

# ACOP TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>1.0</b>	<b>FAIR HOUSING</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION</b> .....	<b>2</b>
2.1	COMMUNICATION .....	3
<b>3.0</b>	<b>SERVICES FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>FAMILY OUTREACH</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>RIGHT TO PRIVACY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>REQUIRED POSTINGS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>TAKING APPLICATIONS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
8.1	INTRODUCTION .....	8
8.2	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA .....	8
8.3	SUITABILITY.....	16
8.4	GROUND FOR DENIAL .....	18
8.5	INFORMAL REVIEW .....	25
<b>9.0</b>	<b>MANAGING THE WAITING LIST</b> .....	<b>26</b>
9.1	OPENING AND CLOSING THE WAITING LIST .....	26
9.2	ORGANIZATION OF THE WAITING LIST .....	26
9.3	FAMILIES NEARING THE TOP OF THE WAITING LIST .....	27
9.4	PURGING THE WAITING LIST .....	27
9.5	REMOVAL OF APPLICANTS FROM THE WAITING LIST .....	27
9.6	MISSED APPOINTMENTS.....	28
9.7	NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE ACTIONS .....	28
<b>10.0</b>	<b>TENANT SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT PLAN</b> .....	<b>28</b>
10.1	PREFERENCES.....	29
10.1.1	DECLARED DISASTERS.....	31
10.1.2	DENIAL OF PREFERENCE .....	32
10.2	ASSIGNMENT OF BEDROOM SIZES .....	32
10.3	SELECTION FROM THE WAITING LIST.....	34
10.4	DECONCENTRATION POLICY .....	34
10.5	DECONCENTRATION INCENTIVES .....	35
10.6	OFFER OF A UNIT .....	35
10.7	REJECTION OF UNIT .....	35
10.8	ACCEPTANCE OF UNIT .....	36
<b>11.0</b>	<b>INCOME, EXCLUSIONS, AND DEDUCTIONS FROM INCOME</b> .....	<b>37</b>
11.1	INCOME .....	37

11.2	ANNUAL INCOME AND ANNUAL INCOME EXCLUSIONS .....	41
11.3	DEDUCTIONS FROM ANNUAL INCOME .....	47
11.4	RECEIPT OF A LETTER OR NOTICE FROM HUD CONCERNING INCOME .....	48
11.5	COOPERATING WITH WELFARE AGENCIES .....	49
11.6	COOPERATING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES .....	49
<b>12.0</b>	<b>VERIFICATION.....</b>	<b>50</b>
12.1	ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF VERIFICATION .....	50
12.2	TYPES OF VERIFICATION.....	55
12.3	VERIFICATION OF CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE NON-CITIZEN STATUS.....	58
12.4	VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS .....	59
12.5	TIMING OF VERIFICATION .....	60
12.6	FREQUENCY OF OBTAINING VERIFICATION.....	60
12.7	DISCREPANCIES IN VERIFIED INFORMATION .....	61
12.8	STREAMLINED INCOME DETERMINATION.....	62
<b>13.0</b>	<b>DETERMINATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT AND TENANT RENT ...</b>	<b>64</b>
13.1	FAMILY CHOICE.....	64
13.2	THE INCOME METHOD .....	64
13.3	MINIMUM RENT .....	65
13.4	THE FLAT RENT .....	66
13.5	RESERVED.....	68
13.6	RENT FOR FAMILIES UNDER THE NONCITIZEN RULE.....	68
13.7	UTILITY ALLOWANCE .....	70
13.8	PAYING RENT.....	70
13.9	RENT FOR POLICE OFFICE OCCUPYING A PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT .....	71
<b>14.0</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY REQUIREMENT .....</b>	<b>71</b>
14.1	GENERAL.....	71
14.2	EXEMPTIONS .....	72
14.3	NOTIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENT .....	73
14.4	VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.....	74
14.5	THE PROCESS .....	75
14.6	NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT.....	76
14.7	OPPORTUNITY FOR CURE.....	76
14.8	PROHIBITION AGAINST REPLACEMENT OF AGENCY EMPLOYEES .....	77
<b>15.0</b>	<b>RECERTIFICATIONS .....</b>	<b>77</b>
15.1	GENERAL.....	77
15.1.1	<i>Compliance Provisions.....</i>	78
15.2	MISSED APPOINTMENTS.....	78
15.3	FLAT RENTS .....	78
15.4	THE INCOME METHOD .....	80
15.5	EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES FOR ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS .....	80
15.6	INTERIM REEXAMINATIONS .....	80
15.7	SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS .....	82
15.8	EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES DUE TO INTERIM OR SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS .....	82
15.9	TIMELY REPORTING REQUIREMENT .....	82
15.10	HOUSING AUTHORITY MISTAKES IN CALCULATING RENT .....	82
15.11	OVER INCOME FAMILIES .....	83

<b>16.0</b>	<b>UNIT TRANSFERS.....</b>	<b>83</b>
16.1	OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSFER POLICY.....	84
16.2	CATEGORIES OF TRANSFERS.....	84
16.3	DOCUMENTATION.....	85
16.4	PROCESSING TRANSFERS.....	85
16.5	COST OF THE FAMILY’S MOVE.....	86
16.6	TENANTS IN GOOD STANDING.....	87
16.7	TRANSFER REQUESTS.....	87
16.8	RIGHT OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY IN TRANSFER POLICY.....	88
<b>17.0</b>	<b>INSPECTIONS.....</b>	<b>88</b>
17.1	MOVE-IN INSPECTIONS.....	88
17.2	ANNUAL INSPECTIONS.....	88
17.3	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS.....	88
17.4	SPECIAL INSPECTIONS.....	88
17.5	HOUSEKEEPING INSPECTIONS.....	89
17.6	NOTICE OF INSPECTION.....	89
17.7	EMERGENCY INSPECTIONS.....	89
17.8	PRE-MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS.....	89
17.9	MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS.....	89
17.10	FAILED HOUKEEPING INSPECTIONS.....	89
<b>17A</b>	<b>MINIMUM HEATING STANDARD.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>18.0</b>	<b>PET POLICY.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>19.0</b>	<b>REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>20.0</b>	<b>TERMINATION.....</b>	<b>91</b>
20.1	TERMINATION BY TENANT.....	91
20.2	TERMINATION BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY.....	92
20.2.1	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE INCOME.....	95
20.2A	VAWA PROTECTIONS.....	95
20.2B	VERIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT OR STALKING 97	
20.2C	CONFIDENTIALITY.....	98
20.3	TERMINATIONS FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.....	99
20.4	ABANDONMENT.....	99
20.5	RETURN OF SECURITY DEPOSIT.....	100
20.6	DEATH OF A RESIDENT.....	101
20.7	THE EIV’S DECEASED TENANTS REPORT.....	101
<b>21.0</b>	<b>SUPPORT FOR OUR ARMED FORCES.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>22.0</b>	<b>ANTI-FRAUD POLICY.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>23.0</b>	<b>PROPERTIES.....</b>	<b>103</b>
23.1	UNPERMITTED ITEMS:.....	103
23.2	SMOKE-FREE HOUSING:.....	103

<b>24.0</b>	<b>FILLING AN ACCESSIBLE UNIT.....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>25.0</b>	<b>RE-OCCUPANCY DURING DEMOLITION/DISPOSITION .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>26.0</b>	<b>PRIVACY .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>27.0</b>	<b>CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CORE VALUES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>104</b>
27.1	PURPOSE.....	104
27.2	CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	104
27.3	PROHIBITION OF SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS .....	105
27.4	HOUSING AUTHORITY ADMINISTRATIVE AND DISCIPLINARY REMEDIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT .....	105
	<b>GLOSSARY.....</b>	<b>106</b>
	<b>ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>124</b>



# **ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY**

---

This Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy defines the Allegheny County Housing Authority's policies for the operation of the Public Housing Program, incorporating Federal, State and local law. If a property is assisted by other sources of funds, then any requirements that these additional funds generate will also be complied with. For example, if a property has Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding, then no one will be admitted to the LIHTC assisted units that make more than the LIHTC limits. Separate management plans and agreements may exist for properties that are not directly owned and/or managed by Allegheny County Housing Authority. If there is any conflict between this policy and laws or regulations, the laws and regulations will prevail.

## **1.0 FAIR HOUSING**

It is the policy of the Allegheny County Housing Authority to fully comply with all Federal, State and local nondiscrimination laws; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall affirmatively further fair housing in the administration of its public housing program. Both of these actions shall be taken in conformity with the procedural guidelines adopted by the Allegheny County Board of Commissioners on June 18, 2008 and incorporated herein by reference.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, familial status, sexual orientation or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the Allegheny County Housing Authority's programs.

No inquiries shall be made about a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. However, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may inquire about a person's sex in order to determine the number of bedrooms a household may be eligible for under the occupancy standards or to accurately complete HUD's 50058.

To further its commitment to full compliance with applicable Civil Rights laws, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will provide Federal/State/local information to applicants/tenants of the Public Housing Program regarding discrimination and any recourse available to them if they believe they may be victims of discrimination. Such information will be made available with the application, and all applicable Fair Housing Information and Discrimination Complaint Forms will be made available at the Allegheny County Housing Authority office. In addition, all appropriate written information and advertisements will contain the proper Equal Opportunity language and logo.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will assist any family in or seeking public housing that believes they have suffered illegal discrimination by providing the family with copies of the appropriate housing discrimination forms. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will also assist them in completing the forms if requested, and will provide them with the address of the nearest HUD office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will keep records of all complaints, investigations, notices and corrective actions for five years.

## **2.0 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

Sometimes people with disabilities may need a reasonable accommodation in order to take full advantage of the Allegheny County Housing Authority housing programs and related services. When such accommodations are granted, they do not confer special treatment or advantage for the person with a disability; rather, they make the program accessible to them in a way that would otherwise not be possible due to their disability. The Allegheny County Housing Authority has adopted a Policy and Procedures for Nondiscrimination and Accessibility for Individuals with a Disability. This policy clarifies how people can request accommodations and the guidelines the Allegheny County Housing Authority will follow in determining whether it is reasonable to provide a requested accommodation.

A reasonable accommodation is a change, adaption, or modification to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's rules, policies, practices or services which are necessary to provide a qualified individual with a handicap or disability an equal opportunity to participate fully in the services, programs or activities provided by the Allegheny County Housing Authority. A reasonable accommodation will be provided by the Allegheny County Housing Authority if: (1) the individual is disabled; (2) the requested accommodation is related to the disability; and (3) the requested accommodation is necessary for the individual to fully use and enjoy the unit. A "disability" or "handicap" is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. If the requested accommodation meets the above three (3) mentioned criteria, it will be approved by the Allegheny County Housing Authority unless granting the request would be a fundamental alteration of the program or an undue financial and administrative burden to the Allegheny County Housing Authority. Because disabilities are not always apparent, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will ensure that all applicants/tenants are aware of the opportunity to request reasonable accommodations. Even when a reasonable accommodation is approved by the Allegheny County Housing Authority, the applicant must still meet the Allegheny County Housing Authority eligibility and screening criteria.

If the individual that is requesting a reasonable accommodation is an applicant, the request should be made to the Leasing Administrator, the Residential Property Manager

or the Assistant Residential Property Manager for the site at which the person is applying. If the individual making the request is a tenant, the request should be made to the Residential Property Manager or the Assistant Residential Property Manager for the site at which the person is a resident. Request can also be made at any time to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's ADA/504 Coordinator at (412)-402-2474, or by mail to Allegheny County Housing Authority, 625 Stanwix Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, and Pittsburgh, PA. 15222. An individual may make a request either orally or in writing. A request can also be made on behalf of the individual by a family member or other agent. Once the request is received by an Allegheny County Housing Authority staff member, he or she will immediately forward the request to the ADA/504 Coordinator. The ADA/504 Coordinator will mail a written hearing decision to an individual that makes a request for a reasonable accommodation within thirty (30) days of the request. All decisions made by the ADA/504 Coordinator will set forth the individual's right to request an informal review of the decision.

## **2.1 COMMUNICATION**

Notifications of reexamination, inspection, an appointment, or eviction will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation. Any notification requesting action by the tenant will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation.

All decisions granting or denying requests for reasonable accommodations will be in writing.

## **3.0 SERVICES FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall do its best, within reason, to assist people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This shall be accomplished by assessing the need of LEP persons using the four factors described in the January 22, 2007 Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons; Notice published in the Federal Register. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall balance these factors in deciding what to do:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service area;
2. The Frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program; and

4. The resources available to the Housing Authority and costs.

Depending upon what this analysis reveals, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may or may not prepare a Language Access Plan (LAP). If a LAP is needed, the guidance outlined in the above reference Notice shall be utilized.

In addition, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will endeavor to have bilingual staff or access to people who speak languages other than English. Finally, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall utilize multilingual “I speak” cards to the maximum degree possible.

## **4.0 FAMILY OUTREACH**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will publicize the availability and nature of the Public Housing Program for extremely low-income, very low and low-income families in a newspaper of general circulation, minority media, and by other suitable means.

To reach people who cannot or do not read the newspapers, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will distr

ibute fact sheets to the broadcasting media and initiate personal contacts with members of the news media and community service personnel. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will also try to utilize public service announcements.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will communicate the status of housing availability to other service providers in the community and inform them of housing eligibility factors and guidelines so they can make proper referrals for the Public Housing Program.

The objective of this effort is to develop a waiting list that is representative of our low-income community. A particular emphasis will be placed on attracting eligible individuals and families least likely to apply for public housing.

## **5.0 RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

All adult members of both applicant and tenant households are required to annually sign HUD Form 9886, Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice. The Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice states how family information will be released and includes the Federal Privacy Act Statement.

Any request for applicant or tenant information will not be released unless there is a signed release of information request from the applicant or tenant.

## **6.0 REQUIRED POSTINGS**

In each of its offices, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will post, in a conspicuous place and at a height easily read by all persons including persons with mobility disabilities, the following information:

- A. Statement of Policies and Procedures governing Admission and Continued Occupancy
- B. Notice of the status of the waiting list (opened or closed)
- C. A listing of all the developments by name, address, number of units, units designed with special accommodations, address of all project offices, office hours, telephone numbers, TDD numbers, and Resident Facilities and operation hours
- D. Income Limits for Admission
- E. Excess Utility Charges
- F. Utility Allowance Schedule
- G. Current Schedule of Routine Maintenance Charges
- H. Dwelling Lease
- I. Grievance Procedure
- J. Fair Housing Poster
- K. Equal Opportunity in Employment Poster
- L. Any current Allegheny County Housing Authority Notices
- M. The Agency's PHAS score and designation.

## **7.0 TAKING APPLICATIONS**

Families (the Head must be at least 18 years old or be an Emancipated Minor) wishing to apply for the site-based public housing waiting list(s) will be required to complete an online pre-application on the Allegheny County Housing Authority Website ([www.achsng.com](http://www.achsng.com)). Families can sign-up for as many available site-based waiting lists as they feel appropriate. Applicants have the ability to apply at the main office (625 Stanwix Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222) between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. or at any ACHA

management office. Allegheny County Housing Authority will accept paper applications from those who do not have the ability to apply online. The online pre-applications can be obtained from the ACHA website, main office or any ACHA management office.

Pre-applications are taken to compile a waiting list based on bedroom size, preference(s), and date and time. Due to the demand for housing in the Allegheny County Housing Authority jurisdiction, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may take pre-applications on an open enrollment basis, depending on the length of the waiting list.

Completed applications will be reviewed for all applicants and the Allegheny County Housing Authority will verify the information. Applicants will be provided the opportunity to complete the information on form HUD-92006, Supplement to Application for Federally Assisted Housing. The form gives applicants the option to identify an individual or organization that the Housing Authority may contact and the reason(s) the individual or organization may be contacted. The applicants, if they choose to provide the additional contact information, must sign and date the form.

If the applicant chooses to have more than one contact person or organization, the applicant must make clear to the Housing Authority the reason each person or organization may be contacted. The Housing Authority will allow the applicant to complete a form HUD-92006 for each contact and indicating the reason the Housing Authority may contact the individual or organization. For example, the applicant may choose to have a relative as a contact for emergency purposes and an advocacy organization for assistance for tenancy purposes.

Those applicants who choose not to provide the contact information should check the box indicating that they “choose not to provide the contact information” and sign and date the form.

Pre-applications are automatically received when applying online. Paper applications may be submitted in person or mailed to the Allegheny County Housing Authority main office. Paper applications will be stamped with the date and time the ACHA received them but may take 2-4 weeks to process.

The confirmation number is a series of numbers specific to an applicant’s online pre-application. This number acts as an access code for applicants to receive details about their application. The confirmation number will also be required for applicants to change or update their application information. All requests must be in writing.

Persons with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation in completing an application may call the Allegheny County Housing Authority to make special arrangements. A Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) is available for the deaf. The TDD telephone number is 412-402-2671.

The application process will involve two phases. The first phase is the initial application for housing assistance or the pre-application. The pre-application requires the family to provide limited basic information (i.e., family composition, income, etc.) establishing any preferences to which they may be entitled. This first phase results in an apparently eligible family's placement on the waiting list.

Upon receipt of the family's pre-application, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will make a preliminary determination of eligibility and enter the applicant, if apparently eligible, into the Web.Appl. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will notify the family in writing of their date and time of placement on the waiting list(s) of the site(s) selected and their confirmation number so they can check on their future status. Incomplete pre-applications will be returned to the applicant without being added to any of the selected sites waiting lists.

Effective October 2016, paper applications titled "Web App Paper Application" will be the only paper applications accepted, due to the Web Application launch of February 1, 2016.

The applicant shall within ten (10) calendar days report changes in their applicant status including changes in family composition, income, or preference factors. The applicant must report all changes in writing. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will annotate the applicant's file and will update their place on the waiting list if appropriate.

The second phase, which is the final determination of eligibility, takes place when the family nears the top of the waiting list. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will ensure that verification of all preferences, eligibility, suitability and selection factors are current (less than 90 calendar days) in order to determine the family's final eligibility for admission into the Public Housing Program. If eligible, a family will be offered the next available unit that they are qualified for. If a family rejects the offer or Allegheny County Housing Authority cannot contact them, they will be removed from that waiting list. If the family disagrees with this action, it can request an informal hearing.

Applicants will also be given the opportunity to update their HUD Form 92006 if applicable and if they so desire.

Caseworkers may also use their client's confirmation number to retain information; however they must also provide the applicants social security number and birthdate.

Applicants that have lost their confirmation number must provide legal ID at the main office or any ACHA management office to receive their confirmation number from the Leasing Administrator or Site Manager. Applicants that applied prior to February 1, 2016 will not have a confirmation number and therefore we will continue their application processing using the old procedure.

## 8.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

There are five eligibility requirements for admission to public housing: qualifies as a family, has an income within the income limits, meets citizenship/eligible immigrant criteria, provides documentation of Social Security numbers, and signs consent authorization documents. In addition to the eligibility criteria, families must also meet the Allegheny County Housing Authority screening criteria in order to be admitted to public housing.

### 8.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. Family Status - All families must have a Head of Household or Co-Heads of Household. Family includes, but is not limited to, the following, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status:
1. A **family with or without children**. Such a family is defined as a group of people related by blood, marriage, adoption or affinity (regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status), that live together in a stable family relationship.
    - a. Children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care are considered family members. If the family does not regain custody within one (1) year, they shall be relocated to an appropriate size unit if the then current family size dictates the move.
    - b. Unborn children and children in the process of being adopted are considered family members for the purpose of determining bedroom size but are not considered family members for determining income limit.
  2. An **elderly family**, which is:
    - a. A family whose head (or co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age;
    - b. Two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or
    - c. One or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides.
  3. A **near-elderly family**, which is:

- a. A family whose head (or co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62;
  - b. Two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or
  - c. One or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living with one or more live-in aides.
4. A **disabled family**, which is:
- a. A family whose head (or co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person with a disability;
  - b. Two or more persons with disabilities living together; or
  - c. One or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides.
  - d. For purposes of qualifying for low-income housing, does not include a person whose disability is based solely on any drug or alcohol dependence.
5. A **displaced family**, which is a family in which each member, or whose sole member, has been displaced by governmental action, or whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws.
6. A **remaining member of a tenant family**. If the remaining member of a tenant family is a minor or minors, it will be necessary for an adult to temporarily move into a unit to serve as a guardian for children residing in the unit. The income received by the temporary guardian will be counted in determining family income. Although typically a criminal background check is required before anyone can move into a public housing unit, this requirement will be waived for a guardian in this situation. Instead, the background check will occur after the person moves in. If the results of the check dictate that the person is ineligible for public housing, the family shall be given a reasonable time to find a replacement guardian or vacate the property.
7. An **emancipated minor** family assumes all adult responsibilities before reaching the age of 18 years old. The emancipated minor's family is eligible to apply for public housing after the emancipated minor submits

legal documents verifying their emancipation and it complies with all other eligibility requirements.

8. A **single person** who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family.

## B. Split Households

### Split Households Prior to Admission

When a family on the waiting list splits into two otherwise eligible families due to divorce, legal separation or other division of the family, and the new families cannot agree as to the new family unit, a determination by the court will be used by the Allegheny County Housing Authority to establish who will retain the placement on the waiting list. In the absence of any applicable court determination, the Allegheny County Housing Authority Director of Housing Management Operations or designee shall consider the following factors in determining who retains the original application and waiting list position:

- Which family member applied as head of household;
- Which family unit retains the children or any disabled or elderly members;
- Restrictions that were in place at the time the family applied;
- Role of domestic violence in the split;
- Outcome of any civil or criminal court cases related to split; or
- Recommendations of social service agencies or qualified professionals such as children's protective services.

Documentation required to verify these factors is the responsibility of the applicant families. If either or both of the families do not provide the documentation, they may be denied placement on the waiting list for failure to supply information requested by the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

The co-head, spouse or other family member removed or “split” from the application must submit a new and separate application.

