

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

The PHA 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 the PHA 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 the PHA 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 the PHA will be in compliance with all relevant fair housing requirements, as described in Chapter 2.

This chapter describes HUD and PHA 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 the PHA will handle the applications it receives.

Part II: Managing the Waiting List. This part presents the policies that govern how the PHA'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 the PHA will use to keep the waiting list current.

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

PART I: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

4-I.A. OVERVIEW

This part describes the PHA 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 the PHA'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 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. The PHA must include Form HUD-92006, Supplement to Application for Federally Assisted Housing, as part of the PHA's application.

PHA Policy

Depending upon the length of time that applicants may need to wait to receive assistance, the PHA may use a one- or two-step application process.

A one-step process will be used when it is expected that a family will be selected from the waiting list within 60 days of the date of application. At application, the family must provide all of the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance.

A two-step process will be used when it is expected 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, the PHA 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 of the information necessary to establish family eligibility and level of assistance when the family is selected from the waiting list.

Families may obtain application forms online. Families requiring reasonable accommodation to complete the online application must contact the PHA during normal business hours for assistance.

Completed applications must be returned to the PHA by mail, electronically, by fax, or submitted in person during normal business hours. Applications must be complete in order to be accepted by the PHA for processing. If an application is incomplete, the PHA will notify the family of the additional information required.

4-I.C. ACCESSIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

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

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

Limited English Proficiency

PHAs are 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 the PHA's policies related to ensuring access to people with limited English proficiency (LEP).

4-I.D. PLACEMENT ON THE WAITING LIST

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 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.

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

PHA Policy

If the PHA 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, the PHA 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

PHA Policy

The PHA will send written 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 using a lottery system. Once each application has been randomly assigned a number, the applications will be placed on the waiting list in the order of the assigned numbers and according to PHA preferences.

PART II: MANAGING THE WAITING LIST

4-II.A. OVERVIEW

The PHA 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 a PHA 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]

The PHA's HCV waiting list must be organized in such a manner to allow the PHA 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 the PHA to maintain a single waiting list for the HCV program unless it serves more than one county or municipality. Such PHAs are permitted, but not required, to maintain a separate waiting list for each county or municipality served.

PHA Policy

The PHA will maintain a single waiting list for the HCV program.

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 the PHA 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 PHAs 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.

PHA Policy

The PHA will not merge the HCV waiting list with the waiting list for any other program the PHA operates.

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 24 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 including, but not limited to:

Newspapers: Bergen Record, El Diario, Korean Bergen News, The Suburbanite, and The Star Ledger.

Notices will also be provided on the Fort Lee Housing Authority Website, and sent to Bergen Family Center, Bergen County Housing, Health and Human Services, Bergen County Board of Social Services, Borough of Fort Lee, Center for Food Action, Local Houses of Worship, Fort Lee Library

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

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

Because HUD requires the PHA to admit a specified percentage of extremely low-income families to the program (see Chapter 4, Part III), the PHA 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].

PHA 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

PHA 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

PHA Policy

The PHA will monitor the characteristics of the population being served and the characteristics of the population as a whole in the PHA'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

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. The changes must be submitted 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 as needed to ensure that all applicants and applicant information is current and timely.

To update the waiting list, the PHA will send an update request via first class mail 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 address that the PHA 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 the PHA not later than 15 business days from the date of the PHA 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, 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.

Removal from the Waiting List

PHA Policy

If at any time an applicant family is on the waiting list, the PHA 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 the PHA has determined the family is not eligible for assistance, a notice will be sent to the family's address of record as well as to any alternate 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 the PHA'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 the PHA 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.

The PHA must maintain a clear record of all information required to verify that the family is selected from the waiting list according to the PHA'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, the PHA 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. The PHA must maintain records showing that such families were admitted with special program funding.

Targeted Funding [24 CFR 982.204(e)]

HUD may award a PHA funding for a specified category of families on the waiting list. The PHA must use this funding only to assist the families within the specified category. In order to assist families within a targeted funding category, the PHA 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.

PHA Policy

The PHA does not currently administer any type of targeted funding.

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

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 use the following local preferences:

1) Veterans Preference

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 540-2.2 the Authority provides a waiting list preference for veterans who are residents and citizens of New Jersey, who have been honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in time of war and surviving spouses of certain veterans as more particularly defined in N.J.A.C. 5:40-1.2, which preference takes priority over all other preferences.

Within the preference for veterans and surviving spouses, preferences are issued in the following order:

- A) Veterans who are homeless and disabled;
- B) Homeless veterans; and
- C) Disabled veterans (including family members who are the primary residential caregivers to such veterans and who are residing with them).

2) Other Local Preferences

Each preference will receive an allocation of points as designated below. The more preference points an applicant has, the higher the applicant's place on the waiting list.

