

9/29/2020

HCV Administrative Plan
TEMPORARY ADDENDUM DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

On April 10, 2020, HUD issued Notice PIH 2020-05. Pursuant to the authority provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, HUD is waiving and establishing alternative requirements for numerous statutory and regulatory requirements for the Public Housing Program. These waivers provide administrative flexibilities and relief to and relief to public housing agencies (PHAs), in response to the COVID-19 national emergency. Use of these waivers is at the discretion of the PHA. On July 2, 2020, HUD issued Notice PIH 2020-13, a revision to 2020-05, restating the waivers and alternative requirements, extending the period of availability for previously established waivers and alternative requirements, and issuing technical amendments to several of the previously established waivers and alternative requirements.

A PHA does not need to notify HUD or receive HUD approval to begin utilizing these waivers/alternative requirements. However, HUD may subsequently require the PHA to provide information to HUD on the waivers used by the PHA and the date the PHA applied the waiver to its program(s).

HUD has allowed PHAs to revise its Public Housing ACOP on a temporary basis without Board Approval with the understanding that said revisions must be formally adopted no later than December 31, 2020. This document, with Board approval, contains the PHA's policies for implementation. The PHA must also evaluate whether adoption of any of the temporary policies would constitute a significant amendment to its annual plan, and must revise the annual plan if necessary.

The temporary provisions that this PHA is adopting are as follows:

1. Family Income and Composition: Delayed Annual Examination
2. Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination-Income Verification Requirements
3. Family Income and Composition: Interim Examinations
4. Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) Monitoring
5. HQS Inspection Requirement-Biennial Inspections
6. HQS Interim Inspections
7. HQS Quality Control Inspections
8. Information When Family is Selected-PHA Oral Briefing
9. Term of Voucher-Extension of Term
10. PHA Approval of Assisted Tenancy-When HAP Contract is Executed
11. Absence from Unit
12. Automatic Termination of HAP Contract
13. Increase in Payment Standard under HAP Contract Term
14. Utility Allowance Schedule-Required Review and Revision

1. PH and HCV-2: Family Income and Composition: Delayed Annual Examinations

Statutory Authority: Section 3(a)(1) of the USHA of 1937

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.516(a)(1) - HCV

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 960.257(a) - Public Housing

Description: PHAs are required to conduct a reexamination of family income and composition at least annually. Recognizing the foreseeable difficulties in complying with this requirement in light of the COVID-19 emergency, HUD is waiving this statutory and regulatory requirement to permit PHAs to delay annual reexaminations of HCV and public housing families.

Period of Availability: All annual recertifications due in Calendar Year (CY) 2020 must be completed by December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy

2. PH and HCV-3: Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination - Income Verification requirements

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §5.233(a)(2) - HCV and Public Housing

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §960.259(c) - Public Housing

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §982.516(a) - HCV

Sub-regulatory Guidance: PIH Notice 2018-18

Description: PHAs are required to use the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System for verification of family income at the annual examination. 24 CFR § 5.233(a)(2) requires PHAs to use EIV as a third-party source to verify tenant employment and income information during mandatory reexaminations or recertifications of family composition and income in accordance with §5.236 and administrative guidance issued by HUD. PIH Notice 2018-18 describes the required verification hierarchy process PHAs must follow. HUD understands that documentation may be difficult to obtain as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. PHAs are also facing challenges with securely accessing HUD systems while many if not all staff are working remotely.

To address these challenges, HUD is waiving the requirements to use the income hierarchy described by PIH Notice 2018-18 and will allow PHAs to forgo third-party income verification requirements for annual reexaminations, including the use of EIV, if the PHA wishes to conduct the annual recertification rather than delaying the family's annual recertification (as permitted under PH and HCV-2 above).

During the allowable period of availability, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process annual reexaminations. This may occur over the telephone (but must be documented by PHA staff with a contemporaneous written record), through an email or postal mail with a self-certification form by the tenant, or through other electronic communications. PHAs are encouraged to incorporate procedures to remind families of the obligation to provide true and complete information when adopting these flexibilities.

PHAs are further reminded that there is no HUD requirement that income and family composition examinations and recertifications must be conducted in-person unless determined necessary as a reasonable accommodation as long as applicable public health guidelines are followed (e.g., social distancing) and any state or local ordinance is followed.

