

ACTIVITY 2023-01: Special Circumstance Admissions

Families in units not meeting the family's need due to an approved Reasonable Accommodation or due to a situation protected under the Violence Against Women's Act, would be issued a voucher if one is available with funding without being placed on a wait list to transfer to a unit that meets the family's needs.

This would allow tenants in Shelter Plus Care or Mod Rehab SRO participants to receive Housing Choice Vouchers for Reasonable Accommodation or under the Violence Against Women's Act without applying during a wait list opening and going through a random selection process.

Waive: 24 CFR 982.202 (a)

This MTW activity serves the following statutory objectives:

- ☐ Cost effectiveness
- ☐ Self-sufficiency
- ☒ Housing Choice

This initiative achieves one or more of the 3 MTW above statutory objectives by: This activity would allow families in assisted units to find units through a different assistance program that meets their needs due to reasonable accommodation or VAWA without waiting on the Housing Choice Voucher wait list.

A MTW activity may apply to all assisted households or only to a subset or subsets of assisted households by having a different policy by household status/family types/sites. This MTW activity applies:

- ☐ to all assisted households
- ☒ only to a subset or subsets of assisted households

A MTW activity can apply only to new admissions, only to currently assisted households, or to both new admissions and currently assisted households. This MTW activity applies to:

- ☒ New admissions (i.e., applicants) only
- ☐ Currently assisted households only
- ☐ New admissions and currently assisted households

A MTW activity can apply to all family types or only selected family types. This MTW activity applies to:

- ☐ all family types
- ☒ only to selected family types

Please select the family types subject to this MTW activity:

- ☐ Non-elderly, non-disabled families

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- ☐ Elderly families
- ☒ Disabled families (to the extent those families are not exempt via a reasonable accommodation)
- ☒ Other – another specifically defined target population or populations. The description of this population is: families assisted under the Mod Rehab SRO program (women who are victims of domestic violence) and the Shelter Plus Care program.

An MTW activity can apply to a tenant-based and or project-based voucher.

- ☐ The MTW activity applies to all tenant-based units.
- ☐ The MTW activity applies to all properties with project-based vouchers.
- ☒ The MTW activity applies to specific tenant-based units and/or properties with project-based vouchers. The description of which tenant-based units and/or properties with project-based vouchers that will participate in this MTW activity is: Applicants

This MTW activity has the following cost implications:

- ☒ Neutral
- ☐ Increased revenue
- ☐ Decreased revenue
- ☐ Increased expenditures
- ☐ Decreased expenditures

The implementation timeline for the initiative is:

Upon approval of MTW Supplement, approval of revised Administrative Plan and training of staff.

This MTW activity does require an impact analysis.

FACTOR 1: Impact on the agency's finances (e.g., how much will the activity cost, any change in the agency's per family contribution)

This activity will not have a large impact on the agency's finances as families will only be housed if funds are available, so transfers will be processed instead of new move-ins which will minimally reduce staff work because of the need to determine eligibility from the Housing Choice Voucher wait list, but this will be offset by staff needing to determine the eligibility of applicants for the program from which the families are transferring.

FACTOR 2: Impact on affordability of housing costs for affected families (e.g., any change in how much affected families will pay towards their housing costs)

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This activity will not greatly affect housing costs for families. It will allow some displaced families to retain assistance. Under the Moderate Rehabilitation and Shelter Plus Care programs, the family only pays 30% of their income towards rent and utilities. Under the Housing Choice Voucher program, families may select a unit where the family share may be more than 30% of their income, so some families may select units that cause their portion of the rent to increase slightly, but this activity does not change the basic rent calculation under the Housing Choice Voucher program.

FACTOR 3: Impact on the agency's waitlist(s) (e.g., any change in the amount of time families are on the waitlist)

There may be a slight increase in the wait time for families on the Housing Choice Voucher waitlist since priority for these vouchers would be given to special circumstance admission families. However, this is not expected to be a significant issue since there is currently sufficient funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program and it is not anticipated that a great number of special admissions will be approved per year. The average tenancy for Shelter Plus Care and Mod Rehab families is over 8 years, so families are not turning over at high rates once on these programs.

FACTOR 4: Impact on the agency's termination rate of families (e.g., any change in the rate at which families non-voluntarily lose assistance from the agency)

This would not affect the termination rate of families.

FACTOR 5: Impact on the agency's current occupancy level in public housing and utilization rate in the HCV program

This would minimally increase the agency's utilization rate in the HCV program as these special circumstance admission families would be utilizing the HCV program instead of their respective Shelter Plus Care or Mod Rehab Single Room Occupancy programs by transferring into new units with an issued HCV. Utilization rates in the other programs would have the same impact whether the family transfers to an HCV or moves out of a unit that does not meet its needs.

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FACTOR 6: Impact on meeting the MTW statutory goals of cost effectiveness, self-sufficiency, and/or housing choice

This would meet the goal of housing choice by providing these special circumstance admission families with more housing options.

FACTOR 7: Impact on the agency's ability to meet the MTW statutory requirements

a) Very Low-Income Requirement

Currently, 91% of the families that would be eligible for this activity are below the extremely low-income level for admissions and 100% of the families are below the very low-income level. These families should be representative of the families housed in these two programs, so this activity should not affect the agency's ability to meet this statutory requirement.

b) Reasonable Rent Policy

This does not affect the family's calculation of total tenant payment under the Housing Choice Voucher program.

c) Substantially the Same Requirement

The activity will not increase payments, so the AHA should be able to meet this requirement.

d) Comparable Mix Requirement

The AHA will monitor families housed under this activity to ensure that the comparable mix requirement is met. If a large number of families are housed from the Single Room Occupancy program, this requirement may be affected. It is anticipated, however, that the number of households being admitted from this activity will not impact this requirement.

e) Housing Quality Standards (HQS)

The units would have to continue to meet the HQS standards, so this statutory requirement would be met.

FACTOR 8: Impact on the rate of hardship requests and the number granted and denied as a result of this activity

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This activity would not result in hardship requests as does not affect the HAP or total tenant payment.

FACTOR 9: Across the other factors above, the impact on protected classes (and any associated disparate impact)

A chi-squared test of independence found a statistically significant relationship between the tenants in Shelter Plus Care or Mod Rehab SRO participants and those on the waitlist to receive Housing Choice Vouchers for the protected class of disability. There are a higher percentage of families with a disabled head of household in the Shelter Plus Care and Moderate Rehabilitation programs than on the Housing Choice Voucher wait list, so this activity may positively impact families with a head with a disability.

The data for race for the Shelter Plus Care and Mod Rehab programs does not allow for a chi-squared test of independence due to the small number of families; but a statistically valid test can be run for ethnicity which found no relationship between ethnicity and the Housing Choice Voucher wait list families versus the families assisted in the two programs.

There is a statistically significant relationship between age and the Housing Choice Voucher wait list families versus the families assisted in the two programs. There are more elderly families assisted under the two programs than on the Housing Choice Voucher wait list.

While the protected classes are not independent from the families being assisted under the Shelter Plus Care and Moderate Rehabilitation program, in all cases, the number of families on the two programs is higher than what would be expected, so the impact on the protected classes would be a positive one and not a disparate impact.

This MTW activity does not require a hardship policy.

See Section H for a copy of all comments received at the public hearing along with the MTW agency's description of how the comments were considered. No comments were received specific to this waiver request.