

Green=added or updated wording related to the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (“HOTMA”)

Chapter 4

ESTABLISHING PREFERENCES AND MAINTAINING THE WAITLIST

(24 CFR, Part 4, Subpart D; 982.54(d)(1); 982.204, 982.205, 982.206)

Introduction

It is HOC’s objective to ensure that families are placed in the proper order on the waitlist and selected from the waitlist for admission in accordance with the policies in this Administrative Plan.

This chapter explains how HOC will administer its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) tenant-based, project-based, and Mainstream Disabled waitlists. The tenant-based and project-based waitlists have Local Preferences that HOC adopted to meet local housing needs, except where provided in this chapter. This chapter defines the eligibility criteria for the preferences, and explains HOC’s system of applying them. HOC maintains separate waitlists for its tenant-based, project-based, and Mainstream Disabled waitlists. Any families selected to be housed utilizing a project-based voucher are eligible for a specific bedroom sized unit based on their family size and HOC’s HCV program occupancy standards. Families selected for a tenant-based voucher are assigned the appropriate number of bedrooms on their voucher based on HOC’s occupancy standards.

By maintaining an accurate waitlist, HOC is able to perform the activities, which ensure that an adequate pool of qualified applicants is available, so that program funds are used in a timely manner. Each family on the tenant-based waitlist may also have its name on the project-based and Mainstream Disabled waitlists.

A. Managing the Waitlists

Opening, Closing, and Maintaining the Waitlists:

HOC currently operates an electronic waitlist, which houses separate waitlists for the various programs and properties that HOC operates. The electronic waitlist is continuously open and self-managing. However, should HOC’s President decide to close the waitlist, closing and re-opening of the waitlist will be announced with a public notice explaining how applications for HCV and all other waitlists maintained by the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) will be affected. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general

circulation and by any available minority media, including social media. The public notice will state any updates to the waitlist and limitations on who may apply.

The notice will state that applicants already on the waitlists for HCV and other housing programs and properties will not lose their place on the waitlist. If new waitlists are added or removed to the electronic waitlist system, current applicants will be notified, along with the general public, that they will be removed or need to apply to the new waitlists separately. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan, and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

Only one application may be submitted for each separate waitlist that HOC maintains and it must be submitted by the head of household or his or her designee. The waitlist is maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The application will be a permanent file. Any contact between HOC and the applicant will be documented in the electronic applicant file.
2. All applications will be maintained in order of date and time of application, and any applicable preference(s).
3. Under the current waitlist structure, multiple waitlists for various programs and properties are maintained electronically. All applications and updates to applications are submitted electronically. Paper and telephone submissions are not permitted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.
4. All applicants must give notice of any changes to their application, as indicated below in Section B of this chapter.
5. The electronic waitlists are updated in real time and applicants' waitlist profiles are accessible via the internet on a 24-hour basis.
6. For the HCV program, HOC maintains three separate waitlists (tenant-based, project-based, and Mainstream Disabled) in order of date/time stamp and any applicable preference(s). However, within the separate HCV waitlists, HOC is able to sort eligible applicants for certain HCV programs and properties that are designated for specific families or preferences.
7. HOC maintains an internal Choice Mobility waitlist separate from HOC's main HCV waitlists for those customers eligible for project-based to tenant-based subsidy conversion. See Chapter 22 of this Administrative Plan for more information.
8. HOC entered into Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contracts to subsidize project-based units at selected properties that are operated by third-party managers and/or owners, or partners with these entities to administer their project-based vouchers. These applicants are selected from the HCV project-based voucher waitlist.

9. Contacts between HOC and waitlist applicants for the purposes of selection from the lists are documented in the participants waitlist file.

HOC will maintain information that permits proper selection from the waitlist. The waitlist contains the following information for each applicant listed:

- Applicant Name
- Age/Date of Birth
- Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms family qualifies for under HOC's subsidy/occupancy standards)
- Date/Time of Applications
- Qualification for any Local Preference(s) or other applicable preferences.
- Racial or ethnic designation of head-of-household.
- Targeted Selection Qualifications
- Self-Declared Household Income
- Household Member Information (disability status, veteran status, etc.)

Cross-Listing of Different Housing Programs and Section 8 (24 CFR 982.205)

HOC maintains separate waitlists for all of its properties and housing programs, for which separate waitlists are required and/or for waitlist management purposes. An applicant is considered for admission to any program for which they are eligible until such time that documentation is presented to HOC, which establishes a customer as ineligible for a given housing program(s). If a customer is determined ineligible for the voucher program (tenant- or project-based) or other housing program or property waitlist, the status of the other HOC Housing Applications is not affected.

B. WAITLIST CUSTOMERS (FAMILIES)

All waitlist applicants are required to maintain an email address. To the extent an applicant chooses to use the email address for another person, including a caseworker or social worker, the applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed email address and lack of access to that account is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices. To the extent a family does not have an email address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free email account. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in their email address. HOC maintains public use computers at all of its locations. Public use computers are also widely available at other public locations such as local libraries. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

All waitlist applicants are required to list an address in their Housing Path application. If the applicant is homeless or does not have a permanent address, the applicant can choose to list the address of another personal acquaintance or organization, including, but not limited to, social services agency, homeless shelter, or non-profit organization, so long as it is not the address of a current voucher holder. This address is used to send any paper correspondence to the applicant, including required paperwork as part of the selection process. The applicant is solely responsible for receiving information sent to the listed address and lack of access to the mail at that address is not considered a valid excuse for missing notices or paperwork. The applicant is responsible for notifying HOC of any change in address.

Treatment of Single Applicants

Single applicants are treated as any other eligible family on the waitlist for the tenant-based, project-based, and Mainstream Disabled waitlists.