PHAs that conduct annual examinations under this waiver/alternative requirement will be responsible for addressing any material discrepancies that may arise later. For example, if a tenant self-certified that the tenant lost their job, but later the EIV Income Validation Tool (IVT) shows the tenant's employment continued, the PHA must take enforcement action in accordance with their policies and procedures.

Period of Availability: The period of availability to conduct annual reexaminations using these modified verification requirements ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy

3. PH AND HCV-4: FAMILY INCOME AND COMPOSITION: INTERIM EXAMINATIONS

Statutory Authority: Section 3(a)(l) of the USHA of 1937

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 5.233(a)(2) - HCV and Public Housing

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.516(c)(2) - HCV

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §§ 960.257(a), (b), and (d); 960.959(c) - Public Housing

Sub-regulatory Guidance: PIH Notice 2018-18

Description: For the HCV and Public Housing programs, PHAs are required to adopt policies (in their Administrative Plans and Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plans (ACOPs), respectively) prescribing when and under what conditions the family must report a change in family income or composition. However, at any time that a family requests an interim determination of family income or composition because of any changes since the last determination, the PHA must make the interim determination within a reasonable time after the family's request. In most cases, the reason a family requests an interim determination is due to a loss in income or a change in family composition.

PHAs are required to use EIV for verification of family income at interim reexamination. 24 CFR §960.259(c) and 24 CFR §982.516(a) require PHAs to obtain third-party verification, or document in the tenant file why third-party verification was not available, during mandatory reexaminations or recertifications of family composition and income. 24 CFR § 5.233(a)(2) requires PHAs to use EIV as a third-party source to verify tenant employment and income information during mandatory reexaminations or recertifications of family composition and income in accordance with §5.236 and administrative guidance issued by HUD. PIH Notice 2018-18 further describes the required verification hierarchy process PHAs must follow.

To assist PHAs that may be prioritizing the processing of interim reexaminations due to decreases in family income and mitigate the challenges of transferring documentation during periods of shelter-in-place/stay-at-home efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD is waiving the requirements to use the income verification hierarchy as described by PIH Notice 2018-18. HUD will allow PHAs to forgo third-party income verification requirements for interim reexaminations, including the required use of EIV. During the allowable period of eligibility, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of

income verification to process interim reexaminations. This may occur over the telephone (with a contemporaneous written record by the PHA staff person), through an email with a self-certification form by the family, or through other electronic communications.

As noted in the previous waiver description, there is no HUD requirement that income and family composition examinations and recertifications must be conducted in-person unless it may be necessary as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability. In such cases, PHAs may look to applicable public health guidelines and any state or local ordinance on how to maintain appropriate health precautions (e.g., social distancing).

PHAs that conduct interim reexaminations under this waiver/alternative requirement will be responsible for addressing any material discrepancies that may arise later. For example, if a tenant self-certified that the tenant lost their job, but later the EIV IVT Report shows the tenant's employment continued, the PHA must take enforcement action that is consistent with its policies and procedures.

PHAs may wish to review and adjust their interim reexamination policies (e.g., revising the PHA requirements when families must report increases in income between annual reexaminations or revising the policy regarding how to determine the effective date of an interim examination). PHAs should see HCV-1 and PH-4 for information on how these types of changes can be expedited.

Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

4. PH AND HCV-5: ENTERPRISE INCOME VERIFICATION (EIV) MONITORING

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 5.233 - Public Housing and HCV

Sub-regulatory Guidance: PIH Notice 2018-18

Description: PIH Notice 2018-18 specifies the required monitoring of EIV reports. For example, PHAs are required to monitor the Deceased Tenants Report, the Identity Verification Report, the Immigration Report, the IVT Report, and the Multiple Subsidy Report and the New Hires Report on a monthly basis. Recognizing the challenges PHAs are facing with many if not all staff working remotely, HUD is waiving the mandatory EIV monitoring requirements. PHAs are reminded that EIV data is overwritten; monthly or quarterly reports must be downloaded to preserve the data for a particular month or quarter.

Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

5. HQS-5: HQS INSPECTION REQUIREMENT – BIENNIAL INSPECTIONS

Statutory Authority: Section 8(o)(D) of the USHA of 1937

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §§ 982.405(a), 983.103(d)

Description: The statute and the regulations require the PHA to inspect the unit not less often than biennially during the term of the HAP contract. (Per the recent Federal Register Notice, 85 Fed. Reg. 11381 (Feb. 27, 2020), small rural PHAs may instead inspect the unit not less often than triennially, but since small rural PHAs do not have the authority to begin using a three-year inspection interval until after the next scheduled inspection after Feb. 27, 2020, is carried out, the majority of small rural PHAs have not yet moved from a biennial to a triennial requirement.) HUD is waiving this requirement and is allowing PHAs to delay biennial inspections for both tenant-based and PBV units. All delayed biennial inspections must be completed as soon as reasonably possible but no later than one year after the date the biennial inspection would have been required absent the waiver.

This waiver and alternative requirement may also be applied to PHA-owned units if the independent entity is unable to perform the inspection.

Period of Availability: The PHA must conduct the delayed biennial inspection as soon as reasonably possible but no later than one year after the date the biennial inspection would have been required absent the waiver.

PHA Policy:

Prior to PIH Notice 2020-05, the PHA conducted its HQS inspections on an annual basis. Consequently, this policy is not applicable.

In light of COVID-19, effective April 10, 2020, the PHA will no longer perform annual inspections but will, instead, perform HQS inspections biennially. Therefore, the remaining Annual HQS inspections for 2020 will be scheduled for inspection in 2021. All Annual HQS inspections completed through April 2020, will be inspected in 2022.

6. HQS-6: HQS INTERIM INSPECTIONS

Statutory Authority: Section 8(o)(8)(F) of the USHA of 1937

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR §§ 982.405(g), 983.103(e)

Description: The statute requires that upon notification to the PHA by a family or government official that the assisted unit does not comply with the HQS, the PHA must inspect the unit within 24 hours of when the PHA received the notification if the condition is life-threatening. 24 CFR 982.405(g) provides that if the reported condition is not life-threatening, the PHA must inspect the unit within 15 days. The regulation further provides that in the event of extraordinary circumstances HUD may waive the 24-hour or the 15-day inspection requirement until such time as an inspection is feasible.

HUD is waiving these requirements and establishing an alternative requirement for both tenant based and PBV units. If the reported deficiency is life-threatening, the PHA must notify the owner of the reported life-threatening deficiency and that the owner must either correct the life threatening deficiency within 24 hours of the PHA notification or provide documentation (e.g., text or email a photo to the PHA) that the reported deficiency does not exist. In the case of a reported non-life-threatening deficiency, the PHA must notify the owner of the reported deficiency within 30 days and the owner must either make the repair or document that the deficiency does not exist within 30 days of the PHA notification or any approved PHA extension. The PHA may add other requirements or conditions in addition to the owner's documentation but is not required to do so.

As is the case under the current HCV program requirements, the PHA is not required to conduct an on-site inspection to verify the repairs have been made but may rely on alternative verification methods (e.g., photos submitted by the owner, tenant certification, etc.).

This waiver may also be applied to PHA-owned units if the independent entity is unable to perform the inspection.

Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020. After December 31, 2020, the PHA must conduct the HQS inspection in accordance with the applicable time periods upon notification by a family or government official that the assisted unit does not comply with the HQS.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

7. HQS-9: HQS QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTIONS

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.405(b), 983.103(e)(3)

Description: The regulations require PHAs to conduct supervisory quality control inspections of a sampling of units under contract. HUD is waiving this regulatory requirement.

Period of Availability: The period of applicability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

8. HCV-2: INFORMATION WHEN FAMILY IS SELECTED - PHA ORAL BRIEFING

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.301(a)(I), § 983.252(a)

Description: The regulation requires when the PHA selects a family to participate in either the HCV or PBV program, the PHA must give the family an oral briefing. HUD is waiving this requirement and as an alternative requirement allowing the PHA to conduct the briefing by other means such as a webcast, video call, or expanded information packet. Section 504 and the ADA require PHAs to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants and members of the public in all communications and notices. The PHA must ensure that the method of communication for the briefing effectively communicates with, and allows for equal participation of, each family member, including those with vision, hearing, and other communication-related disabilities, and ensures meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency.

Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy

9. HCV-3: TERM OF VOUCHER – EXTENSIONS OF TERM

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.303(b)(l)

Description: The regulation provides that at its discretion, the PHA may grant a family one or more extensions of the initial voucher term in accordance with the PHA policy as described in the PHA administrative plan. HUD is waiving the requirement that the extension(s) must be accordance with the PHA's administrative plan in order to allow the PHA to provide extensions even though it has been unable to formally amend its policy in the administrative plan.

Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

10. HCV-4: PHA APPROVAL OF ASSISTED TENANCY: WHEN HAP CONTRACT IS EXECUTED

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.305(c)

Description: The PHA may not make any housing assistance payments to the owner until the HAP contract is executed. The regulation provides that PHA must use best efforts to execute the HAP contract before the beginning of the lease term and that the HAP contract must be executed no later than 60 days from the beginning of the lease term. Any HAP contract executed after the 60-day period is void and the PHA may not pay any housing assistance payments to the owner.

HUD is waiving the regulatory requirement to allow PHAs to execute the HAP contract after the 60-day deadline has passed and make housing assistance payments back to the beginning of the lease term. However, the PHA and owner must execute the HAP contract no later than 120 days from the beginning of the lease term.

Period of Availability: The period of availability to execute the HAP contract after the normally 60-day period from the beginning of the lease term ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:
The PHA will implement this policy.

11. HCV-5: ABSENCE FROM UNIT

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.312

Description: The regulation requires that a family may not be absent from the unit for a period of more than 180 consecutive calendar days for any reason. HUD is waiving this regulatory requirement to allow the PHA at its discretion to continue housing assistance payments and not terminate the HAP contract due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, extended stays at nursing homes, caring for family members).

Period of Availability: The period of availability for the PHA to choose to continue making HAP payments despite the family's absence of more than 180 consecutive days ends on December 31, 2020. The PHA may not make payments beyond December 31, 2020, and the HAP contract will terminate on that date if the family is still absent from the unit.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy.

12. HCV-6: AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF HAP CONTRACT

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.455

Description: When an HCV family's income increases to the extent that the housing assistance payment is reduced to \$0, PHAs are required to terminate HAP contracts 180 days after the last housing assistance payment to the owner. In recognition that the COVID-19 pandemic is creating economic and employment instability for many families, as well as situations where families may on a temporary basis be adding members whose additional income may result in a \$0 HAP subsidy calculation, HUD is waiving this requirement. As an alternative requirement, the PHA, upon written notice to the owner and family, may extend the period of time following the last payment to the owner that triggers the automatic termination of the HAP contract. The extension beyond the normally applicable 180 days is determined by the PHA but may not extend beyond December 31, 2020.

Period of Availability: The period of availability for the extension ends December 31, 2020. The PHA may not extend the HAP contract beyond December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy.

13. HCV-7: INCREASE IN PAYMENT STANDARD DURING HAP CONTRACT TERM

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.505(c)(4)

Description: The regulation requires that if the payment standard amount is increased during the term of the HAP contract, the increased payment standard amount shall be used to calculate the monthly housing assistance payment for the family beginning at the effective date of the family's first regular reexamination on or after the effective date of the increase in the payment standard amount.

HUD is waiving this requirement and as an alternative requirement allowing the PHAs to apply the increased payment standard at any time (e.g., interim reexamination, owner rent increase) after the effective date of the increase in the payment standard amount, provided the increased payment standard is used to calculate the HAP no later than the effective date of the family's first regular reexamination following the change.

Note that if the PHA has delayed the family's annual recertification under the waiver authority described earlier in this Notice (see PH and HCV-2), the PHA must use the increased payment standard amount to calculate the family's HAP beginning the date that the family's first regular examination would have been effective in the absence of the waiver. Alternatively, the PHA may conduct an interim reexamination where the only change is the increased payment standard amount. Regardless of the method used, the

participant must receive the increased payment standard no later than the effective date of the family's first regular reexamination following the increased payment standard.

Period of Availability: The waiver period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy.

14. HCV-8: UTILITY ALLOWANCE SCHEDULE: REQUIRED REVIEW AND REVISION

Regulatory Authority: 24 CFR § 982.517

Description: The regulations require the PHA to review its schedule of utility allowances each year and revise its allowance for a utility category if there has been a change of 10 percent or more in the utility rate since the last time the utility allowance schedule was revised. HUD is waiving this requirement to allow PHAs to delay the review and update of utility allowances.

Period of Availability: Any review and update of utility allowances that were due at some point in time in CY 2020 must be completed no later than December 31, 2020.

PHA Policy:

The PHA will implement this policy