

## **PART III: SELECTION FOR HCV ASSISTANCE**

### **4-III.A. OVERVIEW**

As vouchers become available, families on the waiting list must be selected for assistance in accordance with the policies described in this part.

The order in which families are selected from the waiting list depends on the selection method chosen by the HACC and is impacted in part by any selection preferences for which the family qualifies. The availability of targeted funding also may affect the order in which families are selected from the waiting list.

The HACC must maintain a clear record of all information required to verify that the family is selected from the waiting list according to the HACC's selection policies [24 CFR 982.204(b) and 982.207(e)].

### **4-III.B. SELECTION AND HCV FUNDING SOURCES**

#### **Special Admissions [24 CFR 982.203]**

HUD may award funding for specifically-named families living in specified types of units (e.g., a family that is displaced by demolition of public housing; a non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or 2 projects). In these cases, the HACC may admit such families whether or not they are on the waiting list, and, if they are on the waiting list, without considering the family's position on the waiting list. These families are considered non-waiting list selections. The HACC must maintain records showing that such families were admitted with special program funding.

#### **Targeted Funding [24 CFR 982.204(e)]**

HUD may award a HACC funding for a specified category of families on the waiting list. The HACC must use this funding only to assist the families within the specified category. In order to assist families within a targeted funding category, the HACC may skip families that do not qualify within the targeted funding category. Within this category of families, the order in which such families are assisted is determined according to the policies provided in Section 4-III.C.

#### HACC Policy

The HACC administers the following types of targeted funding:

HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program- This special allocation of vouchers is not subject to selection from the HACC waiting list and selections for participation are based on referrals to the HACC by the participating Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Summary of HUD-VASH Reference Guide requirements are in PIH Notices and the Federal Register notice published on March 23, 2012

#### **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**

HACCs must describe the method for selecting applicant families from the waiting list, including the system of admission preferences that the HACC will use [24 CFR 982.202(d)].

#### **Local Preferences [24 CFR 982.207; HCV p. 4-16]**

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

### HACC Policy

In order to ensure that the Housing Choice Voucher Program services clients with the most critical housing needs, a local preference system was created. In compliance with HUD Notice PIH 2013-15 and with the intent of providing the greatest possible assistance to families experiencing homelessness, the HACC has a preference system to include a category for homeless families that have been referred by designated partnering agencies. These agencies are the organizations providing housing services to Federal Category I, Literally Homeless Families. They are primarily the agencies contracted to provide temporary housing assistance through the Emergency Solutions Grant Program.

The HACC has a current preference point allocation that also reflects an assessment of other local needs in Chester County. These needs have been ranked by the priority they have in relationship to the level of vulnerability facing the family.

The following preference categories and attached point ratings are established by HACC:

<b>Preference Category</b>	<b>Rating Points</b>
Chronically Homeless Families or Individuals Referred by Partnering Agencies*	150
Literally Homeless Families Referred by Partnering Agencies*	150
Eligible Referrals as Determined by Mental Health Housing Options Team*	150
Eligible Referrals for Persons Meeting the Requirements of the Section 811 Program Administered by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency*	150
Eligible Referrals for Families/Youth Qualifying for the Family Unification Program *	150
Eligible Referrals from the Continuum of Care Housing Program*	150
Families or Individuals Transitioning From Rapid Rehousing Program*	150
Homeless Families or Individuals Being Referred to Shared Housing by Partnering Agencies *	150
Homeless Families or Individuals Who Have Suffered Domestic Violence and Who are Being Referred for Permanent Housing Assistance by the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County (DVCCC)*	150
Eligible Referrals for Mainstream Vouchers – Category 1*	150
Eligible Referrals for Mainstream Vouchers – Category 2*	150
Eligible Referrals for Mainstream Vouchers – Category 3*	150
Eligible Referrals for Mainstream Vouchers – Category 4*	75
Individuals Transitioning Out of Nursing Homes*	75
Disabled	50
Elderly	50
Chester County Residency	25
Families with Children under 18 years old	20
Victims of Domestic Violence	20

Veteran	20
Working Family	20

**\*This preference may only be obtained through a referral.**

**HACC Preference Definitions:**

**Literally Homeless Families** – A family or individual is qualified for this preference if they fit the current Category 1 definition of homelessness and if they qualify for permanent housing assistance as defined by their analysis from the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPIDAT). An applicant may only receive this preference if they are referred by an agency partnering with HACC. Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: it has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or federal, state and local government programs); or is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

**Chronically Homeless Families** - A family or individual qualifies for this preference if they meet all of the above criteria and if it is determined that their homelessness can be defined as chronic. As with the above preference an individual or family must be referred by a partnering agency and must be qualified for permanent housing based on analysis through the VI-SPIDAT.