In cases where domestic violence played a role, the standard used for verification will be the same as that required for the "domestic violence" preference. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will require evidence in accordance with this Policy that the family has been displaced as a result of fleeing violence in the home. Families are also eligible for this preference if there is proof that the family is currently living in a situation where they are being subjected to or victimized by violence in the home (see §10.1; §20.2A and §20.2B).

### Multiple Families in the Same Household

When a household applies as a family unit, but consists of two families living together, (such as a mother and father, and a daughter with her own husband or children) they will be treated and remain as a single family unit.

C. Split Family

When a family leasing an LIPH unit becomes divided into two otherwise eligible families due to divorce, legal separation or the division of the family, and the new families cannot agree as to the new family unit, a determination by the court will be used by the Allegheny County Housing Authority to establish who will continue to reside in the unit. In the absence of an applicable court determination, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall establish that the original head of household and associated family retain the unit, except as provided below:

- In cases where domestic violence played a role, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is granted the authority to bifurcate the lease. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will evaluate all documentation and determine unit availability within and outside the current development. The standard used for verification will be the same as that required for the "domestic violence" preference. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will require evidence in accordance with this Policy that the family has been/will be displaced as a result of fleeing violence in the home. (see §20.2A and §20.2B).
- Where the addition of children through birth, adoption or court-awarded custody creates a situation of overcrowding according to the Allegheny County Housing Authority occupancy standards, the Allegheny County Housing Authority has the discretion to authorize a transfer of the new head of household and its members to another unit, subject to both the original head and new head being legally capable of executing a lease.

Except as provided above, the co-head, spouse or other family member removed or "split" from the household, may reapply and will be subject to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's screening and selection criteria.

D. Live-in Aide

A resident requesting a live-in-aide will be required to provide medical verification of the need for a live-in-aide. In addition, before approval of the live-in-aide, the individual (live-in-aide) must complete the application process.

The individual will be ineligible if money is owed to the Allegheny County Housing Authority, another PHA, has committed Fraud, Bribery, or Corruption,

possesses a record of violent criminal activity, has a history of drug-related activity, or registered as a lifetime sex offender. If the individual is found to be ineligible or does not pass the screening criteria, the resident will be informed in writing and given the opportunity for an informal review. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will approve a live-in-aide even if the Authority cannot immediately meet the family's need for an appropriately sized unit. The Allegheny County Housing Authority has a right to hold tenants responsible for the conduct and behavior of the live-in-aide.

Income earned by a live-in-aide is not counted toward household income. The live-in-aide is not required to provide or document a specified number of hours of service to a resident or a need for 24 hour care. Family members may serve as a live-in-aide, but they must meet the requirements for a live-in-aide (see Glossary for definition). Under no circumstances will the live-in-aide be added to the lease or be considered the last remaining member of a tenant's family.

If for any reasons the lease holder is unable to remain in the unit (i.e. eviction, deceased, terminated, personal care home, incarceration) the live-in aide will be required to vacate the unit and turn in keys to the management office within 30 days of the last date of the lease holder residing in the unit.

#### E. Non-Household Key Holder

A resident that claims that he/she needs living assistance may request an additional key or electronic access device (eg.:key fob) for the front entrance of a building where the resident resides. Such request will be treated as a Reasonable Accommodation Request. The 504/ ADA Coordinator will review all submissions and make a determination. If the Request is approved, the potential key holder must pass a background check through the Allegheny County Housing Authority to be considered eligible for the key/ access device.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has a right to hold residents responsible for the conduct and behavior of the non-household key holder. Income earned by a non-household key holder is not counted toward household income. The non-household key holder is not required to provide or document a specified number of hours of service to a resident or a need for 24 hour care. Non-household key holders do not have to be family members. Under no circumstances will the non-household key holder be added to the lease or be considered the last remaining member of a tenant's family.

#### F. Income Eligibility

1. To be eligible for admission to developments or scattered-site units, the family's annual income must be within the low-income limit set by HUD. This means the family income cannot exceed 80 percent of the median

income for the area. If the property has Low Income Housing Tax Credits on it, a lower income cap will apply.

2. Income limits apply only at admission and are not applicable for continued occupancy in any Allegheny County Housing Authority community.
3. A family may not be admitted to the public housing program from another assisted housing program (e.g., tenant-based Section 8) or from a public housing program operated by another housing authority without meeting the income requirements of the Allegheny County Housing Authority.
4. If the Allegheny County Housing Authority acquires a property for federal public housing purposes, the families living there must have incomes within the low-income limit in order to be eligible to remain as public housing residents.
5. Income limit restrictions may apply to families transferring within our Public Housing Program if the unit they move to is assisted by the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.
6. The Allegheny County Housing Authority may allow police officers who would not otherwise be eligible for occupancy in public housing to reside in a public housing dwelling unit. Such occupancy must be for the purpose of increasing security for public housing residents. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will permit a maximum of five (5) police officers to occupy public housing it owns or manages at one period of time. The location of a police officer's occupancy will be in a public housing community where the Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that an increase of security is needed.

#### G. Citizenship/Eligibility Status

1. To be eligible for public housing each member of the family must be a citizen, national, or a noncitizen who has eligible immigration status under one of the categories set forth in Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (see 42 U.S.C. 1436a(a)) or a citizen of the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau. However, people in the last category are not entitled to housing assistance in preference to any United States citizen or national resident within Guam.
2. Family eligibility for assistance.
  - a. A family shall not be eligible for assistance unless at least one member of the family residing in the unit is determined to have

eligible status, with the exception noted below.

- b. Despite the ineligibility of one or more family members, a mixed family may be eligible for one of three types of assistance (See Section 13.6 for calculating rents under the noncitizen rule).
- c. A family without any eligible members and receiving assistance on June 19, 1995 may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance.

All adults must be able to sign the lease. If the State of Pennsylvania forbids individuals with ineligible immigration status from executing contracts (i.e., leases or other legal binding documents), then they are ineligible for this program.

#### H. Social Security Number Documentation

Prior to admission, every family member must provide the Allegheny County Housing Authority with a complete and accurate Social Security Number unless they do not contend eligible immigration status. New family members must provide this verification prior to being added to the lease. If the new family member became a member of the household within six months prior to the date of admission and is under the age of six and has not been assigned a Social Security Number, the family shall have ninety (90) calendar days after starting to receive the assistance to provide a complete and accurate Social Security Number. The Housing Authority shall grant one ninety (90) day extension for newly-added family members under the age of six if in its sole discretion it determines that the person's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and was outside the control of the person. If the Social Security Number is not provided within the required period, the assistance shall be terminated.

If a person is already a program participant and has not disclosed his or her Social Security Number, it must be disclosed at the next re-examination or re-certification.

Participants aged 62 or older as of January 31, 2010 whose initial eligibility determination was begun before January 31, 2010 are exempt from the required disclosure of their Social Security Number. This exemption continues even if the individual moves to a new assisted unit.

The best verification of the Social Security Number is the original Social Security card. If the card is not available, the Housing Authority will accept an original document issued by a federal or state government agency, which contains the name of the individual and the Social Security Number of the individual, along

with other identifying information of the individual or such other evidence of the Social Security Number as HUD may prescribe in administrative instructions.

If a member of an applicant family indicates they have a Social Security Number, but cannot readily verify it, the family cannot be assisted until verification is provided. If the Social Security Number documentation of each household member cannot be provided to the Allegheny County Housing Authority within 60 days of it being requested, the family shall be removed from the waiting list. During this 60 days, if all household members have not documented their SSN at the time a unit becomes available, the Allegheny County Housing Authority must offer the available unit to the next eligible applicant family on the waiting list.

If an individual fails to provide the verification within the time allowed, the family will be denied assistance or will have their assistance terminated. The Housing Authority shall grant one ninety (90) day extension from termination if in its sole discretion it determines that the person's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and there is a reasonable likelihood that the person will be able to disclose a Social Security Number by the deadline.

#### I. Signing Consent Forms

1. In order to be eligible, each member of the family who is at least 18 years of age, and each family head and spouse regardless of age, shall sign one or more consent forms.
2. The consent form must contain, at a minimum, the following:
  - a. A provision authorizing HUD or the Allegheny County Housing Authority to obtain from State Wage Information Collection Agencies (SWICAs) any information or materials necessary to complete or verify the application for participation or for eligibility for continued occupancy;
  - b. A provision authorizing HUD or the Allegheny County Housing Authority to verify with previous or current employers or other sources of income information pertinent to the family's eligibility for or level of assistance;
  - c. A provision authorizing HUD to request income information from the IRS and the SSA for the sole purpose of verifying income information pertinent to the family's eligibility or level of benefits;

- d. A statement allowing the Allegheny County Housing Authority permission to access the applicant's criminal record with any and all police and/or law enforcement agencies, and
  - e. A statement that the authorization to release the information requested by the consent form expires 15 months after the date the consent form is signed.
- J. Notwithstanding any of the above requirements, the Allegheny County Housing Authority expressly reserves the right to place up to five (5) undercover investigators in its public housing communities at any one time to assist it in maintaining safety and superior operations in its public housing communities.
- K. The applicant family cannot be receiving continuing governmental housing assistance from another jurisdiction unless they voluntarily terminate the other governmental housing assistance.

### **8.3 SUITABILITY**

- A. Applicant families will be evaluated to determine whether, based on their recent behavior, such behavior could reasonably be expected to result in noncompliance with the public housing lease. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will look at past conduct as an indicator of future conduct. Emphasis will be placed on whether a family's admission could reasonably be expected to have a detrimental effect on the development environment, other tenants, Allegheny County Housing Authority employees, or other people residing in the immediate vicinity of the property. Otherwise eligible families will be denied admission if they fail to meet the suitability criteria.
- B. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will consider objective and reasonable aspects of the family's background, including the following:
- 1. History of meeting financial obligations, especially rent and any utility payment;
  - 2. Ability to maintain (or with assistance would have the ability to maintain) their housing in a decent and safe condition based on living or housekeeping habits and whether such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants;
  - 3. History of criminal activity by any household member involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property;

4. History of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property;
5. Having committed fraud in connection with any Federal housing assistance program, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived there from; and
6. History of abusing alcohol in a way that may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment by others.

In deciding whether to exercise their discretion to admit an individual or household that has engaged in criminal activity, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will consider all of the circumstances relevant to the particular admission or eviction decision, including but not limited to: the seriousness of the offending action; the effect that eviction of the entire household would have on family members not involved in the criminal activity; and the extent to which the leaseholder has taken all reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate the criminal activity.

C. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will ask applicants (including transfers) to provide information demonstrating their ability to comply with the essential elements of the lease. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will verify the information provided. Such verification may include but may not be limited to the following:

1. A credit check of the head, spouse, co-head, and any other adult family members;
2. A rental history check of all adult family members;
3. A Home Visit. The home visit provides the opportunity for the family to demonstrate their ability to maintain their home in a safe and sanitary manner. This inspection considers cleanliness and care of rooms, appliances, and appurtenances. The inspection may also consider any evidence of criminal activity.
4. A criminal background check will be conducted on all adult household members, including live-in aides at no cost to the applicant. This check will be made through State law enforcement or court records in those cases where the household member has lived in Pennsylvania. Where the individual has lived outside Pennsylvania, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may contact law enforcement agencies where the individual had lived or request a check through the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC). This criminal background check will proceed after each

adult household member has signed a consent form designed by the Allegheny County Housing Authority. The information received as a result of the criminal background check shall be used solely for screening, ease enforcement and eviction purposes. The information derived from the criminal background check shall be shared only with employees of the Allegheny County Housing Authority who have a job-related need to have access to the information. The information shall be maintained confidentially, not misused or improperly disseminated, and destroyed once the purpose(s) for which it was requested has been accomplished and the period for filing a challenge to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's action has expired without a challenge or final disposition of any litigation has occurred;

5. A check of the State's lifetime sex offender registration program for each adult and juveniles over the age of twelve household member, including live-in aides. Denial of assistance based upon sex offender registration will be in accordance with Section 8.4. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will check with the Pennsylvania state registry and if the adult or juvenile over the age of twelve applicant has resided in another State(s), with that State(s)'s list.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will utilize the US Department of Justice's Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender website as an additional resource for both adult and juvenile over the age of twelve household members. The Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Database is an online, searchable database, hosted by the Department of Justice, which combines the data from individual state sex offender registries. Denials based upon checks with the U.S. Department of Justice's Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender website will also be pursuant to Section 8.4.

If an applicant is about to be denied housing based on either of the above record checks, the applicant will be informed of this fact and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the information before the denial or eviction occurs. Applicants that are denied housing will be given a "Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act" which provides information on their rights and responsibilities under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). A copy of the form for "Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act" shall also be provided with the notice. A copy of the HUD-approved Certification form shall also be provided with the notice.

#### **8.4 GROUND S FOR DENIAL**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority is not required or obligated to assist families where applicants or members of the applicant's household:

- A. Do not meet any one or more of the eligibility criteria. If one member of the household does not meet the eligibility criteria, the entire household is considered ineligible. The remaining household members may re-apply with a new application and a new date and time.
- B. Do not supply information or documentation required by the application process.
- C. Have failed to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program
- D. Have a history of not meeting financial obligations, especially rent. (Please refer to Management Plan for all LIHTC sites regarding credit eligibility)
  - 1. An applicant that currently owes rent or other amounts to any PHA in connection with their public housing or Section 8 programs and is listed on the Debts Owed report in EIV. Denial will be upheld until debt is repaid. Once paid, the family may reapply for admission.
  - 2. If an applicant was a former Allegheny County Housing Authority resident and was evicted for non-payment of rent, the applicant will be **ineligible for a period of twelve (12) months**. The twelve-month time period will be based on the eviction date of the former resident. After the 12 months have expired AND the debt has been paid in full, the applicant will be eligible for housing again.
- E. Once management receives landlord verification(s) from current/previous landlords and there is negative response(s), they may be deemed ineligible for the assigned site.
- F. Do not have the ability to maintain (with assistance) their housing in a decent and safe condition where such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants.
- G. If resident household is responsible for paying utilities and they are not able to put utilities in their name, they will be deemed ineligible for the assigned site.
- H. No household member can be participating in another subsidized or assisted housing program.
- I. New admissions of medical marijuana users are prohibited (this does not include FDA-approved marijuana synthetics). HUD has ruled that federal law preempts state law on this issue.

- J. Have engaged in or threatening, abusive or violent behavior towards any Allegheny County Housing Authority staff member, contractor, or resident. **Family will be denied for five (5) years.**
- K. Were evicted from federally assisted housing or terminated from a Housing Choice Voucher Program within the past 5 years for any reason other than the non-payment of rent. **The 5-year limit is based on the date of such eviction or termination.**

If the eviction or termination was for drug related criminal activity, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may admit the household if the PHA determines:

1. The household member who engaged in drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program approved by the Allegheny County Housing Authority; or
  2. The circumstances leading to the eviction or termination no longer exist (for example, the criminal household member is imprisoned or has died).
- L. The Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that any household member or live-in aide is currently engaged in the illegal use of a controlled substance. For purposes of this section, a person is “currently engaged in” the criminal activity if the person has engaged in this behavior recently enough to justify a reasonable belief that the behavior is current. **Family will be denied for three (3) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**
  - M. The Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that a household member or live-in aide’s illegal use or pattern of illegal use of a drug may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. **Family will be denied for three (3) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**
  - N. The Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that it has reasonable cause to believe that a household member or live-in aide’s abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. **Family will be denied for three (3) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**
  - O. Have committed fraud, bribery or any other corruption in connection with any Federal housing assistance program, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived therefrom. **Family will be denied for three (3) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**

- P. Have been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing. **Family will be denied for life.**
- Q. Fugitive felons, parole violators, and persons fleeing to avoid prosecution or custody or confinement after conviction for a crime, or attempt to commit a crime, that is a felony under the laws of the place from which the individual flees. **Family will be denied for three (3) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**
- R. Have a conviction, or are currently charged with, violating the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act of 1995. **Family will be denied for ten (10) years before they are eligible to reapply for admission.**
- S. **Have a history of criminal activity.** Any criminal activity by any household member or live-in aide involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property, and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity, that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property.

For the purpose of this Policy, if any adult member or live-in aide of the applicant family is determined by the Allegheny County Housing Authority on a case-by-case basis to have committed any of the following listed offenses, they will be determined to have engaged in criminal activity, drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity.

While juvenile criminal records will not be routinely monitored, if the Allegheny County Housing Authority becomes aware that a juvenile has committed a non-sex-related crime, it reserves the right to deny admission to that person.

Any applicant that has a conviction or is currently charged with Murder, Homicide, Manslaughter, Kidnapping or Arson, will be denied for life. Any applicant that has been convicted or is currently charged with Criminal Attempt, Solicitation, or Conspiracy with regard to the crimes previously listed in this paragraph will be denied.

**1. Denied for Life:**

- a. Manufacturing or producing methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing
- b. Murder – including Homicide, Voluntary Manslaughter and Involuntary Manslaughter
- c. Kidnapping
- d. Arson

**2. 10-Year Ban**

*Offenses Involving Danger to the Person*

- a. Aggravated Assault
- b. Robbery
- c. “Rocco’s Law”
- d. Violation of the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act of 995

*Drug Offenses*

- e. Possession with the Intent to Deliver a Controlled Substance
- f. The manufacturing of any Controlled Substance or New Drug

**3. 5-Year Ban**

*Drug Offenses*

- a. Possession of a Controlled Substance
- b. Possession of Marijuana charged as a misdemeanor or felony
- c. Solicitation of a Minor to Traffic Drug

*Offenses against Property*

- d. Causing or Risking a Catastrophe
- e. Criminal Mischief (when amount exceeds \$5,000)

*Burglary and other Criminal Intrusions*

- f. Burglary

*Felony Theft and Related Offenses*

- g. Theft by Unlawful Taking or Disposition
- h. Theft by Deception
- i. Theft by Extortion
- j. Theft of Services
- k. Theft of Leases Property
- l. Theft by Failure to Make Required Disposition of Funds Received
- m. Forgery
- n. Access Device Fraud
- o. Identity Theft

*Other Offenses*

- p. Disarming a Law Enforcement Officer
- q. Endangering the Welfare of a Child
- r. Reckless Endangerment of Another Person

Act 33 violations are treated as described above.

- T. **Denial for Individuals Registered as a Sex Offender in Pennsylvania.** Any adult or juvenile household member or live-in aide listed as a registered sex offender in Pennsylvania for a sexual offense listed in 42 Pa.C.S.A. §9799.14 will be denied as follows:

1. **15 years** from the date the individual is required to register, or began registration, whichever is longer, for an offense listed as Tier I Sexual Offense in 42 Pa.C.S.A. §9799.14;
  2. **25 years** from the date the individual is required to register, or began registration, whichever is longer, for an offense listed as a Tier II Sexual Offense in 42 Pa.C.S.A. §9799.14;
  3. **Lifetime** for an individual required to register for an offense listed as a Tier III Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14.
- U. **Denial for Individuals Registered as a Sex Offender in Another State.** Any adult or juvenile household member or live-in aide listed as a registered sex offender on the US Department of Justice’s Dru Sjodin National Sex offender website will be denied as follows:
1. Individuals convicted of a similar offense to those enumerated as a Tier I Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14 will be **denied for 15 years** from the date the individual is required to register, or began registration, whichever is longer;
  2. Individuals convicted of a similar offense to those enumerated as a Tier II Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14 will **be denied for 25 years** from the date the individual is required to register, or began registration, whichever is longer;
  3. Individuals convicted of a similar offense to those enumerated as a Tier III Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14 will be **denied for life**.
- V. **Denial for Failure to Register as a Sex Offender When Required.** Any adult or juvenile household member or live-in aide who fails to register as a sex offender when required to do so pursuant to any state sex offender statute will be denied admission for the period which the individual is required to register, or begin registration, whichever is longer.
- W. **Denial for Other Sex Offenders.** Admission will be denied to any household member or live-in aide currently charged with or convicted in the last **ten (10) years** of the projected date of admission of any offense listed as a sexual offense in Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes Annotated, or a conviction in another state of a similar offense.
- X. **Denial for Sex Offenses Committed Prior to 1995.** Any household member or live-in aide, convicted of an offense designated as a sexual offense under Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes Annotated, or of a sexual offense in another state similar to a Pennsylvania sexual offense, which, if convicted after 1995,

would require the individual to register as a sex offender, will be denied as follows:

1. Individuals convicted of an offense enumerated as a Tier II Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14, or an offense similar to those enumerated as a Tier II Sexual Offense, will be **denied for 25 years** from the date of conviction or from the date of their release from incarceration, whichever is longer;
2. Individuals convicted of an offense enumerated as a Tier III Sexual Offense in 42 PA.C.S.A. §9799.14, or an offense similar to those enumerated as a Tier III Sexual Offense, will be **denied for life**.

In determining whether to deny admission for illegal use of a drug by a household member who is no longer engaging in such use, or for a current charge or conviction in the last five (5) years for Possession of a Controlled Substance, or for abuse or a pattern of abuse of alcohol by a household member who is no longer engaging in such abuse, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may consider whether such household member:

1. Is participating in a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program;
2. Has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program;  
or
3. Has otherwise been successfully rehabilitated.

For this purpose, Allegheny County Housing Authority will require the applicant to submit evidence of the household member's current participation in, or successful completion of, a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or evidence of otherwise having been rehabilitated successfully.

For denying an admission based on any criminal activity, an arrest record, alone, will not serve as sufficient evidence of criminal activity that can support an adverse admission decision. Before the Allegheny County Housing Authority denies admission to an individual or household on the basis of criminal activity by a household member or guest, it will determine that the relevant individual actually engaged in such activity.

