

Metropolitan Council Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA)

Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan Revisions

November 19, 2018

Community Development Committee



Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve two revisions to the Administrative Plan to:

- Incorporate new language for the award of Mainstream Vouchers; and
- Incorporate language regarding a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) variance for windowless bedrooms.

HCV Administrative Plan

- Required by HUD
- Main policy document
- Contains all mandatory and discretionary policies
- The Administrative Plan and any revisions must be approved by the Council.
- Changes to the Administrative Plan are generally submitted for approval as part of the Public Housing Agency plan each October.
 - The Council approved the most current Administrative Plan on September 26, 2018
- The Metro HRA is proposing two changes.

Mainstream Vouchers

- The Metro HRA was recently awarded 89 Mainstream Vouchers through a competitive grant application process. The vouchers will be used to provide federal housing assistance to homeless persons using the transit system as shelter.
- Proposed policy addition to allow administration of the Mainstream Vouchers:

Section 4-III.B. Selection and HCV Funding Sources

Mainstream Voucher Program

- This program provides funding to assist non-elderly persons with disabilities who are:
 - Transitioning out of institutional or other segregated setting,
 - At serious risk of institutionalization,
 - Homeless, or
 - At risk of becoming homeless
- The Metro HRA was awarded 89 vouchers to serve unsheltered homeless, non-elderly persons with disabilities, using transit as shelter.
- Admission for the program will be made through referrals from contracted service partners working directly with the Metro Transit Homeless Action Team
- If additional Mainstream vouchers become available through HUD, the Metro HRA will apply to receive additional vouchers.

Windowless Bedrooms

- Metro HRA requested and received a HUD variance to the Housing Quality Standards inspection criteria for multi-family development units that include an interior bedroom without a window.
- Waiver will be for brand new or rehabilitated units that have large openings, transom windows, other unit windows and patios, providing an abundance of natural light.
- The variance ensures access to additional units and is beneficial to voucher holders without compromising safety.

The underlined portion of the below is the proposed policy language:

- **Section 8.I.B. Additional Local Requirements, Clarification of HUD Requirements**
- Any room for sleeping must have a window or an openable door to the immediate exterior unless it meets the eligibility criteria for a HUD approved variance for windowless sleeping rooms. To be eligible for the variance the unit must:
 - Be newly constructed OR rehabilitated in a multifamily development.
 - Meet all state and local building fire codes.

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