



Housing Opportunities for Low Income Individuals and Families with Disabilities

Individuals and families with disabilities face multiple barriers to securing housing in the community; including a lack of affordable and accessible options coupled with the need for appropriate supportive services, when necessary. According to a recent [HUD report](#), “renter households that include people with disabilities are more likely than those that do not include people with disabilities to have very low incomes, experience worst case needs, pay more than one-half of their income for rent, and have other housing problems such as living in inadequate or overcrowded housing.” Persons with disabilities are also severely overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness.

For low income individuals and families with disabilities, affordable rental housing is a critical need. Following is a brief explanation of one of the key rental housing programs available to low income persons with disabilities and some potential advocacy opportunities for the Commission.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

The [Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher \(HCV\) program](#) is HUD’s largest rental subsidy program. Eligible families use rental vouchers to lease decent, safe and affordable housing in the private market with financial rental assistance from public housing agencies (PHAs). Participants contribute 30% of their adjusted monthly income towards the monthly rent for their homes and the PHA pays the difference with HUD funds.

Existing Resources

The Phoenix Housing Department controls approximately **5,758** housing choice vouchers. The need for this housing is great, illustrated by the following waiting list statistics:

- As of March 1, 2011, there were 6,195 applicants on the HCV waiting list
- The average wait for the Section 8 HCV program is 7 years

On occasion, HUD makes funding available for vouchers specifically for persons with disabilities. These include “Designated Housing Vouchers” and “Mainstream” vouchers. According to the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. (TAC), [275 of these vouchers are designated specifically for persons with disabilities](#). 200 are Designated vouchers and 75 are Mainstream vouchers.

It is critical that upon turnover these vouchers are provided to another eligible individual or family with disabilities. With the limited number of these housing resources for this population, it is important that these vouchers are accurately monitored to ensure that they go to persons with disabilities.

Recommendation #1: *Ensure the Housing Department has a system to accurately track and allocate these existing vouchers for individuals and families with disabilities.*

Opportunities for New Resources

[In 2010, HUD awarded competitive funding](#) to PHAs for two separate types of vouchers for persons with disabilities. **4,300** “Category I” vouchers were awarded to 46 PHAs to serve non-elderly individuals with disabilities already on existing PHA waiting HCV lists.

948 “Category II” vouchers were awarded to 28 PHAs to assist non-elderly individuals with disabilities currently living in nursing homes and other health care institutions to move into the community with rental assistance.

The Phoenix Housing Department should be commended for their 2010 application for Category I vouchers. Unfortunately, the Housing Department was not awarded funds. The Housing Department did not submit an application for Category II vouchers.

In determining whether to apply for these vouchers, the Housing Department must consider their capacity, both internally and via collaborations with other agencies, to administer these special purpose vouchers. Additionally, HUD has significantly reduced administrative funding for the voucher program since 2003, making it increasingly difficult for PHAs to comply with program requirements and fully utilize their vouchers.

Funding for these scarce resources is relatively rare and extremely competitive.

Recommendation #2: *Encourage the Housing Department to continue to apply for additional vouchers for persons with disabilities when available.*

[The Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. \(TAC\)](#) offers tremendous guidance and assistance to PHAs interested in developing competitive applications for these housing opportunities for persons with disabilities. This includes webinars, sample policies, and customized training. Additional local organizations like [Arizona Bridge to Independent Living \(ABIL\)](#) and others are also available and interested in partnering with the Housing Department to secure additional housing opportunities for this population.

Recommendation #3: *Encourage the Housing Department to utilize available technical assistance and when appropriate, collaborate with disability focused community based organizations in order to enhance future efforts at securing new housing vouchers.*

Thank you for your time!

Michael Shore

CEO, HOM, Inc.

mikeshore@hominc.com

www.hominc.com and www.facebook.com/hominc



DATA

Below is a listing of Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) that have been previously funded for one or more special purpose voucher allocations (described below) and the number of vouchers each PHA received*. [Search again](#), or [view more information](#) on these vouchers.

