

Summary of October 23, 2023, Revision of the Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan

This summary includes an outline of the revised chapter of the Administrative Plan and identifies whether a section of the chapter has been revised. If a section has been revised, a summary of the revision is included in the center column and the new language is included in the right-hand column of this table. A full redline version is provided as an attachment. Revisions are identified in ***bold, italics***.

Chapter	Revision Summary	Revisions
Chapter 4: Applications, Waiting List and Tenant Selection	PART I	Part I: THE APPLICATION PROCESS
	4-I.A.: No change	4-I.B. APPLYING FOR ASSISTANCE [HCV GB, pp. 4-11 – 4-16, Notice PIH 2009-36]
	4-I.B.: Revised language to reflect availability of online application system as primary application method	Any family that wishes to receive HCV assistance must apply for admission to the program. HUD permits the PHA to determine the format and content of HCV applications, as well how such applications will be made available to interested families and how applications will be accepted by the PHA. However, the PHA must include Form HUD-92006, Supplement to Application for Federally Assisted Housing, as part of the PHA’s application.
	4-I.C.: No change	
	4-I.D.: Revised language to reflect applicant notification practices with both online and paper applications	<u>PHA Policy</u> The City of Santa Rosa Housing Authority uses a two-step application process.
	PART II	
	4-II.A.: No change	
	4-II.B.: No change	
	4-II.C.: Revised language to reflect more common practice of closing the waiting list when estimated waiting period for housing assistance is five years. Added outlets and agencies that will be included in notification when waiting list is opening.	<i>Under the two-step application process, when families apply for the waiting list they will self-certify their household composition and income as well as any other factors that may affect their eligibility for Project-Based Voucher sites that are targeted to specific populations. When families are selected from the waiting list, the PHA will conduct a full eligibility interview process to verify all household information and the family will be required to provide all the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance.</i> When the waiting list is open, families <i>apply online at www.srcity.org/waitlist.</i> <i>Families with disability-related needs for a reasonable accommodation may request a paper application, or may request and receive assistance in completing the electronic application. Families who have a person or persons with disabilities should call (707) 543-3300 to request a reasonable accommodation for an alternative application format. Translation services are also available upon request.</i>
	4-II.D.: No change	4-I.D. PLACEMENT ON THE WAITING LIST
4-II.E. Revised language to include reference to online application process.	The PHA must review each complete application received and make a preliminary assessment of the family’s eligibility. The PHA must accept applications from families for	

	<p>4-II.F. Revised language to include reference to the online application process. Added language for additional reasons the PHA may reinstate a family to the waiting list for failure to respond.</p> <p>PART III</p> <p>4-III.A.: No change</p> <p>4-III.B.: No change</p> <p>4-III.C.: Revised language to include current structure of the Sonoma County Continuum of Care and Coordinated Entry system for referrals under the Limited Preference for Families Experiencing Homelessness.</p> <p>Eliminated reference to Limited Preference for Disaster Affected Families</p> <p>4-III.D.: No change</p> <p>4-III.E. Added language clarifying the eligibility interview process for adult household members who are not the head of household.</p> <p>4-III.F.: No change</p>	<p>whom the list is open unless there is good cause for not accepting the application (such as denial of assistance) for the grounds stated in the regulations [24 CFR 982.206(b)(2)]. Where the family is determined to be ineligible, the PHA must notify the family in writing [24 CFR 982.201(f)]. Where the family is not determined to be ineligible, the family will be placed on a waiting list of applicants.</p> <p>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)].</p> <p>Ineligible for Placement on the Waiting List</p> <p><u>PHA Policy</u></p> <p>If the PHA can determine from the information provided that a family is ineligible, the family will not be placed on the waiting list.</p> <p><i>If the family is using the online application at srcity.org/waitlist, they must certify certain information to determine their eligibility for placement on the list. If they cannot certify they meet the eligibility requirements, they will be notified immediately on the application website. The notification will include the reason they are not eligible, and they will be informed of their right to request an informal review and provided instructions on how to do so (see Chapter 16).</i></p> <p><i>If a family is using a paper application, if they are determined to be ineligible based on the information provided on the application the PHA will send written notification of the ineligibility determination within 30 days of the waiting list closing date. 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).</i></p> <p>Eligible for Placement on the Waiting List</p> <p><u>PHA Policy</u></p> <p><i>If the family is eligible for placement on the waitlist, they will be notified immediately if they are using the electronic application process that the application will be entered into the waiting list lottery. If the family is using a paper application and they are determined eligible to be placed on the waiting list, they will not be notified in writing that they are being placed in the waiting list lottery; instead, they will receive a final notification regarding their status after the waiting list lottery process is complete.</i></p> <p><i>All applications determined eligible for placement on the waiting list will be selected and randomly rank-numbered by a lottery system at the conclusion of each waiting list opening period. The applications selected will be assigned rank numbers which are after those who are already on the list at the time of the opening.</i></p>
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Applicants who were not selected by the random lottery will be notified in writing within 30 days of the waiting list closing date. Applicants who were selected by the random lottery will be notified within 30 days of the waiting list closing date. The notice will provide instructions on how to update the applicant contact information and other information about the waiting list, which may include an estimated wait time, information about how to apply for Project-Based Voucher site-based waiting lists, contact information for the PHA, and information about accessibility for people with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency.

