determined under 24 CFR 982.517 and 982.624.

Rent Reasonableness [24 CFR 982.622(b)]

During the assisted tenancy, the rent to owner for the manufactured home space may not exceed a reasonable rent. Initially, and at least annually thereafter, DCHA must determine that the rent for the manufactured home space is reasonable based on rents for comparable manufactured home spaces. DCHA must consider the location and size of the space, and any services and maintenance to be provided by the owner in accordance with the lease (without a fee in addition to rent). By accepting the monthly housing assistance payment, the owner of the manufactured home space certifies that the rent does not exceed rents charged by the owner for comparable unassisted spaces in the same manufactured home park or elsewhere.

If requested by the DCHA, the owner must give DCHA information on rents charged by the owner for other manufactured home spaces.

Distribution of HAP [24 CFR 982.623(c)]

DCHA pays the owner of the space the lesser of the housing assistance payment or the portion of the monthly rent due to the owner. The portion of the monthly rent due to the owner is the total of:

- The actual rent charged by the owner for the manufactured home space; and
- Charges for the maintenance and management the space owner must provide under the lease.

If the housing assistance payment exceeds the portion of the monthly rent due to the owner, DCHA may pay the balance of the housing assistance payment to the family. Alternatively, DCHA may pay the balance to the lender or utility company, in an amount no greater than the amount due for the month to each, respectively, subject to the lender's or utility company's willingness to accept DCHA's payment on behalf of the family.

DCHA Policy

If the housing assistance payment exceeds the portion of the monthly rent due to the owner, DCHA will pay the balance to the family.

Single HAP to Family [24 CFR 982.623.(d)]

If the owner of the manufactured home space agrees, DCHA may make the entire housing payment to the family, and the family is responsible for paying the owner directly for the full amount of rent of the manufactured home space due to the owner, including owner maintenance and management charges.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not exercise the option to pay a single HAP and will pay the HAP directly to the owner.

15-VLD. MANUFACTURED HOMES: HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.621]

Under either type of occupancy described in 15-VI.A. above, the manufactured home must meet all housing quality standards performance requirements and acceptability criteria discussed in Chapter 8 of this plan. In addition, the following requirements apply:

Performance Requirement:

A manufactured home must be placed on the site in a stable manner and must be free from hazards such as sliding or wind damage.

Acceptability Criteria: The home must be securely anchored by a tie-down device that distributes and transfers the loads imposed by the unit to appropriate ground anchors to resist overturning and sliding.

PART VII: HOMEOWNERSHIP

[24 CFR 982.625 through 982.643]

15-VII.A. OVERVIEW [24 CFR 982.625]

DCHA DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM.

The chapter has been updated to reflect changes if DCHA administers these vouchers in the future.

The homeownership option is used to assist a family residing in a home purchased and owned by one or more members of the family. A family assisted under this option may be newly admitted or an existing participant in the HCV program. DCHA must have the capacity to operate a successful HCV homeownership program as defined by the regulations.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has not instituted a minimum homeowner down payment requirement of at least three percent of the purchase price and requires that at least one percent of the purchase price come from the family's personal resources.

There are two forms of homeownership assistance described in the regulations: monthly homeownership assistance payments and single down payment assistance grants. However, DCHA may not offer down payment assistance until and unless funding is allocated by Congress. Since this has not yet happened, only monthly homeownership assistance may be offered.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not offer the monthly homeownership assistance payments to qualified families.

DCHA may choose not to offer homeownership assistance. However, DCHA must offer homeownership assistance if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. It is the sole responsibility of DCHA to determine whether it is reasonable to implement a homeownership program as a reasonable accommodation. DCHA must determine what is reasonable based on the specific circumstances and individual needs of the person with a disability. DCHA may determine that it is not reasonable to offer homeownership assistance as a reasonable accommodation in cases where DCHA has otherwise opted not to implement a homeownership program.

DCHA must approve a live-in aide if needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the program is readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

15-VII.B. FAMILY ELIGIBILITY [24 CFR 982.627]

If DCHA offers the homeownership option, participation by the family is optional. However, the family must meet all of the requirements listed below before the commencement of homeownership assistance. DCHA may also establish additional initial requirements as long as they are described in the DCHA administrative plan.

- The family must have been admitted to the Housing Choice Voucher program.
- The family must qualify as a first-time, homeowner, or may be a cooperative member.
- The family must meet the Federal minimum income requirement. The family must have a gross annual income equal to the Federal minimum wage multiplied by 2000, based on the income of adult family members who will own the home. The PHA may establish a higher income standard for families. However, a family that meets the federal minimum income requirement (but not the PHA's requirement) will be considered to meet the minimum income requirement if it can demonstrate that it has been pre-qualified or pre-approved for financing that is sufficient to purchase an eligible unit.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not establish a higher minimum income standard for disabled and/or non-disabled families.

- For disabled families, the minimum income requirement is equal to the current SSI monthly payment for an individual living alone, multiplied by 12.
- For elderly or disabled families, welfare assistance payments for adult family members who will own the home will be included in determining whether the family meets the minimum income requirement. It will not be included for other families.
- The family must satisfy the employment requirements by demonstrating that one or more adult members of the family who will own the home at commencement of homeownership assistance is currently employed on a full-time basis (the term *full-time employment* means not less than an average of 30 hours per week); and has been continuously so employed during the year before commencement of homeownership assistance for the family.

DCHA Policy

Families will be considered “continuously employed” if the break in employment does not exceed four months.

DCHA will not count self-employment in a business when determining whether the family meets the employment requirement.

- The employment requirement does not apply to elderly and disabled families. In addition, if a family, other than an elderly or disabled family includes a person with disabilities, DCHA must grant an exemption from the employment requirement if DCHA determines that it is needed as a reasonable accommodation.
- The family has not defaulted on a mortgage securing debt to purchase a home under the homeownership option.

- Except for cooperative members who have acquired cooperative membership shares prior to commencement of homeownership assistance, no family member has a present ownership interest in a residence at the commencement of homeownership assistance for the purchase of any home.
- Except for cooperative members who have acquired cooperative membership shares prior to the commencement of homeownership assistance, the family has entered a contract of sale in accordance with 24 CFR 982.631(c).

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not impose additional eligibility requirements. To be eligible to participate in the homeownership option, families must meet the following criteria:

The family has had no family-caused violations of housing quality standards within the past year.

The family is not within the initial one-year period of a HAP Contract.

The family owes no money to DCHA.

The family has not committed any serious or repeated violations of a DCHA-assisted lease within the past year.

15-VII.C. SELECTION OF FAMILIES [24 CFR 982.626]

Unless otherwise provided (under the homeownership option), DCHA may limit homeownership assistance to families or purposes defined by DCHA and may prescribe additional requirements for commencement of homeownership assistance for a family. Any such limits or additional requirements must be described in the DCHA administrative plan.

If DCHA limits the number of families that may participate in the homeownership option, DCHA must establish a system by which to select families to participate.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not administer up to five new homeownership units per year. DCHA may exceed the number of units planned per year if it is necessary as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability. If this occurs, DCHA may reduce the number of homeownership units offered in subsequent years.

Families who have been participating in an economic self-sufficiency program for at least six months, or have graduated from such a program, will be given preference over other families. Elderly and disabled families will automatically be given this preference.

Within preference and non-preference categories, families will be selected according to the date and time their application for participation in the homeownership option is submitted to DCHA.

All families must meet eligibility requirements as defined in Section 15-VII.B. of this plan.

15-VII.D. ELIGIBLE UNITS [24 CFR 982.628]

In order for a unit to be eligible, DCHA must determine that the unit satisfies all of the following requirements:

- The unit must meet HUD’s “eligible housing” requirements. The unit may not be any of the following:
 - A public housing or Indian housing unit;
 - A unit receiving Section 8 project-based assistance;
 - A nursing home, board and care home, or facility providing continual psychiatric, medical or nursing services;
 - A college or other school dormitory;
 - On the grounds of penal, reformatory, medical, mental, or similar public or private institutions.
- The unit must be a one-unit property or a single dwelling unit in a cooperative or condominium.
- The unit must have been inspected by the PHA and by an independent inspector designated by the family.
- The unit must meet housing quality standards (see Chapter 8).
- For a unit where the family will not own fee title to the real property (such as a manufactured home), the home must have a permanent foundation and the family must have the right to occupy the site for at least 40 years.

Families may enter into contracts of sale for units not yet under construction. However, DCHA will not commence homeownership assistance for the family for that unit until:

1. Either the responsible entity completes the environmental review as required by 24 CFR part 58 and HUD approved the environmental certification and request for release of funds prior to commencement of construction or HUD performed an environmental review under 24 CFR part 50 and notified DCHA in writing of environmental approval of the site prior to construction commencement; and
 2. Construction of the unit has been completed and the unit has passed the required inspection and independent inspection as addressed elsewhere in this chapter.
- For DCHA-owned units (as defined in 24 CFR 982.4), all of the following conditions must be satisfied:
 - DCHA informs the family, both orally and in writing, that the family has the right to purchase any eligible unit and a DCHA-owned unit is freely selected by the family without DCHA pressure or steering;
 - The unit is not ineligible housing;
 - DCHA obtains the services of an independent entity (as defined in 24 CFR 982.4) to inspect the unit, review the independent inspection report, review the contract of sale, determine the reasonableness of the sales price and any DCHA provided financing. All of these actions must be completed in accordance with program requirements.

DCHA must not approve the unit if DCHA has been informed that the seller is debarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation.

15-VII.E. ADDITIONAL DCHA REQUIREMENTS FOR SEARCH AND PURCHASE [24 CFR 982.629]

It is the family's responsibility to find a home that meets the criteria for voucher homeownership assistance. DCHA may establish the maximum time that will be allowed for a family to locate and purchase a home and may require the family to report on their progress in finding and purchasing a home. If the family is unable to purchase a home within the maximum time established by DCHA, DCHA may issue the family a voucher to lease a unit or place the family's name on the waiting list for a voucher.

DCHA Policy

The family will be allowed 120 days to identify a unit and submit a sales contract to DCHA for review. The family will be allowed an additional 120 days to close on the home. DCHA may grant extensions to either of these periods for good cause. The length of the extension(s) will be determined on a case-by-case, but in no case will an extension exceed a total of 125 days. The maximum amount of time a family will be given to locate and complete the purchase of a home under the homeownership option is 365 days.

During these periods, the family will continue to receive HCV rental assistance in accordance with any active lease and HAP contract until the family vacates the rental unit for its purchased home.

All requests for extensions must be submitted in writing to DCHA prior to the expiration of the period for which the extension is being requested. DCHA will approve or disapprove the extension request within 10 business days. The family will be notified of DCHA's decision in writing.

The family will be required to report their progress on locating and purchasing a home to DCHA every 30 days until the home is purchased.

If the family cannot complete the purchase of a unit within the maximum required time frame, and is not receiving rental assistance under a HAP contract at the time the search and purchase time period expires, the family will be issued a voucher to lease a unit.

15-VII.F. HOMEOWNERSHIP COUNSELING [24 CFR 982.630]

Before commencement of homeownership assistance for a family, the family must attend and satisfactorily complete the pre-assistance homeownership and housing counseling program required by DCHA. HUD suggests the following topics for DCHA-required pre-assistance counseling:

- Home maintenance (including care of the grounds);
- Budgeting and money management;
- Credit counseling;
- How to negotiate the purchase price of a home;
- How to obtain homeownership financing and loan pre-approvals, including a description of types of financing that may be available, and the pros and cons of different types of financing;
- How to find a home, including information about homeownership opportunities, schools, and transportation in DCHA jurisdiction;
- Advantages of purchasing a home in an area that does not have a high concentration of low-income families and how to locate homes in such areas;
- Information on fair housing, including fair housing lending and local fair housing enforcement agencies; and
- Information about the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (12 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.) (RESPA), state and Federal truth-in-lending laws, and how to identify and avoid loans with oppressive terms and conditions.

DCHA may adapt the subjects covered in pre-assistance counseling (as listed) to local circumstances and the needs of individual families.

DCHA may also offer additional counseling after commencement of homeownership assistance (ongoing counseling). If DCHA offers a program of ongoing counseling for participants in the homeownership option, DCHA shall have discretion to determine whether the family is required to participate in the ongoing counseling.

Any homeownership counseling provided to families in connection with this section must be conducted by an HUD certified housing counselor working for an agency approved to participate in HUD's Housing Counseling Program.

DCHA Policy

Families will not be required to participate in ongoing counseling after commencement of homeownership assistance.

15-VII.G. HOME INSPECTIONS, CONTRACT OF SALE, AND PHA DISAPPROVAL OF SELLER [24 CFR 982.631]

Home Inspections

DCHA may not commence monthly homeownership assistance payments for a family until DCHA has inspected the unit and has determined that the unit meets housing quality standards.

DCHA Policy

When the family locates a home they wish to purchase and submits a copy of their purchase offer/contract, DCHA will conduct an inspection within 10 business days. Any items found not to meet housing quality standards must be repaired before the unit can be determined eligible for the homeownership program.

An independent professional inspector selected by and paid for by the family must also inspect the unit. The independent inspection must cover major building systems and components, including foundation and structure, housing interior and exterior, and the roofing, plumbing, electrical, and heating systems. The independent inspector must be qualified to report on property conditions, including major building systems and components.

DCHA may not require the family to use an independent inspector selected by DCHA. The independent inspector may not be a DCHA employee or contractor, or other person under control of DCHA. However, DCHA may establish standards for qualification of inspectors selected by families under the homeownership option.

DCHA Policy

The family must hire an independent professional inspector, whose report must be submitted to DCHA for review. This inspector must be a member of the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) or other recognized professional society, or a licensed engineer. The inspector cannot be a DCHA employee or contractor.

DCHA may disapprove a unit for assistance based on information in the independent inspector's report, even if the unit was found to comply with housing quality standards.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will review the professional report in a timely fashion and, based on the presence of major physical problems, may disapprove the purchase of the home.

If DCHA disapproves the purchase of a home, the family will be notified in writing of the reasons for the disapproval.

While the family is receiving homeownership assistance, DCHA will conduct an inspection every other year.

Contract of Sale

Before commencement of monthly homeownership assistance payments, a member or members of the family must enter into a contract of sale with the seller of the unit to be acquired by the family. The family must give DCHA a copy of the contract of sale. The contract of sale must:

- Specify the price and other terms of sale by the seller to the purchaser;
- Provide that the purchaser will arrange for a pre-purchase inspection of the dwelling unit by an independent inspector selected by the purchaser;
- Provide that the purchaser is not obligated to purchase the unit unless the inspection is satisfactory to the purchaser;
- Provide that the purchaser is not obligated to pay for any necessary repairs; and
- Contain a certification from the seller that the seller has not been debarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation under 24 CFR part 24.
- A contract for the sale of a unit not yet under construction must meet all above requirements, and requirements below. Commencement of construction in violation of the below requirements voids the purchase contract.
 - The purchaser is not obligated to purchase the unit unless an environmental review has been performed and the site received environmental approval prior to commencement of construction in accordance with 24 CFR 982.628; and
 - The construction will not commence until the environmental review has been completed and the seller has received written notice from DCHA that environmental approval has been obtained. Environmental approval may be conditioned on the contracting parties' agreement to modification to the unit design or to mitigation actions.

Disapproval of a Seller

In its administrative discretion, DCHA may deny approval of a seller for the same reasons DCHA may disapprove an owner under the regular HCV program [see 24 CFR 982.306(c)].

15-VII.H. FINANCING [24 CFR 982.632]

DCHA may establish requirements for financing purchase of a home under the homeownership option. This may include requirements concerning qualification of lenders, terms of financing, restrictions concerning debt secured by the home, lender qualifications, loan terms, and affordability of the debt. DCHA must establish policies describing these requirements in the administrative plan.

DCHA may not require that families acquire financing from one or more specified lenders, thereby restricting the family's ability to secure favorable financing terms.

DCHA Policy

As a check against predatory lending, DCHA will review the financing of each purchase transaction, including estimated closing costs. DCHA will review the loans for features, such as balloon payments, adjustable-rate mortgages, and unusually high interest rates, all of which are prohibited. DCHA also will not approve "seller financing" or "owner-held" mortgages. Beyond these basic criteria, DCHA will rely on the lenders to determine that the loan will be affordable to program participants.

The mortgage the family applies for must require a minimum down payment of at least three percent of the sales price with one percent of the down payment coming from the purchaser's personal funds. DCHA will not require that the family have any more than the minimum of one percent of their own money in the transaction. However, in cases where a lender is requiring a larger amount, the family may be held to the underwriting guidelines set by their lending institution.

DCHA will approve a family's request to utilize its Family Self-Sufficiency escrow account after final disbursement for down payment and/or closing costs when purchasing a unit under the HCV homeownership option.

15-VII.I. CONTINUED ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS; FAMILY OBLIGATIONS [24 CFR 982.633]

Homeownership assistance may only be paid while the family is residing in the home. If the family moves out of the home, DCHA may not continue homeownership assistance after the month when the family moves out. The family or lender is not required to refund to DCHA the homeownership assistance for the month when the family moves out.

Before commencement of homeownership assistance, the family must execute a statement of family obligations in the form prescribed by HUD [Form HUD-52649]. In the statement, the family agrees to comply with all family obligations under the homeownership option.

The family must comply with the following obligations:

- The family must comply with the terms of the mortgage securing debt incurred to purchase the home, or any refinancing of such debt.
- The family may not convey or transfer ownership of the home, except for purposes of financing, refinancing, or pending settlement of the estate of a deceased family member. Use and occupancy of the home are subject to 24 CFR 982.551 (h) and (i).
- The family must supply information to DCHA or HUD as specified in 24 CFR 982.551(b). The family must further supply any information required by DCHA or HUD concerning mortgage financing or refinancing, sale or transfer of any interest in the home, or homeownership expenses.
- The family must notify DCHA before moving out of the home.
- The family must notify DCHA if the family defaults on the mortgage used to purchase the home.
- The family must provide DCHA with information on any satisfaction or payment of the mortgage debt.
- No family member may have any ownership interest in any other residential property.
- The family must comply with the obligations of a participant family described in 24 CFR 982.551, except for the following provisions which do not apply to assistance under the homeownership option: 24 CFR 982.551(c), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (j).

DCHA Policy

Any inspection DCHA conducts after the initial inspection will be done on an advisory basis. The family will be encouraged to make the repairs but will not be required to do so as a condition of ongoing assistance.

15-VII.J. MAXIMUM TERM OF HOMEOWNER ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 982.634]

Except in the case of a family that qualifies as an elderly or disabled family, other family members (described below) shall not receive homeownership assistance for more than:

- Fifteen years, if the initial mortgage incurred to finance purchase of the home has a term of 20 years or longer; or
- Ten years, in all other cases.

The maximum term described above applies to any member of the family who:

- Has an ownership interest in the unit during the time that homeownership payments are made; or
- Is the spouse of any member of the household who has an ownership interest in the unit during the time homeownership payments are made.

In the case of an elderly family, the exception only applies if the family qualifies as an elderly family at the start of homeownership assistance. In the case of a disabled family, the exception applies if at any time during receipt of homeownership assistance the family qualifies as a disabled family.

If, during the course of homeownership assistance, the family ceases to qualify as a disabled or elderly family, the maximum term becomes applicable from the date homeownership assistance commenced. However, such a family must be provided at least 6 months of homeownership assistance after the maximum term becomes applicable (provided the family is otherwise eligible to receive homeownership assistance).

If the family has received such assistance for different homes, or from different PHAs, the total of such assistance terms is subject to the maximum term described in this part.

15-VII.K. HOMEOWNERSHIP ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS AND HOMEOWNERSHIP EXPENSES [24 CFR 982.635]

The monthly homeownership assistance payment is the lower of: the voucher payment standard minus the total tenant payment, or the monthly homeownership expenses minus the total tenant payment. The payment standard amount may not be lower than what the payment standard amount was at commencement of homeownership assistance.

In determining the amount of the homeownership assistance payment, DCHA will use the same payment standard schedule, payment standard amounts, and subsidy standards as those described elsewhere in this plan for the Housing Choice Voucher program. The payment standard for a family is the greater of (i) The payment standard as determined at the commencement of homeownership assistance for occupancy of the home, or (ii) The payment standard at the most recent regular reexamination of family income and composition since the commencement of homeownership assistance for occupancy of the home.

DCHA must adopt policies for determining the amount of homeownership expenses to be allowed by DCHA in accordance with HUD requirements.

Homeownership expenses (not including cooperatives) must include amounts allowed by DCHA to cover:

- Principal and interest on initial mortgage debt, any refinancing of such debt, and any mortgage insurance premium incurred to finance purchase of the home;
- Real estate taxes and public assessments on the home;
- Home insurance;
- DCHA allowance for maintenance expenses;
- DCHA allowance for costs of major repairs and replacements;
- DCHA utility allowance for the home;
- Principal and interest on mortgage debt incurred to finance costs for major repairs, replacements or improvements for the home. If a member of the family is a person with disabilities, such debt may include debt incurred by the family to finance costs needed to make the home accessible for such person, if DCHA determines that allowance of such costs as homeownership expenses is needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the homeownership option is readily accessible to and usable by such person;
- Land lease payments where a family does not own fee title to the real property on which the home is located [see 24 CFR 982.628(b)];
- For a condominium unit, condominium operating charges or maintenance fees assessed by the condominium homeowner association.

DCHA does not have the discretion to exclude any of the listed homeownership expenses or to add any additional items.