An arrest record can trigger an inquiry into whether there is sufficient evidence to determine that a person engaged in disqualifying criminal activity, but is not itself evidence on which to base a determination. The Allegheny County Housing Authority can utilize other evidence, such as police reports detailing the circumstances of the arrest, witness statements, and other relevant documentation to assist them in making a determination that disqualifying conduct occurred. Reliable evidence of a conviction for criminal conduct that would disqualify an individual for tenancy may also be the basis for determining that the disqualifying conduct in fact occurred.

Before the Allegheny County Housing Authority denies admission to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's public housing program on the basis of a criminal record, the Allegheny County Housing Authority must notify the household of the proposed action and must provide the person with the criminal record (i.e. the child) and the applicant (head of household) with a copy of the criminal record and an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of that record. The applicant will have ten (10) business days to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the record in writing. If the Allegheny County Housing Authority does not receive the dispute within the allotted time, the applicant will be denied.

Being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking is not an appropriate basis for denial of program assistance or for denial of admission, if the applicant otherwise qualifies for assistance or admission. The Authority will require verification in all cases where an applicant claims protection against an action proposed to be taken by the Authority involving such individual. Types of acceptable verifications are outlined in Section 20.2(B) of the ACOP, and must be submitted within 14 business days after receipt of the Housing Authority's written request for verification.

If an applicant is denied admission due to a current criminal charge that is later dismissed, withdrawn, or where the applicant is found not-guilty, the applicant shall be reinstated to the waiting list as of the date they originally attempted to apply if requested within 90 days of the dismissal, withdrawal, or finding of not guilty.

## **8.5** ***INFORMAL REVIEW***

- A. If the Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that an applicant does not meet the criteria for receiving public housing assistance, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will promptly provide the applicant with written notice of the determination. The notice must contain a brief statement of the reason(s) for the decision and state that the applicant may request **in writing** an informal review of the decision within 10 business days of the denial. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will describe how to obtain the informal review.

The informal review may be conducted by any person designated by the Allegheny County Housing Authority, other than a person who made or approved the decision under review or subordinate of this person. Typically this will be the Residential Property Manager. The applicant must be given the opportunity to present written or oral objections to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's decision. The Allegheny County Housing Authority must notify the applicant of the final decision within 14 calendar days after the informal review, including a brief statement of the reasons for the final decision.

- B. The applicant family may request that the Allegheny County Housing Authority provide for an Informal Hearing after the family has notification of an INS

decision on their citizenship status on appeal, or in lieu of request of appeal to the INS. This request must be made by the applicant within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance, or within 30 calendar days of receipt of the INS appeal decision.

For the applicants, the Informal Hearing Process above will be utilized with the exception that the applicant will have up to 30 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance, or of the INS appeal decision.

## **9.0 MANAGING THE WAITING LIST**

### **9.1 *OPENING AND CLOSING THE WAITING LIST***

Opening of the waiting list will be announced with a public notice stating that applications for public housing will again be accepted. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media. The public notice will state any limitations to who may apply.

The notice will state that applicants already on waiting lists for other housing programs must apply separately for this program and such applicants will not lose their place on other waiting lists when they apply for public housing. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

Closing of a waiting list will also be announced with a public notice. The public notice will state the date the waiting list will be closed and for what bedroom sizes. The public notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media.

Waiting lists are maintained by site and may be opened or closed by site according to the situation at the individual sites. Applicants who have an approved Category 1 Preference(s) may be offered a unit where a waiting list is currently closed, if there is a unit available.

The Public Housing Program waiting lists will not be merged with any other housing program waiting list, except where permitted for low-income housing tax credit developments. Applications for each program must be made separately and will be processed in accordance with the applicable program policies

### **9.2 *ORGANIZATION OF THE WAITING LIST***

Waiting lists will be maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. The application will be a permanent file;

- B. All applications will be maintained by bedroom size in order of preference and then in order of date and time of application;
- C. Substantive contacts between the Allegheny County Housing Authority and the applicant will be documented in the applicant file; and
- D. An applicant may apply to any open waiting list. If the applicant needs to add or remove family members to/from his/her application it must be done in writing and additional information may be requested to support the change in family composition. When the Allegheny County Housing Authority is notified of the change, the family will be placed on the correct bedroom size waiting list that the head of family requests without change to the applicant's original date and time (and preference if applicable). Failure to report changes in family composition or other circumstances as identified in this Policy, may result in the termination of the application

### **9.3 FAMILIES NEARING THE TOP OF THE WAITING LIST**

When a family appears to be nearing the top of a public housing waiting list, the family will be mailed a letter and checklist and invited to an interview at the site which will include the witnessed signing of the forms. The verification process will begin. It is at this point in time that the family's waiting list preference will be verified. If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top of the list, the family's name will be returned to the appropriate spot on the waiting list. The Allegheny County Housing Authority must notify the family in writing of this determination.

The family will complete a full application, present Social Security number information, citizenship/eligible immigrant information, and sign the Consent for Release of Information forms.

Applicants will also be given the opportunity to update their HUD Form 92006 if applicable and if they desire.

### **9.4 PURGING THE WAITING LIST**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will update and purge its waiting lists as necessary to ensure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom the Allegheny County Housing Authority has current information, i.e. applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preferences.

### **9.5 REMOVAL OF APPLICANTS FROM THE WAITING LIST**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not remove an applicant's name from any waiting list unless:

- A. The applicant requests in writing that the name be removed;
- B. The applicant fails to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program; or
- C. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program;
- D. The applicant refuses a unit offer in a particular development; or
- E. The applicant has been housed in a public housing unit.

Applicants will be offered the right to an informal review when removed from a waiting list.

#### **9.6 MISSED APPOINTMENTS**

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment with the Allegheny County Housing Authority will be sent a notice of termination of the process for eligibility.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will allow the family to reschedule for good cause as long as the Housing Authority has been notified of the good cause in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the missed appointment. Generally, no more than one opportunity will be given to reschedule without good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time.

#### **9.7 NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE ACTIONS**

Any applicant whose name is removed from a waiting list will be notified by the Allegheny County Housing Authority, in writing, that they have ten (10) business days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request **in writing** an informal review. The Allegheny County Housing Authority system of removing applicant names from the waiting list 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, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will verify that there is in fact a disability and the disability caused the failure to respond, and will provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the waiting list based on the date and time of the original application.

## **10.0 TENANT SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT PLAN**

## **10.1 PREFERENCES**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority, according to our local needs and preferences, will select families based on the following preferences. All preferences given to applicants must be approved by the Allegheny County Housing Managers and/or Leasing Administrator before the preference will be applied:

### **A. *Category 1 Preferences:***

The following Category 1 Preferences will take priority over the Category 2 Preferences. Within the Category 1 Preferences, a system of ranking will be used so that the top preference, #1, will be ranked higher than the #2 preference and continue in that order so that the #5 preference will be ranked the lowest within the Category #1 Preferences. Therefore, the lower the preference number, the higher the ranking priority. Such ranking priority is established as follows:

1. Applicants for whom a law enforcement agency is seeking housing as an accommodation for its witness protection or confidential informant programs. In order to be considered for this preference, the applicant must actually witness a crime and be willing to testify in court. Documentation from a law enforcement agency is required stating applicant is seeking housing. (No more than the lesser of two families or 5% of the units in an Asset Management Project shall be occupied by a family admitted under this preference);
2. Police officers whose residency is needed to increase security for public housing residents;
3. A household evicted due to a resident or guest who is subsequently found innocent of the charge that led to the eviction or the charge is dismissed;
4. Referrals of up to ten eligible persons from the Pennsylvania 811 program; and
5. Victims of domestic violence and/or a victim protected under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). To qualify for this preference the domestic violence victim must supply a form of documentation listed in Section 20.2B. Once an applicant's verification is approved for a domestic violence preference, they will be offered a unit.

The domestic violence preference does not apply to an applicant who lives in a violent neighborhood or is fearful of other violence outside the household does not qualify for the preference of victim of domestic violence.

***B. Category 2 Preferences:***

1. Veterans or widows or widowers of deceased veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable or current military service (applies to any adult household member) who is not currently housed in an Allegheny County Housing Authority project-based assisted unit; and
2. Families where the household's head or co-head were a state coordinated child and family services program under Parts B or E of Title IV of the Social Security Act. These programs include but are not limited to: foster care, transitional independent living programs, adoption, and Indian tribal programs.

Preferences in Category 2 will have equal priority. Preferences listed in Category 1 have priority over preferences listed in Category 2 and will therefore be offered housing before those listed in Category 2. The date and time of application will be noted on each application and will be utilized to determine the sequence that each individual with a preference is offered housing within the categories.

If an applicant qualifies for both a Category 1 and Category 2 preference, the Category 1 preference will control.

A preference does not guarantee admission. The applicant must still meet the Allegheny County Housing Authority and/or the Mixed Finance Management Plan's eligibility and screening criteria. Category 1 and 2 preferences will only be considered for admissions only. Only the victims of domestic violence and/or a victim protected under Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) will be considered for transfers.

***C. Buildings Designated as Elderly Only Housing:***

The following buildings are designated as elderly only housing: Wilmerding Apartments, Blawnox Apartments, Carver Hall, Corbett Apartments, Dorchester of Mt. Lebanon, John Fraser Hall, Jefferson Manor, Springdale Manor, West Mifflin Manor, West View Tower, Lavender Heights, Homestead A Tower, Homestead C Tower, Homestead D Tower, Dalton's Edge Phase I and Dalton's Edge Phase II, Pine Ridge, and Centurion Commons.

1. In order to be eligible for admission into buildings designated for the elderly only, the family must meet the definition of elderly family. An elderly family is defined as:

- a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age;
  - b. Two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or
  - c. One or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides.
2. If there are no elderly families on the list, the family must then meet the definition of near elderly family to eligible for admission into these buildings. A near elderly family is defined as;
- a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62;
  - b. Two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or
  - c. One or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living with one or more live-in aides.

Additionally, the date and time of application will be noted on each application and will be utilized to determine the sequence that each individual with a preference is offered housing in buildings designed for the elderly. Near elderly families will not be housed in these buildings, even with a preference, unless there are no elderly families on the waiting list. Near elderly family and families not totally elderly are not eligible for properties assisted by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program. Exceptions will be allowed where required by property financing documents.

### ***10.1.1 DECLARED DISASTERS***

In the case of a disaster declared by the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Federal Government or other governmental agency who has the authority to make a disaster declaration, the Allegheny County Housing Authority reserves the right for its Executive Director (or designee) to modify its preference system and permit applicants who have been directly affected by the disaster to be housed immediately, and before all other applicants on the waiting list. However, applicants must meet all screening and other applicable program requirements prior to admission. The duration of such modification shall be at the discretion of the Executive Director (or designee), but in all instances, will automatically expire 180 days after the modification was instituted. Any other provisions of this policy can also be suspended during the emergency at the discretion of the Executive Director so long as the provision suspended

does not violate a law. If regulatory waivers are necessary, they shall be promptly requested of the HUD Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

**10.1.2 DENIAL OF PREFERENCE**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine eligibility for preferences when the applicant’s name is nearing the top of the waiting list, and at the time when the full application process has begun (“Second Phase”). The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall deny an applicant’s preference if the preference cannot be verified.

If the Allegheny County Housing Authority denies a preference, the applicant will be mailed a notice of preference denial within 30 days in accordance with 24 CFR § 5.410(g). The notice will include the reason(s) why the preference was denied, and offer the applicant an opportunity for an informal meeting with the Allegheny County Housing Authority to review the determination. If the preference denial is upheld as a result of the informal meeting, or the applicant does not request an informal meeting, the applicant will be placed on the waiting list based on date and time without the Category 1 preference if the waiting list is open.

If the applicant falsifies documents or makes false statements in order to qualify for a preference, he/she will be terminated from the waiting list.

**10.2 ASSIGNMENT OF BEDROOM SIZES**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will inform each applicant of all unit sizes for which the applicant qualifies, with the goal of providing opportunity for maximum housing choice without overcrowding or over housing. The following guidelines will be used in determining each family’s size. They will determine each family’s unit size without overcrowding or over-housing:

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Persons	
	Minimum	Maximum
0	1	2
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8
5	5	10

The above guidelines are effective for both applicants and residents of the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

These guidelines are based on the assumption that each bedroom will accommodate no more than two (2) persons. However, applicants will be provided the option to choose a smaller unit or (larger unit size may be granted based on an approved reasonable accommodation request) under the guidelines, as set forth below.

In determining bedroom size, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will include the presence of children to be born to a pregnant woman, children who are in the process of being adopted, children whose custody is being obtained, children currently under a 50% (182 ½ days) or more joint custody decree, children who are temporarily away at school, or children who are temporarily in foster-care.

When more than one family shares custody of a child and both live in assisted housing, only one family at a time can claim the dependent deduction for that child. The family with primary custody or with custody at the time of the initial certification or annual recertification receives the deduction. If there is a dispute about which family should claim the dependent deduction, the Allegheny County Housing Authority should refer to available documents such as copies of court orders, school records or an IRS return showing which family has claimed the child for income tax purposes. When both parents live in affordable housing only one will receive the deduction but both will be eligible for a larger bedroom size to accommodate their child.

In addition, the following considerations will be taken in determining bedroom size:

- A. Children of the same sex will share a bedroom, unless there is a six (6) years age difference.
- B. Children of the opposite sex, both under the age of (6) may share a bedroom.
- C. Foster–adults and/or foster-children will not be required to share a bedroom with family members.
- D. Live-in aides may get a separate bedroom.

**Exceptions to the bedroom size guidelines includes the following:**

- A. Units smaller than assigned through the above guidelines – Applicants will be informed that they may request a smaller unit size than the guidelines allow. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will allow the smaller unit so long as the unit complies with the applicable Allegheny County Health Department “Total Floor Area” and “Sleeping Room Area” requirements. The “Total Floor Area” requirements are in section 645 of the Allegheny County Health Department rules and regulations, and section 646 addresses the “Sleeping Room Area”

requirements. These requirements have been in effect since June 15, 1996. As a current resident at Allegheny County Housing Authority, the family can make a request (in writing) for a larger unit and will be placed on the transfer waiting list for the desired property or properties.

- B. Units larger than assigned through the above guidelines – A family may request a larger unit size than the guidelines allow. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will grant exceptions to normal occupancy standards when a family requests a larger size than the guidelines allow and documents a disability or a medical reason why the larger size is necessary. In the case where a household has a reduction in family size and no longer qualifies for the size of the unit they currently reside in, the family will be transferred to the next available appropriate size unit in their community.
- C. If there are no families on the waiting list for a larger size, smaller families may be housed if they sign a release form stating they will transfer (at the family's own expense) to the appropriate size unit when an eligible family needing the larger unit applies. The family transferring will be given a 30 calendar day notice before being required to move.
- D. Larger units may be offered in order to improve the marketing of a development suffering a high vacancy rate.

### ***10.3 SELECTION FROM THE WAITING LIST***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall follow the statutory requirement that at least 40% of newly-admitted families in any fiscal year are families whose annual income is the higher of either 30% of the area median income or the Federal poverty level (defined at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/ill4/index.html> as extremely low-income). To ensure this requirement is met, the Housing Authority shall monitor the incomes of both newly-admitted families and families on the waiting list on a quarterly basis. If it appears that the requirement to house extremely low-income families will not be met, the Housing Authority will skip higher-income families on the waiting lists to reach extremely low-income families.

If there are not enough extremely low-income families on the waiting lists we will conduct outreach on a non-discriminatory basis to attract extremely low-income families to reach the statutory requirement.

### ***10.4 DECONCENTRATION POLICY***

It is the Allegheny County Housing Authority's policy to provide for deconcentration of poverty and encourage income mixing by bringing higher income families into lower income developments and lower income families into higher income developments. Toward this end, we will skip families on the waiting list to reach other families with a

lower or higher income. We will accomplish this in a uniform and non-discriminating manner.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will affirmatively market our housing to all eligible income groups. Lower income residents will not be steered toward lower income developments and higher income people will not be steered toward higher income developments.

Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, we will analyze the income levels of families residing in each of our developments and the income levels of the families on the waiting list. Based on this analysis, we will determine the level of marketing strategies and deconcentration incentives to implement.

### ***10.5 DECONCENTRATION INCENTIVES***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority may offer one or more incentives to encourage applicant families whose income classification would help to meet the deconcentration goals of a particular development.

Various incentives may be used at different times, or under different conditions, but will always be provided in a consistent and nondiscriminatory manner.

### ***10.6 OFFER OF A UNIT***

When the Allegheny County Housing Authority completes its eligibility verification, the applicant is offered a unit depending on what is available at the time. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will then assign the applicant to the particular unit.

If the family rejects the offer of the unit, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will send the family a letter documenting the offer and rejection.

The family will be contacted by the appropriate site manager and asked if they intend to occupy the assigned unit.

The family will be offered the opportunity to view the unit. After the opportunity to view the unit, the family will have three (3) business days to accept or reject the unit. This verbal offer and the family's decision must be documented in the tenant file.

If the family rejects the offer of the unit(s), the Allegheny County Housing Authority will send the family a letter documenting the offer and the rejection. The family name will be removed from the waiting list at that site and will have to reapply. If the family has a good cause, they will remain on the waiting list at the same position.

### ***10.7 REJECTION OF UNIT***

If the family rejects the unit, the family will be removed from that site's waiting list.

The family will be offered the right to an informal review of the decision to alter their application status.

### **10.8 ACCEPTANCE OF UNIT**

Prior to signing the lease, all household members must be moved out of any other subsidized unit or program. The family will be required to sign a lease for twelve (12) months that will become effective no later than three (3) business days after the date of acceptance or the business day after the day the unit becomes available, whichever is later. This is waivable by the Director of Operations or the Director's designee with good cause being demonstrated by the applicant.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of signing the lease, all families (head of household) and other adult family members will be required to attend the Lease and Occupancy Orientation. Applicants who provide prior notice of an inability to attend the orientation will be rescheduled. The orientation shall include the resident's rights and responsibilities under the Violence Against Women Act.

Once the applicant signs a lease, they will be required to sign an acknowledgement from stating they understand that by accepting a unit their name will be removed from every other LIPH site-based waiting list.

The signing of the lease and the review of financial information are to be privately handled. The head of household and all adult family members will be required to execute the lease prior to admission. One executed copy of the lease will be furnished to the head of household and the Allegheny County Housing Authority will retain the original executed lease in the tenant's file. A copy of the grievance procedure will be attached to the resident's copy of the lease.

The applicant will be provided a copy of the lease, the grievance procedure, utility allowances, utility charges, the current schedule of routine maintenance charges, and a request for reasonable accommodation form. These documents will be explained in detail. The applicant will sign a certification that they have received these documents and that they have reviewed them with Housing Authority personnel. The certification will be filed in the tenant's file.

The family will pay a security deposit at the time of lease signing. The security deposit shall be \$200 or the first month's rent, whichever is higher. However, if the site is also participating in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, the property's management plan shall specify a security deposit amount for that property.

In the case of a move within public housing, the security deposit for the first unit will be transferred to the second unit. In the event there are costs attributable to the family for

bringing the first unit into condition for re-renting, the family shall be billed for these charges.

Leases without a substantive change in its term will be accomplished via an addendum.

## **11.0 INCOME, EXCLUSIONS, AND DEDUCTIONS FROM INCOME**

To determine annual income, the Allegheny County Housing Authority adds the income of all family members, excluding the types and sources of income that are specifically excluded. Once the annual income is determined, the Allegheny County Housing Authority subtracts all allowable deductions (allowances) to determine the Total Tenant Payment.

### **11.1 INCOME**

Annual income means all amounts, monetary or not, that:

- A. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
- B. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date; and
- C. Are not specifically excluded from annual income.

If it is not feasible to anticipate a level of income over a 12-month period (e.g. seasonal or cyclic income), or the Allegheny County Housing Authority believes that past income is the best available indicator of expected future income, the actual past annual income from the previous year listed on HUD computer reports will be utilized and rent will be calculated from this.

Annual income includes, but is not limited to, the amounts specified in the federal regulations found in 24 CFR 5.609:

- A. The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services.
- B. The net income from the operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any

withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is a reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family.

- C. Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, annual income includes the greater of the actual income derived from all net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD. Income that could have been derived from assets worth more than \$1000 that were disposed of for less than fair market value within the past two years will be counted as income.
- D. The full amount of periodic amounts received from Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum amount or prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount. (However, deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts are excluded.)
- E. Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment and disability compensation, worker's compensation, and severance pay. (However, lump sum additions such as insurance payments from worker's compensation are excluded.)
- F. Welfare assistance
  - 1. Welfare assistance payments
    - a. Welfare assistance payments made under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program are included in annual income only to the extent such payments:
      - i. Qualify as assistance under the TANF program definition at 45 CFR 260.31; and
      - ii. Are not otherwise excluded under paragraph Section 11.2 of this Policy.

- b. If the welfare assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustment by the welfare assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of welfare assistance income to be included as income consists of:
  - i. The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus
  - ii. The maximum amount that the welfare assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this requirement is the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

2. Imputed welfare income

- a. A family's annual income includes the amount of imputed welfare income (because of specified welfare benefits reductions resulting from either welfare fraud or the failure to comply with economic self-sufficiency requirements, as specified in notice to the Allegheny County Housing Authority by the welfare agency) plus the total amount of other annual income.
- b. At the request of the Allegheny County Housing Authority, the welfare agency will inform the Allegheny County Housing Authority in writing of the amount and term of any specified welfare benefit reduction for a family member, and the reason for such reduction, and will also inform the Allegheny County Housing Authority of any subsequent changes in the term or amount of such specified welfare benefit reduction. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will use this information to determine the amount of imputed welfare income for a family.
- c. A family's annual income includes imputed welfare income in family annual income, as determined at an interim or regular reexamination of family income and composition, during the term of the welfare benefits reduction (as specified in information provided to the Allegheny County Housing Authority by the welfare agency).
- d. The amount of the imputed welfare income is offset by the amount of additional income a family receives that commences after the time the sanction was imposed. When such additional income from

other sources is at least equal to the imputed welfare income, the imputed welfare income is reduced to zero.