Change in Circumstances

Changes in an applicant's circumstances while on the waitlist may affect the family's entitlement to a preference or qualification for certain program criteria. Applicants are required to update their electronic application when their circumstances change within two weeks of a change. Changes include: change of mailing address, change of email address, change of phone number, change in family composition, change in income, or changes in factors affecting preference points status. As noted in paragraph three, all changes must be done electronically because paper and telephone submissions are not accepted. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

Other Housing Assistance (24 CFR 982.205(b))

Other housing assistance means a federal, state, or local housing subsidy, as determined by HUD, including public housing. HOC may not take any of the following actions because an applicant has applied for, received, or refused other housing.

1. Refuse to list the applicant on the waitlist for tenant-based voucher assistance;
2. Deny any admission preference for which the applicant is currently qualified;
3. Change the applicant's place on the waitlist based on a preference, date of application, or other factors affecting selection under HOC's selection policy; or
4. Remove the applicant from the waitlist(s).

C. Housing Choice Voucher Program Waitlists (24 CFR 982.204)

HOC maintains three separate waitlists for its HCV program, as described below:

1. Tenant-Based Voucher Waitlist
2. Project-Based Voucher Waitlist
3. Mainstream/Non-Elderly Disabled Waitlist

Applicants may apply to all three waitlists, when open to the public, and the status of one will not affect the status of the other(s).

Tenant Based Voucher Waitlist

- HOC utilizes a separate waitlist for its tenant-based HCV applicants. Except for Special Admissions and Targeted Selection programs, as defined in this chapter, applicants are selected from the tenant-based voucher program waitlist in accordance with the policies, preferences, and Income-Targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan.

Project-Based Voucher Waitlist

- HOC maintains a separate waitlist for admissions to the project-based voucher assistance program. Except for Special Admissions and targeted selection programs, applicants are selected from HOC’s project-based waitlist in accordance with the policies, preferences, and Income Targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan

Mainstream Disabled Voucher Waitlist

- **Background:** Mainstream Vouchers are special purpose vouchers for non-elderly persons with disabilities, particularly targeting the groups below, that are subject to the requirements outlined under 24 CFR 982.
- HOC maintains a separate waitlist for admission to the Mainstream Disabled (MSD) Voucher Program.
- **Selection/Eligibility:** Applicants selected from the MSD program must have at least one disabled family member between the ages of 18 and 61. Additionally, the applicant must meet one of the criteria below:
 1. Be homeless;
 2. At risk of homelessness;
 3. Transitioning out of institutional settings; or
 4. At risk of institutionalization.

HOC will only accept applications from households that meet the specific criteria above.

- **Transitioning to a single MSD waitlist:** Prior to opening the Mainstream Disabled Voucher Waitlist, HOC will review the tenant-based HCV waitlist to determine if a family that applied for a tenant-based voucher meets the criteria for a MSD voucher. If so, their name will be placed on the MSD waitlist in the order of the date/time of their original tenant-based waitlist. Their name will also remain on the tenant-based and/or project-based voucher waitlists. Once HOC has transitioned to a separate waitlist for MSD, HOC will no longer cross-reference waitlists for MSD eligible families.
- Applicants are selected from the MSD waitlist in accordance with the policies, preferences, and Income Targeting requirements defined in this Administrative Plan. At the time of pre-application when entering the waitlist, applicants self-certify that they meet the criteria above. Once selected, eligibility of the family’s preference is verified. MSD applicants are not required to meet Local Residency Preference, as defined below.

D. Waitlist Preferences (24 CFR 982.207)

When a family is selected from the waitlist(s), the family is required to complete a full application and provide eligibility documents, at which point the verification process begins. It is at this point in time that the family’s waitlist preference(s) are verified. To qualify for a preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualifies for any applicable preferences.

If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top of one of the HCV waitlists because the family does not qualify for a preference, the family's preference status is removed. Importantly, however, the family will remain on the waitlist based upon their original date and time of application, unless the waitlist is solely based on one or more preferences for which the family no longer qualifies. HOC must notify the family in writing of this determination and give the family the opportunity for an informal hearing to appeal the decision.

Once a preference is verified, the family completes a full application, presents Social Security number information, citizenship/eligible immigrant information, and signs the Consent for Release of Information forms.

The HCV program utilizes the following types of preferences and criteria in the selection of applicants, as described throughout this chapter.

1. **Local Preferences:** Apply generally to HOC's HCV program (tenant-based and project-based). Applicants who meet the Local Preferences below will come to the top of the waitlist before applicants who do not meet the Local Preferences. Please reference the "Local Preference" section below for additional information.
 - a. **Displacement:** Referred by the County Executive's Office.
 - b. **Live/Work:** Must have lived or worked in Montgomery County, MD at the time of application or selection from the waitlist.
2. **Targeted Selections:** Include specific voucher groups that are designated for specific demographics and are selected through HOC's general waitlist process based on criteria indicated on the family's applications. Please see the "Targeted Selections" section below for more information.
3. **Special Admissions:** Include specific voucher groups that are designated for specific demographics and do not go through the general waitlist procedures, and are typically referred directly to HOC by qualified entities. Please see "Special Admissions" section below for more information.
4. **Income Targeting:** As described below, HOC may need to target specific income groups when selecting applicants in order to meet compliance with HUD regulations. Please see the "Income Targeting" section below for more information.

Preference Denial (24 CFR 5.415)

If HOC denies a preference, HOC notifies the applicant in writing of the reasons why the preference was denied and offers the applicant an opportunity for an informal review to appeal the decision. If the preference denial is upheld as a result of the review, or the applicant does not request an informal review, the preference is removed from the applicant's entry on the waitlist, returning the applicant to their regular date/time positioning. Applicants may exercise other rights if they believe they are a victim of discrimination. Please reference Chapter 15 (Denial or Termination of Assistance) for additional guidance on preference denials.

If an applicant makes a false statement or submits falsified documents in order to qualify for a preference, HOC will deny the preference.