Homeownership expenses for a cooperative member include amounts allowed by DCHA to cover:

- 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;
- DCHA allowances for maintenance expenses;
- DCHA allowances for costs of major repairs and replacements;
- The DCHA utility allowance for the home; and
- Principal and interest on debt incurred to finance major repairs, replacements or improvements for the home. If a member of the family is a person with disabilities, such debt may include debt incurred by the family to finance costs needed to make the home accessible for such person, if DCHA determines that allowance of such costs as homeownership expenses is needed as a reasonable accommodation so that the homeownership option is readily accessible to and usable by such person.
- Cooperative operating charges or maintenance fees assessed by the cooperative homeowner association.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will use the following amounts for homeownership expenses:

Monthly homeownership payment. This includes principal and interest on initial mortgage debt, taxes and insurance, public assessments, and any mortgage insurance premium, if applicable.

Utility allowance. DCHA's utility allowance for the unit, based on the current HCV utility allowance schedule.

Monthly maintenance/major repair/replacement allowance. A single monthly maintenance/repair/replacement allowance will be provided at \$120 per month.

Monthly co-op/condominium assessments. If applicable, the monthly amount of co-op or condominium association operation and maintenance assessments.

Monthly principal and interest on debt for improvements. Principal and interest for major home repair, replacements, or improvements, if applicable.

Land lease payments. Land lease payments where a family does not own fee title to the real property on which the home is located.

DCHA may pay the homeownership assistance payments directly to the family, or at DCHA's discretion, to a lender on behalf of the family. If the assistance payment exceeds the amount due to the lender, DCHA must pay the excess directly to the family.

DCHA Policy

DCHA's housing assistance payment will be paid directly to the family. It will be the family's responsibility to make the entire payment to the lender. DCHA may make an exception if the family requests the payment to go directly to the lender, and this arrangement is acceptable to the mortgage company. If the assistance payment exceeds the amount due to the lender, DCHA must pay the excess directly to the family.

15-VII.L. PORTABILITY [24 CFR 982.636, 982.637, 982.353(b) and (c), 982.552, 982.553]

Subject to the restrictions on portability included in HUD regulations and DCHA policies, a family may exercise portability if the receiving PHA is administering a voucher homeownership program and accepting new homeownership families. The receiving PHA may absorb the family into its voucher program or bill the initial PHA.

The family must attend the briefing and counseling sessions required by the receiving PHA. The receiving PHA will determine whether the financing for, and the physical condition of the unit, are acceptable. The receiving PHA must promptly notify the initial PHA if the family has purchased an eligible unit under the program, or if the family is unable to purchase a home within the maximum time established by the PHA.

15-VII.M. MOVING WITH CONTINUED ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 982.637]

A family receiving homeownership assistance may move with continued tenant-based assistance or with voucher homeownership assistance.

DCHA must determine that all initial requirements have been satisfied if a family that has received homeownership assistance wants to move with continued homeownership assistance. However, the following do not apply:

- The requirement that a family must be a first-time homeowner is not applicable.
- The requirement for pre-assistance counseling is not applicable. However, DCHA may require that the family complete additional counseling (before or after moving to a new unit with continued homeownership assistance).

Continued tenant-based assistance for a new unit cannot begin so long as any family member holds title to the prior home. However, when the family or a member of the family is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and the move is needed to protect the health or safety of the family or family member (or any family member has been the victim of a sexual assault that occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the family's request to move), such family or family member may be assisted with continued tenant-based assistance even if they own any title or other interest in the prior home.

DCHA may deny permission to move to a new unit with continued voucher assistance:

- If DCHA has insufficient funding to provide continued assistance.
- In accordance with 24 CFR 982.638, regarding denial or termination of assistance.
- In accordance with DCHA's policy regarding number of moves within a 12-month period.

DCHA must deny the family permission to move to a new unit with continued voucher rental assistance if:

- The family defaulted on an FHA-insured mortgage; and
- The family fails to demonstrate that the family has conveyed, or will convey, title to the home, as required by HUD, to HUD or HUD's designee; and
- The family has moved, or will move, from the home within the period established or approved by HUD.

DCHA Policy

For families participating in the homeownership option, requests to move will be approved and/or denied in accordance with DCHA policies in Chapter 10.

DCHA will not require additional counseling of any families who move with continued assistance.

15-VII.N. DENIAL OR TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE [24 CFR 982.638]

At any time, DCHA may deny or terminate homeownership assistance in accordance with HCV program requirements in 24 CFR 982.552 (Grounds for denial or termination of assistance) or 24 CFR 982.553 (Crime by family members).

DCHA may also deny or terminate assistance for violation of participant obligations described in 24 CFR Parts 982.551 or 982.633 and in accordance with its own policy, with the exception of failure to meet obligations under the Family Self-Sufficiency program as prohibited under the alternative requirements set forth in FR Notice 12/29/14.

Homeownership assistance for a family automatically terminates 180 calendar days after the last homeownership assistance payment on behalf of the family. However, DCHA may grant relief from this requirement in those cases where automatic termination would result in extreme hardship for the family.

DCHA Policy

In order for DCHA to consider granting relief from the requirement to automatically terminate homeownership assistance 180 days following DCHA's last housing assistance payment on behalf of the family, the family must submit a written request to DCHA at least 30 days prior to the date of automatic termination. The request must include an explanation of the circumstances that will cause an extreme hardship for the family (e.g., the imminent loss of income or employment) as well as documentation supporting the request. DCHA will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to grant relief from the requirement and for what period of time. In no case will DCHA postpone termination beyond an additional 90 days.

DCHA must terminate voucher homeownership assistance for any member of family receiving homeownership assistance that is dispossessed from the home pursuant to a judgment or order of foreclosure on any mortgage (whether FHA insured or non-FHA) securing debt incurred to purchase the home, or any refinancing of such debt.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will terminate a family's homeownership assistance if the family violates any of the homeowner obligations listed in Section 1, as well as for any of the reasons listed in Section 2 of Form HUD-52649, Statement of Homeowner Obligations Housing Choice Homeownership Voucher Program.

In making its decision to terminate homeownership assistance, DCHA will consider alternatives as described in Section 12-II.C and other factors described in Section 12-II.D. Upon consideration of such alternatives and factors, DCHA may, on a case-by-case basis, choose not to terminate assistance.

Termination notices will be sent in accordance with the requirements and policies set forth in Section 12-II.F.

Chapter 16

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses administrative policies and practices that are relevant to the activities covered in this plan. The policies are discussed in seven parts as described below:

Part I: Administrative Fee Reserve. This part describes DCHA's policies with regard to oversight of expenditures from its administrative fee reserve.

Part II: Setting Program Standards and Schedules. This part describes what payment standards are, and how they are updated, as well as how utility allowances are established and revised.

Part III: Informal Reviews and Hearings. This part outlines the requirements and procedures for informal reviews and hearings, and for informal hearings regarding citizenship status.

Part IV: Owner or Family Debts to DCHA. This part describes policies for recovery of monies that DCHA has overpaid on behalf of families, or to owners, and describes the circumstances under which DCHA will offer repayment agreements to owners and families. Also discussed are the consequences for failure to make payments in accordance with a repayment agreement.

Part V: Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP). This part describes what the SEMAP scores represent, how they are established, and how those scores affect DCHA.

Part VI: Record-Keeping. All aspects of the program involve certain types of record-keeping. This part outlines the privacy rights of applicants and participants and record retention policies DCHA will follow.

Part VII: Reporting and Record Keeping for Children with Elevated Blood Lead Level. This part describes DCHA's responsibilities for reporting, data collection, and record keeping relative to children with elevated blood lead levels that are less than six years of age, and are receiving HCV assistance.

Part VIII: Determination of Insufficient Funding. This part describes DCHA's policies for determining if there is sufficient funding to issue vouchers, to approve moves to higher cost units or areas, and to continue assistance for all participant families.

Part IX: Violence against Women Act (VAWA): Notification, Documentation, Confidentiality. This part contains key terms used in VAWA and describes requirements related to notifying families and owners about their rights and responsibilities under VAWA; requesting documentation from victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking; and maintaining the confidentiality of information obtained from victims.

PART I: ADMINISTRATIVE FEE RESERVE [24 CFR 982.155]

DCHA will maintain administrative fee reserves, or unrestricted net position (UNP) for the program to pay program administrative expenses in excess of administrative fees paid by HUD for a DCHA fiscal year. HUD appropriations acts beginning with FFY 2004 have specified that administrative fee funding may be used only for activities related to the provision of HCV assistance, including related development activities. Notice PIH 2012-9 cites two examples of related development activities: unit modification for accessibility purposes and development of project-based voucher units. The notice makes clear that other activities may also qualify as related development activities. Administrative fees that remain in the UNP account from funding provided prior to 2004 may be used for “other housing purposes permitted by state and local law,” in accordance with 24 CFR 982.155(b)(1).

In addition, as specified in Notice PIH 2022-18, DCHA may use administrative fee funding for both administrative and “other expenses” needed to employ strategies and undertake activities beyond regular administrative responsibilities to facilitate the successful leasing and use of housing choice vouchers by families, such as through the use of security deposit assistance and landlord recruitment and incentive payments, among other allowable expenses specified in the notice. DCHA is also permitted to use UNP for these expenses [Notice PIH 2022-18].

If DCHA has not adequately administered its HCV program, HUD may prohibit use of funds in the UNP Account and may direct DCHA to use funds in that account to improve administration of the program, for HCV HAP expenses, or to reimburse ineligible expenses in accordance with the regulation at 24 CFR 982.155(b)(3).

HUD requires the DCHA Board of Commissioners or other authorized officials to establish the maximum amount that may be charged against the UNP account without specific approval.

DCHA Policy

Expenditures from the UNP account will be made in accordance with all applicable federal requirements. Expenditures will not exceed \$10,000 per occurrence without the prior approval of the DCHA’s Board of Commissioners.

PART II: SETTING PROGRAM STANDARDS AND SCHEDULES

16-II.A. OVERVIEW

Although many of the program's requirements are established centrally by HUD, the HCV program's regulations recognize that some flexibility is required to allow DCHA to adapt the program to local conditions. This part discusses how DCHA establishes and updates certain schedules and standards that are used to administer the program locally. Details about how these schedules are applied to individual families are provided in other chapters. The schedules and standards discussed here include:

- *Payment Standards*, which dictate the maximum subsidy a family can receive (application of the payment standards is discussed in Chapter 6); and
- *Utility Allowances*, which specify how a family's payment should be adjusted to account for tenant-paid utilities (application of utility allowances is discussed in Chapter 6).

DCHA Policy

Copies of the payment standard and utility allowance schedules are available for review in DCHA's office during normal business hours and on DCHA's website.

Families, owners, and members of the public may submit written comments on the schedules discussed in this part, at any time, for consideration during the next revision cycle.

DCHA will maintain documentation to support its annual review of payment standards and utility allowance schedules. This documentation will be retained for at least three years.

16-II.B. PAYMENT STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.503; HCV GB, Chapter 7; and Notice PIH 2024-34]

The payment standard sets the maximum subsidy payment a family can receive from DCHA each month [24 CFR 982.505(a)]. Payment standards are based on fair market rents (FMRs) published annually by HUD. FMRs are set at a percentile within the rent distribution of standard quality rental housing units in each FMR area. For most jurisdictions FMRs are set at the 40th percentile of gross rents in the market area.

In the HCV program, the FMR may be established at the ZIP code level, metropolitan market area level, or nonmetropolitan county level. Within each FMR area, the applicable FMR is the HUD-published:

- Small Area FMR (SAFMR);
 - For any metropolitan area designated as an SAFMR area; or
 - Anywhere a PHA has notified HUD it will voluntarily use SAFMRs;
- Metropolitan FMR for any other metropolitan area; or
- FMR for any other non-metropolitan county.

DCHA must establish a payment standard schedule that establishes payment standard amounts for each FMR area within DCHA’s jurisdiction and for each unit size within each of the FMR areas. In many cases a single FMR area will cover DCHA’s entire jurisdiction. Some PHAs’ jurisdictions include more than one FMR area. DCHA’s established payment standards within the payment standard area always must be within the basic range of the applicable FMR area, or any HUD-approved exception payment standard. Program regulations and this policy refer to the “applicable FMR.” The “applicable FMR” is the HUD-published SAFMR for PHAs in mandatory SAFMR areas or for those PHAs that have opted-in to using the SAFMR, both of which are discussed below.

Small Area FMR PHAs (Mandatory and Opt-In) [Notice PIH 2018-01; Notice PIH 2023-32; Notice PIH 2024-34; and Implementing Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMR) Guidebook]

SAFMRs are FMRs calculated at the ZIP Code level, rather than for an entire metropolitan or non-metropolitan county.

HUD identifies which metropolitan areas are required to use SAFMRs based on significant voucher concentration challenges and market conditions. PHAs administering the HCV program in those areas are required to use the SAFMRs when establishing payment standards (mandatory SAFMR PHAs). Mandatory SAFMR PHAs must use the SAFMR for any part of their jurisdiction located in the SAFMR area.

Upon notification to HUD, PHAs not located in mandatory SAFMR areas may opt-in and voluntarily adopt SAFMRs for one or more of the FMR areas in which the PHA administers vouchers (opt-in PHAs). A PHA that exercises this option in one metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county is not required to exercise this option in other metropolitan areas or non-metropolitan counties. A PHA that opts in to SAFMRs may subsequently opt out through revision of the administrative plan and notification to HUD.

Alternatively, PHAs may elect to use SAFMRs only as the basis for exception payment standards in some or all of those non-mandatory SAFMR areas that cover or are within their jurisdictions. These PHAs are not considered opt-in PHAs.

When applicable, SAFMRs apply to all tenant-based vouchers in the PHA’s jurisdiction, including special vouchers such as the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, the Family Unification Program (FUP), and special housing types such as Single Room Occupancies (SROs) and homeownership vouchers. SAFMRs do not apply to manufactured home space rental.

DCHA Policy

DCHA is a mandatory SAFMR PHA.

DCHA has adopted the use of SAFMRs except to establish exception payment standards in certain ZIP code areas.

The Basic Range [24 CFR 982.503(c) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

DCHA may establish a payment standard within the “basic range” established by HUD—between 90 and 110 percent of the published FMR for each unit size—without HUD approval or prior notification to HUD. For each payment standard area, DCHA must establish a payment standard amount for each unit size which may be based on the same percentage of the published FMR (for example, all units at 100 percent of FMR), or DCHA may set different payment standards for different unit sizes (for example, 1-bedrooms at 90 percent and 2-bedrooms at 100 percent of the FMR).

Designated Payment Standard Areas [24 CFR 982.503(a)(3) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

DCHA may establish designated payment standard areas within each FMR area where DCHA establishes different payment standards, provided each area is no smaller than a census tract block group. If DCHA designates payment standard areas, then it must include the criteria used to determine the designated areas and the payment standard amounts for those areas in the administrative plan.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has established designated payment standard areas for each zip code in the county.

Exception Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.503(d), Notice PIH 2018-01, Notice PIH 2024-34, and FR Notice 9/27/21]

There are several options available to increase payment standards above the basic range. These are known as *exception payment standards*, which are payment standards that exceed 110 percent of the published FMR. The following are types of exception payment standards:

- Payment standards based on SAFMRs in ZIP codes where the SAFMR is higher than the applicable metropolitan or non-metropolitan county FMR
- Payment standards greater than 110 percent up to 120 percent of the applicable FMR
- Payment standards over 120 percent of the applicable FMR
- Payment standards up to 120 percent of the FMR for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Payment standards necessary as a reasonable accommodation

Payment Standards based on SAFMRs in ZIP codes where the SAFMR is Higher than the FMR: Upon notification to HUD, a PHA that is not located in a SAFMR area or that has not opted to voluntarily adopt SAFMRs may establish an exception payment standard for a ZIP code area that exceeds the basic range for the metropolitan area or county FMR of up to and including 110 percent of the SAFMR for that ZIP code area. If an exception area crosses one or more FMR boundaries, then the maximum exception payment standard amount that a PHA may adopt for the area without HUD approval is 110 percent of the ZIP code area with the lowest SAFMR amount. A PHA that adopts an exception payment standard pursuant to this authority must apply it to the entire ZIP code area.

Payment Standards Greater than 110 Percent Up to 120 Percent: Upon notification to HUD, DCHA may establish exception payment standards between 110 percent and 120 percent of the applicable FMR if DCHA meets one of the following criteria:

- Success rate: Fewer than 75 percent of families to which DCHA has issued tenant-based vouchers during the most recent 12-month period for which there is success rate data available have become participants on the program; or
- Rent burden: More than 40 percent of families with tenant-based assistance pay more than 30 percent of their adjusted income as their family share.

DCHA may revert back to the basic range at any time without notification to HUD.

DCHA may combine exception payment standards based on the SAFMR and exception payment standards greater than 110 and up to 120 percent.

Other Exception Payment Standards: DCHA may request HUD approval to establish exception payment standards up to 120 percent of the FMR when the above criteria do not apply or in order to establish exception payment standards that exceed 120 percent of the FMR. Requests may be made for an entire FMR area or a designated part of the FMR area.

Exception Payment Standards for VASH: In addition, HUD allows DCHA to establish a HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) exception payment standard. DCHA may go up to but no higher than 120 percent of the FMR or SAFMR specifically for VASH families. If DCHA wants to establish a VASH exception payment standard over 120 percent they must still request a waiver from HUD (See Section 19-III.E.).

Once exception payment standards are adopted, DCHA may use the exception payment standard for all units, or for only units of a particular size. The exception payment standard may be established for a designated part of the FMR area (called an “exception area”) or for the entire FMR area. Exception areas are typically county, city, town, ZIP code, or census tract areas. However, so long as the exception area is no smaller than census tract block group, DCHA may determine the area for the exception area.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has established exception payment standards for Zip Code 84041.

Reasonable Accommodation [24 CFR 982.503(d)(5), 24 CFR 982.505(d), Notice PIH 2024-34, and Notice PIH 2010-26]

Unit-by-unit exceptions to DCHA’s payment standards generally are not permitted. However, an exception may be made on a case-by-case basis as a reasonable accommodation for a family that includes a person with disabilities. (See Chapter 2 for a discussion of reasonable accommodations.) This type of exception does not affect DCHA’s payment standard schedule.

If required as a reasonable accommodation, DCHA may make an exception to the payment standard without HUD approval if the exception amount does not exceed 120 percent of the applicable FMR/SAFMR for the unit size (or in the case of VASH, up to 140 percent of the FMR/SAFMR). DCHA may request HUD approval for an exception to the payment standard for a particular family if the required amount exceeds 120 percent of the FMR/SAFMR.

DCHA Policy

A family that requires a reasonable accommodation may request a higher payment standard at the time the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) is submitted. The family must document the need for the exception. In order to approve an exception, or request an exception from HUD, DCHA must determine that:

There is a shortage of affordable units that would be appropriate for the family;

The family share would otherwise exceed 40 percent of adjusted monthly income;
and

The rent for the unit is reasonable.

Payment Standard below the Basic Range [24 CFR 982.503(e) and Notice PIH 2024-34]

DCHA must request HUD approval to establish a payment standard amount that is lower than the basic range. At HUD’s sole discretion, HUD may approve establishment of a payment standard lower than the basic range. HUD will consider rent burden on families assisted under the program.

Updating Payment Standards [24 CFR 982.503(c)(3) and Notice PIH 2023-24]

HUD publishes FMRs in the *Federal Register* and also makes them available on the HUD website with an effective date of October 1. When HUD updates FMRs, DCHA must revise its payment standard amounts and schedule no later than three months following the effective date of the published FMR if revisions are necessary to stay within the basic range. HUD may require DCHA to make further adjustments if it determines that rent burdens for assisted families in DCHA's jurisdiction are unacceptably high [24 CFR 982.503(h)]. DCHA must include a copy of the payment standard schedule in the voucher briefing materials, and HUD strongly encourages DCHA to post their payment standard schedule on their website.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will review the appropriateness of the payment standards on an annual basis when the new FMR is published, and at other times as determined necessary. In addition to ensuring the payment standards are always within the "basic range," DCHA will consider the following factors when determining whether an adjustment should be made to the payment standard schedule:

Funding Availability: DCHA will review projected HAP expenditures to determine the impact projected subsidy adjustments will have on funding available for the program and the number of families served. DCHA will compare the number of families who could be served under revised payment standard amounts with the number assisted under current payment standard amounts.

Rent Burden of Participating Families: Rent burden will be determined by identifying the percentage of families, for each unit size, that are paying more than 30 percent of their monthly adjusted income as the family share. When 40 percent or more of families, for any given unit size, are paying more than 30 percent of adjusted monthly income as the family share, DCHA will consider increasing the payment standard. In evaluating rent burdens, DCHA will not include families renting a larger unit than their family unit size.

Quality of Units Selected: DCHA may review the quality of units selected by participant families when making the determination of the percent of income families are paying for housing, to ensure that payment standard increases are only made when needed to reach the mid-range of the market.

Changes in Rent to Owner: DCHA may review a sample of the units to determine how often owners are increasing or decreasing rents and the average percent of increases and decreases by bedroom size.

Unit Availability: DCHA may review the availability of units for each unit size, particularly in areas with low concentrations of poor and minority families.

Lease-up Time and Success Rate: DCHA may consider the percentage of families that are unable to locate suitable housing before the voucher expires and whether families are leaving the jurisdiction to find affordable housing.

Effective dates of changes to payment standard amounts will be determined at the time of update. DCHA will always ensure the payment standards will be within the basic range. DCHA will post its payment standards schedule on DCHA's website and include a copy in the voucher briefing materials.

