

- Mainstream Vouchers for Persons with Disabilities
- VASH – Veterans Affairs for Supportive Housing
- Family Unification Program
- Non-elderly Disabled

**Order of Selection – specified category vouchers**

When HACA resumes voucher issuance after a funding shortfall, HACA will first issue vouchers to specified category vouchers until HACA is assisting the required number of special purpose families.

**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 HACA 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 HACA to establish other local preferences, at its discretion. Any local preferences established must be consistent with HACA plan and the consolidated plan, and must be based on local housing needs and priorities that can be documented by generally accepted data sources.

HACA Policy

Families can claim eligibility for any local preference any time from the date they applied up until the time their name is drawn off the waiting list. Preference claims will be verified once they have been drawn off the waiting list during the interview process. If HACA is unable to verify a preference claim, the family will be placed back on the waiting list without the preference.

HACA will open the waiting list or leave the waiting list open for certain preference groups as needed to meet the preference caps listed below.

1. Non-specified category vouchers will use the following local preferences for purposes of establishing priority. The local preferences are weighted differently, with the higher number representing a higher ranking. Each applicant family can be granted a maximum of one local preference plus the residency preference (if they qualify). Weights for each preference are as follows:

Elderly	= 2
Disabled	= 2
Involuntarily Displaced	= 2

Homeless	= 3
Families with Minor Children	= 2
Residency	= 1
RAD Choice Mobility	= 3
PH Special Accommodation	= 3
FUP Youth	= 3
<u>RAD Relocation</u>	<u>= 4</u>

- (A) **Elderly Preference:** HACA will give preference to elderly families. An elderly family is a family in which the head, spouse or co-head is age 62 or older.
- (B) **Disabled Preference:** HACA will give preference to disabled families. A disabled family is a family in which the head, spouse or co-head is disabled using the current HUD definition of disability.
- (C) **Involuntary Displacement Preference:** HACA will give preference to families displaced as a result of natural disaster or government action. The following documentation will be used to verify displacement status:

Certification from a unit of government concerning displacement due to natural disaster; or

Certification from a unit of government concerning displacement due to code enforcement or public improvement/development or displacement by inaccessibility of a unit.

The displacement must have occurred within six months of requesting the involuntary displacement preference. Also, HACA will offer a preference to any family that has been terminated from its HCV program due to insufficient program funding.

- (D) **Homeless Preference:** HACA will give preference to homeless applicants. Each fiscal year HACA will give a preference to no more than 100 applicants or 25% of all applicants drawn (whichever is less) meeting all of the following criteria:
  - a) Meet the HUD definition of homeless. See definitions section at the end of the Administrative Plan.
  - b) Are referred to HACA by a coalition of homeless service providers with whom HACA has executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the provider’s responsibilities with respect to the provision of housing search assistance and supportive services for the referred household.
  - c) Have received a written commitment from the referring homeless service provider for housing search / location assistance.
  - d) Have received a written commitment from the homeless service provider to offer support services on an as needed basis to help the household transition from homelessness to permanent housing; and
  - e) Have received a written commitment from the homeless service provider to

offer supportive services to help the household maintain housing and comply with HCV rules.

While a referral from the coalition of homeless service providers is required for this preference, use of the offered supportive services is not a requirement. The choice of the applicant to refuse the offered services will not jeopardize any housing assistance for which they are eligible.

HACA will execute a Memorandum of Understanding with one entity representing a coalition of homeless service providers that will serve as the primary point of contact for communicating homeless referrals to HACA. HACA reserves the right to establish additional MOUs as necessary to ensure that homeless applicants have the opportunity to apply for housing assistance under this preference.

If it is determined that an applicant referred by a homeless service provider, as described above, does not meet the criteria described therein, the applicant will not receive the preference and:

if the applicant was only on the HCV waiting list because of the homeless referral, the applicant will be removed from the HCV waiting list

if the applicant was on the HCV waiting list through the regular application process, the applicant will return to their lottery position on the waiting list without the homeless preference.

If HACA denies an applicant's homeless preference claim, HACA will notify the applicant and referring service provider in writing, including the reason(s) for the preference denial. Applicants have the right to appeal the denial of eligibility for the homeless preference using the established process for informal hearings.

Persons transitioning out of the City of Austin's 1115 Waiver Permanent Supportive Housing Assertive Community Treatment Team program into permanent housing will be included as a priority group as part of this preference. This would require a referral from the current case manager as well as documentation that the family was homeless prior to entering into the current program. This documentation must be provided as part of the referral.

Individuals and families transitioning, or "moving up," from Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units will also be included as a priority group as part of this homeless preference. These are persons that were previously homeless prior to entry into a PSH program but who no longer require that level of supportive services. Referrals could also include individuals and families participating in a Continuum of Care homeless rental assistance program, which is not renewed. This would require a referral from the current case manager or PSH provider as well as documentation that the family was homeless prior to entering into the PSH unit. This documentation must be provided as part of the referral.