E. Local Preferences (24 CFR 5.410)

The PHA may establish a system of Local Preferences for selection of families admitted to the HCV program. PHA selection preferences must be described in this Administrative Plan through this section and verified prior to program admission. The Local Preferences outlined in this section are specific to HOC's general HCV program (tenant-based and project-based), and are implemented with the priority indicated below. Families, which meet the Local Preferences outlined below, will come to the top of the waitlist accordingly in order of date/time stamp within the preference groupings. If/when HOC's waitlist exhausts families which meet the two local preferences below, HOC will select applicants who do not meet the local preferences in order of date/time stamp.

HOC offers public notice when changing its Local Preference system and the notices are publicized using the same guidelines as opening and closing the waitlist.

The PHA shall not deny a Local Preference, nor otherwise exclude or penalize a family in admission to the program, solely because the family resides in a public housing project.

Initial Determination of Local Preference Qualifications (24 CFR 5.415):

At the time of application, an applicant's entitlement to a Local Preference may be made on the following basis:

An applicant's certification that they qualify for a preference is accepted without verification at the pre-application when entering HOC's waitlist. When the family is selected from the waitlist for the final determination of eligibility, the preference is verified. To qualify for the Local Preference, an applicant must provide verification that shows he or she qualified either at the time of pre-application or at the time of selection/eligibility certification.

If the preference verification indicates that an applicant does not qualify for the preference, the applicant is returned to the waitlist (tenant-based and/or project-based), without the Local Preference, and given an opportunity for an office meeting.

HOC uses the following Local Preference system for its general HCV program:

- **First Local Preference – Displacement:** Families who are displaced as a result of a fire, flood, natural disaster, State or County redevelopment project, or a change in the nature of a project that is part of the County plan for maintaining affordable housing, and who are referred by the County Executive's office. A signed certification from the County Executive's office is required for the family to qualify for this preference. The Displacement Local Preference takes precedence over the Residency Local Preference below.
- **Second Local Preference – Residency:** Families who live, work, or have a bona fide offer to work in Montgomery County. To qualify for this preference, evidence showing that the applicant qualified for this preference either at the time of application or at the time of selection from the waitlist is required. HOC will treat graduates of, or active participants in, education or training programs in Montgomery County, as residents of Montgomery County if the education or training program is designed to prepare individuals for the job market. To qualify and satisfy this preference, graduates must have graduated after the initial application for housing.

HOCs electronic waitlist utilizes a weighted preference structure in order to sort applicants meeting the Local Preferences to the top of the waitlist in order to prioritize the First Local Preference (Displacement)

over the Second Local Preference (Residency). The two Local Preferences are assigned points, which prioritize as indicated above.

An applicant is not granted any Local Preference for the tenant-based and project-based voucher waitlist if any member of the family was evicted from housing assisted under a HUD 1937 Housing Act program during the past three years because of drug-related criminal activity or felonious charged criminal activity.

HOC will grant an exception to such a family if:

1. The responsible member has successfully completed a rehabilitation program;
2. The evicted person clearly did not participate in or know about the drug-related activity;
3. The evicted person no longer participates in any drug-related criminal activity; and/or
4. A person involved in cases involving a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under 24 CFR part 5, subpart L (Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking) applies.

F. Targeted Selections (24 CFR 982.204)

HUD periodically sets aside special voucher funding for certain family types, or allows for PHAs to designate funding from its tenant-based HCV program for such families. HOC's electronic waitlist is designed to incorporate applicable preference questions into its applications. The waitlist(s) are filtered to bring applicants meeting those specific preferences to the top of the list in order of date/time stamp. This waitlist selection process is specific to the groupings of Targeted Selections outlined in this section.

Targeted Selections differ from Special Admissions (below) because they are selected from the waitlist in order of preference and date/time stamp, and not based on the direct referral process outlined in the Special Admission section below.

Applicants who are admitted under Targeted Selection are identified by codes in the automated system. System codes identify the specific vouchers/households tied to each program, regardless of funding source. Applicant files also document their entry into the specific Targeted Selection program. HOC administers the following "Targeted Selection" programs:

1. **Veterans Preference Vouchers** (not VASH):
2. **Incremental Vouchers**

Veterans Preference Vouchers:

- **Selection/Eligibility:** Applicants must be a homeless veteran and at least 18 years of age. The veteran's immediate family is included in the household. HOC selects these applicants from the tenant-based waitlist based on responses to questions on the waitlist application. HOC then verifies the preference with a list of homeless veterans and their families provided by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).
- **Administration:** This group of vouchers is administered in accordance with the HCV program policies and procedures outlined in 24 CFR Part 982, as well as the policies and procedures outlined in this Administrative Plan.

Incremental Vouchers:

- **Selection/Eligibility:** HOC received an award from HUD to administer Incremental Vouchers for the following families: experiencing homelessness; at risk of homelessness; and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. HOC adopted a preference for families “experiencing homelessness”. Applicants are selected through HOC’s tenant-based waitlist, which filters applicants to the top of the list for this grouping based on answers to questions within the applications. HOC must verify that the individual or family is experiencing homelessness and does so by confirming the applicant receives services through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database. The HMIS maintains information regarding individuals experiencing housing instability throughout Montgomery County.
- **Admission/Denial for Incremental Vouchers:** Pursuant to HUD regulations, HOC is bound by two mandatory prohibitions, but has the authority to exercise discretion on others.
 1. **Mandatory Prohibition:** HOC must deny admissions for the following conduct:
 - Applicants with a household member that has ever been convicted for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
 - Applicants with a household member that is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.
 - HOC must prohibit admission to an applicant for three years from the date of eviction if a household member has been evicted from federally assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity, unless:
 - HOC determines that the household member who engaged in such activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program approved by the PHA or the circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist (e.g. the offending household member is no longer part of the household).
 2. **Discretionary Prohibition:** HOC screens all of its applicants based on the same criteria, as stated in this Administrative Plan. Applicants who are denied for criminal activity are entitled to an appeal and informal review of the circumstances and follows HUD’s guidance on mitigating disparate impact.

