

MEMO

To: Board of Commissioners
From: Karen Brunnemer, MTW, and Federal Policy Director
Date: December 14, 2022
Re: **Administrative Plan Updates**

Background

The Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Admin Plan) contains the policies that explain how Boulder Housing Partners administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program. It is divided into 20 chapters and updated annually. The 20th Chapter is new this year and contains policies specific to Special Purpose Vouchers. BHP administers Non-Elderly Disabled and Mainstream vouchers under this category.

Revisions and changes are first presented to the Board of Commissioners and then released for public review. The public review period must be at least 45 days and provide for a public hearing as an opportunity for the public to comment. Following the public review period, public comments are reviewed for incorporation and the Admin Plan is brought back to the Board for adoption. Given that the document is timely and subject to change, the Board's prior direction to staff about interim changes has been to bring the Board any substantive changes as they come up and to hold administrative changes for annual approval. In our quest to make policies and rules easier to understand, there are minor wording updates and changes throughout the plan.

HUD is re-writing the HCV Guidebook and releasing chapters as they are written and approved. Changes from the guidebook are being incorporated now.

Analysis

Important changes to note:

1. With the creation of the Project-Based Voucher Compliance team, required changes were made to preference and waitlist rules, specifically the Bringing Home School waitlist. This wait list was previously held by Emergency Housing Assistance Association. It is now being managed by the Housing Choice Voucher team.
2. In 2019, we created a pool of vouchers by setting aside 20% of the tenant-based vouchers that turned over each year to be issued to eligible households as referred by the Homeless Solutions of Boulder County Coordinated Entry System. This year, we are implementing a cap of 35 vouchers leased up under this preference at any given time.
3. BHP applied and was awarded extraordinary administrative fees specifically for the Mainstream vouchers. A policy must be included in the Admin Plan on how these funds will be spent. The \$89,000 awarded will be used for security deposits, renter's insurance if required by the lease, and landlord incentives.
4. HUD requires PHAs to have a policy on how to terminate families from the program in the event of insufficient funding. BHP monitors the HCV program and the funding monthly with the goal that we never have to do this. However, it is required to have a policy just in case. Previously, this policy was based on family behavior as to which families would be terminated first. This policy has been changed to families who are receiving the least amount of housing assistance, excluding families that include elderly or disabled family members.
5. Chapter 15 discusses different types of housing where vouchers can be used. Housing Authorities are required to allow all of them if it is needed as accommodation. We are proposing to allow all participants to use the shared housing options. This option allows voucher holders to rent a larger unit and share it with someone else. To protect the

participant, the landlord must sign a lease with each person renting a room or portion of the unit.

- Chapter 20 is brand new. It spells out differences in the Special Purpose Vouchers that BHP administers, which include 181 Non-Elderly Disabled and 178 Mainstream Vouchers.

The following table explains the contents of each chapter and highlights the changes which fall into one of three categories:

- Recent HUD policy changes are published through Notice of Federal Regulations.
- MTW Activity changes that were approved by the Board and HUD through the MTW Annual Plan process must be included.
- Clarification/changes to policies by staff.

Chapter Description	HUD required changes	MTW Activity changes	Clarification/change to policy
Chapter 1: Overview of the Program and Plan – describes the overall program including purpose, intent, and use of the plan	No changes	No changes	Added 30 Pearl and Mount Calvary to the list of project-based vouchers
Chapter 2: Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity – explains the requirements for PHAs regarding civil rights and affirmatively furthering fair housing	No changes	No changes	Added COB-protected classes; Clarified process for reasonable accommodation follow up
Chapter 3: Eligibility – details requirements for a household to be eligible for housing	HUD regulation reference update. FSS rule changes. Use of HUD EIV system clarification.	No changes	Clarification of elderly at Walnut Place is 55+; Gender wording updated.
Chapter 4: Applicants, Waitlists, and Tenant Selection – explains how applications are accepted, waitlists and lottery managed, and the order applicants are selected	No changes	No changes	Added wording for BSH wait list; Lottery will open as needed when vouchers are available; Set aside vouchers capped to 35 total.
Chapter 5: Briefings and Voucher Issuance – includes requirements for briefings and occupancy standards	No changes	No changes	Clarified wording on briefings and video use; Added policy for PBV unit offers.
Chapter 6: Income and Subsidy Determinations – defines annual income and how the subsidy is calculated	No changes	No changes	Gender wording updated.
Chapter 7: Verifications – explains acceptable forms of verification for all factors that determine eligibility	Mandated use of the HUD system for Social Security benefits	No changes	Gender wording updated.
Chapter 8: Housing Quality Standards and Rent Reasonableness	No changes	No changes	No changes