16-II.C. UTILITY ALLOWANCES [24 CFR 982.517]

A DCHA-established utility allowance schedule is used in determining family share and DCHA subsidy. DCHA must maintain a utility allowance schedule for (1) all tenant-paid utilities, (2) the cost of tenant-supplied refrigerators and ranges, and (3) other tenant-paid housing services such as trash collection. DCHA must maintain an area-wide utility allowance schedule. The utility allowance schedule must be determined 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. In developing the schedule, DCHA must use normal patterns of consumption for the community as a whole, and current utility rates.

The utility allowance must include the utilities and services that are necessary in the locality to provide housing that complies with housing quality standards. Costs for telephone, cable/satellite television, and internet services are not included in the utility allowance schedule.

In the utility allowance schedule, DCHA must classify utilities and other housing services according to the following general categories: space heating; air conditioning; cooking; water heating; water; sewer; trash collection; other electric; cost of tenant-supplied refrigerator; cost of tenant-supplied range; applicable surcharges; and other specified housing services.

The cost of each utility and housing service must be stated separately by unit size and type. Chapter 18 of the *HCV Guidebook* provides detailed guidance to DCHA about establishing utility allowance schedules.

DCHA must state its policy for utility allowance payments in the administrative plan and apply it consistently to all households. DCHA must provide a copy of the utility allowance schedule to HUD.

Energy Efficient Utility Allowance [24 CFR 982.517(b)(2)(ii)]

In addition to the area-wide utility allowance standard, DCHA may maintain an area-wide, energy efficient utility allowance schedule to be used for units that are in a building that meets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or Energy Star standards.

DCHA Policy

DCHA maintains an energy efficient utility allowance schedule for gas and electricity.

Air Conditioning [24 CFR 982.517(b)(1)(iii)]

DCHA must provide a utility allowance for air-conditioning when the majority of housing units in the market provide central air-conditioning or are wired for tenant-installed air conditioners.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has included an allowance for air-conditioning in its schedule. Central air-conditioning or a portable air conditioner must be present in a unit before DCHA will apply this allowance to a family's rent and subsidy calculations.

Reasonable Accommodation and Individual Relief

Upon request from a family that includes a person with disabilities, DCHA must approve a utility allowance which is higher than the applicable amount on the utility allowance schedule if a higher utility allowance is needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible and usable by the family member with a disability [24 CFR 982.517(e)]. See Chapter 2 for policies regarding the request and approval of reasonable accommodations.

Further, DCHA may grant requests for relief from charges in excess of the utility allowance on reasonable grounds, such as special needs of the elderly, ill, or residents with disabilities, or special factors not within control of the resident, as DCHA deems appropriate. The family must request the higher allowance and provide DCHA with an explanation of the need for the individual relief and information about the amount of additional allowance required [see HCV GB, p. 18-8].

DCHA has developed criteria for granting individual relief and to notify residents about the availability of individual relief, and also to notify participants about the availability of individual relief programs (sometimes referred to as “Medical Baseline discounts”) offered by the local utility company. Policies for granting exception utility allowances can be found in Section 6-III.D. of this plan.

Utility Allowance Revisions

DCHA must review its schedule of utility allowances each year and must revise the schedule if there has been a change of 10 percent or more in any utility rate since the last time the allowance for that utility was revised [24 CFR 982.517(c)(1)].

DCHA must maintain information supporting its annual review of utility allowance and any revisions made in its utility allowance schedule.

PART III: INFORMAL REVIEWS AND HEARINGS

16-III.A. OVERVIEW

Both applicants and participants have the right to disagree with, and appeal, certain decisions of DCHA that may adversely affect them. DCHA decisions that may be appealed by applicants and participants are discussed in this section.

The process for applicant appeals DCHA decisions is called the “informal review.” For participants (or applicants denied admission because of citizenship issues), the appeal process is called an “informal hearing.” DCHA is required to include informal review procedures for applicants and informal hearing procedures for participants in their administrative plans [24 CFR 982.54(d)(12) and (13)].

16-III.B. INFORMAL REVIEWS

Informal reviews are provided for program applicants. An applicant is someone who has applied for admission to the program but is not yet a participant in the program. Informal reviews are intended to provide a “minimum hearing requirement” [24 CFR 982.554] and need not be as elaborate as the informal hearing requirements [*Federal Register* 60, no. 127 (3 July 1995): 34690].

Decisions Subject to Informal Review [24 CFR 982.554(a) and (c)]

DCHA must give an applicant the opportunity for an informal review of a decision denying assistance [24 CFR 982.554(a)]. Denial of assistance may include any or all of the following [24 CFR 982.552(a)(2)]:

- Denying listing on the DCHA waiting list
- Denying or withdrawing a voucher
- Refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease
- Refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures

Informal reviews are *not* required for the following reasons [24 CFR 982.554(c)]:

- Discretionary administrative determinations by DCHA
- General policy issues or class grievances
- A determination of the family unit size under DCHA subsidy standards
- A DCHA determination not to approve an extension of a voucher term
- A DCHA determination not to grant approval of the tenancy
- A DCHA determination that the unit is not in compliance with the housing quality standards
- A DCHA determination that the unit does not meet space standards

DCHA Policy

DCHA will only offer an informal review to applicants for whom assistance is being denied. Denial of assistance includes denying listing on the DCHA waiting list; denying or withdrawing a voucher; refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease; refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures.

Notice to the Applicant [24 CFR 982.554(a)]

DCHA must give an applicant prompt notice of a decision denying assistance. The notice must contain a brief statement of the reasons for the DCHA decision and must also state that the applicant may request an informal review of the decision. The notice must describe how to obtain the informal review.

Scheduling an Informal Review

DCHA Policy

A request for an informal review must be made in writing and delivered to DCHA either in person or by first class mail, by the close of the business day, no later than 10 business days from the date of DCHA's denial of assistance.

DCHA must schedule and send written notice of the informal review within 10 business days of the family's request.

If the informal review will be conducted remotely, at the time DCHA notifies the family of the informal review, the family will be informed:

Regarding the processes to conduct a remote informal review;

That, if needed, DCHA will provide technical assistance prior to and during the informal review; and

That if the family or any individual witness has any technological, resource, or accessibility barriers preventing them from fully accessing the remote informal review, the family may inform DCHA and DCHA will assist the family in either resolving the issues or allow the family to participate in an in-person informal review, as appropriate.

Informal Review Procedures [24 CFR 982.554(b)]

The informal review must be conducted by a person other than the one who made or approved the decision under review, or a subordinate of this person.

The applicant must be provided an opportunity to present written or oral objections to the decision of DCHA.

Remote Informal Reviews [Notice PIH 2020-32]

There is no requirement that informal reviews be conducted in-person and, as such, HUD allows DCHA to conduct all or a portion of their informal review remotely either over the phone, via video conferencing, or through other virtual platforms. If DCHA chooses to conduct remote informal reviews, applicants may still request an in-person informal review, as applicable.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has the sole discretion to require that informal reviews be conducted remotely in case of local, state, or national physical distancing orders, and in cases of inclement weather or natural disaster.

In addition, DCHA will conduct an informal review remotely upon request of the applicant as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, if an applicant does not have childcare or transportation that would enable them to attend the informal review, or if the applicant believes an in-person informal review would create an undue health risk. DCHA will consider other reasonable requests for a remote informal review on a case-by-case basis.

Ensuring Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals

As with in-person informal reviews, the platform for conducting remote informal reviews must be accessible to persons with disabilities and the informal review must be conducted in accordance with Section 504 and accessibility requirements. This includes ensuring any information, websites, emails, digital notifications, and other virtual platforms are accessible for persons with vision, hearing, and other disabilities. Further, providing effective communication in a digital context may require the use of individualized auxiliary aids or services, such as audio description, captioning, sign language and other types of interpreters, keyboard accessibility, accessible documents, screen reader support, and transcripts. Auxiliary aids or services must be provided in accessible formats, in a timely manner, and in such a way to protect the privacy and independence of the individual. DCHA may never request or require that individuals with disabilities provide their own auxiliary aids or services, including for remote informal hearings.

DCHA is required to make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, and procedures to ensure persons with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all aspects of the informal review process. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of reasonable accommodation requirements.

If no method of conducting a remote informal review is available that appropriately accommodates an individual's disability, DCHA may not hold against the individual their inability to participate in the remote informal review, and DCHA should consider whether postponing the remote informal review to a later date is appropriate or whether there is a suitable alternative.

Due to the individualized nature of disability, the appropriate auxiliary aid or service necessary, or reasonable accommodation, will depend on the specific circumstances and requirements.

As with in-person reviews, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements also apply to remote informal reviews, including the use of interpretation services and document translation. See Chapter 2 for a more thorough discussion of accessibility and LEP requirements, all of which apply in the context of remote informal reviews.

Conducting Remote Informal Reviews

DCHA must ensure that the lack of technology or inability to use technology for remote informal reviews does not pose a disadvantage to families that may not be apparent to DCHA. DCHA should determine through a survey or other means if these barriers exist prior to conducting the remote informal review and, if the family does not have the proper technology to fully participate, either postpone the informal review or provide an alternative means of access.

As with in-person informal reviews, DCHA must provide all materials presented, whether paper or electronic, to the family prior to the remote informal review. The family must also be provided with an accessible means by which to transmit their own evidence.

DCHA must ensure that the applicant has the right to hear and be heard. All DCHA policies and processes for remote informal reviews must be conducted in accordance with due process requirements and be in compliance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 982.554 and guidance specified in Notice PIH 2020-32.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct remote informal reviews via a video conferencing platform, when available. If, after attempting to resolve any barriers, applicants are unable to adequately access the video conferencing platform at any point, or upon applicant request, the informal review will be conducted by telephone conferencing call-in. If the family is unable to adequately access the telephone conferencing call-in at any point, the remote informal review will be postponed, and an in-person alternative will be provided promptly within a reasonable time.

At least five business days prior to the scheduled remote review, DCHA will provide the family with login information and/or conferencing call-in information and an electronic and/or physical copy of all materials being presented via first class mail and/or email. The notice will advise the family of technological requirements for the informal review and request the family notify DCHA of any known barriers. DCHA will resolve any barriers using the guidance in Section 6 of Notice PIH 2020-32, including offering the family the opportunity to attend an in-person informal review.

If the informal review is to be conducted remotely, DCHA will require the family to provide any documents directly relevant to the informal review at least 24 hours before the scheduled review through the mail, via email, or text. DCHA will scan and email copies of these documents to DCHA representative the same day.

Documents will be shared electronically whenever possible.

DCHA will follow up the email with a phone call and/or email to the applicant at least one business day prior to the remote informal review to ensure that the applicant received all information and is comfortable accessing the video conferencing or call-in platform.

DCHA will ensure that all electronic information stored or transmitted with respect to the informal review is secure, including protecting personally identifiable information (PII), and meets the requirements for accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with LEP.

Informal Review Decision [24 CFR 982.554(b)]

DCHA must notify the applicant of DCHA's final decision, including a brief statement of the reasons for the final decision.

DCHA Policy

In rendering a decision, DCHA will evaluate the following matters:

Whether or not the grounds for denial were stated factually in the notice to the family.

The validity of the grounds for denial of assistance. If the grounds for denial are not specified in the regulations, then the decision to deny assistance will be overturned.

The validity of the evidence. DCHA will evaluate whether the facts presented prove the grounds for denial of assistance. If the facts prove that there are grounds for denial, and the denial is required by HUD, DCHA will uphold the decision to deny assistance.

If the facts prove the grounds for denial, and the denial is discretionary, DCHA will consider the recommendation of the person conducting the informal review in making the final decision whether to deny assistance.

DCHA will notify the applicant of the final decision, including a statement explaining the reason(s) for the decision. The notice will be mailed within 10 business days of the informal review, to the applicant and their representative, if any, along with proof of mailing.

If the decision to deny is overturned as a result of the informal review, processing for admission will resume.

If the family fails to appear for their informal review, the denial of admission will stand and the family will be so notified.

16-III.C. INFORMAL HEARINGS FOR PARTICIPANTS [24 CFR 982.555]

DCHA must offer an informal hearing for certain DCHA determinations relating to the individual circumstances of a participant family. A participant is defined as a family that has been admitted to DCHA's HCV program and is currently assisted in the program. The purpose of the informal hearing is to consider whether DCHA's decisions related to the family's circumstances are in accordance with the law, HUD regulations and DCHA policies.

DCHA is not permitted to terminate a family's assistance until the time allowed for the family to request an informal hearing has elapsed, and any requested hearing has been completed. Termination of assistance for a participant may include any or all of the following:

- Refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease
- Terminating housing assistance payments under an outstanding HAP contract
- Refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures

Decisions Subject to Informal Hearing

Circumstances for which DCHA must give a participant family an opportunity for an informal hearing are as follows:

- A determination of the family's annual or adjusted income, and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment
- A determination of the appropriate utility allowance (if any) for tenant-paid utilities from the DCHA utility allowance schedule
- A determination of the family unit size under DCHA's subsidy standards
- A determination to terminate assistance for a participant family because of the family's actions or failure to act
- A determination to terminate assistance because the participant has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than the maximum period permitted under DCHA policy and HUD rules

DCHA Policy

DCHA will also give participant families an opportunity for an informal hearing for:

Any denial of a request for a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities (see Chapter 2).

Families participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, when DCHA withholds the coordination of supportive services or terminates a family's participation in the FSS program because DCHA determines the FSS family has failed to comply without good cause with the requirements of the FSS Contract of Participation in accordance with the FSS Action Plan [24 CFR 984.303(i)].

Circumstances for which an informal hearing is not required are as follows:

- Discretionary administrative determinations by DCHA
- General policy issues or class grievances
- Establishment of the DCHA schedule of utility allowances for families in the program
- A DCHA determination not to approve an extension of a voucher term
- A DCHA determination not to approve a unit or tenancy
- A DCHA determination that a unit selected by the applicant is not in compliance with housing quality standards
- A DCHA determination that the unit is not in accordance with space standards because of family size
- A determination by DCHA to exercise or not to exercise any right or remedy against an owner under a HAP contract

Remote Informal Hearings [Notice PIH 2020-32]

There is no requirement that informal hearings be conducted in-person, and as such, HUD allows DCHA to conduct all or a portion of their informal hearings remotely either over the phone, via video conferencing, or through other virtual platforms. If DCHA chooses to conduct remote informal hearings, applicants may still request an in-person informal hearing, as applicable.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has the sole discretion to require that informal hearings be conducted remotely in case of local, state, or national physical distancing orders, and in cases of inclement weather or natural disaster.

In addition, DCHA will conduct an informal hearing remotely upon request as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, if a participant does not have childcare or transportation that would enable them to attend the informal hearing, or if the participant believes an in-person hearing would create an undue health risk. DCHA will consider other reasonable requests for a remote informal hearing on a case-by-case basis.

Ensuring Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and LEP Individuals

As with in-person informal hearings, the platform for conducting remote informal hearings must be accessible to persons with disabilities and the informal hearings must be conducted in accordance with Section 504 and accessibility requirements. This includes ensuring any information, websites, emails, digital notifications, and other virtual platforms are accessible for persons with vision, hearing, and other disabilities. Further, providing effective communication in a digital context may require the use of individualized auxiliary aids or services, such as audio description, captioning, sign language and other types of interpreters, keyboard accessibility, accessible documents, screen reader support, and transcripts. Auxiliary aids or services must be provided in accessible formats, in a timely manner, and in such a way to protect the privacy and independence of the individual. DCHA may never request or require that individuals with disabilities provide their own auxiliary aids or services, including for remote informal hearings.

DCHA is required to make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, and procedures to ensure persons with disabilities have a full and equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all aspects of the informal hearing process. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of reasonable accommodation requirements.

If no method of conducting a remote informal hearing is available that appropriately accommodates an individual's disability, DCHA may not hold against the individual their inability to participate in the remote informal hearing, and DCHA should consider whether postponing the remote hearing to a later date is appropriate or whether there is a suitable alternative.

Due to the individualized nature of disability, the appropriate auxiliary aid or service necessary, or reasonable accommodation will depend on the specific circumstances and requirements.

As with in-person reviews, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements also apply to remote informal hearings, including the use of interpretation services and document translation. See Chapter 2 for a more thorough discussion of accessibility and LEP requirements, all of which apply in the context of remote informal hearings.

Conducting Informal Hearings Remotely

DCHA must ensure that the lack of technology or inability to use technology for remote informal hearings does not pose a disadvantage to families that may not be apparent to DCHA. DCHA should determine through a survey or other means if these barriers exist prior to conducting the remote informal hearing and, if the family does not have the proper technology to fully participate, either postpone the informal hearing or provide an alternative means of access.

As with in-person informal hearings, DCHA must provide all materials presented, whether paper or electronic, to the family prior to the remote informal hearing. The family must also be provided with an accessible means by which to transmit their own evidence.

DCHA's essential responsibility is to ensure informal hearings meet the requirements of due process and comply with HUD regulations. Therefore, all DCHA policies and processes for remote informal hearings will be conducted in accordance with due process requirements and will be in compliance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 982.555 and the guidance for conducting remote hearings specified in Notice PIH 2020-32.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will conduct remote informal hearings via a video conferencing platform, when available. If, after attempting to resolve any barriers, participants are unable to adequately access the video conferencing platform at any point, or upon request, the informal hearing will be conducted by telephone conferencing call-in. If the family is unable to adequately access the telephone conferencing call-in at any point, the remote informal hearing will be postponed, and an in-person alternative will be provided promptly within a reasonable time.

At least five business days prior to the scheduled remote hearing, DCHA will provide the family with login information and/or conferencing call-in information and an electronic copy of all materials being presented via first class mail and/or email. The notice will advise the family of technological requirements for the hearing and request the family notify DCHA of any known barriers. DCHA will resolve any barriers using the guidance in Section 6 of Notice PIH 2020-32, including offering the family the opportunity to attend an in-person hearing.

DCHA will follow up with a phone call and/or email to the family at least one business day prior to the remote informal hearing to ensure that the family received all information and is comfortable accessing the video conferencing or call-in platform.

DCHA will ensure that all electronic information stored or transmitted with respect to the informal hearing is secure, including protecting personally identifiable information (PII), and meets the requirements for accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with LEP.

Informal Hearing Procedures

***Notice to the Family* [24 CFR 982.555(c)]**

When DCHA makes a decision that is subject to informal hearing procedures, DCHA must inform the family of its right to an informal hearing at the same time that it informs the family of the decision.

For decisions related to the family's annual or adjusted income, the determination of the appropriate utility allowance, and the determination of the family unit size, DCHA must notify the family that they may ask for an explanation of the basis of the determination, and that if they do not agree with the decision, they may request an informal hearing on the decision.

For decisions related to the termination of the family's assistance, or the denial of a family's request for an exception to DCHA's subsidy standards, the notice must contain a brief statement of the reasons for the decision, a statement that if the family does not agree with the decision, the family may request an informal hearing on the decision, and a statement of the deadline for the family to request an informal hearing.

DCHA Policy

In cases where DCHA makes a decision for which an informal hearing must be offered, the notice to the family will include all of the following:

The proposed action or decision of DCHA.

A brief statement of the reasons for the decision, including the regulatory reference.

The date the proposed action will take place.

A statement of the family's right to an explanation of the basis for DCHA's decision.

A statement that if the family does not agree with the decision the family may request an informal hearing of the decision.

A deadline for the family to request the informal hearing.

To whom the hearing request should be addressed.

A copy of DCHA's hearing procedures.

That the family may request a remote informal hearing.

Scheduling an Informal Hearing [24 CFR 982.555(d)]

When an informal hearing is required, DCHA must proceed with the hearing in a reasonably expeditious manner upon the request of the family.

DCHA Policy

A request for an informal hearing must be made in writing and delivered to DCHA either in person or by first class mail, by the close of the business day, no later than 10 business days from the date of DCHA's decision or notice to terminate assistance.

DCHA must schedule and send written notice of the informal hearing to the family within 10 business days of the family's request.

If the DCHA hearing will be conducted remotely, at the time the notice is sent to the family, the family will be notified:

Regarding the processes involved in a remote informal hearing;

That DCHA will provide technical assistance prior to and during the informal hearing, if needed; and

That if the family or any individual witness has any technological, resource, or accessibility barriers, the family may inform DCHA and DCHA will assist the family in either resolving the issue or allow the family to participate in an in-person hearing, as appropriate.

The family may request to reschedule a hearing for good cause, or if it is needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Requests to reschedule a hearing must be made orally or in writing prior to the hearing date. At its discretion, DCHA may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the hearing.

If the family does not appear within 20 minutes of the scheduled time, and was unable to reschedule the hearing in advance due to the nature of the conflict, the family must contact DCHA within 24 hours of the scheduled hearing date, excluding weekends and holidays. DCHA will reschedule the hearing only if the family can show good cause for the failure to appear, or if it is needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. If the family cannot show good cause for the failure to appear, or a rescheduling is not needed as a reasonable accommodation, DCHA's decision will stand.

Pre-Hearing Right to Discovery [24 CFR 982.555(e)]

Participants and DCHA are permitted pre-hearing discovery rights. The family must be given the opportunity to examine before the hearing any DCHA documents that are directly relevant to the hearing. The family must be allowed to copy any such documents at their own expense. If DCHA does not make the document available for examination on request of the family, DCHA may not rely on the document at the hearing.

For the purpose of informal hearings, *documents* include records and regulations.

DCHA Policy

The family will be allowed to copy any documents related to the hearing at no cost to the family. The family must request discovery of DCHA documents no later than 12:00 p.m. on the business day prior to the scheduled hearing date.