G. Special Admissions Programs (24 CFR 982.54(d)(e), 982.203)

When HUD awards HOC program funding that is targeted for specifically named families, or allows HOC to designate vouchers for families meeting special criteria, and these applicants do not go through the standard waitlist process, HOC must admit these families under a Special Admissions procedure.

Special Admissions families are admitted outside of the regular waitlist process. Applicants for vouchers under the Special Admissions category are typically referred directly to HOC by a qualified entity defined in the funding award. They may not have to qualify for any Local Preferences, nor are they required to be on the program waitlist. HOC administers four Special Admission programs. Applicants who are referred are added to the waitlist and selected upon receiving the application/referral specific to the Special Admissions programs.

Applicants who are admitted under Special Admissions are identified by codes in the automated system. System codes identify the specific vouchers/households tied to each program, regardless of funding source. Applicant files also document their entry into the specific Special Admissions program.

HOC administers the following Special Admission programs, which are further described below:

1. **Family Unification Program**
2. **Veterans Administration Supportive Housing**
3. **Emergency Housing Vouchers**
4. **Stability Vouchers**
5. **Other HUD Special Admissions Programs**

Family Unification Program (FUP):

- FUP Qualifies for Special Admissions as long as the individuals referred to HOC meet the following program definition(s):
 1. **Program Eligible Family:** An eligible family that the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) has certified as a family for whom a lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in the imminent placement of the family’s child, or children; in out-of-home care or in the delay of discharge of a child or children to the family from out-of-home care; and that the HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher.
 2. **Program Eligible Youth:** A youth that the PCWA has certified to be at least 18 years old and not more than 24 years old (has not reached his/her 25th birthday) who left foster care at age 16 or older and who does not have adequate housing, and that HOC has determined is eligible for a Housing Choice Voucher. FUP Youth vouchers are limited by statute to 36 months of assistance.
- **FUP Referral/Waitlist Requirements:** Upon receiving a referral from PCWA, HOC must:
 1. Compare the list of PCWA referrals to its HCV waitlist(s) to determine if any names on the PCWA’s referral list are already on HOC’s HCV waitlist(s).
 2. Any names in the PCWA’s referral list that match HOC’s HCV waitlist(s) must maintain the order of their position on the HCV waitlist(s).
 3. Any names in the PCWA’s referral list that are not already on HOC’s HCV waitlist(s) must be placed on the HCV waitlist(s).
 4. If HOC’s HCV waitlist is closed, HOC must reopen its waitlist(s) to accept FUP applicants not already on the HCV waitlist(s).

Once HOC places the FUP applicant on its HCV waitlist and determines whether the family or youth meets HCV program eligibility requirements, including income eligibility, HOC conducts all other processes relating to voucher issuance and administration.

- **FUP 2008 Allocation:** Selection of applicants for HOC’s FUP 2008 allocation are completed in conjunction with referrals from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCHHS). HOC will accept families certified by the MCHHS as eligible applicants for FUP. HOC will compare the names provided with the names on the current HOC waitlist. Any referred family on the HOC waitlist is served first. Those families referred and not on the HOC

waitlist will be added to the waitlist and served based on the date of referral and not on the HOC waitlist, or on a first come first served basis.

- **FUP Voucher Turnover:** If a voucher issued to an FUP-eligible family or FUP eligible youth under the FUP program is terminated, the voucher is reissued to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible FUP eligible family or FUP-eligible youth. If another eligible youth is not available, HOC must notify HUD and HUD will reduce the PHA's HCV assistance.

If a customer served through Special Admissions in the FUP program is on an HOC Program Admissions waitlist (tenant-based or project-based voucher), the customer remains eligible on the waitlist for the period of time the list is active. If a customer is selected from the program waitlist and utilizes the voucher, the FUP voucher is reissued, to the extent practicable, to another FUP-eligible family or FUP-eligible youth.

Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH):

- **Background:** The HUD VASH program combines HUD HCV rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided at Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Centers, Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, or through a designated service provider (DSP) as approved by the VA Secretary. HUD VASH eligible families consist of homeless veterans and their families. The VASH program generally operates concurrently with the tenant-based (24 CFR 982) and project-based (24 CFR 983) HCV regulations, except as noted in this Administrative Plan.
- **Eligibility/Screening:** HOC will administer the VASH program and relinquish its authority to determine the eligibility of families in accordance with the regular HCV and project-based voucher program rules, HUD VASH regulations, and PHA policies with the exceptions of income eligibility and lifetime sex offender status.
 - Under the VASH program, PHAs will not have the authority to screen any potentially eligible family members or deny assistance for any grounds permitted under 24 CFR 982.552 (broad denial for violations of HCV program requirements), and 24 CFR 982.553 (Specific denial for criminal activity and alcohol abusers).
 - HOC is required to prohibit admission if any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program.
 1. If the member subject to a lifetime sex offender registration is not the qualifying homeless veteran, that sex offender may be removed from the household composition.
 2. HOC must adhere to the fair housing and equal opportunity provisions and protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking included in 24 CFR, part 5, subpart L.
- **Eligibility/Referrals/Documentation:** Eligibility determination and veteran selection is done by the VA and eligible families are referred to the partnering PHA for the issuance of voucher or selection for a project-based voucher unit that is not exclusively made available to VASH Families. HOC will accept VASH program referrals from its local Veterans Administration medical center

(VMAC), Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) and other designated and approved service provider.