- (E) **Families with Minor Children Preference:** HACA will give preference to families with minor children. A minor child is a child under age 18 who meets

HUD and HACA’s definition of a family member (See Section 3.I.B for the definition of Family Members).

Minor children of a live in aide do not qualify the family for this preference.

Minor children that are foster children of an authorized adult member of the assisted family do not qualify the family for this preference.

- (F) **Residency Preference:** HACA will give preference to persons who reside in the following Texas Counties: Travis, Hays, Bastrop, Caldwell and Williamson counties. The residency status will be determined at the time of the eligibility interview. This preference will not have the purpose or effect of delaying or otherwise denying admission to the program based on the race, color, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age of any member of an applicant family.

Applicants who are working or who have been notified that they are hired to work in a residency preference area will be treated as residents of the residency preference area with documented proof of employment in the residency preference area. Applicants who are graduates of, or active participants in, education and training programs in a residency preference area are eligible for this preference if the education or training program is designed to prepare individuals for the job market.

- (G) **Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Choice Mobility Preference:** As required by HUD and in accordance with all HUD RAD guidelines, if HACA participates in RAD, HACA will provide a Choice-Mobility option to residents of covered RAD projects in accordance with policies outlined in Chapter 18 of this HCV Administrative Plan.

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(H) **Public Housing Special Accommodation Preference:** HACA will give preference to families that are currently housed in Public Housing and waiting on the transfer list for a unit with an accessible accommodation as well as to families that have been certified eligible off the Public Housing waiting list and are waiting for a unit with an accessible accommodation. To qualify for this preference, the family must meet all of the following criteria:

***For current Public Housing families waiting on the transfer list to be eligible, they must:***

- a) Be currently housed in Public Housing and waiting on the transfer list for a unit with the needed special accommodation;
- b) Have a documented need for a reasonable accommodation which requires a specific type of housing unit (including but not limited to wheelchair accessibility, no stairs, etc).
- c) Have waited more than 9 months since the reasonable accommodation was approved and they were placed on the transfer waiting list without receiving a housing offer specifically because the availability of the needed accommodation is limited within HACA’s portfolio and all units with that accommodation are occupied by families needing that accommodation.

If the needed accommodation is not structurally or economically feasible in HACA’s existing Public Housing portfolio, the family will not be required to wait 9 months.

- d) Have verified income at the time of their last annual or interim recertification which was below the current income limit for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

***For families drawn off the Public Housing waiting list and waiting for their first housing offer, they must:***

- a) Have a current application on the Public Housing waiting list which was drawn according to the regular rules and guidelines of the Public Housing waiting list.
- b) Have completed eligibility certification and are eligible for the Public Housing program.
- c) Have a documented need for a reasonable accommodation which requires a specific type of housing unit (including but not limited to wheelchair accessibility, no stairs, etc).

- d) Have waited more than 9 months since completing the eligibility process for Public Housing without receiving a housing offer specifically due to either
  - 1. The needed accommodation is not economically feasible to be done in HACA’s existing Public Housing portfolio; or
  - 2. The availability of the needed accommodation is limited within HACA’s portfolio and all units with that accommodation are occupied by families needing that accommodation.
- e) Had verified income at the time of their eligibility processing which was below the current income limit for the Housing Choice Voucher program.

***For both current Public Housing families and families drawn off the Public Housing waiting list:***

- a) If the family chooses the special accommodation preference for HCV, they will be placed on the HCV waiting list with the special accommodation preference.
  - b) When the family’s name is drawn from the waiting list, they will be required to meet the eligibility requirements for the HCV program at that time in order to receive a voucher.
  - c) The total number of families (from the combination of both the current Public Housing families and families drawn off the Public Housing waiting list) eligible to receive this preference will be capped at no more than 10 families per calendar year.
- (I) **FUP Youth Preference:** HACA will give preference to FUP youth whose 18 month FUP voucher is expiring and they will lack adequate housing as a result of voucher expiration. To be eligible for this voucher, the FUP Youth must be referred by the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (TDFPS), Lifeworks or another social service agency. The referral must indicate that without continued voucher assistance, the FUP Youth will lack adequate housing. Receipt of this preference is not a guarantee of uninterrupted voucher assistance, as issuance of vouchers is dependent on funding availability.

**(J) RAD Relocation Preference:** HACA may give preference to families currently housed in Public Housing properties that are undergoing significant renovation or redevelopment through RAD and would require long term (more than 6 months) relocation of residents. If HACA chooses to exercise this option for valid business purposes, HACA will have a special opening of the waiting list only for the identified properties. Families that select this option and apply during the open period will receive this preference.

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