State	PHA Name	City	Certain Develop.	Desig.	Mainstrm 1-Y.	Mainstrm 5-Y.	FUP	VASH	Prj. Access	Fairshare Medicaid	Fairshare PWD	NED Cat 1	NED Cat 2
AZ	Cochise County Health and Social Services Housing	Bisbee	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	City of Chandler	Chandler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
AZ	City of Douglas Housing Authority	Douglas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
AZ	City of Flagstaff Housing Authority	Flagstaff	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	Mohave County Housing Authority	Kingman	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	2	8	0	0
AZ	City of Mesa Housing Authority	Mesa	0	0	150	100	0	35	0	0	32	0	0
AZ	City of Phoenix Housing Authority	Phoenix	0	200	0	75	100	335	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation	Phoenix	0	0	0	125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	State of Arizona	Phoenix	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	2	0	0
AZ	City of Scottsdale	Scottsdale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0
AZ	City of Tempe	Tempe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	0	0
AZ	Pima County Housing Authority	Tucson	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	5	27	0	25
AZ	City of Tucson	Tucson	0	0	0	0	100	215	0	13	67	0	0
AZ	Williams Housing Authority	Williams	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
AZ	Housing Authority of the City of Yuma	Yuma	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Based on available HUD information

Certain Development Vouchers: Officially named Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Related to Certain Types of Section 8 Project-Based Developments and Section 202, Section 221 (d)(3) and Section 236 Developments, Certain Developments vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities. PHAs were awarded these vouchers to assist non-elderly disabled households that were not currently receiving housing assistance in certain HUD-assisted properties due to the owner's establishment of preferences or restrictions for occupancy to elderly families.

Designated Housing Vouchers: Officially named Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities in Support of Designated Housing Plans, Designated Housing vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities. These vouchers were awarded to PHAs to enable them to provide sufficient alternative resources to meet the housing needs of those non-elderly disabled households who would have been housed by the PHA if occupancy in a designated public housing project or building (or portion thereof) were not restricted to elderly households through the approval of a Designated Housing Plan.

Mainstream 1-Year Vouchers: Mainstream 1-year vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities. PHAs receive 1 year contracts that are renewed from the Housing Choice Voucher Program appropriation.

Mainstream 5-Year Vouchers: Mainstream 5-year vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities, but are funded from the Section 811 tenant-based rental

assistance appropriation. PHAs and non-profit disability organizations receive 5-year contracts that are renewed from the Section 811 appropriation.

Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers: FUP vouchers are targeted to families for whom the lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in the imminent placement of the family's children to out-of-home care. Youths between 18 and 21 years old who left foster care at age 16 or older and who do not have adequate housing are also eligible for FUP. To administer FUP vouchers, a PHA must have a partnership with the local Public Child Welfare Agency, which is responsible for providing support services.

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers: VASH vouchers are targeted to homeless veterans. VASH combines vouchers with case management and clinical services provided by the Veterans Affairs (VA) at its medical centers and in the community.

Project Access Vouchers: A 2001 pilot program of 400 vouchers awarded to 11 PHAs to assist people with disabilities to transition from nursing homes into the community.

Fair Share - Medicaid Vouchers: Conventional vouchers (i.e., not targeted to any particular group) that were awarded to PHAs that applied through a competition between 2000 and 2002. As part of the competition, HUD awarded extra points to PHAs that agreed to use at least 3% of the vouchers for people with disabilities with Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers.

Fair Share - People with Disabilities Vouchers: Conventional vouchers (i.e., not targeted to any particular group) that were awarded to PHAs that applied through a competition between 2000 and 2002. As part of the competition, HUD awarded extra points to PHAs that agreed to use at least 15% of the vouchers for people with disabilities.

Non-Elderly People with Disabilities (NED) Category 1 Vouchers: Officially named Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly People with Disabilities, NED Category 1 vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities. PHAs receive 1 year contracts that are renewed from the Housing Choice Voucher Program appropriation.

Non-Elderly People with Disabilities (NED) Category 2 Vouchers: Officially named Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly People with Disabilities, NED Category 2 vouchers are targeted to non-elderly people with disabilities that are transitioning from nursing homes and other health care institutions into the community. PHAs receive 1 year contracts that are renewed from the Housing Choice Voucher Program appropriation. PHAs must partner with a state-level Medicaid or health and human services agency responsible for the state's institutional transfer program.

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Search



HUD Releases 2009 Worst Case Housing Needs of People with Disabilities

One Million Very Low Income Non-Elderly Renter Households Have Worst Case Needs

Summary

For the past decade, the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) and the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force (CCD) have urged the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to improve disability data included in its reports on worst case housing need. During that time, HUD developed several worst case housing needs reports for Congress which significantly understated the housing needs of very low income non-elderly adults with disabilities who rent their housing.