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

PART II

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

Closing the Waiting List

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

PHA Policy

The PHA will close the waiting list when the estimated waiting period for housing assistance for applicants on the list reaches ***60 months*** for the most current applicants. Where the PHA has particular preferences or funding criteria that require a specific category of family, the PHA may elect to continue to accept applications from these applicants while closing the waiting list to others.

Reopening the Waiting List

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

PHA Policy

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

The PHA will give public notice by publishing the relevant information in suitable media outlets **and/or sending notice to the outlets or agencies listed below** including, but not limited to:

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| <i>The Press Democrat</i> | City of Santa Rosa website |
| <i>La Voz</i> | City of Santa Rosa social media channels |
| <i>The North Bay Bohemian</i> | Social Service Agency partners |
| KZST Radio | North Coast Rental Housing Association |
| KRCB Radio | Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California |
| KSRO Radio | Sonoma County Housing Authority |
| KBBF Radio | Sonoma County Continuum of Care |

4.II.E REPORTING CHANGES IN FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

PHA Policy

While the family is on the waiting list, the family must immediately inform the PHA of changes in contact information, including current residence, mailing address, and phone number. **Families who use the online application process make these changes by logging into their online application. Families who use a paper application must submit the changes in writing.**

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

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

Purging the Waiting List

The decision to withdraw an applicant family that includes a person with disabilities from the waiting list is subject to reasonable accommodation. If the applicant did not respond to a PHA request for information or updates, and the PHA determines that the family did not respond because of the family member’s disability, the PHA must

reinstate the applicant family to their former position on the waiting list [24 CFR 982.204(c)(2)].

PHA Policy

The waiting list will be updated approximately every two years to ensure that all applicants and applicant information is current and timely.

To update the waiting list, the PHA will send ***an email notification to all families using the online application process informing them of the requirement to log into their online waiting list application and confirm*** whether the family continues to be interested in, and qualifies for, the program. ***This update request will be sent to the email address that is listed on the online application. To update the information for the families using a paper application process, the PHA will send an update form via first class mail to the last address that the PHA has on record for the family.*** The update request, ***whether electronic or paper***, 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.

For families using the electronic application process, failure to log in and complete the update by the deadline specified in the notice will result in removal from the waiting list without further notice.

For families using the paper application process, the response must be in writing and must be delivered by mail. Responses must be postmarked or received by the PHA by the deadline specified in the notice.

If the family fails to respond by the deadline, 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 14 days to respond from the date the letter was re-sent.

If a family is removed from the waiting list for failure to respond, ***whether the application is electronic or paper***, the PHA may reinstate the family if it is determined that the lack of response was due to PHA 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.***

PART III

4-III.C. SELECTION METHOD

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

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

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

PHA Policy

The PHA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding. The preference will be in effect for three years from the termination date.

Limited Preference for Families Experiencing Homelessness

Twenty-four (24) vouchers are targeted for limited preferences for families engaged in homeless assistance programs and/or initiatives in the City of Santa Rosa. These vouchers will be issued based on referrals from the Coordinated Entry administrator under the policies established by the Sonoma County Continuum of Care.

4-III.E. THE APPLICATION INTERVIEW

HUD recommends that the PHA obtain the information and documentation needed to make an eligibility determination through a face-to-face interview with a PHA representative [HCV GB, pg. 4-16]. Being invited to attend 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 the PHA 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 the PHA [Notice PIH 2018-24].

		<p>Reasonable accommodation must be made for persons with disabilities who are unable to attend an interview due to their disability.</p> <p><u>PHA Policy</u></p> <p>Families selected from the waiting list are required to participate in an eligibility interview.</p> <p>The head of household is required to attend the interview. <i>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 the PHA.</i></p> <p>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, the appointment may be rescheduled when the proper documents have been obtained.</p>
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