- e. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not include imputed welfare income in annual income if the family was not an assisted resident at the time of the sanction.
- f. If a resident is not satisfied that the Allegheny County Housing Authority has calculated the amount of imputed welfare income in accordance with HUD requirements, and if the Allegheny County Housing Authority denies the family's request to modify such amount, then the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall give the resident written notice of such denial, with a brief explanation of the basis for the Allegheny County Housing Authority's determination of the amount of imputed welfare income. The Allegheny County Housing Authority's notice shall also state that if the resident does not agree with the determination, the resident may grieve the decision in accordance with our grievance policy. The resident is not required to pay an escrow deposit for the portion of the resident's rent attributable to the imputed welfare income in order to obtain a grievance hearing.
- g. Relations with welfare agencies
  - 1). The Allegheny County Housing Authority will ask welfare agencies to inform it of any specified welfare benefits reduction for a family member, the reason for such reduction, the term of any such reduction, and any subsequent welfare agency determination affecting the amount or term of a specified welfare benefits reduction. If the welfare agency determines a specified welfare benefits reduction for a family member, and gives the Allegheny County Housing Authority written notice of such reduction, the family's annual incomes shall include the imputed welfare income because of the specified welfare benefits reduction.
  - 2). The Allegheny County Housing Authority is responsible for determining the amount of imputed welfare income that is included in the family's annual income as a result of a specified welfare benefits reduction as determined by the welfare agency, and specified in the notice by the welfare agency to the housing authority. However, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is not responsible for determining whether a reduction of welfare benefits by the

welfare agency was correctly determined by the welfare agency in accordance with welfare program requirements and procedures, nor for providing the opportunity for review or hearing on such welfare agency determinations.

- 3). Such welfare agency determinations are the responsibility of the welfare agency, and the family may seek appeal of such determinations through the welfare agency's normal due process procedures. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall rely on the welfare agency notice to the Allegheny County Housing Authority of the welfare agency's determination of a specified welfare benefits reduction.
- G. Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony, child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling.
  - H. All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces. (Special pay to a member exposed to hostile fire is excluded.)

## ***11.2 ANNUAL INCOME AND ANNUAL INCOME EXCLUSIONS***

Annual income does not include the following amounts specified in the federal regulations currently found in 24 CFR 5.609:

- A. Income from employment of children (including foster children) under the age of 18 years;
- B. Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone) or payments made under Kin-GAP or similar guardianship care programs for children leaving the juvenile court system;
- C. Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains, and settlement for personal or property losses;
- D. Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member;
- E. Income of a live-in aide;

- F. The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution unless it is an athletic scholarship that includes assistance available for housing costs and that portion is included in income;
- G. The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire;
- H. The amounts received from the following programs:
  - 1. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD;
  - 2. Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS);
  - 3. Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, transportation, child care, etc.) and that are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;
  - 4. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the Housing Authority or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, resident initiatives coordination, and serving as a member of the Allegheny County Housing Authority governing board. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time;
  - 5. Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying State or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program;
  - 6. Temporary, nonrecurring or sporadic income (including gifts). This specifically includes temporary income payments from the U. S. Census Bureau, defined as employment lasting no longer than 180 days per year and not culminating in permanent employment;

7. Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era;
8. Earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household and spouse);
9. Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 per adopted child;
10. The incremental earnings due to employment during a cumulative 12-month period following date of the initial hire shall be excluded. This exclusion is only available to the following families:
  - a. Families whose income increases as a result of employment of a family member who was previously unemployed for one or more years.
  - b. Families whose annual income increases as a result of increased earnings by a family member during participation in any economic self-sufficiency or other job training program; or families whose annual income increases as a result of new employment or increased earnings of a family member, during or within six months after receiving assistance, benefits or services under any state program for temporary assistance for needy families funded under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act as determined by the PHA in consultation with the local agencies administering temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), and Welfare-to-Work (WTW) programs.
  - c. The TANF Program is not limited to monthly income maintenance, but also includes such benefits and services as one-time payments, wage subsidies, and transportation assistance-provided that the total amount over a six-month period is at least \$500.

This is often referred to as the Earned Income Disregard.

During the second cumulative twelve month period after the date a member of a qualified family is first employed or the family first experiences an increase in annual income attributable to employment, the PHA must exclude from annual income of a qualified family fifty percent of any increase in income of such family member as a result of employment over income of that family member prior to the beginning of such employment.

The disallowance of increased income of an individual family member is

limited to a lifetime 48-month period. It applies for 12 months of the 100% exclusion and for 12 months an exclusion of 50% of any increase in income of a family member as a result of employment over income of that family member prior to the beginning of such employment. This is true if it is implemented prior to March 1, 2017. After that date, the lifetime Disregard will end 24 months after it began.

(While HUD regulations allow for the housing authority to offer an escrow account in lieu of having a portion of their income excluded under this paragraph, it is the policy of this housing authority to provide the exclusion in all cases.)

11. Deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts;
12. Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under State or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit;
13. Amounts paid by a State agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep the developmentally disabled family member at home; or
14. Amounts specifically excluded by any other Federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits. These exclusions include:
  - a. The value of the allotment provided to an eligible household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2017(b));
  - b. Payments to Volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 5044(f)(1), 5058);
  - c. Certain payments received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1626(c));
  - d. Income derived from certain submarginal land of the United States that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes (25 U.S.C. 459e);
  - e. Payments or allowances made under the Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (42 U.S.C. 8624(f));

- f. Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians (Pub. L. 94-540, section 6);
- g. The first \$2000 of per capita shares received from judgment funds awarded by the Indian National Gaming Commission or the U.S. Claims Court, the interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, and the first \$2000 per year of income received by individual Indians from funds derived from interests held in such trust or restricted lands (25 U.S.C. 1407-1408). This exclusion does not include proceeds of gaming operations regulated by the Commission;
- h. Amounts of scholarships funded under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070), including awards under Federal work-study program or under the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs (20 U.S.C. 1087uu). For Section 8 programs only (42 U.S.C. 1437f), any financial assistance in excess of amounts received by an individual for tuition and any other required fees and charges under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 *et seq.*), from private sources, or an institution of higher education (as defined under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), shall not be considered income to that individual if the individual is over the age of 23 with dependent children (Pub. L. 109-115, section 327) (as amended). See definition of Tuition in Glossary;
- i. Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1985 (42 U.S.C. 3056(g));
- j. Payments received on or after January 1, 1989, from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund (Pub. L. 101-201) or any other fund established pursuant to the settlement in *In Re Agent Orange Liability Litigation*, M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.);
- k. Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-420, 25 U.S.C. 1728);
- l. The value of any child care provided or arranged (or any amount received as payment for such care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care) under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858q);
- m. Earned income tax credit (EITC) refund payments received on or after January 1, 1991, for programs administered under the United States Housing Act of 1937, title V of the Housing Act of 1949,

section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965, and sections 221 (d)(3), 235, and 236 of the National Housing Act (26 U.S.C. 32(l));

- n. Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation (Pub. L. 95-433);
- o. Allowances, earnings and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12637(d));
- p. Any allowance paid under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1883(c) to children of Vietnam veterans born with spina bifida (38 U.S.C. 1802-05), children of women Vietnam veterans born with certain birth defects (38 U.S.C. 1811-16), and children of certain Korean service veterans born with spina bifida (38 U.S.C. 1821);
- q. Any amount of crime victim compensation (under the Victims of Crime Act) received through crime victim assistance (or payment or reimbursement of the cost of such assistance) as determined under the Victims of Crime Act because of the commission of a crime against the applicant under the Victims of Crime Act (42 U.S.C. 10602(c));
- r. Allowances, earnings and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2931(a)(2)).
- s. Any amount received under the Richard B. Russell School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(e)) and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1780(b)), including reduced-price lunches and food under the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC);
- t. Payments, funds or distributions authorized, established, or directed by the Seneca Nation Settlement Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 1774f(b));
- u. Payments from any deferred U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts (42 U.S.C. § 1437a(b)(4));
- v. Compensation received by or on behalf of a veteran for service-connected disability, death, dependency, or indemnity compensation as provided by an amendment by the Indian Veterans Housing Opportunity Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111-269; 25

U.S.C. 4103(9)) to the definition of income applicable to programs authorized under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) (25 U.S.C. 4101 *et seq.*) and administered by the Office of Native American Programs;

- w. A lump sum or a periodic payment received by an individual Indian pursuant to the Class Action Settlement Agreement in the case entitled *Elouise Cobell et al. v. Ken Salazar et al.*, 816 F. Supp. 2d 10 (Oct. 5, 2011 D.D.C.), for a period of one year from the time of receipt of that payment as provided in the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 (Pub. L. 111-291);
- x. Any amounts in an “individual development account” as provided by the assets for Independence Act, as amended in 2002 (Pub. L. 107-110, 42 U.S.C. 604(h)(4));
- y. Per capita payments made from the proceeds of Indian Tribal Trust Cases as described in PIH Notice 2013-30 “Exclusion from Income of Payments under Recent Tribal Trust Settlements” (25 U.S.C. 117b(a)); and
- z. Major disaster and emergency assistance received by individuals and families under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Pub. L. 93-288, as amended) comparable disaster assistance provided by States, local governments, and disaster assistance organizations (42 U.S.C. 5155(d)).
- aa. ABLÉ accounts created under the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 (ABLE Act) are excluded from the calculation of both income and assets.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not provide exclusions from income in addition to those already provided for by HUD.

### **11.3 DEDUCTIONS FROM ANNUAL INCOME**

The following deductions will be made from annual income:

- A. \$480 for each dependent;
- B. \$400 for any elderly family or disabled family;
- C. The sum of the following, to the extent the sum exceeds three percent of annual income:
  - 1. Unreimbursed medical expenses of any elderly family or disabled family including any fee paid by the participant for the Medicare Prescription

Drug Program; and

2. Unreimbursed reasonable attendant care and auxiliary apparatus expenses for each member of the family who is a person with disabilities, to the extent necessary to enable any member of the family (including the member who is a person with disabilities) to be employed, but this allowance may not exceed the earned income received by family members who are 18 years of age or older who are able to work because of such attendant care or auxiliary apparatus.
- D. Reasonable childcare expenses for children 12 and younger necessary to enable a member of the family to be employed or to further his or her education. This deduction shall not exceed 50% of gross income. A larger deduction can be approved as a reasonable accommodation.

#### ***11.4 RECEIPT OF A LETTER OR NOTICE FROM HUD CONCERNING INCOME***

- A. If a public housing resident receives a letter or notice from HUD concerning the amount or verification of family income, the letter shall be brought to the person responsible for income verification within ten (10) calendar days of receipt by the resident.
- B. The Property Manager shall reconcile any difference between the amount reported by the resident and the amount listed in the HUD communication. This shall be done as promptly as possible.
- C. After the reconciliation is complete, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall, if appropriate, adjust the resident's rent beginning at the start of the next month unless the reconciliation is completed during the final five (5) calendar days of the month and then the new rent shall take effect on the first day of the second month following the end of the current month. In addition, if the resident had not previously reported the proper income, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall do one of the following:
1. Immediately collect the back rent due to the agency;
  2. Establish a repayment plan for the resident to pay the sum due to the agency;
  3. Terminate the lease and evict for failure to report income; or
  4. Terminate the lease, evict for failure to report income, and collect the back rent due to the agency.

### ***11.5 COOPERATING WITH WELFARE AGENCIES***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will make its best efforts to enter into cooperation agreements with local welfare agencies under which the welfare agencies will agree:

- A. To target assistance, benefits and services to families receiving assistance in the public housing and Section 8 tenant-based assistance program to achieve self-sufficiency; and
- B. To provide written verification to the Allegheny County Housing Authority concerning welfare benefits for families applying for or receiving assistance in our housing assistance programs.

### ***11.6 COOPERATING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will comply, on a case-by-case basis, with information requests from Federal, State or local law enforcement officers regarding possible fugitive felons and/or a parole or probation violators. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will supply upon legitimate request (1) the current address, (2) Social Security number and (3) photograph (if available) of any recipient of assistance.

The Federal, State or local enforcement officer must submit a request that is (1) written, (2) on law enforcement agency letterhead, and (3) is signed by the requesting officer and his or her immediate supervisor. The request for information must provide the name of the fugitive felon and/or parole or probation violator being sought, and may include other personal information used for identification. The request should also comply with the following requirements:

- A. The law enforcement agency shall notify Allegheny County Housing Authority that the fugitive felon and/or parole or probation violator (i) is fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or confinement after conviction, under the laws of the place from which the individual flees, for a crime, or attempt to commit a crime, which is a felony under the laws of the place from which the individual flees, or which, in the case of the State of New Jersey, is a high misdemeanor; or (ii) is violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under Federal or State law; or (iii) has information that is necessary for the officer to conduct his/her official duties;
- B. The location or apprehension of the recipient is within the Allegheny County Housing Authority's official duties; and,
- C. The request is made in the proper exercise of the law enforcement agency's official duties.

## **12.0 VERIFICATION**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will verify information related to waiting list preferences, eligibility, admission, and level of benefits prior to admission. Periodically during occupancy, items related to eligibility and rent determination shall also be reviewed and verified. Income, assets, and expenses will be verified, as well as disability status, need for a live-in aide and other reasonable accommodations; full-time student status of family members 18 years of age and older; Social Security numbers; and citizenship/eligible noncitizen status. Age and relationship will only be verified in those instances where needed to make a determination of level of assistance. All family members 18 years of age or older must sign a consent form to authorize the release of information.

For a family with net assets equal to or less than \$5,000, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will accept, for purposes of recertification of income, a family's written declaration that it has net assets equal to or less than \$5,000, without taking additional steps to verify the accuracy of the declaration. The declaration must state the amount of income the family expects to receive from such assets; this amount will be included in the family's income. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain third-party verification of all family assets every 3 years.

### **12.1 ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF VERIFICATION**

UIV will be used to the maximum extent possible when conducting mandatory examinations and interim examinations of family income and composition.

Age, relationship, U.S. citizenship, and Social Security numbers will generally be verified with documentation provided by the family. For citizenship, the family's certification will be accepted. (Or, for citizenship, documentation such as listed below will be required.) Verification of these items will include photocopies of the Social Security cards and other documents presented by the family, the INS SAVE approval code, and forms signed by the family.

Other information will be verified by the following verification methods acceptable to HUD, in the order of preference indicated:

#### **1. Up-front Income Verifications (UIV)**

UIV is the verification of income through an independent source that systematically maintains income information in computerized form for a large number of individuals.

Current UIV resources include the following:

- a. **Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)** – The EIV System is a web-based application, which provides PHAs with employment, wage, unemployment compensation and social security benefit information of tenants who participate in the Public Housing and various Section 8 programs under the jurisdiction of the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH). Information in EIV is derived from computer matching programs initiated by HUD with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for all program participants with valid personal identifying information (name, date of birth (DOB), and social security number (SSN)) reported on the form HUD-50058. Use of the EIV system in its entirety is mandatory for all annual and interim re-examinations. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will conduct the following searches during the eligibility process – (1) Existing Tenant Search, and (2) Former Tenant Search. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will monitor the following EIV reports on a monthly basis – (1) Deceased Tenants Report, (2) Identity Verification Report, and the (3) Immigration Report. In addition, it will monitor on a quarterly basis the following EIV reports – (1) Income Discrepancy Report, (2) Multiple Subsidy Report, and (3) the New Hires Report. Whether or not an admission is homeless will be noted in the 50058.
- b. **State Wage Information Collection Agencies (SWICAs)**
- c. **State systems for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program**
- d. **Credit Bureau Information (CBA) credit reports**
- e. **Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Letter 1722**
- f. **Private sector databases (e.g. The Work Number)**

It is important to note that UIV data will only be used to verify a resident's eligibility for participation in a rental assistance program and to determine the level of assistance the resident is entitled to receive and only by properly trained persons whose duties require access to this information. Any other use, unless approved by the HUD Headquarters UIV Security System Administrator, is specifically prohibited and will not occur.

No adverse action can be taken against a resident until the Allegheny County Housing Authority has independently verified the UIV information and the resident has been granted an opportunity to contest any adverse findings through the established grievance procedure. The consequences of adverse findings may include the Allegheny County Housing Authority requiring the immediate

payment of any over-subsidy, the entering into a repayment agreement, eviction, criminal prosecution, or any other appropriate remedy.

Furthermore, the information the Allegheny County Housing Authority derives from the UIV system will be protected to ensure that it is utilized solely for official purposes and not disclosed in any way that would violate the privacy of the affected individuals.

The EIV Income Report must remain in the tenant file for the duration of tenancy and no longer than three years from the end of participation (EOP) date. The Allegheny County Housing Authority is required to maintain at a minimum, the last three years of the form HUD-50058, and supporting documentation for all annual and interim reexaminations of family income. All records are to be maintained for a period of at least three years from the effective date of the action. Once the data has served its purpose, it shall be destroyed by either burning or shredding the data.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will use additional UIV resources as they become available. This will be done before, during and/or after examinations and/or re-examinations of household income as appropriate.

## **2. Third-Party Written Verifications**

An original or authentic document generated by a third-party source dated either within the 90-day period preceding the reexamination or the Allegheny County Housing Authority request date. Such documentation may be in the possession of the tenant (or applicant), and is commonly referred to as tenant-provided documents. It is HUD's position that such tenant-provided documents are written third-party verification since these documents originated from a third-party source. The Allegheny County Housing Authority may, at its discretion, reject any tenant-provided documents and follow up directly with the source to obtain necessary verification of information.

Examples of acceptable tenant-provided documentation (generated by a third-party source) include, but are not limited to: pay stubs, payroll summary report, employer notice/letter of hire/termination, SSA benefit verification letter, bank statements, child support payment stubs, welfare benefit letters and/or printouts, and unemployment monetary benefit notices. Current acceptable tenant-provided documents will be used for income and rent determinations.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain at least six weeks of consecutive pay stubs for determining annual income from wages. For new income sources or when two pay stubs are not available, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will project income based on the information from a traditional written third-party verification form or the best available information.

**Note:** Documents older than 90 days (from the Allegheny County Housing Authority interview/determination or request date) is acceptable for confirming effective dates of income.

Third-party written verifications may also be used to supplement Up-front Income Verifications. They will be utilized when there is a discrepancy of \$200 a month or more and the participant disputes the UIV results.

**Note:** Social Security benefit information in EIV is updated every three months. If the tenant agrees with the EIV-reported benefit information, PHAs do not need to obtain or request a benefit verification letter from the tenant.

### **3. Written Third-Party Verification Form**

Also known as traditional third-party verification. A standardized form to collect information from a third-party source is distributed by the Allegheny County Housing Authority. The form is completed by the third-party by hand (in writing or typeset) when sent the form by the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

HUD recognizes that third-party verification request forms sent to third-party sources often are not returned. In other instances, the person who completes the verification form may provide incomplete information; or some tenants may collude with the third-party source to provide false information; or the tenant intercepts the form and provides false information.

HUD requires the Allegheny County Housing Authority to rely on documents that originate from a third-party source's computerized system and/or database, as this process reduces the likelihood of incorrect or falsified information being provided on the third-party verification request form. The use of acceptable tenant-provided documents, which originate from a third-party source, will improve the integrity of information used to determine a family's income and rent and ultimately reduce improper subsidy payments. This verification process will also streamline the income verification process.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will allow fourteen (14) calendar days for the return of third-party written verifications prior to continuing on to the next type of verification.

### **4. Third-Party Oral Verifications**

This type of verification includes direct contact with the source, in person or by telephone. When this method is used, staff members will be required to document in writing with whom they spoke, the date of the conversation, the telephone number, and the facts obtained.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will allow seven (7) calendar days for the return of third-party oral verifications prior to continuing on to the next type of verification.

**5. Review of Documents**

When UIV, written and oral third-party verifications are not available within the fourteen (14) calendar day period allowed in paragraph 3 and seven (7) calendar day period allowed in paragraph 4 above, the Housing Authority will use the information received by the family, provided that the documents provide complete information. Photocopies of the documents, excluding government checks, provided by the family will be maintained in the file. In cases in which documents are viewed and cannot be photocopied, staff reviewing the documents will complete a written statement as to the contents of the document(s).

If oral statements and written documents conflict, the written document will prevail.

**6. Self-Certification and Self-Declaration**

When UIV, written and oral third-party verifications are not available within the fourteen (14) calendar day period allowed in paragraph 3 and seven (7) calendar day period allowed in paragraph 4 above, and hand-carried verification cannot be obtained, the Housing Authority will accept a statement detailing information needed, signed by the head, spouse, co-head, or other adult family member.

Verification forms and reports received will be contained in the applicant/tenant file. Oral third-party documentation will include the same information as if the documentation had been written, i.e. name, date of contact, amount received, etc.

When any verification method other than Up-front Income Verification is utilized, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will document the reason for the choice of the verification methodology in the applicant/resident’s file.

The following chart comes from PIH Notice 2010-19.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Verification Technique</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Up-front Income Verification (UIV) using HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system (not available for income verifications of applicants)</b>	<b>Highest (Mandatory)</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Up-front Income Verification</b>	<b>Highest (Optional)</b>

	(UIV) using non-HUD system	
4	<b>Written Third-Party Verification</b>	<b>High</b> (Mandatory to supplement EIV-reported income sources and when EIV has no data; Mandatory for non-EIV reported income sources; Mandatory when participant disputes EIV-reported employment and income information <b>and</b> is unable to provide acceptable documentation to support dispute)
3	<b>Written Third-Party Verification Form</b>	<b>Medium-Low</b> (Mandatory if written third-party verification documents are not available or rejected by the PHA; and when the applicant or participant is unable to provide acceptable documentation)
2	<b>Oral Third-Party Verification</b>	<b>Low</b> (Mandatory if written third-party verification is not available)
1	<b>Tenant Declaration</b>	<b>Low</b> (Use as a last resort when unable to obtain any type of third-party verification)

## 12.2 TYPES OF VERIFICATION

The chart below outlines the factors that may be verified and gives common examples of the verification that will be sought. To obtain written third-party verification, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will send a request form to the source along with a release form signed by the applicant/tenant via first class mail.