TAC and CCD are gratified that on March 24, 2011, HUD'S Office of Policy Development and Research issued *Worst Case Housing Needs of People with Disabilities* – a supplement to HUD's *Worst Case Housing Needs 2009: Report to Congress* (February 2011) – which significantly improves previous estimates of need among renter households that contain very low income non-elderly adults with disabilities. This HUD supplemental report states that in 2009, approximately 1 million very low income renter households that included non-elderly adults with disabilities had worst case needs.

TAC and CCD will continue to work collaboratively with HUD to improve federal data on the housing needs of non-elderly adults with disabilities, including those who are living in institutional and non-institutional group quarters (such as nursing homes, public institutions, and homeless shelters) and who are not included in housing needs estimates of very low income renter households.

Background

HUD has estimated worst case housing needs data since 1985 using data from the American Housing Survey (AHS). Worst case housing needs households are defined by HUD as very-low-income renter households who do not receive government housing assistance and who either pay more than one-half of their come for rent or live in severely inadequate housing conditions or both.

Until 2009, the AHS did not include any direct questions about disability. Instead, HUD used “proxies” to identify disability. A proxy is data that is a “stand-in” for data that is not available. HUD's proxy was assistance payments that consider disability in some fashion in granting eligibility. As a result of the use of proxies rather than direct questions, the HUD's reports historically undercounted the number of non-elderly adult households with disabilities with worst case needs.

The 2009 survey is the first time the AHS used direct questions to measure whether a household included a person with a disability. The Survey asked six questions about disability including questions about hearing, vision, memory, walking and climbing, dressing and bathing and doing errands alone.

Report Summary

The HUD Supplementary Report released on March 24th found that:

- In 2009, approximately 1 million very low income renter households that included non-elderly adults with disabilities had worst case needs;
- Renter households that include non-elderly adults with disabilities are more likely than those that don't include people with disabilities to have very low incomes, experience worst case housing needs, pay more than one-half of their income for rent, and have other housing problems such as living in inadequate or overcrowded housing;
- Between 2007 and 2009, there was a 13 percent increase in worst case needs households that included non-elderly adults with disabilities. This is a lower increase than among very-low-income renters as a whole (20%).
- Renter households with non-elderly adults disabilities were almost one and one-half times more likely to pay more than one-half of their income for rent than renter households without disabilities
- Compared to other very low income renter households, nonelderly adult households with disabilities are more likely to:
 - Be very low-income (66% compared to 46%);
 - Have worst case housing needs (25% to 19%);and
 - Have severe rent burden (34% to 24%), i.e. paying 50% or more of the household income for rent.
- Nonelderly adult renters with disabilities were less likely to have worst case needs than those without disabilities if they lived in central cities (41% compared to 48%) but more likely if they lived in non-metropolitan areas (21% compared to 15%); they were equally likely to have worst case housing needs in suburban areas.

People with Disabilities Living in Institutional and Non-Institutional Group Quarters

For the first time ever, this HUD report clearly states that the data source HUD uses to prepare worst case needs reports – the American Housing Survey (AHS) – excludes people living in institutional and non-institutional group quarters. This means that there is no federal report that assesses the housing needs of people with disabilities living in nursing homes, health care facilities, correctional facilities, homeless shelters or other group quarters. HUD's report notes that "there is a high prevalence of people with disabilities" in these settings.

Unlike the AHS, which focuses on housing units, the American Community Survey (ACS) focuses on people. According to HUD, the 2009 ACS found that 856,425 people with disabilities are living in homeless shelters, group homes, and other non-institutional group quarters facilities. In addition to this group, TAC and CCD estimate that as many as 350,000 or more non-elderly people with disabilities are living in institutional group quarter settings – primarily nursing homes and public institutions.

TAC and CCD believe that federal housing needs reports should include estimates of need for people with disabilities who are currently living in institutional and non-institutional group quarters and who could live in the community if affordable housing and appropriate supportive services were made available to them. We will continue to work with HUD and with other experts to improve federal housing needs estimates for very low income non-elderly adults with disabilities.

For More Information

See the complete HUD Report at

http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/affhsg/wcn_disability.html