- HOC must not maintain a waitlist or apply Local Preferences for the VASH program.
 - For veterans, PHAs must accept the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214) or the VA-verified Application for Health Benefits (10-10EZ).
 - HOC will document applicant/participant files with written documentation of the VASH referral made to HOC.
- **Family Additions:** When adding family members after acceptance to the VASH program, the rules of 24 CFR 982.551(h)(2) apply. Outside of birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody, the family must request approval from HOC to add any other member to the household, in accordance with HOC's policies contained in Chapter 12 (Re-certifications), Section C.
- **Income/Asset Eligibility:**
 - Income Targeting requirements do not apply to VASH participants.
 - HOC must serve all income eligible veterans, including low-income veterans (up to 80% AMI).
- **Income Exclusions:**
 - Deferred disability benefits from the VA received in lump sum or monthly amounts is excluded from household income.
 - Additionally, any expense related to aid and attendance under Section 1521 of Title 38, United States Code, who are in need of regular aid and attendance is excluded from household income.
 - **VA Service-Connected Disability Benefits:** HUD is waiving and exercising alternative requirements for the purpose of determining income eligibility. HOC must exclude all VA service-connected benefits received by the VASH applicant when determining income eligibility.
- **VASH Voucher Search Term:**
 - VASH vouchers must have an initial search term of 120 days at issuance and moves with assistance.
 - Extensions to VASH vouchers are granted by HOC in accordance with the terms in Chapter Eight (Voucher Issuance and Briefings).
- **Leasing of a tenant-based or project-based unit under VASH:**
 - **HCV Units:** The family's TTP must be less than the applicable payment standard or exception payment standard. Additionally, the family would need to select a unit with a gross rent that is above the family TTP in order to lease a unit with at tenant-based voucher.
 - **Project-Based Voucher Units:** The VASH family's TTP must be less than the gross rent for the unit, rendering the unit eligible for a monthly HAP payment.
 - For HCV tenant-based voucher participants, HUD permits the initial lease term to be less than 12 months. Does not apply to project-based vouchers.
 - **Eligible Housing:** HUD permits the use of tenant-based and project-based vouchers to be used on the grounds of a medical, mental, or similar public or private institution.

- **Mobility/Portability:** VASH families may only reside in areas that are accessible to case management services as determined by the VA medical facility, as these services are required under the VASH program.
 - Families moving under portability must not be subject to rescreening by the receiving PHA.
 - HOC must consult with the VA prior to approving a port (see portability section below).

- **Termination of Assistance:**
 - There are two alternative requirements for termination of assistance for HUD VASH participants.
 - If the VA has determined that a veteran is not participating in required case management, without good cause, the PHA must terminate the family from the VASH program.
 - HOC may offer the family continued assistance through one of its regular vouchers or a project-based voucher unit not exclusively made available for VASH.
 - A VA determination that the veteran no longer requires case management is never grounds for termination. However, HOC may offer the family continued assistance through one of its regular vouchers in order to free up the VASH voucher for another eligible veteran.
 - HUD is waiving the previous requirement to terminate a VASH family that was evicted from housing assisted under the program for serious violation of the lease. HOC will review these instances on a case-by-case basis and consider all relevant circumstances.
 - **Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault:**
 - In the case of a family break-up, the VASH assistance must stay with the VASH veteran. However, in the case of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, in which the VASH Veteran is the perpetrator, the victim must continue to be assisted.
 - Upon termination of the perpetrator's VASH voucher in these instances, the victim must be given a regular HCV if one is available, and the VASH voucher must be used to serve another eligible veteran family.
 - If a regular HCV is not available for the victim, the victim will continue to utilize the VASH voucher.

- **Turnover:** In accordance with the Appropriations Acts, upon turnover, VASH vouchers must be issued to eligible veteran families as identified by the VA.

- **Inspections:** To expedite the leasing process for tenant-based VASH, HOC may pre-inspect available units that veterans may be interested in leasing in order to maintain a pool of eligible units. If the family selects a unit that passed HQS/NSPIRE (without intervening occupancy) within 90 days of the date of the Request for Tenancy Approval, the unit may be approved as long as it meets all other conditions under 24 CFR 982.305.
 - HOC must not directly or indirectly reduce the family's opportunity to select among all available units. All regulatory requirements pertaining to HQS/NSPIRE apply to HUD VASH.

- **Exception Payment Standards:** To assist VASH participants in finding affordable housing, especially in competitive markets, HUD allows HOC to establish a separate VASH exception payment standard, which may be up to, but not higher than, 120 percent of the published metropolitan area-wide Fair Market Rents (FMRs) or Small Area FMRs. This requires HUD approval.
- **Special Housing Types:** HUD permits VASH customers to use the following special housing types for tenant-based assistance: single room occupancy (SRO); congregate housing, group home; shared housing; and cooperative housing. The regulations for these housing types can be found at 24 CFR 982, Subpart M.
 - VASH project-based vouchers can never be applied to shared housing.
- **Minimum Rents:** HOC must consider hardship circumstances before charging a minimum rent in accordance with 24 CFR 6.630(b). HOC may choose to charge a lower minimum rent (including a \$0 rent) specifically for its VASH program.

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV):

- **Background:** HOC administers EHV's. Eligible EHV applicants are referred to HOC from the Continuum of Care (CoC) via the department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HOC can accept direct referrals outside HHS to facilitate an emergency transfer in accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) as outlined in HOC's Emergency Transfer Plan, or if HHS lacks a sufficient number of eligible families to refer. HOC must enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a Victims Service Provider (VSP) to accept EHV referrals from HHS.

HOC must maintain a separate waitlist for EHV referrals at initial leasing and for any turnover vouchers. HOC cannot issue an EHV subsequent to September 30, 2023. Provided that the re-issuance date is prior to September 30, 2023, the term of the EHV may extend beyond September 30, 2023.

- **EHV Eligibility Criteria:** Eligible applicants must meet one of the following eligibility categories:
 1. Homeless,
 2. At risk of homelessness,
 3. Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, or
 4. Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

EHV customers are not required to meet the local residency preference to live or work in Montgomery County. Additionally, Income Targeting requirements are not applicable for EHV families. EHV households can range from extremely low-incomes (30% AMI) to low-incomes (80% AMI).

- **Application Denial:** HOC cannot deny program admission for the following reasons, pursuant to 24 CFR, Part 982.552 and 982.55:
 - If any member of the family has been evicted or terminated from federally assisted housing.