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> party verification	Hand-carried verification
<b>General Eligibility Items</b>		
Social Security Number	Not Allowed	Original Social Security Card, an appropriate government letter showing the number or other HUD-allowed method
Adult Status of the Head of Household		Valid drivers license, identification card issued by a government agency, or a birth certificate

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> party verification	Hand-carried verification
Citizenship	N/A	Signed certification, voter's registration card, birth certificate, etc.
Eligible immigration status	INS SAVE confirmation #	INS card
Disability	Letter from medical professional, SSI, etc	Proof of SSI or Social Security disability payments
Full time student status (if >18)	Letter from school	For high school and/or college students, any document evidencing enrollment
Need for a live-in aide	Letter from doctor or other written documentation from a reliable third party	N/A
Child care costs	Letter from care provider	Bills and receipts
Disability assistance expenses	Letters from suppliers, care givers, etc.	Bills and records of payment
Proof of Age	Social Security Letter with birth date included	Birth Certificate, Passport, State ID, Baptismal Record, Driver's License
Medical expenses	Letters from providers, prescription record from pharmacy, medical professional's letter stating assistance or a companion animal is needed	Bills, receipts, records of payment, dates of trips, mileage log, receipts for fares and tolls
Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage		A card issued by the private prescription drug plan with the words Medicare Rx on it.
Value of and Income from Assets <sup>1</sup>		
Savings, checking accounts	Letter from institution	Passbook, most current statements

<sup>1</sup> Verification of net family assets (as defined in 24 CFR 813.102) of \$1000 or less will not be verified except by self-declaration. The income from these assets will not be included in the total gross income of the family. Tenant must certify that information is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge. False and/or misleading information may result in termination of lease agreement.

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> party verification	Hand-carried verification
CDS, bonds, etc	Letter from institution	Tax return, information brochure from institution, the CD, the bond
Stocks	Letter from broker or holding company	Stock or most current statement, price in newspaper or through Internet
Real property	Letter from tax office, assessment, etc.	Property tax statement (for current value), assessment, records or income and expenses, tax return
Personal property held as an investment	Assessment, bluebook, etc	Receipt for purchase, other evidence of worth
Cash value of whole life insurance policies	Letter from insurance company	Current statement
Assets disposed of for less than fair market value	N/A	Original receipt and receipt at disposition, other evidence of worth
<b>Income</b>		
Earned income	Letter from employer	Multiple pay stubs
Self-employed	N/A	Tax return from prior year, books of accounts
Regular gifts and contributions	Letter from source, letter from organization receiving gift (i.e., if grandmother pays day care provider, the day care provider could so state)	Bank deposits, other similar evidence
Alimony/child support	Court order, letter from source, letter from Human Services	Record of deposits, divorce decree
Social Security Administration		Letter from Social Security no more than 90 calendar days old as verified by HUD computer systems
Periodic payments (i.e., social security, welfare,	Letter or electronic reports from the	Award letter, letter announcing



Family members who do not claim to be citizens, nationals, or eligible non-citizens must be listed on a statement of non-eligible members and the list must be signed by the head of the household.

Non-citizen students on student visas, though in the country legally, are not eligible to be admitted to public housing. If they are members of families that include citizens, the rent must be pro-rated.

Any family member who does not choose to declare their status must be listed on the statement of non-eligible members.

If no family member is determined to be eligible under this section, the family's eligibility will be denied.

The family's assistance will not be denied, delayed, reduced, or terminated because of a delay in the process of determining eligible status under this section, except to the extent that the delay is caused by the family.

If the Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that a family member has knowingly permitted an ineligible non-citizen (other than any ineligible non-citizens listed on the lease) to permanently reside in their public housing unit, the family will be evicted. Such family will not be eligible to be readmitted to public housing for a period of 24 months from the date of eviction or termination.

#### **12.4 VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

Prior to admission, every family member regardless of age must provide the Allegheny County Housing Authority with a complete and accurate Social Security Number documentation unless they do not contend eligible immigration status. New family members must provide this verification prior to being added to the lease. If the new family member is under the age of six and has not been assigned a Social Security Number, the family shall have ninety (90) calendar days after starting to receive the assistance to provide a complete and accurate Social Security Number. The Allegheny County Housing Authority may grant one ninety (90) day extension for newly-added family members under the age of six if in its sole discretion it determines that the person's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and was outside the control of the person.

If a person is already a program participant and has not disclosed his or her Social Security Number, it must be disclosed at the next re-examination or re-certification. Participants aged 62 or older as of January 31, 2010 whose initial eligibility determination was begun before January 31, 2010 are exempt from the required disclosure of their Social Security Number. This exemption continues even if the individual moves to a new assisted unit.

The best verification of the Social Security Number is the original Social Security card. If the card is not available, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will accept an original document issued by a federal or state government agency, which contains the name of the individual and the Social Security Number of the individual, along with other identifying information of the individual or such other evidence of the Social Security Number as HUD may prescribe in administrative instructions.

If a member of an applicant family indicates they have a Social Security Number, but cannot readily verify it, the family cannot be assisted until verification is provided.

If an individual fails to provide the verification within the time allowed, the family will be denied assistance or will have their assistance terminated. The Allegheny County Housing Authority may grant one ninety (90) day extension from termination if in its sole discretion it determines that the person's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and there is a reasonable likelihood that the person will be able to disclose a Social Security Number by the deadline.

#### ***12.5 TIMING OF VERIFICATION***

Verification information must be dated within ninety (90) calendar days of certification or reexamination. If the verification is older than this, the source will be contacted and asked to provide information regarding any changes.

When an interim reexamination is conducted, the Housing Authority will verify and update all information related to family circumstances and level of assistance. (Or, the Housing Authority will only verify and update those elements reported to have changed.)

#### ***12.6 FREQUENCY OF OBTAINING VERIFICATION***

Household composition will be verified annually. The frequency that household income will be verified depends on the type of rent method chosen by the family.

For each family member, citizenship/eligible noncitizen status will be verified only once unless the family member is an eligible immigrant in a transitional stage of admission. In this situation, their status must be updated until they are admitted for permanent residency. This verification will be obtained prior to admission. If the status of any family member was not determined prior to admission, verification of their status will be obtained at the next regular reexamination. Prior to a new member joining the family, their citizenship/eligible noncitizen status will be verified.

For each family member, verification of Social Security number will be obtained only once. This verification will be accomplished prior to admission. When a family member who did not have a Social Security number at admission receives a Social Security number, that number will be verified at the next regular reexamination.

## **12.7 DISCREPANCIES IN VERIFIED INFORMATION**

An EIV Income Report shall be pulled from the system before annual or interim reexamination is conducted for any family and compared with family-reported information. If the EIV report reveals an income source that was not reported by the tenant or a substantial difference (defined as \$2400 or more annually) in the reported income information, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will:

- A. Discuss the income discrepancy with the tenant; and
- B. Request the tenant to provide any documentation to confirm or dispute the unreported or underreported income and/ or income sources; and
- C. In the event the tenant is unable to provide acceptable documentation to resolve the income discrepancy, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will request from the third-party source, any information necessary to resolve the income discrepancy; and
- D. If applicable, determine the tenant's underpayment of rent as a result of unreported or underreported income, retroactively\*; and
- E. Take any other appropriate action.

\*The Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine the retroactive rent as far back as the existence of complete file documentation (form HUD-50058 and supporting documentation) to support such retroactive rent determinations.

The tenant will be provided an opportunity to contest the Allegheny County Housing Authority's determination of tenant rent underpayment. Tenants will be promptly notified in writing of any adverse findings made on the basis of the information verified through the aforementioned income discrepancy resolution process. The tenant may contest the findings in accordance with established grievance procedures. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not terminate, deny, suspend, or reduce the family's assistance until the expiration of any notice or grievance period.

When there is an unsubstantial or no disparity between tenant-reported and EIV-reported income information, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain from the tenant, any necessary documentation to complete the income determination process. As noted previously, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may reject any tenant-provided documentation, if the Authority deems the documentation unacceptable. Documentation provided by the tenant will only be rejected for only the following reasons:

- A. The document is not an original; or

- B. The original document has been altered, mutilated, or is not legible; or
- C. The document appears to be a forged document (i.e. does not appear to be authentic).

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will explain to the tenant, the reason(s) the submitted documents are not acceptable and request the tenant to provide additional documentation. If at any time, the tenant is unable to provide acceptable documentation that the Allegheny County Housing Authority deems necessary to complete the income determination process, the Authority will submit a traditional third-party verification form to the third-party source for completion and submission to the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

If the third-party source does not respond to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's request for information, the Authority is required to document the tenant file of its attempt to obtain third-party verification and that no response to the third-party verification request was received.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will then pursue lower level verifications in accordance with the verification hierarchy.

## **12.8 STREAMLINED INCOME DETERMINATION**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has decided that any family member with a fixed source of income that constitutes 90% or more of his or her income may have his or her income determined for annual reexaminations using a streamlined income determination, where it is deemed by the Allegheny County Housing Authority to be practical and possible, unless the family requests that a third-party verification method be used. A streamlined income determination will be conducted by applying, for each fixed-income source, the verified cost of living adjustment (COLA) (if there has been one announced for that year) or current rate of interest to the previously verified or adjusted income amount.

“Family member with a fixed source of income” is defined as a family member whose income includes periodic payments at reasonably predictable levels from one or more of the following sources:

- A Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Supplemental Disability Insurance;
- B Federal, state, local, or private pension plans;
- C Annuities or other retirement benefit programs, insurance policies, disability or death benefits, or other similar types of periodic receipts; or

D Any other source of income subject to adjustment by a verifiable COLA or current rate of interest and determined appropriate by the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

In the initial year, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine if any of the family member's sources of income are fixed. This determination shall be made by either:

1. comparing the amount of income from the fixed source(s) as indicated on the current year's EIV report or on a family provided document, to the amount generated during the prior year;
2. or by asking the resident.

If so determined, this shall be noted in the tenant file and the file shall state that this was determined. This shall be repeated for new sources of income reported by the resident to the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will use a COLA (if there has been one announced that year) or current rate of interest specific to the fixed source of income in order to adjust the income amount. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will verify the appropriate COLA or current rate of interest from a public source or through tenant-provided, third party-generated documentation. If no such verification is available, then the Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain third-party verification of income amounts in order to calculate the change in income for the source.

For any family member whose income is determined pursuant to a streamlined income determination, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain third-party verification of all income amounts every 3 years. This also means that if a family member with a fixed-income source is added to the family during year two, for example, then the Housing Authority must obtain third-party verification of all income amounts for that family member at the next reexamination if the Housing Authority wishes to have all family members with fixed incomes on the same schedule with respect to streamlined annual reexaminations.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will continue to **annually** conduct third-party verification of non-fixed sources of income (wages, salaries, etc.) and deductions (medical, etc.) where applicable for **all** family members. Also, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will continue to obtain family member signatures on the consent forms required by 24 CFR 5.230, as if this provision had not been adopted.

## **13.0 DETERMINATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT AND TENANT RENT**

### **13.1 FAMILY CHOICE**

At admission and each year in preparation for their annual reexamination, each family is given the choice of having their rent determined under the income method or having their rent set at the flat rent amount.

- A. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income reexamination process every three years, rather than the annual review they would otherwise undergo (Excludes LIHTC Properties). Their family composition must still be reviewed annually.
- B. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a reexamination and return to the income based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. The family's income has decreased.
  - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for childcare, medical care, etc.
  - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the income method would be more financially feasible for the family.
- C. Families have only one choice per year except for financial hardship cases. In order for families to make informed choices about their rent options, the Allegheny County will provide them with the following information whenever they have to make rent decisions:
  - 1. The Allegheny County Housing Authority's policies on switching types of rent in case of a financial hardship; and
  - 2. The dollar amount of tenant rent for the family under each option. If the family chose a flat rent for the previous year, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will provide the amount of income-based rent for the subsequent year only the year the Allegheny County Housing Authority conducts an income reexamination or if the family specifically requests it and submits updated income information.

### **13.2 THE INCOME METHOD**

The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:

- A. 10% of the family's monthly income;

- B. 30% of the family's adjusted monthly income; or
- C. If the family is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of those payments, adjusted in accordance with the family's actual housing costs, is specifically designated by such agency to meet the family's housing costs, the portion of those payments which is so designated. If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this provision is the amount resulting from one application of the percentage; or
- D. The minimum rent of \$50.

### **13.3 MINIMUM RENT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has set the minimum rent at \$50. If the family requests a hardship exemption, however, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will suspend the minimum rent beginning the month following the family's request until the Housing Authority can determine whether the hardship exists and whether the hardship is of a temporary or long-term nature. All hardships determined to be of temporary or long term nature must be approved by the Director of Housing Management Operations or the Associate Director. If approved, the Housing Authority will continue to charge the minimum rent of \$50.00 and complete a monthly adjustment lowering the rent to zero on a monthly basis. The family will be required to meet with the manager (first week of the month) on a monthly basis until the hardship has ended.

- A. A hardship exists in the following circumstances:
  - 1. When the family has lost eligibility for or is waiting an eligibility determination for a Federal, State, or local assistance program, including a family that includes a member who is a noncitizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act who would be entitled to public benefits but for title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996;
  - 2. When the family would be evicted because it is unable to pay the minimum rent;
  - 3. When the income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including loss of employment; and
  - 4. When a death has occurred in the family.

- B. No hardship. If the Housing Authority determines there is no qualifying hardship, the minimum rent will be reinstated, including requiring back payment of minimum rent for the time of suspension.
- C. Temporary hardship. If the Housing Authority reasonably determines that there is a qualifying hardship but that it is of a temporary nature, the minimum rent will not be imposed for a period of thirty (30) calendar days from the beginning of the suspension of the minimum rent. At the end of the 30-day period, the Housing Authority will review and decide if the hardship should continue. Once the hardship has ended, the family's minimum rent will be imposed retroactively to the time of suspension. The Housing Authority will offer a repayment agreement in accordance with Section 19 of this policy for any rent not paid during the period of suspension. During the suspension period the Housing Authority will not evict the family for nonpayment of the amount of tenant rent owed for the suspension period.
- D. Long-term hardship. If the Housing Authority determines there is a long-term hardship (six months or longer), the family will be exempt from the minimum rent requirement until the hardship no longer exists.
- E. Appeals. The family may use the grievance procedure to appeal the Housing Authority's determination regarding the hardship. No escrow deposit will be required in order to access the grievance procedure.

#### **13.4 THE FLAT RENT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has set a flat rent for each public housing unit. The flat rent is determined annually, based on the market rental value of the unit using one of the following three options:

- A. Option One: The Allegheny County Housing Authority will establish a flat rent for each public housing unit that is no less than 80 percent of the applicable Fair Market Rent (FMR);
- B. Option Two: No less than 80 percent of an applicable small area FMR (SAFMR) or 80% of the unadjusted rent<sup>1</sup>, if applicable, as determined by HUD, or any successor determination, that more accurately reflects local market conditions and is based on an applicable market area that is geographically smaller than the applicable market area used in the first paragraph of this section. If HUD has not determined an applicable SAFMR or unadjusted rent<sup>1</sup>, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will rely on the applicable FMR under the first option or may apply for an exception flat rent under the third option. No other smaller geographical FMRs will be allowed by HUD; (See footnote 1 for HUD's definition of "unadjusted rent" as relates to Flat Rent requirements);

- C. Option Three: The Allegheny County Housing Authority may request, and HUD may approve, on a case-by-case basis, a flat rent that is lower than the amounts in Options One or Two of this section, subject to the following requirements:
1. The Allegheny County Housing Authority must submit an acceptable market analysis of the applicable market.
  2. The Allegheny County Housing Authority must demonstrate, based on the market analysis, that the proposed flat rent is a reasonable rent in comparison to rent for other comparable unassisted units, based on the location, quality, size, unit type, and age of the public housing unit and any amenities, housing services, maintenance, and utilities to be provided by the PHA in accordance with the lease.
  3. All requests for exception flat rents under this option must be submitted to and pre-approved by HUD. Upon request, exception rent can be extended up to two additional years by HUD.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not implement Option Three prior to receiving HUD's written approval.

The option chosen to establish the required flat rent will be the sole decision of the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

There is no utility allowance for families paying a flat rent because the Allegheny County Housing Authority has already factored who pays for the utilities into the flat rent calculation. If the resident pays their own utilities, the calculated flat rent shall be reduced by a reasonable utility allowance based on an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances. Otherwise, the entire flat rent shall be paid by the resident to the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

Annually, no later than 90 days after issuance of new FMRs or SAFMRs by HUD, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will compare the current flat rent amount to the applicable FMR and SAFMR/unadjusted rent<sup>2</sup>. If the flat rent is at least 80 percent of the lower of the FMR or SAFMR/unadjusted rent, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is in compliance with the law, and no further steps are necessary. If the flat rent is less

---

<sup>1</sup> The unadjusted rent is the FMR estimated directly from the American Community Survey (ACS) source data that HUD uses to calculate FMRs before HUD applies its state non-metropolitan minimum rent policy. HUD maintains a minimum FMR policy within Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV) in response to numerous public concerns that FMRs in rural areas were too low to operate the HCV program successfully. The policy establishes the FMRs at the higher of the local FMR or the State-wide average FMR of non-metropolitan counties, subject to a ceiling rent cap. The rationale for having a state minimum FMR is that some low-income, low-rent non-metropolitan counties have ACS-based FMR estimates that appear to be below long-term operating costs for standard quality rental units and raise concerns about housing quality. State minimum FMRs have been set at the respective state-wide population weighted median non-metropolitan rent level, but are not allowed to exceed the U.S. median non-metropolitan rent level.

than 80 percent of the lower of the FMR and SAFMR, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will adjust the flat rents at no less than 80 percent of the lower of the FMR or SAFMR/unadjusted rent<sup>1</sup>, subject to the utilities adjustment required for tenant-paid utilities, or the Allegheny County Housing Authority may request an exception flat rent pursuant to Option Three, as described above. Revised flat rents will become effective for all families admitted after the flat rent is changed or at the lease renewal for an existing resident. (See footnote 1 for HUD’s definition of “unadjusted rent” as relates to Flat Rent requirements).

As for flat rent phase-ins, previous regulations in PIH Notice 2014-12 and the subsequent FAQ’s, HUD provided flexibility to PHAs to phase in all flat rent increases over a three-year period, including those increases that were 35 percent or less.

However, the FY 2015 Appropriations Act provides the Allegheny County Housing Authority additional flexibility to establish flat rents at lower amounts, thereby eliminating the need for the three-year phase-in of flat rent increases that are 35 percent or less. **Therefore, the only flat rent increases that will be phased-in are those where a family’s rent will increase by more than 35 percent prior to any applicable adjustments for utility payments.**

Agencies that began phase-ins for families with rent increases at 35 percent or less last year shall follow the actions outlined below at the family’s next annual rent option:

- 1) On a case-by-case basis, at the family’s next annual rent option, compare the updated flat rent amount applicable to the unit to the rent that was being paid by the family immediately prior to the annual rent option;
  - a. If the updated flat rent amount would not increase a family’s rental payment by more than 35 percent, the family may choose to pay either the updated flat rent amount or the previously calculated income-based rent;
  - b. If the agency determines that the updated flat rent amount would increase a household’s rental payment by more than 35 percent, the family may choose to pay the phased-in flat rent amount resulting from the flat rent impact analysis or the previously calculated income-based rent.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will post the flat rents at each of the developments and at the central office. Flat rents are incorporated in this policy upon approval by the Board of Commissioners.

### ***13.5 RESERVED***

### ***13.6 RENT FOR FAMILIES UNDER THE NONCITIZEN RULE***

A mixed family will receive full continuation of assistance if all of the following

conditions are met:

- A. The family was receiving assistance on June 19, 1995;
- B. The family was granted continuation of assistance before November 29, 1996;
- C. The family's head or spouse has eligible immigration status; and
- D. The family does not include any person who does not have eligible status other than the head of household, the spouse of the head of household, any parent of the head or spouse, or any child (under the age of 18) of the head or spouse.

The family's assistance is prorated in the following manner:

- A. Step 1. Determine the total tenant payment in accordance with 24 CFR §5.628. (Annual income includes income of all family members, including any family member who has not established eligible immigration status.)
- B. Step 2. Family maximum rent is equal to the applicable flat rent for the unit size to be occupied by the family.
- C. Step 3. Subtract the total tenant payment from the family maximum rent. The result is the maximum subsidy for which the family could qualify if all members were eligible ("family maximum subsidy").
- D. Step 4. Divide the family maximum subsidy by the number of persons in the family (all persons) to determine the maximum subsidy per each family member who has citizenship or eligible immigration status ("eligible family member"). The subsidy per eligible family member is the "member maximum subsidy."
- E. Step 5. Multiply the member maximum subsidy by the number of family members who have citizenship or eligible immigration status ("eligible family members"). The product of this calculation is the "eligible subsidy."
- F. Step 6. The mixed family TTP is the maximum rent minus the amount of the eligible subsidy.
- G. Step 7. Subtract any applicable utility allowance from the mixed family TTP. The result of this calculation is the mixed family tenant rent.

When the mixed family's TTP is greater than the maximum rent, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will use the TTP as the mixed family TTP.

### **13.7 UTILITY ALLOWANCE**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall establish a utility allowance for all tenant-paid utilities. The allowance will be based on a reasonable consumption of utilities by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful environment. In setting the allowance, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will review the actual consumption of tenant families as well as changes made or anticipated due to modernization (weatherization efforts, installation of energy-efficient appliances, etc). Allowances will be evaluated at least annually.