**Eligible Referral as Determined by Mental Health Housing Options Team** – These preferences affect very few individuals. An applicant is eligible for this preference if they are a client referred by the Mental Health Options Team. These are generally residents of group homes who can transition to independent living.

**Eligible Referrals for Persons Meeting the Requirements of the Section 811 Program Administered by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA)** – This preference is for persons with disabilities, age 18-61, who qualify as extremely low income and meet one of the following criteria: (1) They are institutionalized but able to live in the community with permanent supportive housing; or (2) They are at risk of being institutionalized without permanent supportive housing; or (3) They are living in a congregate setting and are seeking housing within the community. All referrals qualifying for this preference are coordinated through the PHFA.

**Eligible Referrals for Families and Youth Who Qualify for the Family Unification Program (FUP)** – this preference is for families/youth facing such a crisis and who are deemed in need of such a voucher. All referrals to be made by the Chester County Department of Human Services. An explanation of the program requirements are on this website.

**Eligible Referrals from the Continuum of Care Housing Program** – these referrals are designated for current participants in the Continuum of Care Program who are eligible to have their current subsidized status converted to a housing choice voucher. All referrals will be made by the agency designated to administer the Continuum of Care Housing Program.

**Families or Individuals Transitioning Out of Rapid Rehousing** – this preference is for those currently in Rapid Rehousing who facing homelessness without permanent housing assistance. Eligible referrals must come from those agencies under contract to provide Rapid Rehousing assistance.

**Homeless Families or Individuals Being Referred to Shared Housing by Partnering Agencies** – this preference is for those currently in shelters that have agreed to relocate to housing owned by the shelter as the next step in their return to permanent housing.

**Homeless Families or Individuals Who Have Suffered Domestic Violence and Who are Being Referred for Permanent Housing Assistance by the DVCCC** – this preference is for families currently residing in the DVCCC shelter and who qualify to be transferred to the permanent housing (called Garfield Commons) owned by DVCCC. Only DVCCC can make the referrals of those qualifying.

**Eligible Referrals for Category 1 and Category 2 Who Qualify Under the Mainstream Voucher Program** - these vouchers are for individuals leaving an institution (such as a nursing home) or for those in danger of being institutionalized. They must be between 18 and 62 and have a disability. Additional explanation is on the website.

**Eligible Referrals for Category 3 Who Qualify Under the Mainstream Voucher Program** – These are for families who are homeless with at least one family member disabled. The disabled family member must be at least 18 years of age and under 62 years of age. Additional explanation is on the website.

**Eligible Referrals for Category 4 Who Qualify Under the Mainstream Voucher Program** – These are for families who are at risk of homelessness with at least one family member disabled. The disabled family member must be at least 18 years of age and under 62 years of age. Additional explanation is on the website.

**Eligible Referral for Individuals Transitioning Out of Nursing Homes** – These preferences affect very few individuals. An applicant is eligible for this preference if they are the recipient of a temporary housing voucher from the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) program called Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)

**Disabled** – This preference is extended to disabled persons or families with a disabled member. Disability is defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as an individual that has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The HACC will require appropriate documentation from a knowledgeable professional. The HACC will not inquire as to the nature or extent of the disability. Acceptable documentation is also an award letter or other proof of eligibility for Supplemental Social Security (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSDI).

**Elderly** – This preference is defined as the head of household being at least 62 years of age or older. At the time of voucher processing one's birth certificate is considered to be verification of age.

**Chester County Residency** – This preference is for applicants who live, work or have been hired to work in Chester County. The HACC residency 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, religion, disability, or age of any member of an applicant family. To verify eligibility for the Chester County residency preference, HACC will require a minimum of two (2) of the following documents: rent receipts, leases, utility bills, employer verification on company letterhead, a pay stub with work address/location, social service agency records, school records, drivers licenses or state issued identification cards, voter registration or any other documents that are deemed acceptable to HACC as proof of residency.

**Families with Children Under 18 Years Old** – This preference is available for families with dependent children under 18 years old. Birth dates will be verified as part of eligibility interview.

**Victims of Domestic Violence** – Pursuant to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), this preference is available for individuals who have been victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking. Families claiming this preference must be able to provide documentation from federal, state or local police authorities, court records or certification from an agency that provides assistance to victims of such violence.

**Veteran** – A family whose head of household is an honorable or general discharged veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces. Proof of this is through the Defense Department issued Form DD-214 or certification from a federal state or local agency that will attest to the veteran status.

**Working Family** – This preference is for households where the head of household, spouse or sole member has been employed in their current job for at least one year. Verification of employment must be furnished by the employer. If the family is self-employed, the previous year's completed and filed IRS form 1040 is acceptable verification. If the head of household, spouse or sole member is 62 years of age or older and/or disabled, the family will be given the benefit of the working family preference.