- The family owes rent or other amounts owed to a Public Housing Authority (PHA) in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing assistance.
- The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a Housing Assistance Payment Contract (HAP) for rent, damages to the unit or other amounts owed by the family under the lease.
- The family breached an agreement with the PHA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA.
- The family would otherwise be prohibited admission under alcohol abuse standards established by the PHA.
- The PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in drug-related criminal activity during a reasonable time before the admission.

HOC will deny program admission for the following reasons pursuant to CFR 24 part 982.553 of the CFR:

- If any member of the household has been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
 - If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program.
 - If any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in violent criminal activity within the past 12 months.
 - If any household member has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal housing program within the previous 12 months.
 - If any household member engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HOC personnel within the previous 12 months.
- **EHV Voucher Issuance/Lease Term:** HOC will issue an EHV voucher for a term of 120 days. The initial lease term for EHV can be for a period of less than 12 months, regardless of whether the shorter term is the prevailing market practice.
 - **EHV Services:** HOC will assist EHV households by providing the following services based on documented need and funding availability.
 - *Housing Lactation* – EHV applicants will receive housing location assistance from HOC and/or the CoC. This includes helping the family identify and visit available units, providing transportation assistance and directions, assisting with the completion of rental applications and HOC forms and helping to find an accessible unit that meets the needs of a disabled household.
 - *Transportation Assistance* – HOC will provide transportation assistance to EHV households to help them view and select housing units. HOC will provide up to \$150 in transportation assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
 - *Security Deposit* – HOC will provide security deposit assistance to EHV households to help them secure housing. HOC will provide up to \$2,000 in security deposit assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability. If refundable, the security deposit will be refunded to HOC for future use of eligible EHV households.
 - *Application Fee/Holding Fee* – HOC will provide application and/or holding fee assistance to help them secure housing. HOC will provide up to \$200 in application and/or holding fee assistance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.

- *Moving Expenses* – HOC will provide moving assistance to EHV households. HOC will provide up to \$1,800 moving expenses per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
 - *Essential Household Items* – HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure essential household items. HOC will provide up to \$200 in assistance for essential household items per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
 - *Renters Insurance* – HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure renter’s insurance. HOC will provide up to \$175 in assistance for renter’s insurance per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
 - *Furniture* – HOC will provide EHV households with assistance to secure furniture. HOC will provide up to \$1,000 in assistance for furniture per EHV household based on documented need and funding availability.
- **EHV Portability:** EHV applicants can immediately port to another jurisdiction of their choice. The requirement to have a legal domicile in Montgomery County at the time of application submission is waived. HOC cannot restrict an EHV family from exercising portability options because they are a non-resident applicant.

If the EHV family moves to another jurisdiction that administers an EHV program, the receiving PHA may only absorb the EHV family with an available EHV allocated voucher. If the PHA does not have an EHV available to absorb the family, it must bill the initial PHA.

The EHV administration of the is in accordance with the receiving PHA’s EHV policies.

- **EHV Initial Certification:** HOC can accept income calculations and verifications from third party providers or an examination that HOC conducted on behalf of the family for another subsidized housing program in lieu of conducting an initial examination of income as long as the income was calculated in accordance with the rules outlined at Title 24 CFR Part 5 with the last six months, and the family certifies there has been no change in income or the family composition in the interim. At the time of the family’s annual reexamination, HOC must conduct the annual reexamination of income as outlined in 24 CFR 982.516.

EHV applicants may provide third-party documentation which represents the applicant’s income within the 60-day period prior to admission or voucher issuance, but is not dated within 60 days of HOC’s request.

- **HQS/NSPIRE Inspections/EHV:** HOC can pre-inspect available units that EHV families may be interested in leasing. If an EHV family selects a unit that passed a HQS/NSPIRE inspection within 45 days of the date of the Request for Tenancy Approval Form, the unit may be approved as long as it meets the other conditions under 24 CFR 982.305.
- **Interim Reexaminations/EHV:** When adding a family member after the EHV family has been placed under a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract, the regulations at 24 CFR 982.551(h)(2) apply. Other than the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child, the HOC may approve additional family members and must apply its regular screening criteria.

Stability Vouchers (SV) :

- **Background:** HOC administers Stability Vouchers. Eligible SV applicants are referred to HOC from the Continuum of Care (CoC) via the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HOC can accept direct referrals outside of HHS to facilitate an emergency transfer in accordance with the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) as outlined in HOC's Emergency Transfer Plan, or if HHS lacks a sufficient number of eligible families to refer. HOC must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a Victims Service Provider (VSP) to accept SV referrals apart from HHS.
- **SV Eligibility Criteria:** Eligible applicants must meet one of the four eligibility categories:
 1. Homeless;
 2. At risk of homelessness;
 3. Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking; or
 4. Veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meet one of the preceding criteria.

SV customers are not required to meet the Local Residency Preference to live or work in Montgomery County. Additionally, Income Targeting requirements are not applicable to SV families. SV households can range from extremely low-income (30% AMI) to low-incomes (80% AMI).

- **Prohibitions on Denials:** HOC cannot deny program admission for the following reasons, pursuant to 24 CFR 982.552 and 982.553.
 1. If any member of the family has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years;
 2. If the PHA has ever terminated assistance under the program for any member of the family;
 3. If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to the PHA or to another PHA in connection with Section 8 or Public Housing assistance under the 1937 Act;
 4. The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages, to the unit or other amounts owed by the family under the lease; or
 5. The family breached an agreement with the PHA to pay amounts owed to the PHA or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA.

Before denying a SV applicant admission because of a criminal record, HOC will offer the individual the opportunity to provide evidence of mitigating circumstances or that the record is inaccurate. HOC will deny program admission for the following reasons pursuant to 24 CFR 982.553.

