MANAGING YOUR WAITING LIST FAIRLY, CONSISTENTLY, EFFICIENTLY

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Waiting Lists

Overview:

– A waiting list establishes the order in which a PHA offers units/ vouchers to qualified applicants

– A well-managed waiting list is essential to carrying out PH/ HCV admissions in accordance with HUD’s program rules and Civil Rights law

– PHAs are required to establish a fair application and selection process
Waiting Lists

Overview:

- A well-managed list:
  - Treats applicants consistently
  - Provides information on need and demand for units
  - Ensures needy families receive assistance as quickly as possible
  - Is the first step in maintaining a high leasing rate
Waiting Lists

Overview:

- A well-managed list:
  - Helps you learn what population is underserved
  - Whether or not you need to change your outreach
Waiting Lists

Overview:

– Program rules allow for flexibility for each PHA to develop a process tailored to its specific circumstances
– Must be stated in Admin Plan/ ACOP
– Should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are current and effectively support the PHA’s occupancy and leasing objectives
Waiting Lists

 Regulations:

 – Public Housing: 24 CFR 960.201 – 960.208
 – HCV: 24 CFR Subpart E (982.201 – 982.207)
 – HCV and PH Occupancy Guidebooks
 – PIH Notice 2012-34
Opening the Waiting List

Flexibility to keep open or open periodically

– Review waiting list and consider:
  • Whether the list is unreasonably long
  • Whether provides with sufficient number of applicants
  • If you open and close regularly, consider the administration necessary to do so properly each time
Opening the Waiting List

Opening and Closing

- MUST advertise in local newspaper of general circulation and minority media and ad plan must be included in Admin Plan (strong SHOULD in PH)

- MUST include date and time and how long WL will be open and any limitations to applying (limited slots, specific demographic like EL only)
Opening the Waiting List

Opening and Closing

– MUST include efforts to reach out to populations not “likely to apply”, EL/ DH, LEP

– MUST include Equal Opportunity logo and Fair Housing Statement/ Nondiscrimination
Opening the Waiting List

Taking Applications

– Should consider various locations and times
  • AM, PM weekends

– Should consider various ways to accept
  • In person, electronically, email, fax, mail

– Should consider accessibility and LEP
  • Big print, easy locations to get to, various languages
Opening the Waiting List

- Can open just for targeted groups/populations
  - If awarded funding for a specific population (FUP), do not need a preference
  - Otherwise, must have a preference (EL/DH, homeless, working, etc...)

- Can open just for specific properties/projects
Opening the Waiting List

- Can open just for targeted groups/populations
  - Must be consistent with PHA’s preferences
  - Must be defined in ACOP/Admin Plan
- Preferences must be based on local housing need using good data
- Preferences must be consistent with fair housing and civil rights law
Opening the Waiting List

- Can be site-based (PH)
  - Must be in Annual Plan
  - If switching from single to site-based, must follow rules for change
    - Obtain site preferences for current PH applicants after providing information on new site based waiting lists and sites
    - Give them the option to get on new waiting lists
Placing Applicants on Waiting List

- Can use multiple options
  - Date and time for all
  - Lottery for some
    - Not date and time dependent but randomly assigned to list
    - Useful for LARGE applicant pools where putting all on the list makes it too long
    - Prevents rushing to “Be First”
    - Can be for all or some applications
Placing Applicants on Waiting List

Lottery Approach

A PHA uses a lottery to construct a waiting list. Entry cards printed in several languages are distributed from sites at a pre-established date and time. Only one card per family is accepted. Applicants fill out the cards and return them by mail. The cards must be postmarked by a specified date. All of the accepted cards are held in a pool, and the PHA conducts drawings throughout a 12-month period using a computer-based, random selection procedure. The dates of the drawings are published in the local newspaper.
Placing Applicants on Waiting List

Lottery Approach

Winning families are notified in writing regarding application procedures. The number of lottery cards drawn is intended to carry the PHA until the next drawing. Drawings occur one or twice a year or as needed by the PHA. At the end of the year, the entire application process begins again. One PHA using this approach reports that the percent of applicants called from the list who become successful leaseholders has increased from 35 to 80 percent with the implementation of the annual lottery.
Applications

Can use pre-app or full app process

– Pre-app (at a minimum) should include:
  • Name and Address
  • Family unit size
  • Date and time of application
  • Local preference
  • Race/ethnicity for HOH
  • Estimated annual income for income targeting
Applications

- Pre-app Advantages
  - Best when LOTS of applicants
  - Quick initial screening process
  - Screen out obviously ineligible applicants
  - Delays completion of full and eliminates need to reverify
Applications

- Full app Advantages
  - Best when time between screening and housing is minimal
  - Get all information once
Removing Applicants from Waiting List

- Applicants can be removed from WL:
  - When they are housed
  - When they have refused an offer of housing
  - When they request it
  - When their apps are rejected/withdrawn

- Not required to give a hearing if removed at their request or if you can’t contact them
Things to Consider

- Open list for more than one day?
- Use lottery or date and time?
- Make application available ahead of time?
- Pre-app or full app?
QUESTIONS?