

Community Development Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 24, 2016

Subject: Metro HRA Administrative Plan Revision

Proposed Action

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

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

No Discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: February 16, 2016

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 24, 2016

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 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 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.

Metro HRA has success filling PBV general occupancy units with its waiting list but 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 applicants for each vacancy of specialized units. Most applicants on the waiting list do not qualify for the vacancies.

Staff first brought an Administrative Plan Revision related to this issue to the Committee on November 16, 2015. After discussion with the Committee, Council Member Dorfman requested some additional outreach be conducted prior to adopting the revision. The purpose was to ensure all potential applicants have opportunity for vacant PBV units. Staff reached out to Anoka, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties and their Continuums of Care, social service providers, coordinated entry representatives and project based voucher owners.

As a result, the following policy change in the Organization of the Waiting List section of the Administrative Plan is proposed:

Proposed New Policy:

Persons who will reside in PBV units may come from the PHA waiting list or be referred by the property owner. Available units will be filled as follows:

- *Units designated for homeless, disabled or other specialized populations will be filled through applicant referrals from the Coordinated Entry System and/or their providers in the applicable county, via the owner or management agent.*
- *General occupancy / non-supportive housing units will be marketed to applicants on the PHA's HCV waiting list. If the PHA is unable to provide enough eligible applicants to fill the PBV units, the PHA may allow the property owner to refer applicants to the PHA.*

The PHA will survey its HCV waiting list for interest in PBV units serving homeless, disabled or other specialized populations. Interested applicants will be referred to the property owner for waiting list placement awaiting an open unit.

The definition of coordinated entry will be added to the glossary section of the Administrative Plan:

Coordinated entry is a process developed to ensure all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to the community's housing and homeless assistance resources and are quickly identified, assessed for and connected to flexible housing and service options. The Coordinated entry process helps communities prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service needs to ensure the people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner.

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

Staff reached out to Anoka, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties and their Continuums of Care, representatives of the coordinated entry system, social service providers and PBV owners. All support the policy revision.