



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 17-12-13 (5)

Date: December 13, 2017
To: THA Board of Commissioners
From: Michael Mirra
Executive Director
Re: Proposed Revisions to Administrative Plan and ACOP – Waiting Lists Consolidation

This resolution would approve revisions to Tacoma Housing Authority's Administrative Plan and Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) that would consolidate the waiting list for the portfolio and the HOP waiting list into one waiting list. It would also approve some additional administrative changes.

Background

The Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) proposes to consolidate waiting lists for the following programs: Housing Opportunity Program (HOP), THA-administered project based vouchers (PBV), and public housing (PH) programs. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulation 24 CFR § 982.205 allows this consolidation. THA elicited public comment on this change and adjusted the proposal to account for the comments.

THA has exhausted its waiting list for HOP. At the same time, thousands of people remain on site-based waiting lists waiting to rent an apartment at one of THA's subsidized properties. These properties are either public housing or have project-based vouchers. Under this proposal, THA will not reopen its HOP waiting list. Instead, it will offer HOP vouchers to applicants from its property lists. Applicants on the consolidated waiting list remain eligible for subsidized portfolio units, unless they succeed in leasing with a HOP voucher.

Consolidation to one waiting list serves at least four purposes:

1. Serve People on the Waiting List Faster

Consolidation of the waiting lists will offer housing assistance faster to applicants who have been on THA waiting lists for many years. In 2016-2017, we closed and comprehensively updated our site-based lists. We removed nonresponsive and ineligible households, and confirmed site preferences. This reduced the combined list from over 11,000 to about 3,500 unduplicated households. Of these, about 700 applied for HOP during past waitlist openings. Even with updating, hundreds of

households have been waiting for over five years and a significant number have already demonstrated interest in the HOP program.

2. **Puts Voucher Dollars in Use Faster and With Less Administrative Burden**
Consolidation of the waiting list gets THA's HOP rental assistance flowing more quickly with less administrative burden and technical challenge than a traditional waitlist opening. This is important when the agency's software conversion continues to present challenges. Administrative resources and technical focus need to be managed pragmatically during this time.
3. **Controls the Pace of Voucher Issuances**
Consolidation of the waiting lists still allows us to control the pace of voucher issuances. We will not offer vouchers to all waitlist applicants at once. Instead, we will offer in batches. This means we can adjust the pace at which we offer HOP vouchers to waitlist applicants, according to the agency's need to maintain a specific utilization rate.
4. **Eases the Way to Reforming the Portfolio's Waiting List**
THA may later propose to do without waiting lists for its portfolio, or much shorter ones, to more closely resemble a market rate practice of advertising only upon vacancies. Consolidation of the waiting lists is a transitional step to reform.

While there is no immediate consequence for declining HOP, THA will inform households on the consolidated wait list that THA may discontinue its property waitlist.

If the Board authorizes this resolution, Client Services and Property Management will need to monitor the effect on applicant pools for each property. If acceptance and successful utilization of HOP vouchers is high, we may deplete the waiting list quickly. This would mean we need to decide quickly on the reform of the portfolio waiting list so we are not left with unfilled vacancies for lack of either a waiting list or a marketing plan.

Some Additional Changes

Regular Updates to the Waitlist

THA's current policies state that it will "purge" or update its waiting list annually. These updates require contacting all applicants on our waiting list(s) to confirm interest and eligibility. Applicants that do not respond or have become ineligible are removed from the waiting list. This is time consuming as a formal process for THA, and is not necessary if the waitlist is being continually updated by offering HOP vouchers and portfolio units from a consolidated list. THA proposes to amend its policies to state that it will only update its waiting lists as necessary.

Managing Applicant Status

The consolidation of the waiting lists would not change an applicant's relative position on the property waitlist. Each would still be eligible for the same THA properties they originally signed up for. We hope, and expect, that some families will like this alternate assistance option. Households who have waited for years on the site-based lists may be housed more quickly. If these applicants lease successfully using HOP vouchers, everyone moves up faster.

THA also proposes that it will not remove an application from the waiting list if the family chooses not to accept a HOP subsidy but wants to keep waiting for an apartment. If they accept the HOP subsidy, we will allow them to remain active on the list until they actually lease-up. Only at that point will we remove them from the waiting list. A household who attempts to use a HOP voucher but is unsuccessful and returns the voucher will remain eligible for placement at a property.