1. If any member of the household has been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing;
2. If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program;

3. If any household member is currently engaged in, has engaged in violent criminal activity within the last 12 months; or
 4. If any household member has engaged in other criminal activity, which may threaten the health and safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or person residing in the immediate vicinity within the last 12 months,
 5. If any household member has committed fraud bribery or any other corrupt or criminal action in connection with any Federal housing program within the previous 12 months,
 6. If any household member engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward HOC personnel within the previous 12 months.
- **Income Verification at Admission:** HOC will accept self-certification of income at program admission. Applicants must submit an affidavit attesting to the reported income, assets, expenses and other factors which would affect an income eligibility determination. Additionally applicants may provide third-party documentation which represents the applicant's income within the sixty-day period prior to admission or voucher issuance, but is not dated within 60 days of the PHA's request.

HOC may accept income calculations and verification from third-party providers or from an examination that the PHA conducted on behalf of the family for another subsidized housing program in lieu of conducting an initial examination of income as long as the income was (1) calculated in accordance with rules outlined at 24 CFR Part 5 and within the last six months, and (2) the family certifies there has been no change in income or family composition in the interim.

HOC will take necessary enforcement action if the SV applicant was never eligible for assistance due to their income.

- **Verification of Social Security Number, Citizenship Status, Date of Birth and Disability:** HOC will admit SV applicants who are unable to provide the required documentation of their Social Security Number or citizenship status during the initial eligibility determination. SV applicants must furnish the required documents to HOC within 180 days of admission to be eligible for continued assistance or when verification of their SSN has been verified by EIV.

HOC will accept self-certification of the date of birth and disability status if a higher level of verification is not immediately available. HOC must obtain a higher level of verification within 90 days of admission or verify the information in EIV.

- **Voucher Issuance/Lease Term:** HOC will issue the SV voucher for a term of 120 days. The initial lease term for SV households can be for a period of less than 12 months, regardless of whether the shorter term is the prevailing market practice.
- **Portability:** SV applicants can immediately port to another jurisdiction of their choice. The requirement to have a legal domicile in Montgomery County at the time of the application submission is waived. HOC cannot restrict a SV family from exercising portability options because they are a non-resident applicant.

If the SV family moves to another jurisdiction that does not administer a SV program, the receiving PHA may absorb the family into its regular HCV program or bill the initial PHA.

If the SV family moves to another jurisdiction that administers a SV program, the receiving PHA may only absorb the SV family with an available SV allocated voucher. If the PHA does not have an SV available to absorb the family, it must bill the initial PHA.

The SV administration of the voucher is in accordance with the receiving PHA's SV policies.

Other HUD Special Admission Programs:

- The following are examples of types of program funding that may be designated by HUD for families living in a specified unit:
 1. A family displaced because of demolition or disposition of a public or Indian Housing project;
 2. A family residing in a multifamily rental housing project when HUD, sells, forecloses or demolishes the project;
 3. For housing covered by the Low Income Housing Preservation and resident Homeownership Act of 1990;
 4. A family residing in a project covered by a project-based Section 8 HAP contract at or near the end of the HAP contract term; and
 5. A non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or HOPE 2 project.

H. Income Targeting

In accordance with the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, and outlined in each fiscal year, HOC reserves a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of its Section 8 new admissions for families whose incomes do not exceed thirty (30) percent of the area median income (AMI). HUD refers to these families as "extremely low-income families". HOC must admit families who qualify under the extremely low-income limit to meet the income targeting requirement, regardless of preference. This policy applies to the tenant-based voucher waitlist(s).

HOC's Income Targeting requirement does not apply to low-income families continuously assisted, as provided for under the 1937 Housing Act.

HOC is also exempt from this requirement when HOC provides assistance to low-income or moderate-income families entitled to preservation assistance under the tenant-based voucher program as a result of a mortgage prepayment or opt-out.

I. Order of Selection (24 CFR 982.207)

HOC's method of selecting applicants from a preference category or using preference criteria leaves a clear audit trail, which can be used to verify that each applicant was selected in accordance with the method specified in the Administrative Plan. The section below outlines the selection methods used for each HCV waitlist (tenant-based, project-based, and Mainstream Disabled).

Tenant-Based Voucher Waitlist:

1. **Local Preference:** HOC’s waitlist filters applicants that meet the Local Preference requirements, based on pre-application certification, to the top of the waitlist in date/time stamp order. As indicated in Section E (Local Preferences), HOC’s electronic waitlist is configured to prioritize Local Preference One (Displacement) over Local Preference Two (Residency) by assigning points to each.
2. If/when this waitlist is exhausted of applicants who meet the Local Preference, applicants are selected only by order of date/time stamp of application.

Note: Targeted Selections are also selected from this waitlist in accordance with the process outlined in Section F (Targeted Selections).

Project-Based Voucher Waitlist:

1. **Local Preference:** HOC’s project-based waitlist filters applicants that meet the Local Preference requirements to the top of the waitlist in date/time stamp order. As indicated in Section E (Local Preferences), HOC’s electronic waitlist is configured to prioritize Local Preference One (Displacement) over Local Preference Two (Residency) by assigning points to each.
 - a. If/when this waitlist is exhausted of applicants who meet the Local Preference, applicants are selected only by order of date/time stamp of application and the criteria below.
2. Applicants are then selected from the project-based voucher waitlist based on other preferences (as applicable to the property) and family size. The corresponding occupancy standards based on family size are as follows:
 - a. One- and two-person families are eligible for a one-bedroom unit.
 - b. Three- and four-person families are eligible for a two-bedroom unit.
 - c. Five- and six-person families are eligible for a three-bedroom unit.
 - d. Seven- and eight-person families are eligible for a four-bedroom unit.

Note: Properties with project-based voucher units may have other preference requirements, such as elderly (age 62 or older), disability, etc. Exceptions to this policy are made in accordance with HOC’s policies of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities (please see Chapter One).

The number of persons per bedroom is subject to compliance with the Montgomery County Code, under Chapter 26-5 (Space, Use, and Location).

Mainstream Disabled Voucher Waitlist:

1. HOC’s HCV Local Preferences do not apply to these vouchers.
2. **Statute Preference:** This waitlist is based on the preferences outlined in Section “C” of this chapter.
3. **Date/Time Stamp:** All applicants on this waitlist must certify that they qualify for the applicable preferences. Therefore, applicants are selected based on date/time stamp of application.