- | | Points |
|---|--------|
| A) A "residency" preferences to a family who resides in Fort Lee or includes a family member who works or has been notified that they are hired to work in Fort Lee. | 5 |
| B) A "working family" preference where the head, spouse or sole member is employed at least 25 hours per week. However, an applicant where the head or spouse or sole member is a person age 62 or older, or is a person with | 1 |

disabilities (as defined below) will also be given this preference.

- C) A preference for a family that includes a member who is a victim of Domestic Violence. To qualify for this preference: 1

Actual or threatened physical violence directed against the applicant or the Applicant's family by a spouse or other household member who lives in the Unit with the family must have occurred within the past sixty (60) days or be of a continuing nature; or

The family must have been displaced as a result of fleeing violence in the home or they are currently living in a situation where they are being subjected to or victimized by violence in the home; and

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

- D) A "rent burden" preference for families paying more than 50% of their 1
income for rent and utilities. This preference applies to families paying more than 50% of their income for rent and utilities for at least 90 days commencing before they were selected from the waiting list, and continuing through the verification of the preference. For purposes of this preference, "family income is gross monthly income as defined in the regulations. "Rent" is defined as the actual amount due under a lease or occupancy agreement calculated on a monthly basis without regard to the amount actually paid, plus the monthly amount of tenant-supplied utilities which can be either:

The PHA's reasonable estimate of the cost of such utilities, using the Section 8 Utility Allowance Schedule; or

The average monthly payments the family actually made for these utilities in the most recent 12 month period, or if the information is not obtainable for the entire period, the average of the past ninety (90) days.

An applicant family may choose which method to use to calculate utilities expense. Any amounts paid to or on behalf of a family under any energy assistance program must be subtracted from the total rent burden if included in family income. The

applicant must show that they actually paid the utility bills, regardless of whose name the service is under.

To qualify for the rent burden preference, the applicant must pay rent directly to the

landlord or agent. If the applicant pays their share of rent to a cohabitant and is not named on the lease, the PHA will require both verification from the landlord that the applicant resides in the unit, and verification from the cohabitant of the amount of rent paid by the applicant. If the applicant is subletting, the lessor must have the legal right to sublet. If an applicant owns a mobile home, but rents the space upon which it is located, then "rent" must include the monthly payment made to amortize the purchase price of the home.

Members of a cooperative are "renters" for the purposes of qualifying for the preference. In this case, "rent" would mean the charges under the occupancy agreement.

- E) A preference for families who are homeless or living in substandard w1 housing. Applicants who live in substandard housing are families whose dwelling meets one or more of the following criteria provided that the family did not cause the condition:

Is dilapidated, as cited by officials of local code enforcement office and does not provide safe, adequate shelter; has one or more critical defects or a combination of defects requiring considerable repair; endangers the health, safety, and well-being of family.

Does not have operable indoor plumbing.

Does not have usable flush toilet in the unit for the exclusive use of the family.

Does not have usable bathtub or shower in unit for exclusive family use.

Does not have adequate, safe electrical service.

Does not have an adequate, safe source of heat.

Should, but does not, have a kitchen. (Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing is not substandard solely because it does not contain sanitary and/or food preparation facilities in the unit).

Has been declared unfit for habitation by a government agency.

Is overcrowded according to HQS/local/state/BOCA code.

Persons who reside as part of a family unit shall not be considered a separate family unit for substandard housing definition preference purposes.

Applicants living in public housing or publicly assisted housing shall not be denied this

preference if unit meets the criteria for the substandard preference.

An applicant who is a "homeless family" is considered to be living in substandard housing. "Homeless Families":

Lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and

Have a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised public or private shelter providing temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters and transitional housing), or an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not ordinarily used as a sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Homeless families may maintain their place on the waiting list while completing a transitional housing program.

Families who are residing with friends or relatives on a temporary basis will be included in the homeless definition.

Persons who reside as part of a family unit shall not be considered a separate household.

Verification of Waiting List Preferences

- **Residency Preference:** For families who live, work or have been hired to work in the jurisdiction of the PHA.

In order to verify that an applicant is a resident, the PHA will require a minimum of three of the following documents: rent receipts, leases, utility bills, employer or agency records, school records, drivers licenses, voters registration records, credit reports, statement from household with whom the family is residing.

For families who have been hired to work in the jurisdiction of the PHA, a statement from the employer will be required.

Veterans Preference: This preference is available to New Jersey citizens and residents who are current members of the U.S. Armed Forces, veterans, or surviving spouses of veterans.

The PHA will require U.S. government documents which indicate that the applicant qualifies under the above definition.

Disability Preference: This preference is extended to disabled persons or families with a disabled member as defined in this plan. The PHA will require appropriate documentation from a knowledgeable professional. The PHA will not inquire as to the nature or extent of the disability.