If the hearing will be conducted remotely, DCHA will compile a hearing packet, consisting of all documents DCHA intends to produce at the informal hearing. DCHA will mail copies of the hearing packet to the family, the family's representatives, if any, and the hearing officer at least three days before the scheduled remote informal hearing. The original hearing packet will be in the possession of the DCHA representative and retained by DCHA.

Documents will be shared electronically whenever possible.

DCHA hearing procedures may provide that DCHA must be given the opportunity to examine at DCHA offices before the hearing any family documents that are directly relevant to the hearing. DCHA must be allowed to copy any such document at DCHA's expense. If the family does not make the document available for examination on request of DCHA, the family may not rely on the document at the hearing.

DCHA Policy

For in-person hearings, DCHA will require pre-hearing discovery by DCHA of family documents directly relevant to the hearing no later than 12:00 p.m. on the business day prior to the scheduled hearing date.

If the informal hearing is to be conducted remotely, DCHA will require the family to provide any documents directly relevant to the informal hearing at least 24 hours before the scheduled hearing through the mail, via email, or text. DCHA will scan and email copies of these documents to the hearing officer and the DCHA representative the same day.

Documents will be shared electronically whenever possible.

Participant's Right to Bring Counsel [24 CFR 982.555(e)(3)]

At its own expense, the family may be represented by a lawyer or other representative at the informal hearing.

Informal Hearing Officer [24 CFR 982.555(e)(4)]

Informal hearings will be conducted by a person or persons approved by DCHA, other than the person who made or approved the decision or a subordinate of the person who made or approved the decision.

Attendance at the Informal Hearing

DCHA Policy

Hearings may be attended by a hearing officer and the following applicable persons:

A DCHA representative(s) and any witnesses for DCHA

The participant and any witnesses for the participant

The participant's counsel or other representative

Any other person approved by DCHA as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability

Conduct at Hearings

The person who conducts the hearing may regulate the conduct of the hearing in accordance with DCHA's hearing procedures [24 CFR 982.555(4)(ii)].

DCHA Policy

The hearing officer is responsible to manage the order of business and to ensure that hearings are conducted in a professional and businesslike manner. Attendees are expected to comply with all hearing procedures established by the hearing officer and guidelines for conduct. Any person demonstrating disruptive, abusive or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be excused from the hearing at the discretion of the hearing officer.

Evidence [24 CFR 982.555(e)(5)]

DCHA and the family must be given the opportunity to present evidence and question any witnesses. In general, all evidence is admissible at an informal hearing. Evidence may be considered without regard to admissibility under the rules of evidence applicable to judicial proceedings.

DCHA Policy

Any evidence to be considered by the hearing officer must be presented at the time of the hearing. There are four categories of evidence.

Oral evidence: the testimony of witnesses

Documentary evidence: a writing which is relevant to the case, for example, a letter written to DCHA. Writings include all forms of recorded communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, videotapes or symbols or combinations thereof.

Demonstrative evidence: Evidence created specifically for the hearing and presented as an illustrative aid to assist the hearing officer, such as a model, a chart or other diagram.

Real evidence: A tangible item relating directly to the case.

Hearsay Evidence is evidence based not on a witness' personal knowledge. In and of itself, hearsay evidence carries no weight when making a finding of fact. The hearing officer may include hearsay evidence when considering their decision if it is corroborated by other evidence. Even though hearsay evidence is generally admissible in a hearing, the hearing officer will not base a hearing decision on hearsay alone unless there is clear probative value and credibility of the evidence, and the party seeking the change has met the burden of proof.

If either DCHA (or the family, if required in a remote hearing) fail to comply with the discovery requirements described above, the hearing officer will refuse to admit such evidence.

Other than the failure of a party to comply with discovery, the hearing officer has the authority to overrule any objections to evidence.

Procedures for Rehearing or Further Hearing

DCHA Policy

The hearing officer may ask the family for additional information and/or might adjourn the hearing in order to reconvene at a later date, before reaching a decision. If the family misses an appointment or deadline ordered by the hearing officer, the action of DCHA will take effect and another hearing will not be granted.

Hearing Officer's Decision [24 CFR 982.555(e)(6)]

The person who conducts the hearing must issue a written decision, stating briefly the reasons for the decision. Factual determinations relating to the individual circumstances of the family must be based on a preponderance of evidence presented at the hearing.

DCHA Policy

In rendering a decision, the hearing officer will consider the following matters:

DCHA Notice to the Family: The hearing officer will determine if the reasons for DCHA's decision are factually stated in the Notice.

Discovery: The hearing officer will determine if DCHA and the family were given the opportunity to examine any relevant documents in accordance with DCHA policy.

DCHA Evidence to Support the DCHA Decision: The evidence consists of the facts presented. Evidence is not conclusion and it is not argument. The hearing officer will evaluate the facts to determine if they support DCHA's conclusion.

Validity of Grounds for Termination of Assistance (when applicable): The hearing officer will determine if the termination of assistance is for one of the grounds specified in the HUD regulations and DCHA policies. If the grounds for termination are not specified in the regulations or in compliance with DCHA policies, then the decision of DCHA will be overturned.

The hearing officer will issue a written decision to the family and DCHA no later than 10 business days after the hearing. The report will contain the following information:

Hearing information:

Name of the participant;

Date, time and place of the hearing;

Name of the hearing officer;

Name of the DCHA representative; and

Name of family representative (if any).

Background: A brief, impartial statement of the reason for the hearing.

Summary of the Evidence: The hearing officer will summarize the testimony of each witness and identify any documents that a witness produced in support of their testimony and that are admitted into evidence.

Findings of Fact: The hearing officer will include all findings of fact, based on a preponderance of the evidence. *Preponderance of the evidence* is defined as evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence which as a whole indicates that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not. Preponderance of the evidence may not be determined by the number of witnesses, but by the greater weight of all evidence.

Conclusions: The hearing officer will render a conclusion derived from the facts that were found to be true by a preponderance of the evidence. The conclusion will result in a determination of whether these facts uphold DCHA's decision.

Order: The hearing report will include a statement of whether DCHA's decision is upheld or overturned. If it is overturned, the hearing officer will instruct DCHA to change the decision in accordance with the hearing officer's determination. In the case of termination of assistance, the hearing officer will instruct DCHA to restore the participant's program status.

Issuance of Decision [24 CFR 982.555(e)(6)]

A copy of the hearing order must be furnished promptly to the family.

DCHA Policy

The hearing officer will mail and email a "Notice of Hearing Decision" to DCHA and to the participant on the same day. This notice will be sent by first-class mail and email, if the email address of the participant has been provided. The participant will be mailed the original "Notice of Hearing Decision". A copy of the "Notice of Hearing Decision" will be maintained in DCHA's file.

Effect of Final Decision [24 CFR 982.555(f)]

DCHA is not bound by the decision of the hearing officer for matters in which DCHA is not required to provide an opportunity for a hearing, decisions that exceed the authority of the hearing officer, decisions that conflict with or contradict HUD regulations, requirements, or are otherwise contrary to federal, state, or local laws.

If DCHA determines it is not bound by the hearing officer's decision in accordance with HUD regulations, DCHA must promptly notify the family of the determination and the reason for the determination.

DCHA Policy

The Executive Director has the authority to determine that DCHA is not bound by the decision of the hearing officer because DCHA was not required to provide a hearing, the decision exceeded the authority of the hearing officer, the decision conflicted with or contradicted HUD regulations, requirements, or the decision was otherwise contrary to federal, state, or local laws.

In such a case, DCHA will mail a "Notice of Final Decision" to the DCHA program director and the participant on the same day. The "Notice of Final Decision" will be sent by first-class mail. A copy of this notice will be maintained in DCHA's file.

16-III.D. HEARING AND APPEAL PROVISIONS FOR NONCITIZENS [24 CFR 5.514]

Denial or termination of assistance based on immigration status is subject to special hearing and notice rules. Applicants who are denied assistance due to immigration status are entitled to an informal hearing, not an informal review.

Assistance to a family may not be delayed, denied, or terminated on the basis of immigration status at any time prior to a decision under the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) appeal process. Assistance to a family may not be terminated or denied while the DCHA hearing is pending, but assistance to an applicant may be delayed pending the completion of the informal hearing.

A decision against a family member, issued in accordance with the USCIS appeal process or the DCHA informal hearing process, does not preclude the family from exercising the right, that may otherwise be available, to seek redress directly through judicial procedures.

Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance [24 CFR 5.514(d)]

The notice of denial or termination of assistance for noncitizens must advise the family:

- That financial assistance will be denied or terminated and provide a brief explanation of the reasons for the proposed denial or termination of assistance.
- The family may be eligible for proration of assistance.
- In the case of a participant, the criteria and procedures for obtaining relief under the provisions for preservation of families [24 CFR 5.514 and 5.518].
- That the family has a right to request an appeal to the USCIS of the results of secondary verification of immigration status and to submit additional documentation or explanation in support of the appeal.
- That the family has a right to request an informal hearing with DCHA either upon completion of the USCIS appeal or in lieu of the USCIS appeal.
- For applicants, assistance may not be delayed until the conclusion of the USCIS appeal process, but assistance may be delayed during the period of the informal hearing process.

USCIS Appeal Process [24 CFR 5.514(e)]

When DCHA receives notification that the USCIS secondary verification failed to confirm eligible immigration status, DCHA must notify the family of the results of the USCIS verification. The family will have 30 days from the date of the notification to request an appeal of the USCIS results. The request for appeal must be made by the family in writing directly to the USCIS. The family must provide DCHA with a copy of the written request for appeal and the proof of mailing.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will notify the family in writing of the results of the USCIS secondary verification within 10 business days of receiving the results.

The family must provide DCHA with a copy of the written request for appeal and proof of mailing within 10 business days of sending the request to the USCIS.

The family must forward to the designated USCIS office any additional documentation or written explanation in support of the appeal. This material must include a copy of the USCIS document verification request (used to process the secondary request) or such other form specified by the USCIS, and a letter indicating that the family is requesting an appeal of the USCIS immigration status verification results.

The USCIS will notify the family, with a copy to DCHA, of its decision. When the USCIS notifies DCHA of the decision, DCHA must notify the family of its right to request an informal hearing.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will send written notice to the family of its right to request an informal hearing within 10 business days of receiving notice of the USCIS decision regarding the family's immigration status.

Informal Hearing Procedures for Applicants [24 CFR 5.514(f)]

After notification of the USCIS decision on appeal, or in lieu of an appeal to the USCIS, the family may request that DCHA provide a hearing. The request for a hearing must be made either within 30 days of receipt of the DCHA notice of denial, or within 30 days of receipt of the USCIS appeal decision.

The informal hearing procedures for applicant families are described below.

Informal Hearing Officer

DCHA must provide an informal hearing before an impartial individual, other than a person who made or approved the decision under review, and other than a person who is a subordinate of the person who made or approved the decision. See Section 16-III.C. for a listing of positions that serve as informal hearing officers.

Evidence

The family must be provided the opportunity to examine and copy at the family's expense, at a reasonable time in advance of the hearing, any documents in the possession of DCHA pertaining to the family's eligibility status, or in the possession of the USCIS (as permitted by USCIS requirements), including any records and regulations that may be relevant to the hearing.

DCHA Policy

The family will be allowed to copy any documents related to the hearing at no charge.

The family must request discovery of DCHA documents no later than 12:00 p.m. on the business day prior to the hearing.

The family must be provided the opportunity to present evidence and arguments in support of eligible status. Evidence may be considered without regard to admissibility under the rules of evidence applicable to judicial proceedings.

The family must also be provided the opportunity to refute evidence relied upon by DCHA, and to confront and cross-examine all witnesses on whose testimony or information DCHA relies.

Representation and Interpretive Services

The family is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other designee, at the family's expense, and to have such person make statements on the family's behalf.

The family is entitled to request an interpreter. Upon request, DCHA will provide competent interpretation services, free of charge.

Recording of the Hearing

The family is entitled to have the hearing recorded by audiotape. DCHA may, but is not required to provide a transcript of the hearing.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not provide a transcript of an audio taped hearing.

Hearing Decision

DCHA must provide the family with a written final decision, based solely on the facts presented at the hearing, within 14 calendar days of the date of the informal hearing. The decision must state the basis for the decision.

Informal Hearing Procedures for Residents [24 CFR 5.514(f)]

After notification of the USCIS decision on appeal, or in lieu of an appeal to the USCIS, the family may request that DCHA provide a hearing. The request for a hearing must be made either within 30 days of receipt of the DCHA notice of termination, or within 30 days of receipt of the USCIS appeal decision.

For the informal hearing procedures that apply to participant families whose assistance is being terminated based on immigration status, see Section 16-III.C.

Retention of Documents [24 CFR 5.514(h)]

DCHA must retain for a minimum of 5 years the following documents that may have been submitted to DCHA by the family, or provided to DCHA as part of the USCIS appeal or the DCHA informal hearing process:

- The application for assistance
- The form completed by the family for income reexamination
- Photocopies of any original documents, including original USCIS documents
- The signed verification consent form
- The USCIS verification results
- The request for a USCIS appeal
- The final USCIS determination
- The request for an informal hearing
- The final informal hearing decision

PART IV: OWNER OR FAMILY DEBTS TO DCHA

16-IV.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA has included in the administrative plan, policies concerning repayment by a family of amounts owed to DCHA [24 CFR 982.54]. If the family breaches an agreement with DCHA to pay amounts owed to DCHA, or amounts paid to an owner by DCHA, DCHA, at its discretion, may offer a family the opportunity to enter an agreement to pay amounts owed to DCHA or amounts paid to an owner by DCHA. DCHA may prescribe the terms of the agreement [24 CFR 982.552(c)(1)(vii)]. This part describes DCHA's policies for recovery of monies owed to DCHA by families or owners.

DCHA Policy

When an action or inaction of an owner or participant results in the overpayment of housing assistance, DCHA holds the owner or participant liable to return any overpayments to DCHA.

DCHA will enter into repayment agreements in accordance with the policies contained in this part as a means to recover overpayments.

16-IV.B. REPAYMENT POLICY

Owner Debts to DCHA

DCHA Policy

Any amount due to DCHA by an owner must be repaid by the owner within 30 days of DCHA's determination of the debt.

If the owner fails to repay the debt within the required time frame and is entitled to future HAP payments, DCHA will reduce the future HAP payments by the amount owed until the debt is paid in full.

If the owner is not entitled to future HAP payments DCHA may, in its sole discretion, offer to enter into a repayment agreement on terms prescribed by DCHA.

If the owner refuses to repay the debt, does not enter into a repayment agreement, or breaches a repayment agreement, DCHA will ban the owner from future participation in the program and pursue other modes of collection.

When an owner refuses to repay monies owed to DCHA, DCHA will utilize other available collection alternatives including, but not limited to, the following:

- Collection agencies
- Small claims court
- Civil lawsuit
- State income tax set-off program

Family Debts to DCHA

Families are required to reimburse DCHA if they were charged less rent than required because the family either underreported or failed to report income. DCHA is required to determine retroactive rent amounts as far back as DCHA has documentation of family unreported income [Notice PIH 2018-18].

DCHA Policy

Any amount owed to DCHA by an HCV family must be repaid by the family. If the family is unable to repay the debt within 30 days, DCHA will offer to enter into a repayment agreement in accordance with the policies below.

Criminal Prosecution for Program Fraud/Abuse

Local, state or federal criminal prosecution should be considered by DCHA in flagrant cases, if the abuse was committed over several years, the fraud and/or underpayments are substantial and DCHA documents that a family and/or owner willfully intended to misrepresent the truth [HUD OIG Integrity Bulletin, Summer 2015].

DCHA Policy

DCHA will consult with the HUD Field Office and regional OIG Special Agent in Charge (SAC) to determine whether it will refer the matter to the state or local district attorney to pursue criminal fraud charges.

Refusal to Enter into an Agreement

If the family refuses to repay the debt, does not enter into a repayment agreement, or breaches a repayment agreement, DCHA must terminate assistance [Notice PIH 2018-18].

DCHA Policy

When a family refuses to repay monies owed to DCHA, in addition to termination of program assistance, DCHA will utilize other available collection alternatives including, but not limited to, the following:

- Collection agencies
- Small claims court
- Civil lawsuit
- State income tax set-off program

Repayment Agreement [24 CFR 792.103]

The term *repayment agreement* refers to a formal written document signed by a tenant or owner and provided to DCHA in which a tenant or owner acknowledges a debt in a specific amount and agrees to repay the amount due at specific time periods.

General Repayment Agreement Guidelines for Families

Down Payment Requirement

DCHA Policy

Before executing a repayment agreement with a family, DCHA will generally require a down payment of 10 percent of the total amount owed. If the family can provide evidence satisfactory to DCHA that a down payment of 10 percent would impose an undue hardship, DCHA may, in its sole discretion, require a lesser percentage or waive the requirement.

Payment Thresholds

Notice PIH 2018-18 recommends that the total amount that a family must pay each month—the family’s monthly share of rent plus the monthly debt repayment amount—should not exceed 40 percent of the family’s monthly adjusted income. However, a family may already be paying 40 per cent or more of its monthly adjusted income in rent. Moreover, Notice PIH 2018-18 acknowledges that DCHA has the discretion to establish “thresholds and policies” for repayment agreements with families [24 CFR 982.552(c)(1)(vii)].

DCHA Policy

DCHA has established the following thresholds for repayment of debts:

Amounts over \$3,000 must be repaid within 36 months.

Amounts between \$2,000 and \$2,999 must be repaid within 30 months.

Amounts between \$1,000 and \$1,999 must be repaid within 24 months.

Amounts under \$1,000 must be repaid within 12 months.

If a family can provide evidence satisfactory to DCHA that the threshold applicable to the family’s debt would impose an undue hardship, DCHA may, in its sole discretion, determine that a lower monthly payment amount is reasonable. In making its determination, DCHA will consider all relevant information, including the following:

The amount owed by the family to DCHA

The reason for the debt, including whether the debt was the result of family action/inaction or circumstances beyond the family’s control

The family’s current and potential income and expenses

The family’s current family share, as calculated under 24 CFR 982.515

The family’s history of meeting its financial responsibilities

Execution of the Agreement

All repayment agreements must be in writing, dated, and signed by both the family and DCHA [Notice PIH 2018-18].

DCHA Policy

Any repayment agreement between DCHA and a family must be signed and dated by DCHA and by the head of household and spouse/cohead (if applicable) before the date the overpayment total is required to be paid.

Due Dates

DCHA Policy

All payments are due by the close of business on the 5th day of the month. If the 5th does not fall on a business day, the due date is the close of business on the first business day after the 5th.

Late or Missed Payments

DCHA Policy

If a payment is not received by the end of the business day on the date due, and prior approval for the missed payment has not been given by DCHA, DCHA will send the family a delinquency notice giving the family 10 business days to make the late payment. If the payment is not received by the due date of the delinquency notice, it will be considered a breach of the agreement and DCHA will terminate assistance in accordance with the policies in Chapter 12.

If a family receives three delinquency notices for unexcused late payments in a 12-month period, the repayment agreement will be considered in default, and DCHA will terminate assistance in accordance with the policies in Chapter 12.

No Offer of Repayment Agreement

DCHA Policy

DCHA generally will not enter into a repayment agreement with a family if there is already a repayment agreement in place with the family or if DCHA, in consultation with HUD and local law enforcement, determine to pursue criminal charges in connection with the conduct and the amounts owed.

Repayment Agreement Terms

All repayment agreements must be in writing, dated, signed by both the family and DCHA, include the total retroactive rent amount owed, any amount of lump sum payment made at time of execution, if applicable, and the monthly repayment amount. Notice PIH 2018-18 requires certain provisions, at a minimum, be included in any repayment agreement involving amounts owed by a family because it underreported or failed to report income:

- A reference to the items in the family briefing packet that state the family's obligation to provide true and complete information at every reexamination and the grounds on which DCHA may terminate assistance because of a family's action or failure to act

- A statement clarifying that each month the family not only must pay to DCHA the monthly payment amount specified in the agreement but must also pay to the owner the family's monthly share of the rent to owner
- A statement that the terms of the repayment agreement may be renegotiated if the family's income decreases or increases
- A statement that late or missed payments constitute default of the repayment agreement and may result in termination of assistance

PART V: SECTION 8 MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (SEMAP)

16-V.A. OVERVIEW

The Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) is a tool that allows HUD to measure DCHA performance in key areas to ensure program integrity and accountability. SEMAP scores translate into a rating for each PHA as high performing, standard, or troubled. Scores on individual SEMAP indicators, as well as overall SEMAP ratings, can affect DCHA in several ways.

- High-performing PHAs can be given a competitive advantage under notices of funding availability [24 CFR 985.103].
- PHAs with deficiencies on one or more indicators are required to correct the deficiencies and report to HUD [24 CFR 985.106].
- PHAs with an overall rating of “troubled” are subject to additional HUD oversight, including on-site reviews by HUD staff, a requirement to develop a corrective action plan, and monitoring to ensure the successful implementation of the corrective action plan. In addition, PHAs that are designated “troubled” may not use any part of the administrative fee reserve for other housing purposes [24 CFR 985.107].
- HUD may determine that a PHA's failure to correct identified SEMAP deficiencies or to prepare and implement a corrective action plan required by HUD constitutes a default under the ACC [24 CFR 985.109].