Note: The selection from any of the three HCV waitlists will not affect the statuses of other HCV waitlists.

J. Project-Based Voucher Referrals: Existing Residents

In an effort to minimize displacement of families, if a unit that is to be included in the project-based voucher contract is occupied by an eligible family, the in-place family must be placed on the program waitlist. When eligibility is determined, the family must be given an absolute selection preference and referred to the project owner for an appropriately sized project-based voucher unit.

A preference will be extended through the project-based voucher program (only) for services offered. In selecting families, HOC may give a preference to disabled families who need services offered at a particular project. This preference (more specifically a referral) is limited to the population of families with disabilities that significantly interfere with their ability to obtain and maintain themselves in housing.

K. Removal From the Waitlists and Purging (24 CFR 982.204)

HOC will not remove an applicant's name from the tenant-based, project-based, or Mainstream Disabled waitlists unless:

1. The applicant requests in writing that their name be removed; or
2. The applicant is unresponsive to declare their continued interest in the waitlist(s); or
3. The applicant is unresponsive to requests to contact once selected after sufficient attempts to contact: email, mail, phone, emergency contact, etc.; or
4. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program during the eligibility phase of application.

Project-Based Voucher Offer of Units: HOC will offer up to two project-based voucher unit options. If the applicant refuses both options without good cause, they are removed from the waitlist. Good cause includes the items listed below:

Good Cause/Prohibited Actions (project-based voucher):

Good cause must include, at a minimum:

- The family determines the unit is not accessible to a household member with a disability or otherwise does not meet the member's disability-related needs;
- The unit has HQS deficiencies;
- The family is unable to accept the offer due to circumstances beyond the family's control such as hospitalization, temporary economic hardship, or natural disaster; and
- The family determines the unit presents a health or safety risk to a household member who is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

None of the following actions may be taken against an applicant solely because the applicant has applied for, received, or refused an offer of project-based voucher assistance:

- Refuse to list the applicant on the PHA waitlist for tenant-based assistance or any other available project-based voucher waitlist. However, the PHA (or owner in the case of owner-maintained waitlists) is not required to open a closed waitlist to place the family on that waitlist;
- Deny any admission preference for which the applicant is currently qualified;
- Change the applicant's placement on the waitlist based on preference, date, and time of application, or other factors affecting selection from the waitlist; or

- Remove the applicant from the waitlist for tenant-based voucher assistance.

Obligation to Periodically Confirm Application Information:

Each year, or at such time as HOC determines reasonable, HOC will issue notice to all applicants on the waitlist requesting that each applicant confirm their continued interest in remaining on the waitlist(s). Failure to renew the information in a timely manner will result in removal from the waitlist(s).

HOC will provide notice to applicants on the waitlist(s) to confirm their continued interest and set a date by which their renewal must be completed. HOC will send notices thirty (30) days, fifteen (15) days, five (5) days, and one (1) day prior to the date when that renewal confirmation is due.

All notices under this section are sent by HOC electronically to the last known email address listed on the application(s). Email is the primary method of contact and any other method of contact is dependent upon the capability of HOC's electronic waitlist. If a family does not have an email address, HOC can assist the family in obtaining a free mail account. It will be the applicant's sole responsibility to check that email account from time to time and to respond to any email or other method of communication from HOC. To the extent an applicant requires assistance, upon request, staff from HOC is available to assist with electronic submissions.

Should an applicant not respond to the request to confirm their continued interest in remaining on the waitlist(s) by renewing their application(s) or to their notification of selection for a program for any reason, prior to any established deadline, the applicant is removed from the waitlist. Reasons for non-response, resulting in removal from the waitlist(s), include (but are not limited to) negligence in completing the electronic update/application in a timely manner and relocation resulting in a return of the electronic notice to HOC with no forwarding email address provided. Applicants removed from the waitlist will receive a notification identifying their removal from the waitlist.

Missed Appointments

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment (where applicable), or miss a deadline, are sent a written notice of termination of the process for eligibility. That written notification of termination may be sent as an attachment to an email.

HOC will allow the family to reschedule an appointment (where applicable) or missed deadline for good cause. Generally, no more than one opportunity is given to reschedule without good cause, and no more than two opportunities are given for good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, HOC will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time. Applicants are advised of their right to an informal review before being removed from the waitlist.

Notice of Negative Action

Any applicant whose name is being removed from the waitlist will be notified by HOC, in writing, that they have ten (10) business days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request an informal review. The letter will also indicate that their name will be removed from the waitlist if they fail to respond within the timeframe specified. HOC's system of removing applicant names from the waitlist will not violate the rights of persons with disabilities. If an applicant claims that their failure to respond to a request for information or updates was caused by a disability, HOC will verify that there is in fact a disability, that the disability is what caused the failure to respond, and then provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the waitlist based on the date and time of their original application.

Purging the Waitlist

HOC utilizes an electronic waitlist system, which may be continuously open. Applicants are required to renew or confirm their continued interest in remaining on the waitlist(s) at intervals specified by HOC. If applicants fail to renew or confirm continued interest, their application(s) will expire and they are removed from the waitlist.

HOC will update and purge its waitlist as needed to ensure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom HOC has current information, i.e. applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preference. Under certain circumstances, HOC may need to purge one or more waitlists. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to: increased selection to lease-up ratios due to a high number of applicants on the waitlist who do not qualify based on income or occupancy standards; high number of applicants on the waitlist that do not meet the requirements of the property (elderly, occupancy standards, or other specific preference tied to the property/program); and any other reason determined by HOC.

HOC must provide sufficient notification to all applicants on any affected waitlists prior to conducting a purge. Notification will include the reason for the purge, criteria that will affect the existing applicants' status, instructions on how to remove or update their applications, and how to appeal if removed from the waitlist(s).