

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO: HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS  
FROM: REBECCA LANE, MANAGER  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING LIMITED PREFERENCES FOR 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 establish a Waiting List Limited Preference for individuals and families who are homeless.

---

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. The Housing Authority has expressed interest in modifying the Waiting List policies to allow for a Limited Preference for persons experiencing homelessness.

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 1,862 vouchers under contract with HUD and approximately 4,350 households on the Waiting List. The average wait time is seven to ten years from placement on the Waiting List to the initial eligibility interview.

The City of Santa Rosa's Waiting List is organized by lottery and year of application. The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority's Administrative Plan currently offers one preference on the Waiting List. This preference is for families that have been terminated

ESTABLISHING LIMITED PREFERENCES FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER  
PROGRAM WAITING LIST  
PAGE 2 OF 3

from the City of Santa Rosa Housing Choice Voucher program due to insufficient funding and remains in effect for three years from the family's termination from the program.

PRIOR HOUSING AUTHORITY REVIEW

On April 28, 2014, the Housing Authority held a study session to review the potential advantages and disadvantages of implementing preferences for the HCV Waiting List.

On February 27, 2017, the Housing Authority held a study session to review the scope of the Housing Authority in relation to homeless solutions.

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.

In 2013, HUD released a notice encouraging Housing Authorities to consider local policies that help meet the federal strategic goals related to ending homelessness. Locally, the City of Santa Rosa 2015-2017 Council Goals include efforts to address homelessness through a comprehensive Housing First strategy. Creating an HCV preference policy for persons experiencing homelessness supports these goals.

Establishing Limited Preferences would not re-order the current Waiting List. Twenty-four (24) vouchers per year, approximately 15 percent of the regular program turnover, would be designated for families and individuals in homeless assistance programs with whom the Department of Housing and Community Services would partner.

FISCAL IMPACT

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

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

ESTABLISHING LIMITED PREFERENCES FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER  
PROGRAM WAITING LIST  
PAGE 3 OF 3

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Summary of Administrative Plan Changes, April 2017
- Attachment 2 – Administrative Plan for the City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority, Chapter 4
- Resolution

CONTACT

Rebecca Lane, [rlane@srcity.org](mailto:rlane@srcity.org), 707-543-3305