16-V.B. SEMAP CERTIFICATION [24 CFR 985.101]

DCHA must submit the HUD-required SEMAP certification form within 60 calendar days after the end of its fiscal year. The certification must be approved by DCHA board resolution and signed by the DCHA executive director. If DCHA is a unit of local government or a state, a resolution approving the certification is not required, and the certification must be executed by the Section 8 program director.

PHAs with less than 250 voucher units are only required to be assessed every other PHA fiscal year. HUD will assess such PHAs annually if the PHA elects to have its performance assessed on an annual basis; or is designated as “troubled” [24 CFR 985.105].

Failure of DCHA to submit its SEMAP certification within the required time frame will result in an overall performance rating of “troubled.”

DCHA’s SEMAP certification is subject to HUD verification by an on-site confirmatory review at any time. For small PHAs, HUD may conduct a remote confirmatory review.

Upon receipt of DCHA’s SEMAP certification, HUD will rate DCHA’s performance under each SEMAP indicator in accordance with program requirements.

HUD Verification Method

Several of the SEMAP indicators are scored based on a review of a quality control sample selected for this purpose. DCHA or the Independent Auditor must select an unbiased sample that provides an adequate representation of the types of information to be assessed, in accordance with SEMAP requirements [24 CFR 985.2].

If the HUD verification method for the indicator relies on data in the Form-50058 module (formerly known as MTCS) in the PIH Information Center (PIC), and HUD determines that those data are insufficient to verify DCHA's certification on the indicator due to DCHA's failure to adequately report family data, HUD will assign a zero rating for the indicator [24 CFR 985.3].

16-V.C. SEMAP INDICATORS [24 CFR 985.3 and Form HUD-52648]

The table below lists each of the SEMAP indicators, contains a description of each indicator, and explains the basis for points awarded under each indicator.

A PHA that expends less than \$300,000 in Federal awards and whose Section 8 programs are not audited by an independent auditor, is not to be rated under SEMAP indicators 1-7.

SEMAP Indicators
<p>Indicator 1: Selection from the waiting list Maximum Score: 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This indicator shows whether DCHA has written policies in its administrative plan for selecting applicants from the waiting list and whether DCHA follows these policies when selecting applicants from the waiting list.• Points are based on the percent of families that are selected from the waiting list in accordance with DCHA's written policies, according to DCHA's quality control samples.
<p>Indicator 2: Rent reasonableness Maximum Score: 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This indicator shows whether DCHA has and implements a reasonable written method to determine and document for each unit leased that the rent to owner is reasonable based on current rents for comparable unassisted units at the required times.• Points are based on the percent of units for which DCHA follows its written method to determine reasonable rent and has documented its determination that the rent to owner is reasonable, according to DCHA's quality control sample.
<p>Indicator 3: Determination of adjusted income Maximum Score: 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This indicator measures whether DCHA verifies and correctly determines adjusted income for each assisted family, and where applicable, uses the appropriate utility allowances for the unit leased in determining the gross rent.• Points are based on the percent of files that are calculated and verified correctly, according to DCHA's quality control sample.
<p>Indicator 4: Utility allowance schedule Maximum Score: 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This indicator shows whether DCHA maintains an up-to-date utility allowance schedule.• Points are based on whether DCHA has reviewed the utility allowance schedule and adjusted it when required, according to DCHA's certification.

Indicator 5: HQS quality control inspections**Maximum Score: 5**

- This indicator shows whether a DCHA supervisor reinspects a sample of units under contract during DCHA's fiscal year, which meets the minimum sample size requirements for quality control of HQS inspections.
- Points are based on whether the required quality control reinspections were completed, according to DCHA's certification.

Indicator 6: HQS enforcement**Maximum Score: 10**

- This indicator shows whether, following each inspection of a unit under contract where the unit fails to meet housing quality standards, any cited life-threatening deficiencies are corrected within 24 hours from the inspection and all other deficiencies are corrected within no more than 30 calendar days from the inspection or any DCHA-approved extension.
- Points are based on whether DCHA corrects all deficiencies in accordance with required time frames, according to DCHA's certification.

Indicator 7: Expanding housing opportunities**Maximum Points: 5**

- Only applies to PHAs with jurisdiction in metropolitan FMR areas.
- This indicator shows whether the PHA has adopted and implemented a written policy to encourage participation by owners of units located outside areas of poverty or minority concentration; informs voucher holders of the full range of areas where they may lease units both inside and outside the PHA's jurisdiction; and supplies a list of landlords or other parties who are willing to lease units or help families find units, including units outside areas of poverty or minority concentration.
- Points are based on whether the PHA has adopted and implemented written policies in accordance with SEMAP requirements, according to the PHA's certification.

Indicator 8: FMR limit and payment standards**Maximum Points: 5 points**

- This indicator shows whether DCHA has adopted a payment standard schedule that establishes payment standard amounts by unit size for each FMR area in DCHA's jurisdiction, that are within the basic range of 90 to 110 percent of the published FMR.
- Points are based on whether DCHA has appropriately adopted a payment standard schedule(s), according to DCHA's certification.

Indicator 9: Annual reexaminations**Maximum Points: 10**

- This indicator shows whether DCHA completes a reexamination for each participating family at least every 12 months.
- Points are based on the percent of reexaminations that are less than two months overdue, according to data from PIC.

Indicator 10: Correct tenant rent calculations

Maximum Points: 5

- This indicator shows whether DCHA correctly calculates the family’s share of the rent to owner.
- Points are based on the percent of correct calculations of family share of the rent, according to data from PIC.

Indicator 11: Pre-contract inspections

Maximum Points: 5

- This indicator shows whether newly leased units pass inspection on or before the effective date of the assisted lease and HAP contract.
- Points are based on the percent of newly leased units that passed inspection on or before the effective date of the lease and HAP contract, according to data from PIC.

Indicator 12: Annual inspections

Maximum Points: 10

- This indicator shows whether DCHA inspects each unit under contract at least annually.
- Points are based on the percent of annual inspections of units under contract that are more than 2 months overdue, according to data from PIC.

Indicator 13: Lease-up

Maximum Points: 20 points

- This indicator shows whether DCHA enters HAP contracts for at least 98 percent of the number of DCHA’s baseline voucher units in the ACC for the calendar year ending on or before DCHA’s fiscal year, or whether DCHA has expended at least 98 percent of its allocated budget authority for the same calendar year. DCHA can receive 15 points if 95 to 97 percent of vouchers are leased or budget authority is utilized.
- Points are based on utilization of vouchers and HAP expenditures as reported in the voucher management system (VMS) for the most recently completed calendar year.

Indicator 14: Family self-sufficiency (FSS) enrollment and escrow account balances

Maximum Points: 10

- Only applies to PHAs with mandatory FSS programs.
- This indicator shows whether the PHA has enrolled families in the FSS program as required and measures the percent of current FSS participants that have had increases in earned income which resulted in escrow account balances.
- Points are based on the percent of mandatory FSS slots that are filled and the percent of families with escrow account balances, according to data from PIC.

Success Rate of Voucher Holders**Maximum Points: 5**

- Only applies to PHAs that have received approval to establish success rate payment standard amounts, and isn't effective until the second full PHA fiscal year following the date of HUD approval of success rate payment standard amounts.
- This indicator shows whether voucher holders were successful in leasing units with voucher assistance.
- Points are based on the percent of families that were issued vouchers, and that became participants in the voucher program.

Deconcentration Bonus Indicator**Maximum Points: 5**

- Submission of data for this indicator is mandatory for a PHA using one or more payment standard amount(s) that exceed(s) 100 percent of the published FMR set at the 50th percentile rent, starting with the second full PHA fiscal year following initial use of payment standard amounts based on the FMRs set at the 50th percentile.
- Additional points are available to PHAs that have jurisdiction in metropolitan FMR areas and that choose to submit the required data.
- Points are based on whether the data that is submitted meets the requirements for bonus points.

PART VI: RECORD KEEPING

16-VI.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA must maintain complete and accurate accounts and other records for the program in accordance with HUD requirements, in a manner that permits a speedy and effective audit. All such records must be made available to HUD or the Comptroller General of the United States upon request.

In addition, DCHA must ensure that all applicant and participant files are maintained in a way that protects an individual's privacy rights.

16-VI.B. RECORD RETENTION [24 CFR 982.158; 24 CFR 908.101]

During the term of each assisted lease, and for at least three years thereafter, DCHA must keep:

- A copy of the executed lease;
- The HAP contract; and
- The application from the family.

In addition, DCHA must keep the following records for at least three years:

- Records that provide income, racial, ethnic, gender, and disability status data on program applicants and participants;
- An application from each ineligible family and notice that the applicant is not eligible;
- HUD-required reports;
- Unit inspection reports;
- Lead-based paint records as required by 24 CFR 35, Subpart B.
- Accounts and other records supporting DCHA budget and financial statements for the program;
- Records to document the basis for DCHA determination that rent to owner is a reasonable rent (initially and during the term of a HAP contract); and
- Other records specified by HUD.

DCHA must keep the last three years of the Form HUD-50058 and supporting documentation during the term of each assisted lease, and for a period of at least three years from the end of participation (EOP) date [24 CFR 908.101].

DCHA must maintain Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system Income Reports in the tenant file for the duration of the tenancy but for a period not to exceed three years from the EOP date [Notice PIH 2018-18].

Notice PIH 2014-20 requires DCHA to keep records of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions related to violations of the Fair Housing Act or the equal access final rule.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will keep for at least three years records of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions related to violations of the Fair Housing Act, the equal access final rule, or VAWA.

DCHA must keep confidential records of all emergency transfer requested by victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking under DCHA's Emergency Transfer Plan, as well as the outcomes of such requests, and retain the records for a period of three years [see 24 CFR 5.2002(e)(12)].

If an informal hearing to establish a family's citizenship status is held, longer retention requirements apply for some types of documents. For specific requirements, see Section 16-III.D., Retention of Documents.

16-VI.C. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

DCHA must maintain applicant and participant files and information in accordance with the regulatory requirements described below.

DCHA Policy

All applicant and participant information will be kept in a secure location and access will be limited to authorized DCHA staff.

DCHA staff will not discuss personal family information unless there is a business reason to do so. Inappropriate discussion of family information or improper disclosure of family information by staff will result in disciplinary action.

Privacy Act Requirements [24 CFR 5.212 and Form-9886-A]

The collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of social security numbers (SSN), employer identification numbers (EIN), any information derived from these numbers, and income information of applicants and participants must be conducted, to the extent applicable, in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, and all other provisions of Federal, State, and local law.

Applicants and participants, including all adults in the household, are required to sign a consent form, HUD-9886-A, Authorization for Release of Information. This form incorporates the Federal Privacy Act Statement and describes how the information collected using the form may be used, and under what conditions HUD or DCHA may release the information collected.

Upfront Income Verification (UIV) Records

DCHA accesses UIV data through HUD's Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system and has adopted and follows specific security procedures to ensure that all EIV data is protected in accordance with federal laws, regardless of the media on which the data is recorded (e.g. electronic, paper). These requirements are contained in the HUD-issued document, *Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System, Security Procedures for Upfront Income Verification data*.

DCHA Policy

In utilizing HUD's EIV system, DCHA has adopted and implemented EIV security procedures required by HUD.

Criminal Records

DCHA may only disclose the criminal conviction records which DCHA receives from a law enforcement agency to officers or employees of DCHA, or to authorized representatives of DCHA who have a job-related need to have access to the information [24 CFR 5.903(e)].

DCHA has established and has implemented a system of records management that ensures that any criminal record received by DCHA from a law enforcement agency is maintained confidentially, not misused or improperly disseminated, and destroyed, once the purpose for which the record was requested has been accomplished, including expiration of the period for filing a challenge to DCHA action without institution of a challenge or final disposition of any such litigation [24 CFR 5.903(g)].

DCHA must establish and implement a system of records management that ensures that any sex offender registration information received by DCHA from a State or local agency is maintained confidentially, not misused or improperly disseminated, and destroyed, once the purpose for which the record was requested has been accomplished, including expiration of the period for filing a challenge to DCHA action without institution of a challenge or final disposition of any such litigation. However, a record of the screening, including the type of screening and the date performed must be retained [Notice PIH 2012-28]. This requirement does not apply to information that is public information or is obtained by DCHA other than under 24 CFR 5.905.

Medical/Disability Records

DCHA is not permitted to inquire about the nature or extent of a person's disability. DCHA may not inquire about a person's diagnosis or details of treatment for a disability or medical condition. If DCHA receives a verification document that provides such information, DCHA should not place this information in the tenant file. DCHA should destroy the document.

Documentation of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking

For requirements and DCHA policies related to management of documentation obtained from victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking see section 16-IX.E.

PART VII: REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING FOR CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL

16-VII.A. OVERVIEW

DCHA has certain responsibilities relative to children with elevated blood lead levels that are receiving HCV assistance. The notification, verification, and hazard reduction requirements are discussed in Chapter 8. This part deals with the reporting requirements, and data collection and record keeping responsibilities that DCHA is subject to.

16-VII.B. REPORTING REQUIREMENT [24 CFR 35.1225(e); Notice PIH 2017-13]

The owner must report the name and address of a child identified as having an elevated blood lead level to the public health department within five business days of being so notified by any other medical health care professional. The owner must also notify the HUD field office and the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (OLHCHH) of the child's address within five business days. DCHA may collaborate with the owner on the notification process, such as by agreeing with the owner to provide the required notifications on the owner's behalf.

DCHA Policy

Upon notification by the owner, DCHA will provide the public health department written notice of the name and address of any child identified as having an elevated blood lead level within five business days.

Upon notification by the owner, DCHA will notify the HUD field office and the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes (OLHCHH) of the child's address within five business days.

16-VII.C. DATA COLLECTION AND RECORD KEEPING [24 CFR 35.1225(f)]

At least quarterly, DCHA must attempt to obtain from the public health department(s) with a similar area of jurisdiction, the names and/or addresses of children less than 6 years old with an elevated blood lead level.

If DCHA obtains names and addresses of elevated blood lead level children from the public health department(s), DCHA must match this information with the names and addresses of families receiving HCV assistance, unless the public health department performs such a procedure. If a match occurs, DCHA must carry out the notification, verification, and hazard reduction requirements discussed in Chapter 8, and the reporting requirement discussed above.

At least quarterly, DCHA must also report an updated list of the addresses of units receiving assistance under the HCV program to the same public health department(s), unless the public health department(s) states that it does not wish to receive such a report.

DCHA Policy

The public health department(s) has stated they **do not** wish to receive a report of an updated list of the addresses of units receiving assistance under the HCV program, on a quarterly basis. Therefore, DCHA is not providing such a report.

PART VIII: DETERMINATION OF INSUFFICIENT FUNDING

16-VIII.A. OVERVIEW

The HCV regulations allow DCHA to deny families permission to move and to terminate Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts if funding under the consolidated ACC is insufficient to support continued assistance [24 CFR 982.354(e)(1) and 982.454]. If DCHA denies a family a portability move based on insufficient funding, DCHA is required to notify the local HUD office within 10 business days [24 CFR 982.354]. Insufficient funding may also impact DCHA's ability to issue vouchers to families on the waiting list. This part discusses the methodology DCHA will use to determine whether or not DCHA has sufficient funding to issue vouchers, approve moves, and to continue subsidizing all families currently under a HAP contract. DCHA must identify in the administrative plan, in the event of insufficient funding, considering any cost saving measures taken by DCHA, a description of the factors DCHA will consider when determining which HAP contracts to terminate first. See Chapter 12 for a description of these factors.

16-VIII.B. METHODOLOGY

DCHA Policy

DCHA will determine whether there is adequate funding to issue vouchers, approve moves to higher cost units and areas, and continue subsidizing all current participants by comparing DCHA's annual budget authority to the annual total HAP needs on a monthly basis. The total HAP needs for the calendar year will be projected by establishing the actual HAP costs year to date. To that figure, DCHA will add anticipated HAP expenditures for the remainder of the calendar year. Projected HAP expenditures will be calculated by multiplying the projected number of units leased per remaining months by the most current month's average HAP. The projected number of units leased per month will take into account the average monthly turnover of participant families. If the total annual HAP needs equal or exceed the annual budget authority and funding reserves, or if DCHA cannot support the cost of the proposed subsidy commitment (voucher issuance or move) based on the funding analysis, DCHA will be considered to have insufficient funding.

PART IX: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA): NOTIFICATION, DOCUMENTATION, CONFIDENTIALITY

16-IX.A. OVERVIEW

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides special protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking who are applying for or receiving assistance under the housing choice voucher (HCV) program. If your state or local laws provide greater protection for such victims, those laws apply in conjunction with VAWA.

- Although the VAWA 2022 statute does not specifically include human trafficking in the list of victims protected under VAWA, in 2022 HUD began including human trafficking as part of the list of victims protected under VAWA (as seen in Notices PIH 2022-06, PIH 2022-22, and PIH 2022-24). In the absence of a final rule implementing VAWA 2022 and to mirror HUD's recent usage, this policy includes human trafficking in addition to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking anywhere such a list appears.

In addition to definitions of key terms used in VAWA, this part contains general VAWA requirements and DCHA policies in three areas: notification, documentation, and confidentiality. Specific VAWA requirements and DCHA policies are located primarily in the following sections: 3-I.C, "Family Breakup and Remaining Member of Tenant Family"; 3-III.H, "Prohibition against Denial of Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Human Trafficking"; 10-I.A, "Allowable Moves"; 10-I.B, "Restrictions on Moves"; 12-II.E, "Terminations Related to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking"; and 12-II.F, "Termination Notice."

16-IX.B. DEFINITIONS [24 CFR 5.2003, 42 USC 13925]

As used in VAWA:

- The term *affiliated individual* means, with respect to a person:
 - A spouse, parent, brother or sister, or child of that individual, or an individual to whom that individual stands in the position or place of a parent; or
 - Any other individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the household of the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- The term *bifurcate* means, with respect to a public housing or Section 8 lease, to divide a lease as a matter of law such that certain tenants can be evicted or removed while the remaining family members' lease and occupancy rights are allowed to remain intact.
- The term *dating violence* means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - The length of the relationship
 - The type of relationship
 - The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship

- The term *domestic violence* includes felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant funding, and in the case of victim services, includes the user or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who is:
 - The current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, or person similarly situated to a spouse or intimate partner of the victim
 - A person who is cohabitating or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner
 - A person with whom the victim shares a child in common
 - A person who commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction
- The term *economic abuse* means behavior that is coercive, deceptive, or unreasonably controls or restrains a person's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources to which they are entitled, including using coercion, fraud, and manipulation to:
 - Restrict a person's access to money, assets, credit, or financial information
 - Unfairly use a person's personal economic resources, including money, assets, and credit, for one's own advantage
 - Exert undue influence over a person's financial and economic behavior or decisions, including forcing default on joint or other financial obligations, exploiting powers of attorney, guardianship, or conservatorship, or to whom one has a fiduciary duty
- The term *sexual assault* means:
 - Any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks the capacity to consent
- The term *stalking* means:
 - To engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.

- The term *technological abuse* means an act or pattern of behavior that occurs within domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and is intended to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, extort, or monitor another person, except as otherwise permitted by law, that occurs using any form of technology, including but not limited to:
 - Internet enabled devices
 - Online spaces and platforms
 - Computers
 - Mobile devices
 - Cameras and imaging programs
 - Apps
 - Location tracking devices
 - Communication technologies
 - Any other emergency technologies

16-IX.C. NOTIFICATION [24 CFR 5.2005(a)]

Notification to Public

DCHA adopts the following policy to help ensure that all actual and potential beneficiaries of its HCV program are aware of their rights under VAWA.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will post the following information regarding VAWA in its offices and on its website. It will also make the information readily available to anyone who requests it.

A copy of Form HUD-5380, Notice of Occupancy Rights under VAWA, to housing choice voucher program applicants and participants who are or have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking (Exhibit 16-1)

A copy of Form HUD-5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking and Alternate Documentation (Exhibit 16-2)

A copy of DCHA's emergency transfer plan (Exhibit 16-3)

A copy of Form HUD-5383, HUD's Emergency Transfer Request for Certain Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (Exhibit 16-4)

The National Domestic Violence Hot Line: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY) (included in Exhibits 16-1 and 16-2)

Contact information for local victim advocacy groups or service providers

Notification to Program Applicants and Participants [24 CFR 5.2005(a)(1)]

DCHA is required to inform program applicants and participants of their rights under VAWA, including their right to confidentiality and the limits thereof, when they are denied assistance, when they are admitted to the program, and when they are notified of an eviction or termination of housing benefits.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will provide all applicants with information about VAWA at the time they request an application for housing assistance, as part of the written briefing packet, and at the time the family is admitted to the program. DCHA will also include information about VAWA in all notices of denial of assistance (see section 3-III.H).

DCHA will provide all participants with information about VAWA at the time of admission (see section 5-I.B) and at annual reexamination. DCHA will also include information about VAWA in notices of termination of assistance, as provided in section 12-II.F.

The VAWA information provided to applicants and participants will consist of the notices in Exhibits 16-1 and 16-2.

DCHA is not limited to providing VAWA information at the times specified in the above policy. If DCHA decides to provide VAWA information to a participant following an incident of domestic violence, Notice PIH 2017-08 cautions against sending the information by mail, since the abuser may be monitoring the mail. The notice recommends that in such cases DCHA make alternative delivery arrangements that will not put the victim at risk.

DCHA Policy

Whenever DCHA has reason to suspect that providing information about VAWA to a participant might place a victim of domestic violence at risk, it will attempt to deliver the information by hand directly to the victim or by having the victim come to an office or other space that may be safer for the individual, making reasonable accommodations as necessary. For example, DCHA may decide not to send mail regarding VAWA protections to the victim's unit if DCHA believes the perpetrator may have access to the victim's mail, unless requested by the victim.

