

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: April 29, 2016

TO: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman - Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by James Mathy, Housing Administrator, Housing Division

SUBJECT: Report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting approval of the updated Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program

Background

The Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is requesting approval of an updated Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) for the Housing Division.

The HCVP provides rental assistance to eligible families in Milwaukee County and currently assists more than 1,700 families. The rules and regulations of HCPV are determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Each individual program is afforded choices in regards to its policy, which are included in the Administrative Plan. The purpose of the Administrative Plan is to establish policies for carrying out the program in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and also incorporate goals and objectives specific to the local program. The Administrative Plan is the core of the program, providing consistency, clarity and guidance for the participants, program staff and the community. DHHS is now requesting that the County Board approve the revised Administrative Plan for the HCVP program.

Discussion

The current HCVP Administrative Plan was originally drafted and adopted in 1999. An updated plan was approved by this committee in 2012. This updated plan led to several changes that have benefitted the program. Those changes included:

- The subsidy standards have been updated. Tighter subsidy standard guidelines allowed the program to assist additional low income families. This is important due to the lengthy waiting list for the HCVP.
- The updated Administrative Plan contained clear language in regards to participant obligations. Written expectations and well-defined consequences aided the staff in the enforcement of program guidelines. Written policy protects the program against fraud and abuse.

- Procedural changes resulted in a more streamlined process. This efficiency assisted staff in meeting payment deadlines and dramatically reduced late payments.

For 2016, the Housing Division is recommending new preferences for the Section 8 waiting list to build upon the Division's progress in ending chronic homelessness. The Division is recommending adding the following preference:

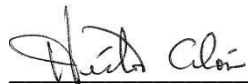
- 1) An individual or family that is homeless or is transitioning up from a Permanent Supportive Housing Unit - this includes individuals and families that meet the definition of Category 1 or Category 4 homelessness as defined in HUD notice PIH 2013-15 (HA).
- 2) The other technical change the Division is recommending is that the Milwaukee County Housing Choice Voucher Program will maintain separate waiting lists for Project Based Voucher units. This is common practice for these types of vouchers.

Recommendation

The Director, Department of Health and Human Services, recommends that the County Board of Supervisors approve the updated Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan as well as its submission to HUD.

Fiscal Effect

There is no anticipated fiscal effect as a result of this approval.



Héctor Colón, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

cc: County Executive Chris Abele
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