

7/14/15

Do you have a "homeless" preference? (this might be broader than a natural disaster displacement preference, e.g., to cover emergency housing for a family who lost their house to fire)?

We have a local preference but nothing to justify homeless, only if involuntary displaced due to fire, flood or other disaster. The application when submitted would be put on the wait list date and time of submission.

Yes. They must be referred by a member of our Local Homeless Consortium and we have set aside up to 12 vouchers for this. (Lubbock)

Yes (McKinney)

Austin Housing Authority

HACA does have a homeless preference. See the quoted section of our Admin Plan below. In order to access the homeless preference, families must be referred by a homeless service provider. All the homeless service providers in Austin have collaborated to create a coordinated intake assessment. From there, families are matched to the most appropriate housing option available, which may be the voucher program homeless preference or another housing option. This coordinated assessment helps homeless families get access to a wide range of housing options beyond what is offered through the Housing Authority. We have attached a one page sheet with more information about the coordinated assessment.

HACA Admin Plan:

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. 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.