We will remove applicants from the consolidated waitlist if they do not respond by either choosing HOP or declining HOP and confirming they wish to remain on the property list.

We are not proposing any changes to our unit turn down policy. Under that policy, applicants have one chance to reject an offered apartment. After rejecting an apartment, a household remains eligible for one more offer. After declining two units, the household become ineligible to lease within our subsidized portfolio. However, the household will remain eligible for a HOP voucher unless until it declines HOP or is unsuccessful in leasing with HOP.

There are reasons why accepting or declining HOP may make sense for a family. The comparisons below between HOP and site-based programs highlight the major differences:

| Key Differences of Tenant Based Assistance (HOP) vs. Project Based and Public Housing Assistance | |
|---|--|
| <i>HOP</i> | <i>Project Based/Public Housing</i> |
| Tenant Based Assistance The client has the ability to take the assistance anywhere in THA's jurisdiction that accepts a voucher. | Assistance is attached to unit not individual The client must stay in the subsidized unit to receive assistance. |
| No Time Limit for Elderly or Disabled Families that are considered Elderly or Disabled are not subject to a 5-year term limit. | No Time Limits for Anyone |
| 5-Year Time Limit for Work-Able Families If the family is not considered Elderly or Disabled, they have a 5 year limit on the program. | No Time Limit for Anyone |
| Assistance is Based on Percentage of Payment Standard for Family Size This means even if you make more money, the amount of your subsidy does not decrease. If your income goes down, your subsidy does not increase. | Assistance is Based on Income The higher your income, the more you may have to pay toward rent. The lower your income, the less you may have to pay. |
| Proposed Revisions to ACOP and Administrative Plan | |



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

RESOLUTION 2017-12-13 (5) **(Proposed Revisions to THA's Administrative Plan and ACOP re Waiting List Consolidation)**

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma

WHEREAS, The Administrative Plan relates to the administration of the Housing Choice Voucher program and is required by HUD; and

WHEREAS, The Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) relates to the administration of the Public Housing program and is required by HUD; and

WHEREAS, The Administrative Plan and ACOP is to establish policies for carrying out programs in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives contained in THA's Moving to Work plan; and

WHEREAS, Changes to the Administrative Plan and ACOP must be approved by THA Board of Commissioners; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington, that:

THA is authorized to adopt the following updates to the Administrative Plan to reflect the proposed policy changes.

| Policy Proposal | Applicable THA Policies Requiring Revision |
|---|--|
| Waitlist consolidation for HOP and PBV assistance (Administrative Plan and ACOP) | <u>ACOP</u> 4-II.B. "Organization of the Waiting List" Allow for merging of waitlists 4-III.B. "Selection Method" Allow for selecting off consolidated list <u>Admin Plan</u> |

| Policy Proposal | Applicable THA Policies Requiring Revision |
|-----------------|--|
| | <p>4-I.D “Placement on the Waiting List” Allow for placement on a consolidated list</p> <p>4.II.B “Organization of Waiting List” Allow for merging to a single list</p> <p>4-II.F “Updating the Waiting List”</p> |

Approved: December 13, 2017

 

Janis Flauding, Chair

CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, the duly chosen, qualified and acting Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma (the "Authority") and keeper of the records of the Authority, CERTIFY:

1. That the attached Resolution No. 2017-12-13 (5) (the "Resolution") is a true and correct copy of the resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Authority as adopted at a meeting of the Authority held on the 13th day of December, 2017, and duly recorded in the minute books of the Authority.

2. That such meeting was duly convened and held in all respects in accordance with law, and, to the extent required by law, due and proper notice of such meeting was given; that a quorum was present throughout the meeting and a majority of the members of the Board of Commissioners of the Authority present at the meeting voted in the proper manner for the adoption of the Resolution; that all other requirements and proceedings incident to the proper adoption of the Resolution have been duly fulfilled, carried out and otherwise observed, and that I am authorized to execute this Certificate.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 13th day of December, 2017.



Michael Mirra, Executive Director of the Authority