The utility allowance will be subtracted from the family's income-based rent to determine the amount of the Tenant Rent. The Tenant Rent is the amount the family owes each month to the Allegheny County Housing Authority. The amount of the utility allowance is then still available to the family to pay the cost of their utilities. Any utility cost above the allowance is the responsibility of the tenant. A higher utility allowance will be offered if the tenant's disability requires higher utility consumption. This also may apply in waiving excess utility charges, air conditioning or other "special use" fees. Any savings resulting from utility costs below the amount of the allowance belongs to the tenant.

Requests for relief from surcharges for excess consumption of Allegheny County Housing Authority purchased utilities or from payment of utility supplier billings in excess of the utility allowance for tenant-paid utility costs may be granted by the Allegheny County Housing Authority on reasonable grounds. Requests shall be granted to families that include an elderly member or a member with disabilities. Requests by the family shall be submitted under the Reasonable Accommodation Policy. Families shall be advised of their right to individual relief at admission to public housing and at time of utility allowance changes.

The methodology used by the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall be the same for both the public housing program and the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

### **13.8 PAYING RENT**

Rent and other charges are due and payable on the first day of the month. Reasonable accommodations for this requirement will be made for persons with disabilities upon request of the family. As a safety measure, no cash shall be accepted as a rent payment. The Allegheny County Housing Authority offers several options in paying rent.

- A. Direct Debit Payment (DDP)
- B. Pay by mail (Payments mailed directly to LockBox bank account)

- C. Pay by Phone/Internet 1-800-961-6184 (credit card/debit card) transfer fees apply
- D. Pay Rent Online (transfer fees apply)

If the rent and/or other charges are not paid by the fifth of the month, on or about the sixth day of the month a Lease Termination Notice will be issued to the tenant. In addition, a \$20 late fee will be assessed to the tenant if the rent is not paid by the tenth day of the month. The late fee will be charged on or after the eleventh of the month. This will occur for each month that rent and/or other charges are not paid in a timely manner. If rent is paid by a personal check and the check is returned for insufficient funds, this shall be considered a non-payment of rent and will incur the late fee plus an additional charge of \$40 for processing costs. After two checks have been returned, only money orders or certified checks will be accepted for payment for the following twelve months. The same guidelines will be applied to residents that are on the Allegheny County Housing Authority Demand Debit Program (DDP), pay rent online or by phone, whose accounts show insufficient funds on two separate occasions. Residents utilizing the DDP will not be considered late on their rent if their rent is paid at a later date in the month that the rent is due under the DDP.

Residents utilizing the Pennsylvania Volunteer Vendor Payment System and the Direct Debit Program will be exempt from the possibility of these additional charges unless there are other remaining balances not associated with the current month's rent.

### ***13.9 RENT FOR POLICE OFFICE OCCUPYING A PUBLIC HOUSING UNIT***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority permits police officers to reside in a public housing unit to increase security for its public housing residents. The rent charged to a police officer for occupancy of a public housing unit will be the minimum rent amount set forth in Section 13.0. However, if the police officer resides in a public housing community where tenants are required to pay utilities in addition to rent, the police officer will also be responsible for paying the utilities in accordance with the terms of the lease.

## **14.0 COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY REQUIREMENT**

### ***14.1 GENERAL***

In order to be eligible for continued occupancy, each adult family member must either (1) contribute eight hours per month of community service (not including political activities), (2) participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, or (3) perform eight hours per month of combined activities as previously described unless they are exempt from this requirement. The eight hours of activity may be completed at eight hours each month or aggregated across a year, as long as 96 hours are completed by each annual certification.

## **14.2 EXEMPTIONS**

The following adult family members of tenant families are exempt from this requirement:

- A. Family members who are 62 or older.
- B. Family members who are:
  - 1. blind or disabled as defined under 216(I)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(I)(1) , Section 1382(c)) and who certify that because of this disability she or he is unable to comply with the community service requirements.
  - or
  - 2. Family members who are the primary care giver of such individual.
- C. Family members engaged in work activities as defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 607(d)), specified below:
  - 1. Unsubsidized employment;
  - 2. Subsidized private-sector employment;
  - 3. Subsidized public-sector employment;
  - 4. Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available;
  - 5. On-the-job-training;
  - 6. Job-search;
  - 7. Community service programs;
  - 8. Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual);
  - 9. Job-skills training directly related to employment;
  - 10. Education directly related to employment in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency; and

- 11. Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate.
- D. Able to meet requirements under a State program funded under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare program in our State, including a State-administered Welfare-to-Work program; or
- E. A member of a family receiving assistance, benefits, or services under a State program funded under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 601 et seq.), or under any other welfare program of our State (HUD has determined that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) qualifies as a welfare program of the state. Therefore, if a tenant is a member of a family receiving assistance under SNAP, and has been found by the State to be in compliance with the program requirements, that tenant is exempt from the CSSR, including a State-administered Welfare-to-Work program, and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in non-compliance with such a program.

**14.3 NOTIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall identify all adult family members who are apparently not exempt from the community service requirement.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall notify all such family members of the community service requirement and of the categories of individuals who are exempt from the requirement. The notification will provide the opportunity for family members to claim and explain an exempt status in writing. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall verify such claims. If a resident does not agree with the Allegheny County Housing Authority's determination, he or she can appeal by following the Grievance Policy. Changes in exempt or non-exempt status of a resident shall be reported by the resident to the Allegheny County Housing Authority within ten (10) calendar days of the change.

At lease execution or re-examination, all adult members (18 or older) of a public housing resident family must:

- A. Provide all requested documentation, if applicable, that they qualify for an exemption; (Documentation provided by the tenant will be used (and verified if necessary) by the Allegheny County Housing Authority to determine whether the tenant is exempt from the CSSR), and
- B. Sign a certification that they have received and read the policy and understand that, if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the community service

requirement will result in non-renewal of their lease, per 24 CFR 966.4(1)(2)(iii)(D).

When a non-exempt person becomes exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the Allegheny County Housing Authority and provide documentation. When an exempt person becomes non-exempt, it is his or her responsibility to report this to the Allegheny County Housing Authority as soon as possible.

For families paying a flat rent, the obligation begins on the date their annual reexamination would have been effective had an annual reexamination taken place. It will also advise them that failure to comply with the community service requirement will result in ineligibility for continued occupancy at the time of any subsequent annual reexamination.

#### **14.4 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Eligible community service activities include, but are not limited to, serving at:

- A. Local public or non-profit institutions, such as schools, Head Start Programs, before- or after-school programs, childcare centers, hospitals, clinics, hospices, nursing homes, recreation centers, senior centers, adult daycare programs, homeless shelters, feeding programs, food banks (distributing either donated or commodity foods), or clothes closets (distributing donated clothing);
- B. Non-profit organizations serving Allegheny County Housing Authority residents or their children, such as: Boy or Girl Scouts, Boys or Girls Club, 4-H Clubs, Police Activities League (PAL), organized children's recreation, mentoring, or education programs, Big Brothers or Big Sisters, Garden Centers, community clean-up programs, beautification programs;
- C. Programs funded under the Older Americans Act, such as Green Thumb, Service Corps of Retired Executives, senior meals programs, senior centers, Meals on Wheels;
- D. Public or non-profit organizations dedicated to seniors, youth, children, residents, citizens, special-needs populations or with missions to enhance the environment, historic resources, cultural identities, neighborhoods or performing arts;
- E. Allegheny County Housing Authority housing to improve grounds or provide gardens (so long as such work does not alter the Allegheny County Housing Authority's insurance coverage), or work through resident organizations to help other residents with problems, including serving on the Resident Advisory Board, outreach and assistance with Allegheny County Housing Authority-run self-sufficiency activities including supporting computer learning centers; and

- F. Care for the children of other residents so parents may volunteer.

In order to facilitate easier documentation of the community service provided, residents shall work exclusively for non-profits or a governmental agency. Any required court-ordered community service or probation-based work shall not count towards a resident's required 8 hours per month of community service.

Eligible self-sufficiency activities include, but are not limited, to:

- A. Job readiness or job training while not employed;
- B. Training programs through local One-Stop Career Centers, Workforce Investment Boards (local entities administered through the U.S. Department of Labor), or other training providers;
- C. Higher education (junior college or college);
- D. Apprenticeships (formal or informal);
- E. Substance abuse or mental health counseling;
- F. Reading, financial and/or computer literacy classes;
- G. English as a Second Language and/or English proficiency classes;
- H. Budgeting and credit counseling.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will try to coordinate with social service agencies, local schools, and the Human Resources Office in identifying a list of volunteer community service positions.

Together with the resident advisory councils, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may create volunteer positions such as hall monitoring, litter patrols, and supervising and record keeping for volunteers.

#### **14.5 THE PROCESS**

Upon admission and each annual reexamination thereafter, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will do the following:

- A. Provide a list of known volunteer opportunities to the family members.
- B. Provide information about obtaining suitable volunteer positions.

- C. Provide a volunteer time sheet to the family member. Instructions for the time sheet require the individual to complete the form and have a supervisor date and sign for each period of work.
- D. Assign family members to a volunteer coordinator who will assist the family members in identifying appropriate volunteer positions and in meeting their responsibilities. The volunteer coordinator will track the family member's progress monthly and will contact the family member as needed to best encourage compliance.

At each regularly scheduled rent re-examination, each non-exempt family member will present a signed certification on a form provided by the Allegheny County Housing Authority of CSSR activities performed over the previous twelve (12) months. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain third-party verification of CSSR completion administered through outside organizations.

**14.6 NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will notify any family found to be in noncompliance of the following:

- A. The family member(s) has been determined to be in noncompliance;
- B. That the determination is subject to the grievance procedure, a right to be represented by counsel, and the opportunity to any available judicial remedy; and
- C. That, unless the family member(s) enter into a written work-out agreement, the lease will not be renewed.

**14.7 OPPORTUNITY FOR CURE**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will offer the family member(s) the opportunity to enter into a work-out agreement prior to the anniversary of the lease. The agreement shall state that the family member(s) agrees to enter into an economic self-sufficiency program or agrees to contribute to community service for as many hours as needed to comply with the requirement over the past 12-month period. It will state the number of hours that the family member is deficient. The cure shall occur over the 12-month period beginning with the date of the agreement and the resident shall at the same time stay current with that year's community service requirement. The first hours a resident earns go toward the current commitment until the current year's commitment is made.

The volunteer coordinator will assist the family member in identifying volunteer opportunities and will track compliance on a monthly basis.

Six months into the Cure Period, the Property Manager or designee shall meet with the family and warn the family of the consequences of non-compliance.

If any applicable family member does not accept the terms of the agreement or does not fulfill their obligation to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall take action to terminate the lease unless the noncompliant family member no longer lives in the unit.

#### **14.8 PROHIBITION AGAINST REPLACEMENT OF AGENCY EMPLOYEES**

In implementing the service requirement, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may not substitute community service or self-sufficiency activities performed by residents for work ordinarily performed by its employees, or replace a job at any location where residents perform activities to satisfy the service requirement.

### **15.0 RECERTIFICATIONS**

At least once every twelve months, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will conduct a reexamination of family income and circumstances. The results of the reexamination determine (1) the rent the family will pay, and (2) whether the family is housed in the correct unit size.

#### **15.1 GENERAL**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will send a notification letter to the family letting them know that it is time for their annual reexamination, giving them the option of selecting either the flat rent or income method, and scheduling an appointment if they are currently paying an income rent. If the family thinks they may want to switch from a flat rent to an income rent, they should request an appointment. At the appointment, the family can make their final decision regarding which rent method they will choose. The letter also includes, for those families paying the income method, forms for the family to complete in preparation for the interview. The letter includes instructions permitting the family to reschedule the interview if necessary. The letter tells families who may need to make alternate arrangements due to a disability that they may contact staff to request an accommodation of their needs.

During the appointment, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine whether family composition may require a transfer to a different bedroom size unit, and if so, the family's name will be placed on the transfer list.

Criminal background checks will be performed on all adult members of the household that are 18 years or older at the time of all annual recertifications. Sex offender registration checks will also be performed on all adult and juvenile household members.

The Housing Authority will verify this information using the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Database and document this information in the same method used at admission. If the criminal background check or sex offender registration check reveals information that may violate the lease between the household and the Allegheny County Housing Authority, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may take action to terminate the lease and evict the household. In addition, for any admissions after June 25, 2001 (the effective date of the Screening and Eviction for Drug Abuse and Other Criminal Activity final rule), if the recertification screening reveals that the tenant or a member of the tenant's household is subject to a lifetime sex offender registration requirement, if the Allegheny County Housing Authority learns that the tenant or household member has falsified information or otherwise failed to disclose his or her criminal history on their application and/or recertification forms, the Housing Authority will pursue eviction of the household

If a family is about to be evicted from housing based on either the criminal background check or the sex offender registration check, the resident will not be entitled to a grievance hearing.

#### 15.1.1 Compliance Provisions

The Allegheny County Housing Authority may participate in streamlined annual recertifications for elderly and disabled families on fixed income when HUD permits temporary compliance provisions. The Allegheny County Housing Authority may also allow households to self-certify as to having assets of less than \$5000 when HUD permits.

### 15.2 *MISSED APPOINTMENTS*

If the family fails to respond to the letter and fails to attend the interview, a second letter will be mailed. The second letter will advise of a new time and date for the interview, allowing for the same considerations for rescheduling and accommodation as above. The letter will also advise that failure by the family to attend the second scheduled interview without good cause will result in the Allegheny County Housing Authority taking eviction actions against the family and charging the family the amount of subsidy lost by the Allegheny County Housing Authority due to the family's failure to attend the recertification interview.

### 15.3 *FLAT RENTS*

The annual letter to flat rent payers regarding the reexamination process will state the following:

- A. Each year at the time of the annual reexamination, the family has the option of selecting a flat rent amount in lieu of completing the reexamination process and having their rent based on the income amount.
- B. The amount of the flat rent and the Allegheny County Housing Authority's

policies on switching rent types due to financial hardship.

- C. A fact sheet about income rents that explains the types of income counted, the most common types of income excluded, and the categories allowances that can be deducted from income.
- D. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income reexamination process every three years, rather than the annual review they otherwise would undergo.
- E. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a reexamination and return to the income based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. The family's income has decreased.
  - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for child care, medical care, etc.
  - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the income method would be more financially feasible for the family.

Once a family returns to the income based method during their “lease year” they cannot go back to a flat rent until their next regular annual reexamination.

- F. The dates upon which the Allegheny County Housing Authority expects to review the amount of the flat rent, the approximate rent increase the family could expect, and the approximate date upon which a future rent increase could become effective.
- G. The name and phone number of an individual to call to get additional information or counseling concerning flat rents.
- H. A certification for the family to sign accepting or declining the flat rent.

Each year prior to their anniversary date, Allegheny County Housing Authority will send a reexamination letter to the family offering the choice between a flat rent and income rent. At the appointment, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may assist the family in identifying the rent method that would be most advantageous for the family. If the family wishes to select the flat rent method without meeting with the Allegheny County Housing Authority representative, they may make the selection on the form and return the form to the Allegheny County Housing Authority. In such case, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will cancel the appointment and solely verify the family size and whether it is an appropriate size unit.

#### **15.4 THE INCOME METHOD**

During the interview, the family will provide all information regarding income, assets, deductions (eligible expenses), and other information necessary to determine the family's share of rent. The family will sign the HUD consent form and other consent forms that later will be mailed to the sources that will verify the family circumstances.

Upon receipt of verification, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine the family's annual income and will calculate their rent as follows.

The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:

- A. 10% of the family's monthly income;
- B. 30% of the family's adjusted monthly income;
- C. The welfare rent; or
- D. The minimum rent.

The family shall be informed of the results of the rent calculation under both the Income Method and the Flat Rent and given their choice of which rent to pay.

#### **15.5 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES FOR ANNUAL REEXAMINATIONS**

The new rent will be effective upon the anniversary date with thirty (30) calendar days notice of any rent increase to the family.

If the rent determination is delayed due to a reason beyond the control of the family, then any rent increase will be effective the first of the month after the month in which the family receives a 30-day notice of the amount. If the new rent is a reduction and the delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective as scheduled on the anniversary date or Universal Effective Date.

If the family caused the delay, then any increase will be effective on the anniversary date. Any reduction will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

#### **15.6 INTERIM REEXAMINATIONS**

During an interim reexamination, only the information affected by the changes being reported will be reviewed and verified.

Families will not be required to report any increase in income or decrease in allowable expenses between annual reexaminations unless their income increases by at least \$200 a month or their rent was reduced due to a decrease in income. In that situation, families

will be required to report immediately any increases in income. In this situation where the income has increased, the rent will also be increased

When the rent increases as a result of the interim reexamination, the increase shall be effective on the first day of the second month following the reexamination. When the rent decreases, it shall be effective on the first day of the next month.

Families are required to report the following changes to the Allegheny County Housing Authority between regular reexaminations. If the family's rent is being determined under the income method, these changes will trigger an interim reexamination. The family shall report these changes within ten (10) calendar days of their occurrence.

- A. A member has been added to the family through birth or adoption or court-awarded custody.
- B. A household member is leaving or has left the family unit.
- C. Any addition to the household. (Tenant must be in good standing before making these requests; excluding any additions which fall under letter A.)
- D. Removal of household member when Final Protection from Abuse is issued against said household member.

In order to add a household member other than through birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody, the family must request that the new member be added to the lease. Before adding the new member to the lease, the individual must complete an application form stating their income assets, and all other information required of an applicant. The individual must provide their Social Security number and must verify their citizenship/eligible immigrant status. (Their housing will not be delayed due to delays in verifying eligible immigrant status other than delays caused by the family.) The new family member will go through the screening process similar to the process for applicants. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will determine the eligibility of the individual before adding them to the lease. If the individual is found to be ineligible or does not pass the screening criteria, they will be advised in writing and given the opportunity for an informal review. If they are found to be eligible and do pass the screening criteria, their name will be added to the lease. At the same time, if the family's rent is being determined under the income method, the family's annual income will be recalculated taking into account the circumstances of the new family member. The effective date of the new rent will be in accordance with Section 15.8.

Families are not required to, but may at any time, request an interim reexamination based on a decrease in income, an increase in allowable expenses, requested enrollment in the Family Self-Sufficiency program, or other changes in family circumstances. Upon such request, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will take timely action to process the interim reexamination and recalculate the tenant's rent.

When a decrease in income is reported, and the Allegheny County Housing Authority receives confirmation that the decrease will last less than 30 days, an interim adjustment will not be processed.

### ***15.7 SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS***

If a family's income is too unstable to project for twelve (12) months, including families that temporarily have little to no income (0 to \$50 renters) or have a temporary decrease in income, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may schedule special reexaminations every thirty (30) calendar days until the income stabilizes and an annual income can be determined. Once an annual income is determined, rent will be increased the first of the month after the month in which the family receives a 30-day notice of that amount.

### ***15.8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES DUE TO INTERIM OR SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS***

Unless there is a delay in reexamination processing caused by the family, any rent increase will be effective the first of the second month after the month in which the family receives notice of the new rent amount. If the family causes a delay, then the rent increase will be effective on the date it would have been effective had the process not been delayed (even if this means a retroactive increase).

If the new rent is a reduction and any delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective the first of the month after the interim reexamination should have been completed.

If the new rent is a reduction and the family caused the delay or did not report the change in a timely manner, the change will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

### ***15.9 TIMELY REPORTING REQUIREMENT***

Families must notify the Allegheny County Housing Authority of all reportable changes, as defined in this chapter, in a timely manner. Timely reporting means that the family, without notice, must notify the Allegheny County Housing Authority of any change within ten (10) calendar days of the actual date of such change, except that any additions to the family, other than births, require prior approval by the Allegheny County Housing Authority. Such notice must be made in writing to the site's management office.

### ***15.10 HOUSING AUTHORITY MISTAKES IN CALCULATING RENT***

If the Allegheny County Housing Authority makes a mistake in calculating a resident's rent contribution and overcharges the resident, the resident shall receive a refund for the amount of the mistake going back a maximum of twelve months. The refund shall be

given to the resident as soon as practical or credited to the resident's account, whichever the resident desires unless the resident owes the Housing Authority money in which case the debt shall be offset to the degree possible before the resident chooses between the two refund methods.

### **15.11 OVER INCOME FAMILIES**

Beginning December 1, 2018, the XYZ Housing Authority shall track all public housing residents who have an income over 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This is defined as 2.4 times the HUD determined Very Low-Income limit for our jurisdiction. The limit will be adjusted each year within 60 days after HUD published new income limits. When the Housing Authority becomes aware, through an annual reexamination or an interim reexamination for an increase in income, that a family's income exceeds the applicable income limit, the Housing Authority must, per HUD regulation, document in the family's tenant file that the family exceeds the threshold to compare with the family's income a year later.

If, one year after the initial determination by the Housing Authority that a family's income exceeds the over-income limit, and the family's income continues to exceed the over-income limit, the Housing Authority must, as required by HUD regulation, provide written notification to the family that their income has exceeded the over-income limit for one year. The written notification shall further state that if the family's income continues to exceed the over-income limit for the next 12 consecutive months, the family will be subject to either a higher rent (as determined on a HUD formula) or termination based on the Housing Authority's policies. **[DELETE THE OPTION THAT DOES NOT APPLY AFTER HUD PUBLISHES ADDITIONAL INFO]** All notices and communications will be provided in a manner appropriate for persons with hearing, visual or other disabilities.

If the XYZ Housing Authority discovers through an annual or interim exam that the family's income falls below the over-income limit, the two year period starts over again if the family exceeds the limit in the future.

The termination or higher rent payment decision will be made after HUD publishes additional information and guidelines.

Exempted from this regulation are families with a valid Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) contract, or families where at least one family member is receiving the Earned Income Disregard benefit.

