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Housing Works

Housing Choice Voucher Program

Notice of Subsidy Standard Revision

Effective March 25, 2015

Why is it necessary to change the subsidy standards?

The costs associated with administering the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program have risen significantly over the past several years. Therefore, in order to ensure serving the maximum number of families allowable, it is necessary for us to revise the subsidy standards for this program.

What are subsidy standards?

Subsidy standards determine the number of bedrooms needed for families of different sizes and compositions. This is the voucher size a family will be given. The voucher size does not dictate the size of unit the family must actually lease, nor does it determine who within a household will share a bedroom/sleeping room. It only determines the maximum amount of subsidy we will pay. HUD Regulations require that subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding.

What changes were made to the subsidy standards?

We will assign one bedroom for each two persons within the household, except in the following circumstances:

- Persons of the opposite sex (other than spouses, domestic partner and children under the age of 10) will be allocated separate bedrooms.
- Live-in aides will be allocated a separate bedroom. Additional bedrooms are not provided for the family members of live-in aides.
- Single person families will be allocated one bedroom.
- Foster children will be included in determining unit size only if they will be in the unit for more than (6) months.
- An additional bedroom will not be issued to a family with a newborn until the child reaches the age of two years old. In cases where a family is in the process of moving, or at the annual recertification, the child would have to be within three months of their 2nd birthday for consideration of receiving a larger size voucher.
- A head of household will not be combined with another family member other than a spouse, co-head or domestic partner in assigning a bedroom.

Housing Works will reference the following chart in determining the appropriate voucher size for a family:

Voucher Size	Persons in Household (Minimum – Maximum)
1 bedroom	1 – 4
2 bedroom	2 – 6
3 bedroom	3 – 8
4 bedroom	6 – 10
5 bedroom	8 – 12

Are there exceptions to the subsidy standards?

Housing Works may grant an exception to its established subsidy standards if determined that the exception is justified by the age, sex, health, handicap, or relationship of family members or other personal circumstances. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A need for an additional bedroom for medical equipment.
- A need for a separate bedroom for reasons related to a family member's disability, medical or health condition.
- The family must request any exception to the subsidy standards in writing. The request must explain the need or justification for a larger family unit size, and must include appropriate documentation. Requests based on health-related reasons must be verified by a knowledgeable professional source (e.g., doctor or health professional). Any exceptions to the subsidy standards will be reviewed and determined by management and must be reverified annually.

How will the change in subsidy standards affect me?

The subsidy standard change will affect families who are 1) new to the program; 2) moving; 3) changing their family composition; or 4) at their first annual reexamination. The subsidy standard will change the voucher size, which determines the payment standard used for the family.

The payment standard for a family is the lower of 1) the payment standard of the voucher size, or 2) the payment standard for the size of the dwelling unit rented by the family.

When a lower payment standard is used you may see an increase in the amount of rent you are required to pay your landlord. If you are receiving a utility reimbursement that amount may also be reduced.

Are the subsidy standards the same for all Housing Authorities?

No. The subsidy standards are not the same with all Housing Authorities. Each Housing Authority must establish their own subsidy standards.

Questions?

If you have any questions about how this change may affect you please be sure to let your Housing Specialist know.