When discussing VAWA with the victim, DCHA will take reasonable precautions to ensure that no one can overhear the conversation, such as having conversations in a private room.

The victim may, but is not required to, designate an attorney, advocate, or other secure contact for communications regarding VAWA protections.

Notification to Owners and Managers

While DCHA is no longer required by regulation to notify owners and managers participating in the HCV program of their rights and obligations under VAWA, DCHA may still choose to inform them.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will provide owners and managers with information about their rights and obligations under VAWA when they begin their participation in the program.

The VAWA information provided to owners will consist of the notice in Exhibit 16-5 and a copy of Form HUD-5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking and Alternate Documentation.

16-IX.D. DOCUMENTATION [24 CFR 5.2007]

When DCHA is presented with a claim for initial or continued assistance based on status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or criminal activity related to any of these forms of abuse may—but is not required to—request that the individual making the claim document the abuse. Any request for documentation must be in writing, and the individual must be allowed at least 14 business days after receipt of the request to submit the documentation. DCHA may extend this time period at its discretion. [24 CFR 5.2007(a)]

The individual may satisfy DCHA’s request by providing any one of the following three forms of documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(b)]:

- (1) A completed and signed HUD-approved certification form (HUD-5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking), which must include the name of the perpetrator only if the name of the perpetrator is safe to provide and is known to the victim. The form may be filled out and submitted on behalf of the victim.
- (2) A federal, state, tribal, territorial, or local police report or court record, or an administrative record
- (3) Documentation signed by a person who has assisted the victim in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or the effects of such abuse. This person may be an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider; an attorney; a mental health professional; or a medical professional. The person signing the documentation must attest under penalty of perjury to the person’s belief that the incidents in question are bona fide incidents of abuse. The victim must also sign the documentation.

DCHA may not require third-party documentation (forms 2 and 3) in addition to certification (form 1), except as specified below under “Conflicting Documentation,” nor may it require certification in addition to third-party documentation [FR Notice 11/16/16].

DCHA Policy

Any request for documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking will be in writing, will specify a deadline of 14 business days following receipt of the request, will describe the three forms of acceptable documentation, will provide explicit instructions on where and to whom the documentation must be submitted, and will state the consequences for failure to submit the documentation or request an extension in writing by the deadline.

DCHA may, in its discretion, extend the deadline for 10 business days. In determining whether to extend the deadline, DCHA will consider factors that may contribute to the victim’s inability to provide documentation in a timely manner, including cognitive limitations, disabilities, limited English proficiency, absence from the unit, administrative delays, the danger of further violence, and the victim’s need to address health or safety issues. Any extension granted by DCHA will be in writing.

Once the victim provides documentation, DCHA will acknowledge receipt of the documentation within 10 business days.

Conflicting Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(e)]

In cases where DCHA receives conflicting certification documents from two or more members of a household, each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the perpetrator, DCHA may determine which is the true victim by requiring each to provide acceptable third-party documentation, as described above (forms 2 and 3). DCHA may also request third-party documentation when submitted documentation contains information that conflicts with existing information already available to DCHA. Individuals have 30 calendar days to return third-party verification to DCHA. If DCHA does not receive third-party documentation, and DCHA will deny or terminate assistance as a result, DCHA must hold separate hearings for the tenants [Notice PIH 2017-08].

DCHA must honor any court orders issued to protect the victim or to address the distribution of property.

DCHA Policy

If presented with conflicting certification documents from members of the same household, DCHA will attempt to determine which is the true victim by requiring each of them to provide third-party documentation in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007(e) and by following any HUD guidance on how such determinations should be made.

When requesting third-party documents, DCHA will provide contact information for local domestic violence and legal aid offices. In such cases, applicants or tenants will be given 30 calendar days from the date of the request to provide such documentation.

If DCHA does not receive third-party documentation within the required timeframe (and any extensions) DCHA will deny VAWA protections and will notify the applicant or tenant in writing of the denial. If, as a result, the applicant or tenant is denied or terminated from the program, DCHA will hold separate hearings for the applicants or tenants.

Discretion to Require No Formal Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(d)]

DCHA has the discretion to provide benefits to an individual based solely on the individual's statement or other corroborating evidence—i.e., without requiring formal documentation of abuse in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007(b). HUD recommends documentation in a confidential manner when a verbal statement or other evidence is accepted.

DCHA Policy

If DCHA accepts an individual's statement or other corroborating evidence (as determined by the victim) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, DCHA will document acceptance of the statement or evidence in the individual's file.

Failure to Provide Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(c)]

In order to deny relief for protection under VAWA, DCHA must provide the individual requesting relief with a written request for documentation of abuse. If the individual fails to provide the documentation within 14 business days from the date of receipt, or such longer time as DCHA may allow, DCHA may deny relief for protection under VAWA.

16-IX.E. CONFIDENTIALITY [24 CFR 5.2007(b)(4)]

All information provided to DCHA regarding domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, including the fact that an individual is a victim, must be retained in confidence. This means that DCHA (1) may not enter the information into any shared database, (2) may not allow employees or others to access the information unless they are explicitly authorized to do so and have a need to know the information for purposes of their work, and (3) may not provide the information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that the disclosure is (a) requested or consented to by the individual in writing, (b) required for use in an eviction proceeding, or (c) otherwise required by applicable law.

DCHA Policy

If disclosure is required for use in an eviction proceeding or is otherwise required by applicable law, DCHA will inform the victim before disclosure occurs so that safety risks can be identified and addressed.

**EXHIBIT 16-1: SAMPLE NOTICE OF OCCUPANCY RIGHTS UNDER THE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT, FORM HUD-5380**

Davis Community Housing Authority

Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act¹

To all Tenants and Applicants

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protections are not only available to women, but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal agency that oversees that the housing choice voucher program is in compliance with VAWA. This notice explains your rights under VAWA. A HUD-approved certification form is attached to this notice. You can fill out this form to show that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and that you wish to use your rights under VAWA.”

Protections for Applicants

If you otherwise qualify for assistance under the housing choice voucher program, you cannot be denied admission or denied assistance because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Protections for Tenants

If you are receiving assistance under the housing choice voucher program, you may not be denied assistance, terminated from participation, or be evicted from your rental housing because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Also, if you or an affiliated individual of yours is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking by a member of your household or any guest, you may not be denied rental assistance or occupancy rights under the housing choice voucher program solely on the basis of criminal activity directly relating to that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Affiliated individual means your spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child, or a person to whom you stand in the place of a parent or guardian (for example, the affiliated individual is in your care, custody, or control); or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in your household.

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Removing the Abuser or Perpetrator from the Household

DCHA may divide (bifurcate) your lease in order to evict the individual or terminate the assistance of the individual who has engaged in criminal activity (the abuser or perpetrator) directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If DCHA chooses to remove the abuser or perpetrator, DCHA may not take away the rights of eligible tenants to the unit or otherwise punish the remaining tenants. If the evicted abuser or perpetrator was the sole tenant to have established eligibility for assistance under the program, DCHA must allow the tenant who is or has been a victim and other household members to remain in the unit for a period of time, in order to establish eligibility under the program or under another HUD housing program covered by VAWA, or, find alternative housing.

In removing the abuser or perpetrator from the household, DCHA must follow federal, state, and local eviction procedures. In order to divide a lease, DCHA may, but is not required to, ask you for documentation or certification of the incidences of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Moving to Another Unit

Upon your request, DCHA may permit you to move to another unit, subject to the availability of other units, and still keep your assistance. In order to approve a request, DCHA may ask you to provide documentation that you are requesting to move because of an incidence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the request is a request for emergency transfer, the housing provider may ask you to submit a written request or fill out a form where you certify that you meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA. The criteria are:

- 1. You are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.** If your housing provider does not already have documentation that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, your housing provider may ask you for such documentation, as described in the documentation section below.
- 2. You expressly request the emergency transfer.** Your housing provider may choose to require that you submit a form, or may accept another written or oral request.
- 3. You reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your current unit.** This means you have a reason to fear that if you are not granted a unit transfer you would suffer violence in the very near future.

OR

You are a victim of sexual assault and the assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period before you request a transfer. If you are a victim of sexual assault, then in addition to qualifying for an emergency transfer because you reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your unit, you may qualify for an emergency transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises of the property from which you are seeking your transfer, and that assault happened within the 90-calendar-day period before you expressly request the transfer.

DCHA will keep confidential requests for emergency transfers by victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and the location of any move by such victims and their families.

DCHA's emergency transfer plan provides further information on emergency transfers, and DCHA must make a copy of its emergency transfer plan available to you if you ask to see it.

Documenting You Are or Have Been a Victim of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

DCHA can, but is not required to, ask you to provide documentation to "certify" that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Such request from DCHA must be in writing, and DCHA must give you at least 14 business days (Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays do not count) from the day you receive the request to provide the documentation. DCHA may, but does not have to, extend the deadline for the submission of documentation upon your request.

You can provide one of the following to DCHA as documentation. It is your choice which of the following to submit if DCHA asks you to provide documentation that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- A complete HUD-approved certification form given to you by DCHA with this notice, that documents an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The form will ask for your name, the date, time, and location of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and a description of the incident. The certification form provides for including the name of the abuser or perpetrator if the name of the abuser or perpetrator is known and is safe to provide.
- A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial, or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency that documents the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Examples of such records include police reports, protective orders, and restraining orders, among others.
- A statement, which you must sign, along with the signature of an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, a medical professional or a mental health professional (collectively, "professional") from whom you sought assistance in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse, and with the professional selected by you attesting under penalty of perjury that they believe that the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking are grounds for protection.
- Any other statement or evidence that DCHA has agreed to accept.

If you fail or refuse to provide one of these documents within the 14 business days, DCHA does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

If DCHA receives conflicting evidence that an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has been committed (such as certification forms from two or more members of a household each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the abuser or perpetrator), DCHA has the right to request that you provide third-party documentation within thirty 30 calendar days in order to resolve the conflict. If you fail or refuse to provide third-party documentation where there is conflicting evidence, DCHA does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

Confidentiality

DCHA must keep confidential any information you provide related to the exercise of your rights under VAWA, including the fact that you are exercising your rights under VAWA.

DCHA must not allow any individual administering assistance or other services on behalf of the PHA (for example, employees and contractors) to have access to confidential information unless for reasons that specifically call for these individuals to have access to this information under applicable Federal, State, or local law.

DCHA must not enter your information into any shared database or disclose your information to any other entity or individual. DCHA, however, may disclose the information provided if:

- You give written permission to DCHA to release the information on a time limited basis.
- DCHA needs to use the information in an eviction or termination proceeding, such as to evict your abuser or perpetrator or terminate your abuser or perpetrator from assistance under this program.
- A law requires DCHA or your landlord to release the information.

VAWA does not limit DCHA's duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property. This includes orders issued to protect a victim and orders dividing property among household members in cases where a family breaks up.

Reasons a Tenant Eligible for Occupancy Rights under VAWA May Be Evicted or Assistance May Be Terminated

You can be evicted and your assistance can be terminated for serious or repeated lease violations that are not related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against you. However, DCHA cannot hold tenants who have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to a more demanding set of rules than it applies to tenants who have not been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

The protections described in this notice might not apply, and you could be evicted and your assistance terminated, if DCHA can demonstrate that not evicting you or terminating your assistance would present a real physical danger that:

1. Would occur within an immediate time frame, and
2. Could result in death or serious bodily harm to other tenants or those who work on the property.

If DCHA can demonstrate the above, DCHA should only terminate your assistance or evict you if there are no other actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat.

Other Laws

VAWA does not replace any federal, state, or local law that provides greater protection for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. You may be entitled to additional housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under other Federal laws, as well as under State and local laws.

Non-Compliance with The Requirements of This Notice

You may report a covered housing provider's violations of these rights and seek additional assistance, if needed, by contacting or filing a complaint with **[insert contact information for any intermediary, if applicable]** or **[insert HUD field office]**.

For Additional Information

You may view a copy of HUD's final VAWA rule at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-11-16/pdf/2016-25888.pdf>.

Additionally, DCHA must make a copy of HUD's VAWA regulations available to you if you ask to see them.

For questions regarding VAWA, please contact **[insert name of program or rental assistance contact information able to answer questions on VAWA]**.

For help regarding an abusive relationship, you may call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or, for persons with hearing impairments, 1-800-787-3224 (TTY). You may also contact **[Insert contact information for relevant local organizations]**.

For tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

For help regarding sexual assault, you may contact **[Insert contact information for relevant organizations]**

Victims of stalking seeking help may contact **[Insert contact information for relevant organizations]**.

Attachment: Certification Form HUD-5382 **[form approved for this program to be included]**

**EXHIBIT 16-2: CERTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE,
SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING AND ALTERNATE DOCUMENTATION,
FORM HUD-5382**

**CERTIFICATION OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
DATING VIOLENCE,
SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING,
AND ALTERNATE DOCUMENTATION**

**U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development**

OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Exp. 06/30/2017

Purpose of Form: The Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”) protects applicants, tenants, and program participants in certain HUD programs from being evicted, denied housing assistance, or terminated from housing assistance based on acts of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against them. Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Use of This Optional Form: If you are seeking VAWA protections from your housing provider, your housing provider may give you a written request that asks you to submit documentation about the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

In response to this request, you or someone on your behalf may complete this optional form and submit it to your housing provider, or you may submit one of the following types of third-party documentation:

- (1) A document signed by you and an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or medical professional, or a mental health professional (collectively, “professional”) from whom you have sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse. The document must specify, under penalty of perjury, that the professional believes the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking occurred and meet the definition of “domestic violence,” “dating violence,” “sexual assault,” or “stalking” in HUD’s regulations at 24 CFR 5.2003.
- (2) A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency; or
- (3) At the discretion of the housing provider, a statement or other evidence provided by the applicant or tenant.

Submission of Documentation: The time period to submit documentation is 14 business days from the date that you receive a written request from your housing provider asking that you provide documentation of the occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Your housing provider may, but is not required to, extend the time period to submit the documentation, if you request an extension of the time period. If the requested information is not received within 14 business days of when you received the request for the documentation, or any extension of the date provided by your housing provider, your housing provider does not need to grant you any of the VAWA protections. Distribution or issuance of this form does not serve as a written request for certification.

Confidentiality: All information provided to your housing provider concerning the incident(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking shall be kept confidential and such details shall not be entered into any shared database. Employees of your housing provider are not to have access to these details unless to grant or deny VAWA protections to you, and such employees may not disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is: (i) consented to by you in writing in a time-limited release; (ii) required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or (iii) otherwise required by applicable law.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING**

1. Date the written request is received by victim: _____

2. Name of victim: _____

3. Your name (if different from victim's): _____

4. Name(s) of other family member(s) listed on the lease: _____

5. Residence of victim: _____

6. Name of the accused perpetrator (if known and can be safely disclosed): _____

7. Relationship of the accused perpetrator to the victim: _____

8. Date(s) and times(s) of incident(s) (if known): _____

10. Location of incident(s): _____

In your own words, briefly describe the incident(s):

This is to certify that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that the individual named above in Item 2 is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. I acknowledge that submission of false information could jeopardize program eligibility and could be the basis for denial of admission, termination of assistance, or eviction.

Signature _____ Signed on (Date) _____

Public Reporting Burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting the data. The information provided is to be used by the housing provider to request certification that the applicant or tenant is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The information is subject to the confidentiality requirements of VAWA. This agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.

**EXHIBIT 16-3: EMERGENCY TRANSFER PLAN FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING
(HCV VERSION)**

Attachment: Certification form HUD-5382

[Insert name of covered housing provider]

**Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual
Assault, or Stalking
Housing Choice Voucher Program**

Emergency Transfers

DCHA is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),³ DCHA allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.⁴ The ability of DCHA to honor such request for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether DCHA has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency that oversees that the **public housing and housing choice voucher (HCV) programs** are in compliance with VAWA.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L, is eligible for an emergency transfer if the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

³Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

⁴Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify DCHA's management office and submit a written request for a transfer to **any PHA office**. DCHA will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under DCHA's program; OR
2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

DCHA will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives DCHA written permission to release the information on a time-limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person or persons that committed an act of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence against Women Act for All Tenants for more information about DCHA's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

DCHA cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. DCHA will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. DCHA may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If DCHA has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency transfer is eligible, DCHA will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, DCHA will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan.

Emergency Transfers: Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

Tenant-based assistance: If you are a participant in the tenant-based HCV program and request an emergency transfer as described in this plan, DCHA will assist you to move to a safe unit quickly using your existing voucher assistance. DCHA will make exceptions to program regulations restricting moves as required.

At your request, DCHA will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

Project-based assistance: If you are assisted under the project-based voucher (PBV) program, you may request an emergency transfer under the following programs for which you are not required to apply:

- Tenant-based voucher, if available
- Project-based assistance in the same project (if a vacant unit is available and you determine that the vacant unit is safe)
- Project-based assistance in another development owned by DCHA

Emergency transfers under VAWA will take priority over waiting list admissions for these types of assistance.

You may also request an emergency transfer under the following programs for which you are required to apply:

- Public housing program
- PBV assistance in another development not owned by DCHA
- **[Insert other programs the PHA provides, such as LIHTC or HOME]**

Emergency transfers will not take priority over waiting list admissions for these programs. At your request, DCHA will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at: <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

Tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at: <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

Attachment: Local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

EXHIBIT 16-4: EMERGENCY TRANSFER REQUEST FOR CERTAIN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING, FORM HUD-5383

**EMERGENCY TRANSFER
REQUEST FOR CERTAIN
VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE,
SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING**

**U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development**

OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Exp. 06/30/2017

Purpose of Form: If you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and you are seeking an emergency transfer, you may use this form to request an emergency transfer and certify that you meet the requirements of eligibility for an emergency transfer under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Although the statutory name references women, VAWA rights and protections apply to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. Using this form does not necessarily mean that you will receive an emergency transfer. See your housing provider's emergency transfer plan for more information about the availability of emergency transfers.

The requirements you must meet are:

(1) You are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If your housing provider does not already have documentation that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, your housing provider may ask you for such documentation. In response, you may submit Form HUD-5382, or any one of the other types of documentation listed on that Form.

(2) You expressly request the emergency transfer. Submission of this form confirms that you have expressly requested a transfer. Your housing provider may choose to require that you submit this form, or may accept another written or oral request. Please see your housing provider's emergency transfer plan for more details.

(3) You reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your current unit. This means you have a reason to fear that if you do not receive a transfer you would suffer violence in the very near future.

OR

You are a victim of sexual assault and the assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period before you request a transfer. If you are a victim of sexual assault, then in addition to qualifying for an emergency transfer because you reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your unit, you may qualify for an emergency transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises of the property from which you are seeking your transfer, and that assault happened within the 90-calendar-day period before you submit this form or otherwise expressly request the transfer.

Submission of Documentation: If you have third-party documentation that demonstrates why you are eligible for an emergency transfer, you should submit that documentation to your housing provider if it is safe for you to do so. Examples of third party documentation include, but are not limited to: a letter or other documentation from a victim service provider, social worker, legal assistance provider, pastoral counselor, mental health provider, or other professional from whom you have sought assistance; a current restraining order; a recent court order or other court records; a law enforcement report or records; communication records from the perpetrator of the violence or family members or friends of the perpetrator of the violence, including emails, voicemails, text messages, and social media posts.

Confidentiality: All information provided to your housing provider concerning the incident(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and concerning your request for an emergency transfer shall be kept confidential. Such details shall not be entered into any shared database. Employees of your housing provider are not to have access to these details unless to grant or deny VAWA protections or an emergency transfer to you. Such employees may not disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is: (i) consented to by you in writing in a time-limited release; (ii) required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or (iii) otherwise required by applicable law.

TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE PERSON REQUESTING A TRANSFER

1. Name of victim requesting an emergency transfer: _____

2. Your name (if different from victim's) _____

3. Name(s) of other family member(s) listed on the lease: _____

4. Name(s) of other family member(s) who would transfer with the victim: _____

5. Address of location from which the victim seeks to transfer: _____

6. Address or phone number for contacting the victim: _____

7. Name of the accused perpetrator (if known and can be safely disclosed): _____

8. Relationship of the accused perpetrator to the victim: _____

9. Date(s), Time(s) and location(s) of incident(s): _____

10. Is the person requesting the transfer a victim of a sexual assault that occurred in the past 90 days on the premises of the property from which the victim is seeking a transfer? If yes, skip question 11. If no, fill out question 11. _____

11. Describe why the victim believes they are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if they remain in their current unit.

12. If voluntarily provided, list any third-party documentation you are providing along with this notice: _____

This is to certify that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that the individual named above in Item 1 meets the requirement laid out on this form for an emergency transfer. I acknowledge that submission of false information could jeopardize program eligibility and could be the basis for denial of admission, termination of assistance, or eviction.

Signature _____ Signed on (Date) _____

EXHIBIT 16-5: MODEL OWNER NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

DAVIS COMMUNITY HOUSING AUTHORITY NOTIFICATION OF YOUR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

VAWA provides protections for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and PBV applicants, tenants, and participants from being denied assistance on the basis or as a direct result of being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking.

Purpose

Many of VAWA's protections to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking involve action by the public housing agency (PHA), but some situations involve action by owners of assisted housing. The purpose of this notice (herein called "Notice") is to explain your rights and obligations under VAWA, as an owner of housing assisted through [insert name of housing provider] HCV program. Each component of this Notice also provides citations to HUD's applicable regulations.