An award letter or other proof of eligibility for Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income will be acceptable.

Working Preference: This preference is available for families with at least one member who is employed or to families whose head and spouse, or sole member is elderly or disabled.

The PHA will require a statement from the employer, or verification of the age or disability

status of the head and spouse, or sole member.

Victims of Domestic Violence: The PHA will offer a local preference to families that include victims of domestic violence.

The PHA will require written verification from the police, a social service agency, the court, a clergyperson, a physician, and/or a public or private facility giving shelter and/or counseling to victims. The documentation must verify that the family has been displaced as a result of fleeing violence in the home or they are currently living in a situation where they are being subjected to or victimized by violence in the home, and identify when the actual or threatened physical violence against the applicant last occurred.

The family must certify that the abuser will not return to the household without the advance written approval of the PHA.

Substandard Housing:

Families who claim to be living in a substandard housing unit:

Written or oral verification by a government agency

PHA inspection

Landlord's statement of unit condition

Inspection form completed and certified by family head of household

"Homeless" Families:

Written certification by a public or private facility providing shelter, the police, or a social services agency.

The PHA designates agencies for this purpose. Any suitable agency may verify.

Prior to processing the application, the PHA requires a second certification from the same source that the applicant is not yet permanently housed and has been continuously homeless or temporarily housed since claiming the preference.

A PHA inspector may verify that the applicant is living in a place not normally used for human habitation.

If a family is in transitional housing and wishes the PHA to hold the family's place on the waiting list, a statement is required from the agency providing the transitional housing.

Rent Burden: Paying more than 50% of income for rent:

Families will be required to verify their income, the amount of rent and utilities they are obligated to pay, and the period of time they have been residing in the unit.

Families must furnish copies of rental receipts/the lease/canceled checks/money orders.

The PHA may contact the landlord directly by mail or telephone.

The PHA compares the address with address(es) used on other documents in the file.

In cases where the family pays rent to a co-renter or sublets the unit, the PHA requires a

certification from the person who receives the money from the applicant, and verification from the owner that the family resides in the unit.

If there is no rental agreement, and no other landlord verification, the PHA will require documentation for six months.

If there is no lease or occupancy agreement and the family is receiving public assistance, the PHA may verify the amount of rent and address of the unit with the appropriate social service agency.

If there is no lease or occupancy agreement, and the family is not receiving public assistance, the PHA will require receipts and other forms of identification which indicate the residence. Such documents include receipts, telephone bills, utility bills, driver's license, and school records.

To verify the amount due to amortize the purchase price of a manufactured home, copies of the most recent payment receipts, canceled checks or money order receipts, or a copy of the current purchase agreement.

At the family's option, the PHA can use either the actual cost of utilities or the PHA's Section 8 Existing utility allowance schedule. To verify the amount the family actually paid for utilities not included in the rent (if the Section 8 Utility Allowance Schedule is not used):

- Copies of receipts, canceled checks, bills showing previous utility payments

- Written verification of consumption costs directly from the utility or service supplier

Verification must be provided for a minimum period of six months

Documentation of the amount of rent due must be provided for a period of twelve months.

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 the PHA'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, a PHA 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)].

PHA Policy

The PHA 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 PHA system of preferences 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 a PHA 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)].

PHA 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 the PHA's hierarchy of preferences, if applicable. Within each targeted funding or preference category, families will be selected in numerical order based on the numbers that were assigned to each application, by lottery, at the time the applications were placed on the waiting list. Documentation will be maintained by the PHA 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 the PHA 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, the PHA must notify the family [24 CFR 982.554(a)].

PHA Policy

The PHA will notify the family by first class mail when it is selected from the waiting list. The notice will inform the family of the following:

- Date, time, and location of the scheduled application interview, including any procedures for rescheduling the interview

- Who is required to attend the interview

- All documents that must be provided at the interview, including information about what constitutes acceptable documentation

If a notification letter is returned to the PHA 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 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].

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

PHA 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 the PHA.

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, the PHA will allow the family to retain its place on the waiting list for **six (6) months**. If not all household members have disclosed their SSNs at the next time the PHA is issuing vouchers, the PHA 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, the PHA 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, the PHA will provide translation services in accordance with the PHA's LEP plan.

If the family is unable to attend a scheduled interview, the family should contact the PHA in advance of the interview to schedule a new appointment. In all circumstances, if a family does not attend a scheduled interview, the PHA will send another notification letter with a new interview appointment time. Applicants who fail to attend two scheduled interviews without PHA 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

The PHA must verify all information provided by the family (see Chapter 7). Based on verified information, the PHA 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.

PHA Policy

If the PHA determines that the family is ineligible, the PHA 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, extremely low-income), the family will be returned to its original position on the waiting list. The PHA will notify the family in writing that it has been returned to the waiting list, and will specify the reasons for it.

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