## **16.0 UNIT TRANSFERS**

Unit transfers initiated by the resident will be for sites chosen by the resident. In all cases, residents will be permitted to transfer only once per year. For example, if a resident transfers in July, they will not be eligible for another transfer until the following July. The lease for the new unit that the resident is transferring into shall be for the period of time remaining on the old lease so HUD re-certification requirements can be met.

### **16.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSFER POLICY**

The objectives of the Transfer Policy include the following:

- A. To address emergency situations (Health and Safety).
- B. To fully utilize available housing resources while avoiding overcrowding by insuring that each family occupies the appropriate size unit.
- C. To facilitate a relocation when required for modernization or other management purposes.
- D. To facilitate relocation of families with inadequate housing accommodations.
- E. To assist residents, lawful occupants, or affiliated individuals who are victims of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking according to VAWA.
- F. To eliminate vacancy loss and other expenses due to unnecessary transfers.

An approved transfer between units or properties does not constitute a lease violation.

### **16.2 CATEGORIES OF TRANSFERS**

Category 1: Emergency transfers. These transfers are necessary when conditions pose an immediate threat to the life, health, or safety of a family or one of its members or where a family member, lawful occupant, or affiliated individual is a victim of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to family members or affiliated individuals. Such situations may involve defects of the unit or the building in which it is located, a domestic abuse situation, a hate crime, the safety of witnesses to a crime, or a law enforcement matter particular to the neighborhood. All emergency transfers shall be completed as soon as practical.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has a specific VAWA Emergency Transfer Policy that is incorporated by reference into this ACOP and will govern all transfers requested under VAWA.

Category 2: Immediate administrative transfers. These transfers are necessary in order to permit a family needing accessible features to move to a unit with such a feature, allow a

family who has been granted a larger unit or transfer due to reasonable accommodation to move, to enable modernization, revitalization, disposition or demolition work.

Category 3: Over and Under Housed. To correct occupancy standards where the unit size is inappropriate for the size and composition of the family.

Category 4: Regular administrative transfers. These transfers are made to offer incentives to families willing to help meet certain Allegheny County Housing Authority occupancy goals or other transfers approved by the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

### **16.3 DOCUMENTATION**

When the transfer is at the request of the family, the family may be required to provide third party verification of the need for the transfer.

When the transfer is a result of an action protected under VAWA, the documentation required under the VAWA Emergency Transfer shall be required.

### **16.4 PROCESSING TRANSFERS**

Transfers on the waiting list will be sorted by the above categories and within each category by date and time.

Transfers in category 1 and 2 will be housed ahead of any other families, including those on the applicant waiting list. Transfers in category 1 will be housed ahead of transfers in category 2. Closed waiting lists will not affect category 1 transfers.

Transfers in categories 3 and 4 will be housed along with applicants for admission at a ratio of one transfer for every ten admissions by site (this means ten will come off the wait list before one comes off the transfer list). The transfers will occur in the sequence that the Allegheny County Housing Authority becomes aware of the over or under housed situation and adds the family to the transfer list. If the family did not self-report their situation, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall send them a written letter explaining their addition to the transfer list and the process that will be followed.

Upon offer and acceptance of a unit, the family will execute all lease up documents (including a lease for the time remaining on the original lease) and pay any rent and/or security deposit within two (2) business days of being informed the unit is ready to rent. The family will be allowed five (5) business days to complete a transfer. The family will be responsible for paying rent at the old unit as well as the new unit for any period of time they have possession of both. The prorated rent and other charges (key deposit and any additional security deposit owing) must be paid at the time of lease execution.

The following is the policy for the rejection of an offer to transfer:

- A. If the family rejects with good cause any unit offered, they will not lose their

place on the transfer waiting list although Allegheny County Housing Authority will offer the unit to the next one on the waiting list.

- B. If the transfer is being made at the request of the Allegheny County Housing Authority and the family rejects the offer without good cause, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will take action to terminate their tenancy. If the reason for the transfer is that the current unit is too small to meet the Allegheny County Housing Authority's optimum occupancy standards, the family may request in writing to stay in the unit without being transferred so long as their occupancy will not exceed two people per living/sleeping room and the family agrees not to seek another transfer for two (2) years.
- C. If the transfer is being made at the family's request, the family may, without good cause, turn down the offer. However, if the offer is rejected the family will be removed from that transfer list.
- D. A Transfer request will be considered when the entire family (adult members) demonstrates agreement. The entire family must transfer to the new unit.

#### **16.5 COST OF THE FAMILY'S MOVE**

The cost of the transfer generally will be borne by the family in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is made at the request of the family or by others on behalf of the family (i.e. by the police);
- B. When the transfer is made under VAWA;
- C. When the transfer is needed to move the family to an appropriately sized unit, either larger or smaller; or
- D. When the transfer is needed because action or inaction by the family caused the unit to be unsafe or uninhabitable.

The cost of the transfer will be borne by the Allegheny County Housing Authority in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is needed in order to carry out rehabilitation, modernization, disposition or demolition activities;
- B. When a move is necessary for tenants to receive accessible features of the unit;

- C. When action or inaction by the Allegheny County Housing Authority has caused the unit to be unsafe or inhabitable; or

When the transfer is necessitated because a family with disabilities needs the accessible unit into which the transferring family moved.

The responsibility for moving costs in other circumstances will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **16.6 TENANTS IN GOOD STANDING**

When the transfer is to right-size an under-housed family, they cannot join the transfer list nor will it be approved unless the family is in compliance with their lease, current in all payments to the Housing Authority, all adult family members in agreement with the transfer, they comply with the eligibility requirements of the property and must pass a housekeeping inspection. VAWA victims will follow the VAWA rules.

Over-housed families will be transferred in accordance with this policy as long as the transfer complies with the eligibility requirements of the property.

## **16.7 TRANSFER REQUESTS**

A tenant may not request a regular administrative transfer for one year after initially occupied the public housing unit. In considering the request, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may request a meeting with the tenant to better understand the need for transfer and to explore possible alternatives. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will review the request in a timely manner and if a meeting is desired, it shall contact the tenant within ten (10) business days of receipt of the request to schedule a meeting. All housing options shall be explained to the affected family at the time of the requested meeting.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will grant or deny the transfer request in writing within ten (10) business days of receiving the request or holding the meeting, whichever is later. If the transfer request is approved, the family's name will be added to the transfer waiting list and the transfer will occur as described in this policy.

Wherever possible, the family shall be transferred to an appropriately sized unit on the same site.

If the transfer request is denied, the denial letter will advise the family of their right to utilize the grievance procedure.

If the transfer is requested under VAWA, the provisions of VAWA shall apply.

## **16.8 RIGHT OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY IN TRANSFER POLICY**

The provisions listed above are to be used as a guide to ensure fair and impartial means of assigning units for transfers. It is not intended that this policy will create a property right or any other type of right for a tenant to transfer or refuse to transfer.

## **17.0 INSPECTIONS**

An authorized representative of the Allegheny County Housing Authority and an adult family member will inspect the premises prior to commencement of occupancy. A written statement of the condition of the premises will be made, all equipment will be provided, and the statement will be signed by both parties with a copy retained in the Allegheny County Housing Authority file and a copy given to the family member. An authorized Allegheny County Housing Authority representative will inspect the premises at the time the resident vacates and will furnish a statement of any charges to be made provided the resident turns in the proper notice under State law. The resident's security deposit can be used to offset against any Allegheny County Housing Authority damages to the unit.

### **17.1 MOVE-IN INSPECTIONS**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority and an adult member of the family will inspect the unit prior to signing the lease. Both parties will sign a written statement of the condition of the unit. A copy of the signed inspection will be given to the family and the original will be placed in the tenant file.

### **17.2 ANNUAL INSPECTIONS**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will inspect each public housing unit at least annually to ensure that each unit meets the Allegheny County Housing Authority's housing standards. Work orders will be submitted and completed to correct any deficiencies.

### **17.3 PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS**

This is generally conducted along with the annual inspection. This inspection is intended to keep items in good repair. It checks weatherization; checks the condition of the smoke detectors, water heaters, furnaces, automatic thermostats and water temperatures; checks for leaks; and provides an opportunity to change furnace filters and provide other minor servicing that extends the life of the unit and its equipment.

### **17.4 SPECIAL INSPECTIONS**

A special inspection may be scheduled to enable HUD or others to inspect a sample of the housing stock maintained by the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

#### ***17.5 HOUSEKEEPING INSPECTIONS***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will conduct at least one housekeeping inspection annually to ensure the family is maintaining the unit in a safe and sanitary condition.

#### ***17.6 NOTICE OF INSPECTION***

For inspections defined as annual inspections, preventative maintenance inspections, special inspections, and housekeeping inspections, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will give the tenant at least two (2) calendar days written notice.

#### ***17.7 EMERGENCY INSPECTIONS***

If any employee and/or agent of the Allegheny County Housing Authority has reason to believe that an emergency exists within the housing unit, the unit can be entered without notice. The person(s) that enters the unit will leave a written notice to the resident that indicates the date and time the unit was entered and the reason why it was necessary to enter the unit.

#### ***17.8 PRE-MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS***

When a tenant gives notice that they intend to move, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will offer to schedule a pre-move-out inspection with the family. The inspection allows the Allegheny County Housing Authority to help the family identify any problems which, if left uncorrected, could lead to vacate charges. This inspection is a courtesy to the family and has been found to be helpful both in reducing costs to the family and in enabling the Allegheny County Housing Authority to ready units more quickly for the future occupants.

#### ***17.9 MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS***

The Allegheny County Housing Authority conducts the move-out inspection after the tenant vacates to assess the condition of the unit and determine responsibility for any needed repairs. When possible, the tenant is notified of the inspection and is encouraged to be present. This inspection becomes the basis for any claims that may be assessed against the security deposit.

#### ***17.10 FAILED HOUSEKEEPING INSPECTIONS***

When a resident's unit fails a housekeeping inspection, the resident will be informed of such immediately after the inspection is completed. The resident will also be issued a copy of the housekeeping inspection form showing the deficiencies.

- A. The inspection is required to be documented on a housekeeping inspection form and a notice must be sent to the resident identifying the deficiencies and providing no more than 30 days for correction.
- B. A re-inspection will occur after the initial 30 day correction period to determine whether the problems have been corrected. If the resident fails the re-inspection, he/she will be required to take a mandatory housekeeping class by the ACHA within 30 calendar days of the failure.
- C. The resident will be given a third opportunity to pass the housekeeping inspection. Failure to either pass the third inspection or attend the mandatory housekeeping class, will result in eviction proceedings.
- D. A follow-up housekeeping re-inspection will be conducted once per month for two months following the passed inspection. If acceptable, the ACHA will continue on a regular housekeeping inspection schedule, unless additional housekeeping issues arise. Any failure of a housekeeping inspection during this period will result in eviction proceedings.

*NOTE: In all cases where poor housekeeping is detected, the assigned Resident Services Coordinator will be contacted to assist in locating possible services for the resident.*

## **17A MINIMUM HEATING STANDARD**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall comply with the heating standards established by the Allegheny County Health Department.

## **18.0 PET POLICY**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has a separate Pet Policy that has been approved by the Board of Directors.

## **19.0 REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS**

When a resident owes the Allegheny County Housing Authority retroactive rent or back charges and is unable to pay the balance by the due date, the resident may request that the

Allegheny County Housing Authority allow them to enter into a Repayment Agreement. The Allegheny County Housing Authority has the sole discretion of whether to accept such an agreement. All Repayment Agreements must assure that the full payment is made within a period not to exceed twelve (12) months. If feasible, the total amount paid will not exceed 40% of monthly adjusted income. All Repayment Agreements must be in writing and signed by both parties. They must include the following elements:

- A. Reference to the paragraphs in the Public Housing lease whereby the tenant is in non-compliance and may be subject to termination of tenancy or assistance, or both.
- B. The monthly retroactive rent repayment amount is in addition to the family's regular rent contribution and is payable to the PHA.
- C. The terms of the agreement may be renegotiated if there is a decrease or increase in the family's income.
- D. Late and missed payments constitute default of the repayment agreement and may result in termination of tenancy and/or assistance.

Refusal to enter into a Repayment Agreement for monies owed will subject the family to eviction procedures.

If a resident is paying the minimum rent and has it abated for a temporary period, the resident has a right to enter into a repayment agreement and repay the rent over a four (4) month period.

In cases where it is deemed a resident has committed fraud against the Allegheny County Housing Authority, the Authority may agree to enter into a repayment agreement if the resident will:

- A. Immediately repay the entire amount of overpaid assistance in excess of \$3000; and
- B. Immediate 25% of the remaining balance; and
- C. Pay the remainder over a twelve (12) month period.

## **20.0 TERMINATION**

### **20.1 *TERMINATION BY TENANT***

The tenant may terminate the lease at any time by submitting a 14-day written notice. In this case, the tenant will still be responsible for the full month's rent for any portion of a

month that a tenant has control of the unit. Upon vacating a unit, the tenant is required to deliver all key to the unit to the property manager in order to get a security deposit refund assuming one is due to the tenant.

## **20.2 TERMINATION BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority after October 1, 2001 will not renew the lease of any family that is not in compliance with the community service requirement or an approved Agreement to Cure. If they do not voluntarily leave the property, eviction proceedings will begin. This will become enforceable after HUD's final regulation is implemented.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will terminate the lease for serious or repeated violations of material lease terms or for falsifying a response to the housing application. Such violations include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Nonpayment of rent or other charges;
- B. A history of late rental payments;
- C. Failure to provide timely and accurate information regarding family composition, income circumstances, or other information related to eligibility or rent;
- D. Failure to fill out certification paperwork, including signatures from all adult household members or failure to pass annual criminal background check for any family member in the household or any other reason stated in 8.4 Grounds of Denial;
- E. Failure to allow inspection of the unit;
- F. Failure to maintain the unit in a safe and sanitary manner;
- G. Assignment or subletting of the premises;
- H. Use of the premises for purposes other than as a dwelling unit (other than for housing authority approved resident businesses);
- I. Destruction of property;
- J. Acts of destruction, defacement, or removal of any part of the premises or failure to cause guests to refrain from such acts;
- K. Any violent or drug-related criminal activity on or off the premises, not just on or near the premises. This includes any tenant, member of the tenant's household or guest, and any such activity engaged in on the premises by any other person under

the tenant's control. This includes but is not limited to the manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of the Allegheny County Housing Authority or on the premises of any other federally assisted housing;

- L. Non-compliance with Non-Citizen Rule requirements;
- M. Permitting persons not on the lease to reside in the unit more than fourteen (14) calendar days each year without the prior written approval of the Housing Authority;
- N. Any activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other Residents or employees of the Authority by the Resident, household members, or guests of the Resident or threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of their residences by persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises is grounds for termination of tenancy;
- O. Alcohol abuse that the Allegheny County Housing Authority determines interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents;
- P. Failure to perform required community service or be exempted therefrom;
- Q. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will take immediate action to evict any household that includes an individual who is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program or convicted of other prohibited criminal activities;
- R. Determination that a household member is illegally using a drug or when the Allegheny County Housing Authority determines that a pattern of illegal use of a drug interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents;
- S. Criminal activity as shown by a criminal record. In such cases the Allegheny County Housing Authority will notify the household of the proposed action to be based on the information and will provide the subject of the record and the tenant with a copy of the criminal record before the Allegheny County Housing Authority grievance hearing or court trial concerning the termination of tenancy or eviction. The tenant will be given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of that record in the grievance hearing or court trial;
- T. Tenant must notified Allegheny County Housing Management office if they are in possession of any firearms and/or other offensive weapons. The Tenant is not to display or use, or allow members of the Tenant's household or guests to display or use any firearms, BB guns, pellet guns, slingshots, bow and arrows, or other offensive weapons as defined by the laws and the courts of the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania in a manner that endangers life or property. Tenant will keep fire arms and/or other offensive weapons stored on the premises in a locked cabinet supplied by the Tenant and approved by the ACHA.

- U. Disconnecting a smoke detector in any manner, removing any batteries from a smoke detector or failing to notify the Housing Authority if the smoke detector is inoperable for any reason;
- V. Permitting persons not on lease to use household mailing address as their own;
- W. When judgment is obtained against a tenant and that tenant does not voluntarily leave the unit, then Allegheny County Housing Authority will obtain an Order of Possession. If the constable and/or sheriff must forcibly evict the tenant from their unit then that tenant's lease is considered completely terminated. The tenant's termination is final and the tenant retains no rights to the unit itself; and
- X. Other good cause.

If an individual or family's lease is terminated for criminal activity, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will notify the local post office serving the development that the individual or family no longer lives there.

In deciding to terminate a tenancy for criminal activity or alcohol abuse, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will consider circumstances relevant to the particular case such as the seriousness of the offending action, the extent of participation by the leaseholder in the offending action, the effects that the eviction would have on family members not involved in the offending activity, and the extent to which the leaseholder has shown personal responsibility and has taken all reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate the offending action.

In deciding whether to exercise their discretion to terminate an individual or household that has engaged in criminal activity, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will consider all of the circumstances relevant to the particular admission or eviction decision, including but not limited to: the seriousness of the offending action; the effect that eviction of the entire household would have on family members not involved in the criminal activity; and the extent to which the leaseholder has taken all reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate the criminal activity.

An arrest record, alone, will not serve as sufficient evidence of criminal activity that can support an adverse termination, or eviction decision. Before the Allegheny County Housing Authority evicts an individual or household on the basis of criminal activity by a household member or guest, it will determine that the relevant individual actually engaged in such activity.

An arrest record can trigger an inquiry into whether there is sufficient evidence to determine that a person engaged in disqualifying criminal activity, but is not itself evidence on which to base a determination. The Allegheny County Housing Authority can utilize other evidence, such as police reports detailing the circumstances of the arrest, witness statements, and other relevant documentation to assist them in making a determination that disqualifying conduct occurred. Reliable evidence of a conviction for criminal conduct that would disqualify an individual for tenancy may also be the basis for determining that the disqualifying conduct in fact occurred.

If the Allegheny County Housing Authority proposes to terminate assistance on the basis of a criminal record, the Housing Authority will notify the household of the proposed action to be based on the information and will provide the subject of the record and the tenant with a copy of the criminal record before the Housing Authority grievance hearing or court trial concerning the termination of tenancy or eviction. The tenant will be given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of that record in the grievance hearing or court trial. The family will have ten (10) business days to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the record in writing. If the Housing Authority does not receive the dispute within the allotted time, the family will be terminated.

#### ***20.2.1 MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE INCOME***

Residents will be subject to a maximum income limit to remain eligible to reside in Allegheny County Housing Authority public housing units. Such limit will be set at 120% of the Area Median Income for the family size, and other applicable HUD regulations.

A resident whose family income exceeds the 120% of the Area Median Income shall be provided a notice at the first annual re-examination following the increase in income that their Lease and eligibility for public housing will be terminated at their anniversary date of the next annual re-re-examination. However, where there is a decrease in the family's income below the 120% Maximum Allowable Income Limit prior to the effective date of the termination, the family shall remain an eligible resident, but shall be subject to these Maximum Allowable Income requirements for any further changes in income eligibility.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall exempt elderly and disabled families from this provision and comply with 24 CFR 960.221(b) in instances where the family is participating in the Allegheny County Housing Authority FSS Program or while receiving an "earned income disallowance".

#### ***20.2A VAWA PROTECTIONS***

Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), notwithstanding the title of the statute, protections are not limited to women but cover victims regardless of sex, gender

identity, or sexual orientation. Public housing residents have the following specific protections, which will be observed by the Allegheny County Housing Authority:

An incident or incidents or actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking will not be construed as a serious or repeated violation of the lease by the victim or threatened victim of that violence, and shall not in itself be good cause for terminating the assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights of the victim of such violence.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall provide each applicant and resident a HUD prescribed Notice of Occupancy Rights and Certification form. It shall also be provided with any notice of eviction. In addition, the Authority shall make an adopted Emergency Transfer Plan and Emergency Transfer Request available upon request.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall keep a record of all emergency transfer requests requested under the Emergency Transfer Plan and the outcome of these requests for three years.

The Housing Authority may terminate the assistance to remove a lawful occupant or tenant who engages in criminal acts or threatened acts of violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to family members or affiliated individuals without terminating the assistance or evicting victimized lawful occupants. This is also true even if the household member or affiliated individual is not a signatory to the lease. Under VAWA, the Allegheny County Housing Authority is granted the authority to bifurcate the lease. The VAWA victim must be the one who retains the assistance.

The Housing Authority will honor court orders regarding the rights of access or control of the property.

There is no limitation on the ability of the Housing Authority to evict for other good cause unrelated to the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, other than the victim may not be subject to a “more demanding standard” than non-victims.

There is no prohibition on the Housing Authority evicting if it “can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing service to the property if that tenant’s (victim’s) tenancy is not terminated.” An actual and imminent threat consists of a physical danger that is real, would occur within an immediate timeframe, and could result in death or serious bodily harm. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include: the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the length of time before the potential harm would occur.

Any protections provided by law which give greater protection to the victim are not superseded by these provisions.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall require verification in all cases where an individual claims protection against an action involving such individual proposed to be taken by the Housing Authority. Types of acceptable verifications are outlined below, and must be submitted within 14 business days after receipt of the Housing Authority's written request for verification.

## **20.2B VERIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT OR STALKING**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall require verification in all cases where an individual claims protection against an action involving such individual proposed to be taken by the Housing Authority. The request for verification shall take the form of a written request by the Allegheny County Housing Authority to the claimant.

- A. **Requirement for Verification.** The law allows, but does not require, the Allegheny County Housing Authority to verify that an incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking claimed by a tenant or other lawful occupant is bona fide and meets the requirements of the applicable definitions set forth in this policy. The Housing Authority shall require verification in all cases where an individual claims protection against an action involving such individual proposed to be taken by the Housing Authority.

