

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: November 16, 2015

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of December 9, 2015

Subject: Metro HRA Administrative Plan Revision

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: 24 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 982

Staff Prepared/Presented: Terri Smith, HRA Manager, (651) 602-1187

Division/Department: Community Development / HRA

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the proposed revision to the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Administrative Plan.

Background

The Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to adopt an Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Although HUD develops regulations for program administration, the housing authority (HA) establishes discretionary policies that go along with the regulation. The Administrative Plan outlines these regulations and the discretionary policies. The Plan and any revisions of the Plan must be formally adopted by the Council.

The Metro HRA generally requests approval of and changes to the Plan along with the Public Housing Agency Plan annual process. The Council last approved the Administrative Plan on October 14, 2015.

The Metro HRA is requesting two minor revisions to the Administrative Plan related to the Project Based Voucher program. The Metro HRA administers 596 units of Project Based Voucher (PBV) assistance. PBV is when a voucher is tied to a specific unit rather than to a household. The regulations governing the PBV program require applicants who will occupy PBV units be selected from the public housing authority (PHA) waiting list according to the policies in the Administrative Plan. The regulations also allow the PHA to place families referred by the PBV owner on its waiting list.

The Metro HRA recently opened its waiting list and has 2,000 new applicants. The Metro HRA has success filling PBV general occupancy units with this list. The Metro HRA has not had success filling PBV units from the waiting list with specialized supportive services. These units serve specialized populations such as people who are homeless or disabled needing specific services.

There is currently no language in the Administrative Plan to address this issue, therefore requiring contact with all 2,000 applicants for each vacancy of these very specialized units. Most applicants on the waiting list do not qualify for the vacancies.

The Metro HRA has historically had a separate waiting list for the Council-owned PBV housing units. Staff determined this is no longer necessary as these general occupancy units can be marketed to waiting list applicants with success while avoiding duplication of work with a separate list.

This action requests changes to address these issues in the Organization of the Waiting List section of the Project Based Voucher chapter of the Administrative Plan:

Current Policy Removal:

The PHA will establish and maintain separate waiting lists for the Council-owned Project Based Voucher (PBV) units.

Proposed New Policy:

Persons who will reside in PBV units may come from the PHA waiting list or be referred by the owner.

- For supportive housing PBV units, the PHA will accept applicant referrals from the supportive housing manager or owner. The referred applicant will be processed to determine program eligibility.
- The PHA will survey its HCV waiting list for vacancies in non-supportive housing PBV developments at the request of a project, including the Council-owned PBV units. If the PHA is unable to provide enough eligible applicants to fill the PBV units, the PHA may allow the owner to refer applicants to the PHA.

Rationale

Changing this language will remove the unnecessary administrative burden and expense of mailing to applicants not eligible for very specialized units.

Funding

N/A

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this recommendation.