



**HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER RESIDENTS
AND
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

WEBINAR


MARCH 24, 2010






AGENDA


- Welcome and Introductions (5 min)
Catherine Bishop, NHLP
- Welcome, Purpose, and Goals for April 14 Convening of Residents (10 min)
Sandra Henriquez, Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing
- HUD Goals for the Future of Rental Assistance Programs (10 min)
Sandra Henriquez, Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing
- Questions (15 min)
- HUD's Administrative Improvements to the Housing Choice Voucher Program (20 min)
Danielle Bastarache, Director, Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Questions (15 min)
- Benefits of HCVs and Mobility Counseling (10 min)
Brenda Harris, HCV resident, Dallas, TX
- Next Steps (5 min)
Sandra Henriquez, Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing






APRIL 14, 2010 MEETING GOALS


- Dialogue with residents on plans for the future of HUD's rental assistance programs
- Collect ideas for maintaining residents' voices in the federal policy process
- Encourage a more engaged and informed group of residents with an ongoing, meaningful, and participatory role in the development of federal policies
- Create opportunities for cross-program learning among residents






THE NEED TO ACT

- Disinvestment in public housing program has led to loss of 150,000 units from inventory of assisted stock in recent years, through demolition or sale
- Currently an estimated \$20 billion capital backlog in public housing properties
- Obama Administration provided an additional \$4 billion in public housing capital funding as part of last year's Recovery Act
- Federal government alone will not be able to provide funds needed to bring properties up to date and preserve them for the next generation
- Now is a historic opportunity to preserve and improve HUD housing




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TRANSFORMING RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Principles:

- HUD's Rental Housing programs are too complex to use, and too complex to run.
- We need to shift from today's way of funding public housing to one that can attract money from private and other public sources.
- We must bring our rental programs into the housing mainstream.
- We must combine the best features of our tenant-based and project-based programs to provide residents more choice about where they live.




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RENTAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD...


- Be simple to use and simple to administer
- Be flexible, taking the form of either tenant-based or project-based assistance
- Assure resident choice
- Reduce the number of families with worst-case housing need
- Provide affordability for extremely low-income families
- Help residents access areas of opportunity, regardless of race and/or income
- Promote financially and physically sustainable properties
- Create opportunities to leverage capital for improving property quality
- Help residents reach self-sufficiency on their own terms, living in their neighborhoods of choice




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Questions?





Portability in the Housing Choice Voucher Program







Portability is a key feature of the housing choice voucher program

- Portability allows families a broader option in choosing where to live.
- Families may choose a unit anywhere in the United States as long as there is a housing agency administering the voucher program in that area.


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CURRENT PORTABILITY PROCESS

- Family must submit a request to move using portability
- PHA determines if there is a housing agency in new location
- Current PHA notifies receiving PHA of family's arrival
- Family reports to receiving PHA and complies with incoming portability rules
- Family is issued new voucher by receiving PHA and begins housing search
- Family must find housing and submit request for approval before voucher expires
- Receiving PHA conducts inspection of new unit to determine if it meets housing quality standards
- If approved, family signs lease with landlord and housing agency signs contract with landlord




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STREAMLINING THE PORTABILITY PROCESS

- HUD is working to identify barriers faced by both housing agencies and families
- HUD conducted a survey of PHAs across the country that identified specific barriers
- A meeting was held in Washington D.C. with PHAs and industry groups to discuss the barriers they experience with portability and to get ideas for possible solutions




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BARRIERS TO FAMILY MOBILITY

- Portability procedures are complicated and confusing
- Lack of communication between housing agencies makes it difficult for families (i.e., new agency was not notified family was moving to their jurisdiction)
- Often difficult for families to speak to someone at new housing agency
- Confusion caused by different policies between old and new housing agency
- Duplicate paperwork
- Multiple appointments
- Delay in issuance of voucher by new agency causing delays in family search time
- Families are often unfamiliar with new location making it difficult to find an acceptable unit
- Relocation costs




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POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO FAMILY BARRIERS


- Portability brochure that describes benefits of and process for requesting moves under portability
- Website that provides contact information for a portability staff person at each housing agency to improve communication
- Explain the difference in policies between current and new housing agency so family is better informed before they make move
- Consider providing incentives to PHAs to offer mobility counseling to its families
- Revise current regulations, remove some administrative barriers






Housing Quality Standards (HQS)





HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS GOAL

Provide “decent, safe, and sanitary” housing to families in the HCV program






HQS PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Sanitary facilities	7. Interior air quality
2. Food preparation & refuse disposal	8. Water supply
3. Space & security	9. Lead-based paint
4. Thermal environment	10. Access
5. Illumination & electricity	11. Site & neighborhood
6. Structure & materials	12. Sanitary conditions
	13. Smoke detectors




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HQS INSPECTION PROCESS & PROCEDURES

- Households cannot move into units until they have had HQS inspection
- Annual HQS inspections required
- PHA must respond to tenant complaints, and if needed, conduct HQS inspection
- PHA must notify owners and tenants in writing of things in unit that do not meet HQS standards and indicate a time period for making corrections




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TERMINATION OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE

- Owners are allowed at least 30 days to fix non-life threatening problems with unit
- Life threatening violations must be fixed within 24 hours
- PHAs must stop payments to owners that do not fix HQS deficiencies within required timeframe
- PHAs may terminate assistance for an owner's failure to comply with HQS
- PHAs must terminate program assistance to families who fail to fix damage that they caused




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HQS & OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL


- May 2008 OIG report, based on 47 previous OIG reports, found that:
 - HUD did not have adequate management controls over the physical condition of HCV program units
 - Units were in significant noncompliance because a physical inspection component under the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) had never been implemented
- Key recommendation of report was that HUD should develop a physical inspection system to make sure that PHAs are applying HQS to HCV units




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Questions?




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Benefits of HCVs and Mobility Counseling

- Brenda Harris, HCV resident, Dallas, TX




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3/23/2010



Next Steps

- Sandra Henriquez, Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing



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