Denial of Tenancy

Protections for applicants: Owners cannot deny tenancy based on the applicant having been or currently being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. However, the applicant must be otherwise eligible for tenancy. (See 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 982.452(b)(1).)

Eviction

Protections for HCV participants: Incidents or threats of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking will not be considered a serious or repeated lease violation by the victim, or good cause to terminate the tenancy of the victim (see 24 CFR 5.2005(c)). Protection also applies to criminal activity related directly to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, conducted by a member of a tenant's household or any guest or other person under the tenant's control, if the tenant or an affiliated individual of the tenant is the victim or threatened victim of such domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking (24 CFR 5.2005(b)(2)).

Limitations of VAWA protections:

a. Nothing in VAWA limits the authority of an owner, when notified of a court order, to comply with a court order with respect to (24 CFR 5.2005(d)(1)):

- 1) The rights of access or control of property, including civil protection orders issued to protect a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; or
- 2) The distribution or possession of property among members of a household in a case.

b. Nothing in VAWA limits an owner from evicting a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking for a lease violation that is not premised on an act of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, as long as the owner does not subject the victim to more demanding standards than other tenants when deciding whether to evict. (See 24 CFR 5.2005(d)(2).)

c. Nothing in VAWA limits an owner from evicting a tenant (including the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking) if the owner can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing services to the HCV property would be present if the tenant or lawful occupant is not evicted. (See 24 CFR 5.2005(d)(3).)

i. In this context, words, gestures, actions, or other indicators will be considered an “actual and imminent threat” if they meet the following standards: An actual and imminent threat consists of a physical danger that is real, would occur within an immediate time frame, and could result in death or serious bodily harm. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include: the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the length of time before the potential harm would occur. (See 24 CFR 5.2003.)

ii. Any eviction due to “actual and imminent threat” should be utilized by an owner only when there are no other actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat, including, but not limited to, transferring the victim to a different unit, barring the perpetrator from the property, contacting law enforcement to increase police presence or develop other plans to keep the property safe, or seeking other legal remedies to prevent the perpetrator from acting on a threat. Restrictions predicated on public safety cannot be based on stereotypes, but must be tailored to particularized concerns about individual residents. (See 24 CFR 5.2005(d)(4).)

Documentation of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking

If an applicant or tenant requests VAWA protection based on status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, the owner has the option to request that the victim document or provide written evidence to demonstrate that the violence occurred. However, nothing in HUD’s regulation requires a covered housing provider to request this documentation. (See 24 CFR 5.2007(b)(3).)

If the owner chooses to request this documentation, the owner must make such request in writing. The individual may satisfy this request by providing any one document type listed under 24 CFR 5.2007(b)(1):

- a. Form HUD-55383 (Self-Certification Form); or
- b. A document: 1) Signed by an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or medical professional or a mental health professional (collectively, “professional”) from whom the victim has sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, or the effects of abuse:
 - 2) Signed by the applicant or tenant; and
 - 3) That specifies, under penalty of perjury, that the professional believes in the occurrence of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking that is the ground for protection and remedies under 24 CFR part 5, subpart L, and that the incident meets the applicable definition of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking under 24 CFR 5.2003; or
- c. A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency; or
- d. At the discretion of a covered housing provider, a statement or other evidence provided by the applicant or tenant.

The owner must accept any of the above items (a – c). The owner has discretion to accept a statement or other evidence (d).

The owner is prohibited from requiring third-party documentation of the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, unless the submitted documentation contains conflicting information.

If the owner makes a written request for documentation, the owner may require submission of that documentation within 14 business days after the date that the individual received the written request for documentation. (24 CFR 5.2007(a)(2)). The owner may extend this time period at its discretion. During the 14 business-day period and any granted extensions of that time, no adverse actions, such as evictions or terminations, can be taken against the individual requesting VAWA protection.

Once a victim provides documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, the owner is encouraged to acknowledge receipt of the documentation in a timely manner.

If the applicant or tenant fails to provide documentation that meets the criteria in 24 CFR 5.2007 within 14 business days after receiving the written request for that documentation or within the designated extension period, nothing in VAWA may be construed to limit the authority of the covered housing provider to:

- a. Deny admission by the applicant or tenant to the housing or program;
- b. Deny assistance under the covered housing program to the applicant or tenant;
- c. Terminate the participation of the tenant in the covered housing program; or
- d. Evict the tenant, or a lawful occupant that commits a violation of a lease.

An individual's failure to timely provide documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking does not result in a waiver of the individual's right to challenge the denial of assistance or termination, nor does it preclude the individual's ability to raise an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking at eviction or termination proceedings.

Owners may not coerce, intimidate, threaten, interfere with, or retaliate against any person who exercises or assists or encourages a person to exercise any rights or protections under VAWAs (See FR Notice 1/4/23.)

Moves

A victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking may move in violation of their lease if the move is required to protect their safety. If a move results in the termination of the Housing Assistance Payment Contract, the lease is automatically terminated.

Lease Bifurcation

Owners may choose to bifurcate a lease, or remove a household member from a lease in order to evict, remove, terminate occupancy rights, or terminate assistance to such member who engages in criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking against an affiliated individual or other individual. (See 24 CFR 5.2009(a).) If an owner chooses to bifurcate the lease, the owner must comply with the reasonable time to establish eligibility under the covered housing program or find alternative housing following lease bifurcation provision in 24 CFR 5.2009(b). VAWA protections, including bifurcation, do not apply to guests or unreported members of a household or anyone else residing in a household who is not a tenant.

Eviction, removal, termination of occupancy rights, or termination of assistance must be effected in accordance with the procedures prescribed by federal, state, or local law for termination of leases.

To avoid unnecessary delay in the bifurcation process, HUD recommends that owners seek court-ordered eviction of the perpetrator pursuant to applicable laws. This process results in the underlying lease becoming null and void once the owner regains possession of the unit. The owner would then execute a new lease with the victim.

Evictions Due to “Actual and Imminent Threat” or Violations Not Premised on Abuse

VAWA generally prohibits eviction on the basis or as a direct result of the fact that the applicant or tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, if the applicant or tenant otherwise qualifies for assistance, participation or occupancy. (See 24 CFR 5.2005.)

However, VAWA does not prohibit an owner from evicting a tenant for any violation not premised on an act of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking that is in question against the tenant or an affiliated individual of the tenant. Nor does VAWA prohibit an owner from evicting a tenant if the owner can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing services to property of the owner would be present if that tenant or lawful occupant is not evicted or terminated from assistance. (See 5.2005(d)(2) and (3).)

In order to demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or employees at the property, the covered housing provider must have objective evidence of words, gestures, actions, or other indicators that meet the standards in the following definition:

Actual and imminent threat refers to a physical danger that is real, would occur within an immediate time frame, and could result in death or serious bodily harm. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include:

- The duration of the risk;
- The nature and severity of the potential harm;
- The likelihood that the potential harm will occur; and
- The length of time before the potential harm would occur.

(See 24 CFR 5.2003 and 5.2005(d)(2).)

Confidentiality

Any information submitted to a covered housing provider under 24 CFR 5.2007, including the fact that an individual is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, must be maintained in strict confidence by the covered housing provider. (See 24 CFR 5.2007(c).)

Employees of the owner (or those within their employ, e.g., contractors) must not have access to the information unless explicitly authorized by the owner for reasons that specifically call for these individuals to have access to this information under applicable federal, state, or local law (e.g., the information is needed by an employee to provide the VAWA protections to the victim).

The owner must not enter this information into any shared database, or disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- a. Requested or consented to in writing by the individual (victim) in a time-limited release;
- b. Required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program; or
- c. Otherwise required by applicable law.

When communicating with the victim, owners must take precautions to ensure compliance with these confidentiality requirements.

Service Providers

[insert name of housing provider] has extensive relationships with local service providers. [insert name of housing provider] staff are available to provide referrals to shelters, counselors, and advocates. These resources are also provided in [insert name of housing provider] Annual and 5-Year Plan, Administrative Plan, VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights, and Emergency Transfer Plan. A list of local service providers is attached to this Notice.

Definitions

Actual and imminent threat refers to a physical danger that is real, would occur within an immediate time frame, and could result in death or serious bodily harm. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include: the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the length of time before the potential harm would occur.

Affiliated individual, with respect to an individual, means:

- (1) A spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child of that individual, or a person to whom that individual stands in the place of a parent or guardian (for example, the affiliated individual is a person in the care, custody, or control of that individual); or
- (2) Any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the household of that individual.

Bifurcate means to divide a lease as a matter of law, subject to the permissibility of such process under the requirements of the applicable HUD-covered program and State or local law, such that certain tenants or lawful occupants can be evicted or removed and the remaining tenants or lawful occupants can continue to reside in the unit under the same lease requirements or as may be revised depending upon the eligibility for continued occupancy of the remaining tenants and lawful occupants.

Dating violence means violence committed by a person:

- (1) Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
- (2) Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - (i) The length of the relationship;
 - (ii) The type of relationship; and
 - (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Domestic violence includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant funding, and in the case of victim services, includes the user or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who is:

- The current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, or person similarly situated to a spouse or intimate partner of the victim
- A person who is cohabitating or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner
- A person with whom the victim shares a child in common
- A person who commits acts against an youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction

Sexual assault means any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

- (1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others; or
- (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

VAWA means the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, as amended (42 U.S.C. 13925 and 42 U.S.C. 14043e et seq.).

Attached:

Legal services and the domestic violence resources for the Metro area
Form HUD-5382 Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking
[insert name of housing provider] VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights

Chapter 19

SPECIAL PURPOSE VOUCHERS

INTRODUCTION

Special purpose vouchers are specifically funded by Congress in separate appropriations from regular HCV program funding in order to target specific populations. Special purpose vouchers include vouchers for the following programs:

- Family Unification Program (FUP)
- Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program
- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Mainstream
- Non-Elderly Disabled (NED)
- Stability Voucher program

DCHA Policy

DCHA will administer the following types of special purpose vouchers:

- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Mainstream voucher program
- Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) vouchers

This chapter describes HUD regulations and DCHA policies for administering special purpose vouchers. The policies outlined in this chapter are organized into three sections, as follows:

Part I: Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)

Part II: Mainstream voucher program

Part III: Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) vouchers

Except as addressed by this chapter and as required under federal statute and HUD requirements, the general requirements of the HCV program apply to special purpose vouchers.

PART I: VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (VASH) PROGRAM

19-I.A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since 2008, HCV program funding has provided rental assistance under a supportive housing program for homeless veterans. The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program combines HCV rental assistance with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), or through a designated service provider (DSP) as approved by the VA Secretary. Eligible families are homeless veterans and their families that agree to participate in VA case management and are referred to the VAMC's partner PHA for HCV assistance. The VAMC or DSP's responsibilities include:

- Screening homeless veterans to determine whether they meet VASH program participation criteria;
- Referring homeless veterans to DCHA;
 - The term *homeless veteran* means a veteran who is homeless (as that term is defined in subsection (a) or (b) of Section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302)). See 38 U.S.C. 2002.
- Providing appropriate treatment and supportive services to potential VASH participants, if needed, prior to DCHA issuance of a voucher;
- Providing housing search assistance to VASH participants;
- Identifying the social service and medical needs of VASH participants, and providing or ensuring the provision of regular ongoing case management, outpatient health services, hospitalization, and other supportive services as needed throughout the veterans' participation period; and
- Maintaining records and providing information for evaluation purposes, as required by HUD and the VA.

VASH vouchers are awarded noncompetitively based on geographic need and DCHA administrative performance. Eligible PHAs must be located within the jurisdiction of a VAMC and in an area of high need based on data compiled by HUD and the VA. When Congress funds a new allocation of VASH vouchers, HUD invites eligible PHAs to apply for a specified number of vouchers.

Generally, the HUD-VASH program is administered in accordance with regular HCV program requirements. However, HUD is authorized to waive or specify alternative requirements to allow PHAs to effectively deliver and administer VASH assistance. Alternative requirements are established in the HUD-VASH Operating Requirements, which were originally published in the Federal Register on May 6, 2008, and updated September 27, 2021, and then again in 2024. Unless expressly waived by HUD, all regulatory requirements and HUD directives regarding the HCV program requirements are applicable to VASH vouchers, including the use of all HUD-required contracts and other forms, and all civil rights and fair housing requirements. In addition, the PHA may request additional statutory or regulatory waivers that it determines are necessary for the effective delivery and administration of the program.

The VASH program is administered in accordance with applicable Fair Housing requirements since civil rights requirements cannot be waived under the program. These include applicable authorities under 24 CFR 5.105(a) and 24 CFR 982.53 including, but not limited to, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act and all PHA policies as outlined in Chapter 2 of this document.

When HUD-VASH recipients include veterans with disabilities or family members with disabilities, reasonable accommodation requirements in Part II of Chapter 2 of this policy apply.

19-III.B. REFERRALS [FR Notice 8/13/24 and HUD-VASH Q&A]

VAMC case managers will screen all families in accordance with VA screening criteria and refer eligible families to DCHA for determination of program eligibility and voucher issuance. DCHA has no role in determining or verifying the veteran's eligibility under VA screening criteria, including determining the veteran's homelessness status. DCHA must accept referrals from the partnering VAMC and must maintain written documentation of referrals in VASH tenant files. Upon turnover, VASH vouchers must be issued to eligible veteran families as identified by the VAMC.

DCHA Policy

In order to expedite the screening process, DCHA will provide all forms and a list of documents required for the VASH application to the VAMC. Case managers will work with veterans to fill out the forms and compile all documents prior to meeting with DCHA and submitting an application. When feasible, the VAMC case manager should email copies of all documents to DCHA prior to the meeting in order to allow DCHA time to review them and start a file for the veteran.

After the VAMC has given DCHA a complete referral, DCHA will perform an eligibility screening within five business days of receipt of a VAMC referral.

19-III.C. HCV PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Eligible participants are homeless veterans and their families who agree to participate in case management from the VAMC.

- A *VASH Veteran* or *veteran family* refers to either a single veteran or a veteran with a household composed of two or more related persons. It also includes one or more eligible persons living with the veteran who are determined to be important to the veteran's care or well-being.
- A veteran for the purpose of VASH is a person whose length of service meets statutory requirements, and who served in the active military, naval, or air service, was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable, and is eligible for VA health care.

Under VASH, DCHA does not have authority to determine family eligibility in accordance with HCV program rules and DCHA policies. The only reasons for denial of assistance by DCHA are failure to meet the income eligibility requirements and/or that a family member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program. Under portability, the receiving PHA must also comply with these VASH screening requirements.

Social Security Numbers

When verifying Social Security numbers (SSNs) for homeless veterans and their family members, DCHA must use available flexibilities in accordance with 24 CFR 5.216(g)(1)(iii) to accept self-certification of SSNs and at least one third-party document, such as a bank statement, utility or cell phone bill, or benefit letter that contains the name of the individual in the absence of other documentation.

In the case of the homeless veteran, DCHA must accept the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD-214) or the VA-verified Application for Health Benefits (10-10EZ) as verification of SSN if these forms are available and cannot require the veteran to provide a Social Security card. A VA-issued identification card may also be used to verify the SSN of a homeless veteran.

Proof of Age

The DD-214 or 10-10EZ must be accepted as proof of age in lieu of birth certificates or other PHA-required documentation as outlined in Section 7-II.C. of this policy. A VA-issued identification card may also be used to verify the age of a homeless veteran.

Photo Identification

A VA-issued identification card must be accepted in lieu of another type of government-issued photo identification. These cards also serve as verification of SSNs and date of birth.

Income Eligibility [FR Notice 8/13/24]

With some exceptions, DCHA must determine income eligibility for VASH families in accordance with 24 CFR 982.201 and policies in Section 3-II.A. Low-income families (80 percent of AMI) are eligible for assistance under VASH, and DCHA may not condition eligibility based on additional eligibility criteria specified in its administrative plan. If the family is over-income based on the most recently published income limits for the family size, the family will be ineligible for assistance.

The following alternative requirements related to income apply to VASH families:

- DCHA must determine the applicant's annual income for purposes of income eligibility by excluding all VA service-connected benefits received by the applicant. This special income exclusion only applies to the definition of *annual income* for purposes of determining income eligibility. If the HUD-VASH applicant qualifies as a low-income family under the alternative requirement, the VA service-connected benefits (with the exception of the normally excluded deferred VA disability payments under 24 CFR 5.609(b)(16) and the payments related to aid and attendance under 24 CFR 5.609(b)(17)) must still be included as annual income when calculating the family's adjusted income. In other words, the VA service-connected disability benefits are excluded for purposes of determining income eligibility but included for purposes of calculating the family's total tenant payment (TTP), housing assistance payment (HAP), and family share.
- When a veteran family reports that they have zero income, DCHA must accept a self-certification of zero income from the family at admission and at reexamination without taking any additional steps to verify the family is indeed zero income. The self-certification does not need to be notarized. DCHA must verify families' income in the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system within 120 days after admission. DCHA may not deny zero income families.
- Regardless of DCHA policy, in determining compliance with the asset limitation at admission, for the VASH program, DCHA must accept a self-certification by the family that the family's total assets are equal to or less than the HUD-published asset limitation amount (adjusted annually) and that the family does not have any present ownership interest in real property, without taking additional steps to verify the accuracy of the declaration.
- DCHA must not enforce the asset limitation for VASH families at reexamination.
- In addition, because there needs to be a monthly housing assistance payment (HAP) in order to enter into a HAP contract on behalf of a tenant-based voucher family, the utilization of tenant-based VASH assistance by families determined income-eligible is limited to those areas where the family's (TTP) is less than the applicable payment standard or exception payment standard (including any VASH-specific exception payment standard established by DCHA). The family must select a unit with a gross rent that is above the family's TTP in order to lease a unit with the tenant-based VASH voucher.

While income-targeting does not apply to VASH vouchers, DCHA may include the admission of extremely low-income VASH families in its income targeting numbers for the fiscal year in which these families are admitted.

DCHA Policy

While income-targeting requirements will not be considered by DCHA when families are referred by the partnering VAMC, DCHA will include any extremely low-income VASH families that are admitted in its income targeting numbers for the fiscal year in which these families are admitted.

Minimum Rent [FR Notice 8/13/24]

DCHA must consider hardship circumstances before charging a minimum rent in accordance with 24 CFR 5.630(b). DCHA may choose to charge a lower minimum rent (including a minimum rent of \$0) specifically for their VASH program regardless of the minimum rent policies established in their administrative plan for other HCV families.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has established a minimum rent of \$0 for VASH families.

Screening [FR Notice 8/13/24]

DCHA may not screen any potentially eligible family members or deny assistance for any grounds permitted under 24 CFR 982.552 and 982.553 with one exception: DCHA is still required to prohibit admission if any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program. Accordingly, with the exception of denial for registration as a lifetime sex offender under state law and DCHA policies on how sex offender screenings will be conducted, DCHA policy in Sections 3-III.B. through 3-III.E. do not apply to VASH. The prohibition against screening families for anything other than lifetime sex offender status applies to all family members, not just the veteran.

If a family member is subject to lifetime registration under a state sex offender registration program, the remaining family members may be served if the family agrees to remove the sex offender from its family composition. This is true unless the family member subject to lifetime registration under a state sex offender registration program is the homeless veteran, in which case the family would be denied admission to the program [FR Notice 8/13/24].

Denial of Assistance [Notice PIH 2008-37]

Once a veteran is referred by the VAMC, DCHA must either issue a voucher or deny assistance. If DCHA denies assistance, it must provide the family with prompt notice of the decision and a brief statement of the reason for denial in accordance with Section 3-III.F. Like in the standard HCV program, the family must be provided with the opportunity for an informal review in accordance with policies in Section 3-III.F. In addition, a copy of the denial notice must be sent to the VAMC case manager.

19-III.D. CHANGES IN FAMILY COMPOSITION

Adding Family Members [FR Notice 8/13/24]

When adding a family member after the family has been admitted to the program, DCHA policies in Section 3-II.B. apply. Other than the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child, DCHA must approve additional family members and will apply its regular screening criteria in doing so.

Remaining Family Members [HUD-VASH Q & A]

If the homeless veteran dies while the family is being assisted, the voucher would remain with the remaining members of the tenant family. DCHA may use one of its own regular vouchers, if available, to continue assisting this family and free up a VASH voucher for another VASH-eligible family. If a regular voucher is not available, the family would continue utilizing the VASH voucher. Once the VASH voucher turns over, however, it must go to a homeless veteran family.

Family Break Up [HUD-VASH Q & A]

In the case of divorce or separation, since the set-aside of VASH vouchers is for veterans, the voucher must remain with the veteran. This overrides DCHA's policies in Section 3-I.C. on how to determine who remains in the program if a family breaks up.

19-III.E. LEASING [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Waiting List

DCHA does not have the authority to maintain a waiting list or apply local preferences for HUD–VASH vouchers. Policies in Chapter 4 relating to applicant selection from the waiting list, local preferences, special admissions, cross-listing, and opening and closing the waiting list do not apply to VASH vouchers.

Exception Payment Standards [FR Notice 8/13/24]

To assist VASH participants in finding affordable housing, especially in competitive markets, HUD allows DCHA to establish a HUD-VASH exception payment standard. DCHA may go up to but no higher than 120 percent of the published metropolitan area-wide fair market rent (FMR) or small area fair market rent (SAFMR) specifically for VASH families. If DCHA wants to establish a VASH exception payment standard over 120 percent they are allowed but must still request a waiver from HUD through the regular waiver process outlined in Notice PIH 2018-16, or any successor notices.

