

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO: HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS
FROM: REBECCA LANE, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
MANAGER
SUBJECT: EXPANDING LIMITED PREFERENCES FOR DISASTER-
AFFECTED FAMILIES ON THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER
PROGRAM WAITING LIST

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Department of Housing and Community Services that the Housing Authority, by resolution, approve a revision to Chapter 4, Section 4-III.C. of the Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan which would expand the Waiting List Limited Preference for individuals and families who were affected by the October 2017 wildfire disaster from 24 vouchers to 48 vouchers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Administrative Plan is the major policy document guiding the ongoing administration of the federally-regulated Housing Choice Voucher program. Where allowed under law, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) permits local jurisdictions to establish policies pertaining to the program. In August 2018, the Housing Authority approved a change to the Waiting List policies to implement a Limited Preference for Disaster-Affected families. The Housing Authority partnered with the Rebuilding Our Community (ROC) center for referrals under this Limited Preference. Based on the success of this Limited Preference and the ongoing need for disaster recovery resources, the Housing Authority proposes to expand the program and increase the number of available vouchers from 24 to 48.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Housing and Community Services administers the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program for the City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority. The HCV Program, formerly known as Section 8, is a federally-funded rental assistance program for qualifying extremely low and very low income households. The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority has 1,887 vouchers under contract with HUD and approximately

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5,860 households on the Waiting List. The average wait time is seven to nine years from placement on the Waiting List to the initial eligibility interview.

The City of Santa Rosa's Waiting List is organized by year of application and lottery. The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority's Administrative Plan currently offers one standard preference on the Waiting List for families that have been terminated from the City of Santa Rosa Housing Choice Voucher program due to insufficient funding.

The Administrative Plan also includes a Limited Preference for Families Experiencing Homelessness and a Limited Preference for Disaster-Affected Families. The Department of Housing and Community Services is recommending an expansion of the Limited Preference for Disaster-Affected families from 24 vouchers to 48.

PRIOR HOUSING AUTHORITY REVIEW

On August 27, 2018, The Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approved a Limited Preference of 24 vouchers for families affected by the 2017 wildfires.

ANALYSIS

HUD allows local jurisdictions to set certain local preferences for selecting applicants from its waiting list, including Limited Preferences that designate a certain number of vouchers per year for an allowable preference category. Currently, the Santa Rosa Housing Authority has an established Limited Preference for Families Experiencing Homelessness and a Limited Preference for Disaster-Affected Families.

Limited Preferences do not re-order the existing Waiting List. Instead, a designated number of turnover vouchers are set aside for the Limited Preference. Currently, there are 24 Limited Preference vouchers for families impacted by the 2017 wildfires. This Limited Preference has resulted in the referral of 24 families through a partnership with Rebuilding Our Community (ROC). The partnership ensures that disaster-affected families have access to housing location and navigation services, security deposit assistance and disaster case management. Vouchers have been issued to 12 families under this Limited Preference and an additional eight applications are under eligibility review. The remaining families that have been determined eligible under the ROC guidelines are completing their application materials. Three families have been housed, and three additional requests for tenancy are being processed for admission on April 1.

Based on the success of the current Limited Preference, Housing and Community Services would like to expand the number of vouchers available under the Limited Preference for disaster relief from 24 to 48 vouchers.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on any Housing Authority funds.

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The funds are already allocated under the Housing Choice Voucher program.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

COUNCIL/BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Summary of Administrative Plan Changes, March 2019
- Attachment 2 – Administrative Plan for the City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority, Chapter 4 with redline.
- Resolution

CONTACT

Rebecca Lane, (707)543-3305, rlane@srcity.org