- explains requirements for units to pass both tests prior to paying assistance			
Chapter 9: General Leasing Process – covers lease-up process from submission of Request for Tenancy Approval to execution of Housing Assistance Payment Contract	No changes	No changes	No changes
Chapter 10: Moving with Continued Assistance – explains how and where a household can move while continuing to receive housing assistance	Late billing choice updated.	No changes	Gender wording updated.
Chapter 11: Income Reexaminations – explains policies regarding regularly scheduled and interim exams	No changes	No changes	Gender wording updated.
Chapter 12: Termination of Tenancy and Assistance – describes policies on optional and mandatory terminations	FSS program updates	No changes	Gender wording updated; Updated insufficient funding policy.
Chapter 13: Owners – discusses the roles and relationship between PHA and owners/landlords and HAP contracts	Conflict of interest wording updated.	No changes	Minor wording changes
Chapter 14: Program Integrity – covers policies designed to prevent, detect, investigate, and resolve instances of program abuse or fraud	No changes	No changes	No changes
Chapter 15: Special Housing Types – includes policies on single-room occupancy, shared housing, congregate housing, group homes, manufactured homes, cooperative housing, and home ownership	HUD updates due to new HCV Guidebook	No changes	Allowing participants to use the shared housing options without a reasonable accommodation
Chapter 16: Program Administration – covers program standards, informal reviews and hearings, debts owed to the PHA, the MTW plan and report, insufficient funding, and the Violence Against Women Act	HUD updates re: debts owed by family or landlord. Record retention information.	No changes	MS extraordinary admin fee uses; Gender wording updated.
Chapter 17: Project-Based Vouchers – describes HUD rules and BHP policies regarding vouchers that have been project-based	HUD regulation updates	No changes	Clarified bi-annual HQS inspections for PBV units; Added 30Pearl as PBV units; Updated BSH wait list and preference info; Updated exhibits for each PBV development.

Chapter 18: Rental Assistance Demonstration – covers the public housing properties that were converted to vouchers under the RAD program	HUD regulation updates; Choice Mobility updates per PIH notice; Emergency Transfers under VAWA updates; RAD contract rent increases.	No changes	Inspection schedule clarified; Changed wait list holder for BSH units to BHP; Clarification for next available voucher requests; Gender wording updated; updated PBV development exhibits.
Chapter 19: Emergency Housing Vouchers	No changes	No changes	No changes
Chapter 20: Special Purpose Vouchers	An entire chapter is new and speaks to the difference with the Special Purpose Vouchers. Non-Elderly Disabled and Mainstream Vouchers are the only type of special purpose vouchers BHP administers.		

A red-lined copy of the Admin Plan has been sent electronically.

Next Steps:

Subject to the Board's approval of the changes, the documents will be posted for public review on our website no later than December 20, 2022. The required posting is for 45 days. A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023. Information regarding these changes will be posted to our website, shared in the January session of the HCV Educational Series, and sent via email in our monthly Opportunities email. Comments can be submitted to Karen Brunnemer at hcv@boulderhousing.org or via phone at 720-564-4631. Comments from the Commissioners are always welcome.

Following the 45-day period, the document will return to the Board for final adoption at the February 2023 meeting.

Action Requested

This will be the Board’s first reading of the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan. The action requested is to authorize the release of the document for public comment with final adoption by the Board at the February 2023 meeting.