Exception payment standards implemented by DCHA under this section also apply in determining rents under 24 CFR 983.301(b) for PBV projects only when the project is comprised solely of units exclusively made available to VASH families.

DCHA may also establish an exception payment standard up to 140 percent of the published FMR or SAFMR only to be applied if required as a reasonable accommodation for a family that includes a person with a disability. Any unit approved under an exception payment standard must still meet reasonable rent requirements. DCHA may use a payment standard that is greater than 140 percent of FMR as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability, but only with HUD approval.

Voucher Issuance [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Unlike the standard HCV program which requires an initial voucher term of at least 60 days, VASH vouchers must have a search term of at least 120 days. This applies both to the initial search term and moves. DCHA policies on extensions as outlined in Section 5-II.E. will apply.

DCHA Policy

All VASH vouchers will have an initial term of 120 calendar days.

The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 120-day period unless the PHA grants an extension.

DCHA must track issuance of HCVs for families referred by the VAMC or DSP in HUD systems as required in FR Notice 8/13/24.

Special Housing Types [FR Notice 8/13/24]

DCHA must permit VASH clients to use the following special housing types for tenant-based VASH assistance, regardless of whether these types are permitted in their administrative plan for other families:

- Single room occupancy (SRO);
- Congregate housing;
- Group home;
- Shared housing; and
- Cooperative housing.

Initial Lease Term [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Unlike in the standard the HCV program, VASH voucher holders may enter into an initial lease that is for less than 12 months. Accordingly, DCHA policy in Section 9-I.E., Term of Assisted Tenancy, does not apply.

Ineligible Housing [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Unlike in the standard HCV program, VASH families are permitted to live on the grounds of a VA facility in units developed to house homeless veterans. This applies to both tenant-based assistance and PBV. Therefore, 24 CFR 982.352(a)(5) and 983.53(a)(2), which prohibit units on the physical grounds of a medical, mental, or similar public or private institution, do not apply to VASH for this purpose only. Accordingly, DCHA policy in 9-I.D., Ineligible Units, does not apply for this purpose only.

Pre-Inspections [FR Notice 8/13/24]

To expedite the leasing process, DCHA may pre-inspect available units that veterans may be interested in leasing in order to maintain a pool of eligible units. If a VASH family selects a unit that passed inspection (without intervening occupancy) within 90 days of the date of the Request for Tenancy Approval (Form HUD-52517), the unit may be approved if it meets all other conditions under 24 CFR 982.305. However, the veteran must be free to select their unit and cannot be steered to these units. All regulatory requirements pertaining to housing quality standards found at 24 CFR 5.703 apply to HUD-VASH.

DCHA Policy

To expedite the leasing process, DCHA may pre-inspect available units that veterans may be interested in leasing to maintain a pool of eligible units. If a VASH family selects a unit that passed a pre-inspection (without intervening occupancy) within 45 days of the date of the RTA, the unit may be approved provided that it meets all other conditions under 24 CFR 982.305. The veteran will be free to select their unit.

When a pre-inspected unit is not selected, DCHA will make every effort to fast-track the inspection process, including adjusting the normal inspection schedule for both initial and any required reinspections.

19-III.F. PORTABILITY [Notice PIH 2011-53 and FR Notice 8/13/24]

General Requirements

Portability policies under VASH depend on whether the family wants to move within or outside of the initial VA facility's catchment area (the area in which the VAMC or DSP operates). In all cases, the initial VA facility must be consulted prior to the move and provide written confirmation that case management will continue to be provided in the family's new location. VASH participant families may only reside in jurisdictions that are accessible to case management services, as determined by case managers at the partnering VAMC or DSP.

Under VASH, applicant families may move under portability even if the family did not have legal residency in the jurisdiction of the initial DCHA when they applied. As a result, DCHA policies in Section 10-II.B. about nonresident applicants do not apply. A family that moves under the portability procedures must not be subject to rescreening by the receiving PHA.

If the family no longer requires case management, there are no portability restrictions. Normal portability rules apply.

Portability within the Initial VAMC or DSP's Catchment Area

A VASH family can move within the VAMC's catchment area as long as case management can still be provided, as determined by the VA. If the initial PHA's partnering VAMC will still provide the case management services, the receiving PHA must process the move in accordance with portability procedures:

- If the receiving PHA has been awarded VASH vouchers, it can choose to either bill the initial PHA or absorb the family if it has a VASH voucher available to do so.
 - If the PHA absorbs the family, the VAMC or DSP providing the initial case management must agree to the absorption and the transfer of case management.
- If the receiving PHA does not administer a VASH program, it must always bill the initial PHA.

Portability Outside of the Initial VAMC or DSP's Catchment Area

If a family wants to move to another jurisdiction where it will not be possible for the initial PHA's partnering VAMC or DSP to provide case management services, the initial VAMC or DSP must first determine that the VASH family could be served by another VAMC or DSP that is participating in the VASH program, and the receiving PHA has an available VASH voucher.

In these cases, the family must be absorbed by the receiving PHA either as a new admission or as a portability move-in, as applicable. Upon absorption, the initial PHA's VASH voucher will be available to lease to a new VASH-eligible family, and the absorbed family will count toward the number of VASH slots awarded to the receiving PHA.

Portability Outside of the Initial VAMC or DSP's Catchment Area under VAWA

Veterans who request to port beyond the catchment area of the VAMC or DSP where they are receiving case management to protect the health or safety of a person who is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and who reasonably believes they are threatened with imminent harm from further violence by remaining in the unit may port prior to receiving approval from the receiving VAMC or DSP. The initial PHA must follow its emergency transfer plan (see Exhibit 16-3). PHAs may require verbal self-certification or a written request from a participant seeking a move beyond the catchment area of the VAMC or DSP.

The verbal self-certification or written request must include either a statement expressing why the participant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if they were to remain in the same unit or a statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-day period preceding the participants request for the move.

The participant must still port to a PHA that has a VASH program. If the receiving PHA does not have a VASH voucher available to lease, they may bill the initial PHA until a VASH voucher is available, at which point the porting veteran must be absorbed into the receiving PHA's program.

19-III.G. TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE [FR Notice 8/13/24]

Prior to terminating VASH participants, HUD strongly encourages DCHA to exercise their discretion under 24 CFR 982.552(c)(2) as outlined in Section 12-II.D. of this policy and consider all relevant circumstances of the specific case. This includes granting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, as well as considering the role of the case manager and the impact that ongoing case management services can have on mitigating the conditions that led to the potential termination.

VASH participant families may not be terminated after admission for a circumstance or activities that occurred prior to admission and were known to the PHA but could not be considered at the time of admission due to VASH program requirements. The PHA may terminate the family's assistance only for program violations that occur after the family's admission to the program.

There are two alternative requirements for termination of assistance for VASH participants.

Cessation of Case Management

As a condition of receiving HCV rental assistance, a HUD-VASH-eligible family must receive case management services from the VAMC or DSP. VASH participant family's assistance must be terminated for failure to participate, without good cause, in case management as verified by the VAMC or DSP. However, DCHA may offer the family continued assistance through one of its regular vouchers or a PBV unit not exclusively made available for HUD-VASH.

However, a VAMC or DSP determination that the participant family no longer requires case management is not grounds for termination of voucher or PBV assistance. In such a case, at its option, DCHA may offer the family continued assistance through one of its regular vouchers. The decision to transfer assistance to a regular voucher must consider veteran preference and must be communicated to the VA prior to occurring. If DCHA has no voucher to offer, the family will retain its VASH voucher, or PBV unit, until such time as DCHA has an available voucher (or PBV unit not exclusively made available for VASH) for the family. If DCHA has no voucher to offer, the family will retain its VASH voucher or PBV unit until such time as DCHA has an available voucher for the family.

Serious Violation of the Lease

The regulation at 24 CFR 982.552(b)(2) states that DCHA must terminate program assistance for a family evicted from housing assisted under the program for serious violation of the lease. HUD waived this provision, and establishing the alternative requirement that the PHA may terminate program assistance in this case. Prior to terminating VASH participants for this reason, HUD strongly encourages DCHA to exercise their discretion under 24 CFR 982.552(c)(2) and consider all relevant circumstances of the specific case, as well as including the role of the case manager and the impact that ongoing case management services can have on mitigating the conditions that led to the potential termination, prior to determining whether to terminate assistance.

VAWA [FR Notice 8/13/24]

When a veteran's family member is receiving protection under VAWA because the veteran is the perpetrator of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, the victim must continue to be assisted. Upon termination of the perpetrator's VASH assistance, the victim must be given a regular HCV if one is available, and the perpetrator's VASH voucher must be used to serve another eligible veteran family. If a regular HCV is not available, the perpetrator must be terminated from assistance and the victim will continue to use the VASH voucher.

PART II: MAINSTREAM VOUCHER PROGRAM

19-II.A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Notice PIH 2024-30]

Mainstream vouchers assist non-elderly persons with disabilities and their families (particularly those transitioning out of institutions or at serious risk of institutionalization) in the form of either project-based or tenant-based voucher assistance.

The Mainstream voucher program, (previously referred to as the Mainstream 5-Year program or the Section 811 voucher program) was originally authorized under the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990. Mainstream vouchers operated separately from the regular HCV program until the passage of the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010. Funding for Mainstream voucher renewals and administrative fees was first made available in 2012. In 2017 and 2019, incremental vouchers were made available for the first time since the Melville Act (in addition to renewals and administrative fees), and PHAs were invited to apply for a competitive award of Mainstream vouchers under the FY17 and FY19 NOFAs. In 2020, Notice PIH 2020-22 provided an opportunity for any PHA administering an HCV program to apply for Mainstream vouchers noncompetitively, while Notice PIH 2020-09 authorized an increase in Mainstream voucher units and budget authority for those PHAs already awarded Mainstream vouchers under the FY17 and FY19 NOFAs.

Funding and reporting for Mainstream vouchers is separate from the HCV program. Funds for Mainstream vouchers may be recaptured and reallocated if DCHA does not comply with all program requirements or fails to maintain a utilization rate of 80 percent for the PHA's Mainstream vouchers.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42) authorized HUD to establish waivers and alternative requirements for Mainstream Vouchers related to the administration of waiting lists, local preferences, and the initial term and extensions of tenant-based vouchers. HUD is not permitted to waive requirements related to tenant rights and protections, rent setting, fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, and the environment. Prior to this, Mainstream vouchers follow the same program requirements as standard vouchers.

19-II.B. ELIGIBLE POPULATION [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Notice PIH 2020-22]

All Mainstream vouchers must be used to serve non-elderly persons with disabilities and their families, defined as any family that includes a person with disabilities who is at least 18 years old and not yet 62 years old as of the effective date of the initial HAP contract. The eligible disabled household member does not need to be the head of household.

The definition of person with disabilities for purposes of Mainstream vouchers is the statutory definition under section 3(b)(3)(E) of the 1937 Act, which is the same as is used for allowances and deductions in the HCV program and is provided in Exhibit 3-1 of this policy.

Existing families receiving Mainstream vouchers, where the eligible family member is now age 62 or older, will not “age out” of the program as long as the family was eligible on the day it was first assisted under a HAP contract.

DCHA may not implement eligibility screening criteria for Mainstream vouchers that is different from that of the regular HCV program.

19-IV.C. PARTNERSHIP AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES [Notice PIH 2020-01]

DCHA is encouraged but not required to establish formal and informal partnerships with a variety of organizations that assist persons with disabilities to help ensure eligible participants find and maintain stable housing.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has implemented a Mainstream program without partnerships.

19-II.D. WAITING LIST ADMINISTRATION [Notice PIH 2024-30]

For Mainstream vouchers, HUD has waived 24 CFR 982.204(f), which requires one waiting list for the HCV program and allows DCHA the discretion to operate a Mainstream voucher waiting list that is separate from the general HCV waiting list. This is optional.

If DCHA chooses to create a separate Mainstream waiting list, DCHA must notify families on the HCV waiting list of the separate Mainstream waiting list and provide an opportunity for families on the HCV list to be placed on the Mainstream list.

If DCHA does not pursue the optional waiver to maintain a separate Mainstream waiting list, DCHA must still ensure program access for individuals with disabilities.

Upon turnover, vouchers must be provided to Mainstream-eligible families.

DCHA Policy

DCHA will not establish a separate waiting list for the Mainstream program.

19-IV.E. PREFERENCES [Notice PIH 2024-30]

While DCHA may establish local preferences based on local housing needs and priorities in accordance with 24 CFR 982.207(a), HCV regulations do not permit DCHA to establish separate preferences for Mainstream voucher applicants. HUD waived 24 CFR 982.207(a)(1) and allows DCHA to establish separate preferences for Mainstream voucher applicants. However, DCHA may not apply a residency preference to Mainstream voucher applicants.

PHAs with outstanding Olmstead-related litigation or enforcement activities, as well as those undertaking affirmative Olmstead planning and implementation efforts, who wish to establish preferences that target individuals with specific disabilities must request HUD approval. The process for requesting approval for a remedial preference targeting individuals with specific disabilities is outlined in Notice PIH 2012-31.

Regardless of whether DCHA chooses to adopt separate Mainstream voucher preferences, if DCHA claimed points for a preference in a NOFO application for Mainstream vouchers, DCHA must adopt a preference for at least one of the targeted groups identified in the NOFO. DCHA may choose to apply NOFO preferences to the entire HCV waiting list or only to Mainstream voucher applicants as a separate Mainstream voucher preference.

DCHA may use either date and time of application or a drawing or other random choice technique in selecting families from the Mainstream waiting list among applicants with the same preference status in accordance with DCHA's administrative plan.

DCHA Policy

DCHA has not claimed a preference for a targeted group as part of an application for Mainstream vouchers under a NOFO.

19-II.F. VOUCHER ISSUANCE

Initial Search Term [Notice PIH 2024-30]

For Mainstream vouchers, HUD waived 24 CFR 982.303(a), which requires an initial search term of at least 60 days, and established an alternative requirement that the initial search term for a Mainstream voucher be at least 120 days. The initial 120-day term also applies when a family chooses to move to a new unit with continued assistance inside or outside DCHA's jurisdiction. When issuing a Mainstream voucher, DCHA also must provide a current listing of available accessible units known to DCHA and, if necessary, otherwise assist the family in identifying an accessible unit.

DCHA Policy

The initial voucher term for all Mainstream vouchers, including those issued when a family wishes to exercise portability, will be 120 days.

Voucher Extension [Notice PIH 2024-30]

DCHA's administrative plan must describe DCHA's policies for granting extensions to the initial 120-day voucher term and provide clear instructions to families on the procedures for requesting an extension. If a family requires additional time, DCHA is required to provide an extension as a reasonable accommodation.

DCHA must adopt an extension policy for Mainstream vouchers that includes the following:

- Each extension must be for a minimum of 90 days;
- DCHA must approve the first extension request, regardless of how the request is made (written or verbal) or when it is made, as long as the request is made on or before the expiration date of the voucher and is consistent with applicable requirements (subsequent requests should be processed in accordance with DCHA's administrative plan); and
- DCHA must, on at least one occasion after voucher issuance, notify the family prior to the expiration of the initial term to remind them of the expiration date, the process for requesting an extension, and to inquire if the family is in need of assistance with their housing search.

As part of its search extension policy, DCHA may not restrict a first extension approval to certain circumstances or require documentation from applicants. For all extension requests, a written or verbal request is sufficient. In providing notice to families of the expiration date and extension request process, DCHA must ensure effective communication with persons with disabilities, including those with vision, hearing, speech, intellectual or other developmental disabilities, or any other communication-related disabilities. DCHA must approve all extensions made as a reasonable accommodation, and DCHA must provide this information during the family briefing.

DCHA Policy

At least 30 days prior to the expiration of the initial term of the voucher, DCHA will contact the family to remind them of the expiration date of their voucher, the process for requesting an extension, and to inquire if the family needs assistance with their housing search. Depending on the family's preferred method of communication, DCHA may contact the family via telephone, text message, email, or other accessible communication method. DCHA will ensure effective communication with persons with disabilities, including those with vision, hearing, speech, intellectual or other developmental disabilities, or any other communication-related disabilities.

Families may request an extension, either orally or in writing, at any time prior to the expiration of the family's voucher. All requests for extensions will automatically be granted without the requirement for the family to provide documentation. The initial extension period will be for 90 days. If the family requires additional extensions beyond 90 days, the family may request additional extensions, either orally or in writing, at any time prior to the expiration of the extended voucher term. All subsequent extensions will also be for a period of 90 days and will not require the family to meet certain circumstances or provide documentation. Each time the family requests an extension, DCHA will inquire if the family needs assistance with their housing search and will provide a current listing of available accessible units known to DCHA.

19-II.G. PORTABILITY [Notice PIH 2020-01 and Mainstream Voucher Basics Webinar, 10/15/20]

Mainstream voucher participants are eligible for portability under standard portability rules and all DCHA policies regarding portability in Chapter 10, Part II apply to Mainstream families.

The following special considerations for Mainstream vouchers apply under portability:

- If the receiving PHA has a Mainstream voucher available, the participant may remain a Mainstream participant.
 - If the receiving PHA chooses to bill the initial PHA, then the voucher will remain a Mainstream voucher.
 - If the receiving PHA chooses to absorb the voucher, the voucher will be considered a regular voucher, or a Mainstream voucher if the receiving PHA has a Mainstream voucher available, and the Mainstream voucher at the initial PHA will be freed up to lease to another Mainstream-eligible family.
- If the receiving PHA does not have a Mainstream voucher available, the participant may receive a regular voucher.

PART III: NON-ELDERLY DISABLED (NED) VOUCHERS

19-III.A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW [Notice PIH 2013-19]

NED vouchers help non-elderly disabled families lease suitable, accessible, and affordable housing in the private market. Aside from separate funding appropriations and serving a specific population, NED vouchers follow the same program requirements as standard vouchers. DCHA does not have special authority to treat families that receive a NED voucher differently from other applicants and participants.

Some NED vouchers are awarded to PHAs through competitive NOFAs. The NOFA for FY2009 Rental Assistance for NED made incremental funding available for two categories of NED families:

- **Category 1** vouchers enable non-elderly persons or families with disabilities to access affordable housing on the private market.
- **Category 2** vouchers enable non-elderly persons with disabilities currently residing in nursing homes or other healthcare institutions to transition into the community. PHAs with NED Category 2 vouchers were required to partner with a state Medicaid or health agency or the state Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration agency.

Since 1997, HCVs for NED families have been also awarded under various special purpose HCV programs: Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans (Designated Housing), Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Related to Certain Types of Section 8 Project-Based Developments (Certain Developments), One-Year Mainstream Housing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and the Project Access Pilot Program (formerly Access Housing 2000).

- **19-III.B. ELIGIBLE POPULATION**

General Requirements [Notice PIH 2013-19]

Only eligible families whose head of household, spouse, or cohead is non-elderly (under age 62) and disabled may receive a NED voucher. Families with only a minor child with a disability are not eligible.

In cases where the qualifying household member now qualifies as elderly due to the passage of time since the family received the NED voucher, existing NED participant families do not “age out,” as the family was eligible on the day it was first assisted under a housing assistance payments (HAP) contract.

The definition of person with disabilities for purposes of NED vouchers is the statutory definition under Section 3(b)(3)(E) of the 1937 Act, which is the same as is used for allowances and deductions in the HCV program and is provided in Exhibit 3-1 of this policy.

DCHA may not implement eligibility screening criteria for NED vouchers that is different from that of the regular HCV program.

19-III.C. WAITING LIST

General Requirements [Notice PIH 2013-19]

Families must be selected for NED vouchers from DCHA’s NED waiting list in accordance with all applicable regulations and DCHA policies in Chapter 4.

Regardless of the number of NED families DCHA is required to serve, the next family on the waiting list must be served. Further, DCHA may not skip over NED-eligible families on the waiting list because DCHA is serving the required number of NED families.

Reissuance of Turnover Vouchers [Notice PIH 2013-19]

All NED turnover vouchers must be reissued to the next NED family on DCHA’s waiting list.

All NED vouchers should be affirmatively marketed to a diverse population of NED-eligible families to attract protected classes least likely to apply. If at any time following the turnover of a NED HCV DCHA believes it is not practicable to assist NED families, DCHA must contact HUD.

19-III.D. LEASE UP [Notice PIH 2013-19]

Briefings

In addition to providing families with a disabled person a list of accessible units known to DCHA, HUD encourages, but does not require, DCHA to provide additional resources to NED families as part of the briefing.

DCHA Policy

In addition to providing families with a disabled person a list of accessible units known to DCHA, DCHA will provide a list of local supportive service and disability organizations that may provide such assistance as counseling services and funding for moving expenses or security deposits in the briefing packet. These organizations include state protection and advocacy agencies, Centers for Independent Living, state Medicaid agencies, and disability advocacy groups that represent individuals with a variety of disabilities.

Further, if other governmental or non-governmental agencies provide available resources such as housing search counseling, moving expenses, security deposits, and utility deposits, DCHA will include this information in the briefing packet.

DCHA will also offer specialized housing search assistance to families with a disabled person to locate accessible units if requested. Trained DCHA staff or a local supportive service or disability organization may be able to provide this service.

Voucher Term

While DCHA is not required to establish different policies for the initial term of the voucher for NED vouchers, HUD has encouraged DCHA to be generous in establishing reasonable initial search terms and subsequent extensions for families with a disabled person.

DCHA Policy

All NED vouchers will have an initial term of 120 calendar days.

The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 120-day period unless DCHA grants an extension.

All other DCHA policies on extensions and suspension of vouchers in Section 5-II.E. will apply.