Verification of a claimed incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking may be accomplished in one of the following three ways:

1. **HUD-approved form** – By providing to the Housing Authority a written certification, on the form approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), that the individual is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that the incident or incidents in question are bona fide incidents of actual or threatened abuse meeting the requirements of the applicable definition(s) set forth in this policy. The incident or incidents in question must be described in reasonable detail as required in the HUD-approved form, and the completed certification must include the name of the perpetrator, only if the name of the perpetrator is safe to provide and is known to the victim.
2. **Other documentation** – by providing to the Housing Authority documentation signed by an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or a medical professional, from whom the victim has sought assistance in addressing the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of the abuse, described

in such documentation. The professional providing the documentation must sign and attest under penalty of perjury (28 U.S.C. 1746) to the professional's belief that the incident or incidents in question are bona fide incidents of abuse meeting the requirements of the applicable definition(s) set forth in this policy. The victim of the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking described in the documentation must also sign and attest to the documentation under penalty of perjury.

3. ***Police or court record*** – by providing to the Housing Authority a Federal, State, tribal, territorial, or local law enforcement or court record describing the incident or incidents in question.
- B. ***Time allowed to provide verification/failure to provide.*** An individual who claims protection against adverse action based on an incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and who is requested by the Housing Authority to provide verification, must provide such verification within 14 business days after receipt of the written request for verification. Failure to provide verification, in proper form within such time will result in loss of protection under VAWA and this policy against a proposed adverse action. The submission of false information may be the basis for the termination of assistance or for eviction.
- C. ***Managing conflicting documentation.*** In cases where the Allegheny County Housing Authority receives conflicting certification documents from two or more members of a household, each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the perpetrator, the Allegheny County Housing Authority may determine which is the true victim by requiring third-party documentation as described in 24 CFR 5.2007 and in accordance with any HUD guidance as to how such determinations will be made. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall honor any court orders addressing rights of access or control of the property, including civil protection orders issued to protect the victim and issued to address the distribution or possession of property among the household.

## **20.2C CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information provided under VAWA including the fact that an individual is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, shall be retained in confidence and shall not be entered into any shared database or provided to any related entity except to the extent that the disclosure is:

- A. Requested or consented to by the individual in writing;
- B. Required for used in an eviction proceeding; or
- C. Otherwise required by applicable law.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall provide its tenants notice of their rights under VAWA including their right to confidentiality and the limits thereof.

### **20.3 TERMINATIONS FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

- A. The term “due process determination” means a determination by HUD that law covering the Allegheny County Housing Authority’s jurisdiction requires that residents must be given the opportunity for a hearing in court which provides the basic elements of due process before eviction from the dwelling unit.
- B. HUD has issued a due process determination that the law of this State requires that residents be given the opportunity for a hearing in a court that provides the basic elements of due process before eviction from a dwelling unit. The Allegheny County Housing Authority has therefore determined that this Grievance Procedure shall not be applicable to any termination of tenancy or eviction for:
  - 1. Any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the Allegheny County Housing Authority’s public housing premises by other residents or employees of the Housing Authority;
  - 2. Any violent or drug-related criminal activity on or off such premises; or
  - 3. Any activity resulting in a felony conviction.

### **20.4 ABANDONMENT**

- A. Upon the termination of a lease or relinquishment of possession of the unit, the tenant shall remove all personal property from the leased or formerly leased premises. Abandoned personal property remaining on the premises may be disposed of at the discretion of the Allegheny County Housing Authority subject to the provisions of this section.
- B. Personal property remaining on the premises may be deemed abandoned if any of the following apply:
  - 1. Tenant has vacated the unit following a written lease termination notice
  - 2. An eviction order, or order for possession, in favor of the Allegheny County Housing Authority, has been entered and tenant has vacated the unit and removed substantially all personal property
  - 3. An eviction order or order for possession in favor of the Allegheny County Housing Authority has been executed

4. Tenant has provided the Allegheny County Housing Authority with proper written notice, as detailed in the lease, of a forwarding address and has vacated the unit and removed substantially all personal property
  5. Tenant has vacated the unit without communicating an intent to return, the rent is more than fifteen (15) days past due and, subsequent to those events, the Allegheny County Housing Authority has posted notice of tenant's rights regarding the property
- C. Prior to removing or disposing of abandoned property, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will provide written notice of the tenant's rights regarding the property. The tenant shall have ten (10) days from the postmark date of the notice to retrieve the property or to request that the property be stored for an additional period not exceeding thirty (30) days from the date of the notice. If the tenant so requests, the Authority will retain or store the property for up to thirty (30) days from the date of the notice. Storage will be provided at a place of the Authority's choosing and the tenant shall be responsible for costs. The Authority shall make the property reasonably available for purposes of retrieval.
- D. The notice shall be sent by first class mail to the tenant at the address of the leased premises and to any forwarding address provided by the tenant, including any address provided for emergency purposes.
- E. If no communication is made to the Allegheny County Housing Authority within ten (10) days, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will dispose of the property at its discretion.

## **20.5 RETURN OF SECURITY DEPOSIT**

Before a family moves out, the Head of the Household must complete an "Intent to Vacate" form (with forwarding address and exact move-out date) to the Property Manager at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to move-out. The Head of the Household must submit all keys relative to the unit to the Property Manager on the day of move-out. Keys will only be accepted during business hours. If keys are turned in after the first of the month, the family will be charged a full month's rent. The security deposit shall be forfeited if the family moves out in the first twelve months of their occupancy. In any case, a death will trigger the return of the security deposit less the cost of damages or money owed to the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

After a family moves out, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will return the security deposit within thirty (30) calendar days or give the family a written statement of why all or part of the security deposit is being kept. The rental unit must be restored to the same conditions as when the family moved in, except for normal wear and tear. Deposits will not be used to cover normal wear and tear or damage that existed when the

family moved in. If the party moving out is deceased, any refund will be made payable to the decedent's estate.

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will be considered in compliance with the above if the required payment, statement, or both, are deposited in the U.S. mail with first class postage paid within thirty (30) calendar days.

## **20.6 DEATH OF A RESIDENT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority will allow up to 14 days for the resident's family to remove all belonging of the deceased resident. If after 14 days, the deceased resident's belongings have not been removed, Allegheny County Housing Authority will disposed of all belonging. A fee will be charged to the resident's estate.

## **20.7 THE EIV'S DECEASED TENANTS REPORT**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall generate the EIV's Deceased Tenants Report monthly shortly before either the end of the month or creating rent statements to see if the system flags deceased residents. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall review the report and follow up with any listed families immediately and take any necessary corrective action as set forth in PIH Notice 2010-50 or successor publications.

If it is a single member household, the Housing Authority shall immediately visit the unit and determine if it is vacant or occupied by an unauthorized person. If improperly occupied, the Housing Authority shall take immediate eviction actions under state law. If the property is occupied by a live-in-aide to the deceased person, the aide must move out within fourteen (14) calendar days and is not eligible for continued occupancy or rental assistance.

## **21.0 SUPPORT FOR OUR ARMED FORCES**

A major and important component of our armed forces is the part-time military personnel that serve in various Reserve and National Guard units. The Allegheny County Housing Authority is very supportive of these men and women. An unfortunate fact of service in both the Reserves and National Guard is that from time to time their personnel are activated to full-time status and asked to serve our country in a variety of ways and circumstances. Whenever the Federal Government activates Reserve and/or National Guard personnel, the Allegheny County Housing Authority wants to support these brave warriors in the following manners:

- A. If a family finds it necessary for another adult to temporarily move into a unit solely to serve as a temporary guardian for children residing in the unit, the income received by the temporary guardian will not be counted in determining family income.

- B. Although typically a criminal background check is required before anyone can move into a public housing unit, this requirement will be waived for a temporary guardian. Instead, the background check will occur after the person moves in. If the results of the check dictate that the person is ineligible for public housing, the family shall be given a reasonable time to find a replacement temporary guardian.
- C. Recognizing that activation in the Reserves or National Guard can be very disruptive to a family's income, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will expeditiously re-evaluate a resident's rent if requested to do so and will exercise reasonable restraint if the activated resident has trouble paying their rent.
- D. Typically a unit cannot be held by a family that is not residing in it as their primary residence. If all members of a military family are temporarily absent from the unit because a member of the family has been called to active duty, the family can retain control of the unit by paying the required rent and returning to the unit within 30 calendar days of the conclusion of the active duty service.

## **22.0 ANTI-FRAUD POLICY**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority is fully committed to combating fraud in its public housing program. It defines fraud as a single act or pattern of actions that include false statements, the omission of information, or the concealment of a substantive fact made with the intention of deceiving or misleading the Allegheny County Housing Authority. It results in the inappropriate expenditure of public housing funds and/or a violation of public housing requirements.

Although there are numerous different types of fraud that may be committed, the two most common are the failure to fully report all sources of income and the failure to accurately report who is residing in the residence. The Allegheny County Housing Authority shall aggressively attempt to prevent all cases of fraud.

When a fraudulent action is discovered, the Allegheny County Housing Authority shall take action. It shall do one or more of the following things depending on circumstances and what it determines appropriate:

- A. Require the resident to immediately repay the amount in question;
- B. Require the resident to enter into a satisfactory repayment agreement as set forth in a previous section of this Policy;
- C. Terminate the resident's tenancy;
- D. Refer the case for criminal prosecution; or

- E. Take such other action as the Allegheny County Housing Authority deems appropriate.

## **23.0 PROPERTIES**

### **23.1 UNPERMITTED ITEMS:**

Public housing residents will not be permitted to have personal pools, grocery carts, fuel, or hazardous material on Allegheny County Housing Authority premises (common grounds, apartments, or town homes). Violators (residents) may be charged a fee for maintenance removing items listed above and if this practice continues the Allegheny County Housing Authority may start eviction proceeding.

### **23.2 SMOKE-FREE HOUSING:**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority has a separate no smoking policy.

## **24.0 FILLING AN ACCESSIBLE UNIT**

Accessible units will be first offered to families who may benefit from the accessible features who reside in the development that has the vacancy. If there are no families residing in that development needing the accessible unit, it shall then be offered to families residing in other developments who may benefit from the accessible unit. If there are no families residing in the other developments needing the accessible unit, it shall then be offered to applicants on the waiting list who may benefit from the accessible features. When offering an accessible unit to an applicant on the waiting list, the unit will first be offered to an applicant on the waiting list for the site at which the unit is vacant. Then, it will be offered to applicants on waiting lists of other Allegheny County Housing Authority developments. Applicants for these units will be selected utilizing the same preference system as outlined in Section 10.1.

If there are no applicants who would benefit from the accessible features, the units will be offered to other applicants in the order that their names come to the top of the waiting list. Such applicants, however, will be required to sign a lease rider stating they will accept a transfer if, at a future time, a family requiring an accessible feature applies or a family requires a transfer from a non-accessible unit. Any family required to transfer will be given a 30-day notice.

Once applicants are determined to be eligible for the program and eligible for these units, they will be offered these units based on date and time of application before any non-disabled applicant on the waiting list.

## **25.0 RE-OCCUPANCY DURING DEMOLITION/DISPOSITION**

Due to the demand for affordable housing in the community, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will be re-leasing turnover units in properties approved or under review by HUD for demolition and/or disposition until a date determined by the Allegheny County Housing Authority. Residents who will be occupying a unit targeted or scheduled for demolition or disposition will be notified of this fact in writing and shall sign the special lease addendum developed for this purpose.

## **26.0 PRIVACY**

The Allegheny County Housing Authority is strongly committed to protecting the privacy of people dealing with the agency to the greatest degree practical. There are numerous federal privacy laws, regulations, notices, and other requirements that the Housing Authority follows to the greatest degree practical. Details about these requirements are set forth in PIH Notice 2015-06 and any ensuing publications. The Housing Authority will educate all of its employees who have access to personally identifiable information (PII) and/or Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information about these requirements and expect them to appropriately manage and safeguard the information. Employees will also be trained on the proper disposition of said information.

## **27.0 CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CORE VALUES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS**

### **27.1 PURPOSE**

This Code of Conduct establishes standards for employee and Commissioner conduct that will assure the highest level of public service. Recognizing that compliance with any ethical standards rests primarily on personal integrity and specifically in this situation with the integrity of the employees and Commissioners of the Allegheny County Housing Authority, this Section sets forth those acts or omissions of acts that could be deemed injurious to the general mission of the Authority.

This Code of Conduct is not intended, nor should it be construed, as an attempt to unreasonably intrude upon the individual employee or Commissioner's right to privacy and the right to participate freely in a democratic society and economy.

### **27.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Neither the Allegheny County Housing Authority nor any of its contractors or subcontractors may enter into any contract or arrangement in connection with any program in which any of the following classes of persons has any interest, direct or

indirect, during his or her tenure with the Allegheny County Housing Authority or for one year thereafter:

- A. Any present or former member or officer of the Housing Authority (except a participant commissioner);
- B. Any employee of the Housing Authority or any contractor, subcontractor or agent of the Housing Authority who formulates policy or who influences decisions with respect to the programs;
- C. Any public official, member of a governing body, or State or local legislator who exercises functions or responsibilities with respect to the Allegheny County Housing Authority's programs; or
- D. Any member of the Congress of the United States.

Any member of the classes described in A, B, C, or D, must disclose their interest or prospective interest to the Housing Authority and HUD.

The Conflict of Interest prohibition under this section (24.2) may be waived by the HUD Field Office upon the request of the Allegheny County Housing Authority for good cause.

### **27.3 PROHIBITION OF SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS**

No Commissioner or Authority employee shall solicit any gift or consideration of any kind, nor shall any Authority employee accept or receive a gift having value in excess of \$25 regardless of the form of the gift, from any person who has an interest in any matter proposed or pending before the Authority.

### **27.4 HOUSING AUTHORITY ADMINISTRATIVE AND DISCIPLINARY REMEDIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT**

Violations of this Code of Conduct Policy will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Allegheny County Housing Authority's Personnel Policy or as determined by action of the Board of Commissioners.

## GLOSSARY

**50058 Form:** The HUD form that housing authorities are required to complete and electronically submit to HUD for each assisted household in public housing to record information used in the certification and re-certification process and, at the option of the housing authority, for interim reexaminations. Housing Authorities must retain at a minimum the last three years of the form 50058, and supporting documentation, during the term of each assisted lease, and for a period of at least three years from the end of participation date. Electronic retention of form HUD 50058 and HUD 50058-FSS and supporting documentation fulfills the record retention requirement. The 50058s must be submitted to HUD no later than 60 calendar days from the effective date of actions recorded in Line 2b.

**1937 Housing Act:** The United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.) (24 CFR 5.100)

**Absence of Any Member:** Any member of the household, or the sole member of a household, will be considered permanently absent if s/he is away from the unit for 90 (ninety) consecutive days, except as otherwise provided in this Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy.

**Absence due to Incarceration:** If the sole member is incarcerated for more than 90 (ninety) consecutive days, s/he will be considered permanently absent. Any member of the household, other than the sole member, will be considered permanently absent if s/he is incarcerated for 90 (ninety) consecutive days.

**Absence due to Medical Reasons:** If any family member leaves the household to enter a facility such as hospital, nursing home, or rehabilitation center, the Allegheny County Housing Authority will seek advice from a reliable qualified source as to the likelihood and timing of their return. If the verification indicates that the family member will be permanently confined to a nursing home, the family member will be considered Permanently Absent. If the verification indicates that the family member will return in less than 180 (one hundred eighty) consecutive days, the family member will not be considered permanently absent, as long as rent and other charges remains current. If the person who is determined to be permanently absent is the sole member of the household, assistance will be terminated in accordance with the PHA's definition of "Absence Any Member".

**Actual and imminent threat:** a physical danger that is real, would occur within an immediate time frame, and could result in death or serious bodily harm. In determining whether an individual would pose an actual and imminent threat, the factors to be considered include: The duration of the risk, the nature and severity of the potential harm, the likelihood that the potential harm will occur, and the length of time before the potential harm would occur.

**Adjusted Annual Income:** The amount of household income, after deductions for specified allowances, on which tenant rent is based. (24 CFR 5.611)

**Adult:** A household member who is 18 years or older or who is the head of the household, or spouse, or co-head. An emancipated minor is also considered an adult. In the anti-drug portions of this policy, it also refers to a minor who has been convicted of a crime as an adult under any Federal, State or tribal law.

**Affirmative mobility counseling:** A counseling opportunity designed to encourage a greater integration of our housing authority sites.

**Affiliated individual:** with respect to an individual, means: (1) A spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child of that individual, or a person to whom that individual stands in the place of a parent or guardian (for example, the affiliated individual is a person in the care, custody, or control of that individual); or (2) Any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the household of that individual.

**Allowances:** Amounts deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income (the income amount used in the rent calculation). Allowances are given for elderly families, dependents, medical expenses for elderly and disabled families, disability expenses, and child care expenses for children under 13 years of age. Other allowance can be given at the discretion of the housing authority.

**Annual Contributions Contract (ACC):** The written contract between HUD and a housing authority under which HUD agrees to provide funding for a program under the 1937 Act, and the housing authority agrees to comply with HUD requirements for the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Annual Income:** All amounts, monetary or not, that:

- A. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
- B. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date; and
- C. Are not specifically excluded from annual income.

Annual Income also includes amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access. (1937 Housing Act; 24 CFR 5.609)

**Applicant (applicant family):** A person or family that has applied for admission to a program but is not yet a participant in the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

**As-Paid States:** States where the welfare agency adjusts the shelter and utility component of the welfare grant in accordance with actual housing costs. Currently, the four as-paid States are New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, and Vermont.

**Assets:** The value of equity in savings, checking, IRA and Keogh accounts, real property, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles are not counted as assets. (Also see "net family assets.")

**Asset Income:** Income received from assets held by family members. If assets total more than \$5,000, income from the assets is "imputed" and the greater of actual asset income and imputed asset income is counted in annual income. (See "imputed asset income" below.)

**Assistance applicant:** A family or individual that seeks admission to the public housing program.

**Bifurcate:** means to divide a lease as a matter of law, subject to the permissibility of such process under the requirements of the applicable HUD covered program and State or local law, such that certain tenants or lawful occupants can be evicted or removed and the remaining tenants or lawful occupants can continue to reside in the unit under the same lease requirements or as may be revised depending upon the eligibility for continued occupancy of the remaining tenants and lawful occupants.

**Business Days:** Days the housing authority is open for business.

**Certification:** The examination of a household's income, expenses, and family composition to determine the family's eligibility for program participation and to calculate the family's share of rent.

**Child:** For purposes of citizenship regulations, a member of the family other than the family head or spouse who is under 18 years of age. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Child Care Expenses:** Amounts anticipated to be paid by the family for the care of children under 13 years of age during the period for which annual income is computed, but only where such care is necessary to enable a family member to actively seek employment, be gainfully employed, or to further his or her education and only to the extent such amounts are not reimbursed. The amount deducted shall reflect reasonable charges for child care. In the case of childcare necessary to permit employment, the amount deducted shall not exceed the amount of employment income that is included in annual income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Citizen:** A citizen or national of the United States. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Community service:** The performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community. Community service is not employment and may not include political activities.

**Consent Form:** Any consent form approved by HUD to be signed by assistance applicants and participants for the purpose of obtaining income information from employers and SWICAs,

return information from the Social Security Administration, and return information for unearned income from the Internal Revenue Service. The consent forms may authorize the collection of other information from assistance applicants or participant to determine eligibility or level of benefits. (24 CFR 5.214)

**Covered Families:** Families who receive welfare assistance or other public assistance benefits ("welfare benefits") from a State or other public agency ("welfare agency") under a program for which Federal, State, or local law requires that a member of the family must participate in an economic self-sufficiency program as a condition for such assistance.

**Covered Person:** For purposes of the anti-drug provisions of this policy, a covered person is a tenant, any member of the tenant's household, a guest or another person under the tenant's control.

**Currently engaging in:** With respect to behavior such as illegal use of a drug, other drug-related criminal activity, or other criminal activity, currently engaging in means that the individual has engaged in the behavior recently enough to justify a reasonable belief that the individual's behavior is current. Arrests alone are not sufficient evidence of criminal activity.

**Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person: (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) the length of the relationship; (ii) the type of relationship; and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

**Decent, Safe, and Sanitary:** Housing is decent, safe, and sanitary if it satisfies the applicable housing quality standards.

**Department:** The Department of Housing and Urban Development. (24 CFR 5.100)

**Dependent:** A member of the family (except foster children and foster adults), other than the family head or spouse, who is under 18 years of age or is a person with a disability or is a full-time student. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Dependent Allowance:** An amount, equal to \$480 multiplied by the number of dependents, that is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

**Disability Assistance Expenses:** Reasonable expenses that are anticipated, during the period for which annual income is computed, for attendant care and auxiliary apparatus for a disabled family member and that are necessary to enable a family member (including the disabled member) to be employed, provided that the expenses are neither paid to a member of the family nor reimbursed by an outside source. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Disability Assistance Expense Allowance:** In determining adjusted annual income, the amount of disability assistance expenses deducted from annual income for families with a disabled household member.

**Disabled Family:** A family whose head (including co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities; two or more persons with disabilities living together; or one or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403(b)) (Also see "person with disabilities.")

**Disabled Person:** See "person with disabilities."

**Displaced Family:** A family in which each member, or whose sole member, is a person displaced by governmental action (such as urban renewal), or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

**Displaced Person:** A person displaced by governmental action or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. [1937 Act]

**Domestic Violence:** Includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by a person with whom the victim share a child in common, by a person who is cohabitated with or has cohabited with the victim as a spouse, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that persons acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction. The term "spouse or intimate partner of the victim" includes a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, as determined by the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

**Drug:** means a controlled substance as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

**Drug-Related Criminal Activity:** The illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug.

**Economic self-sufficiency program:** Any program designed to encourage, assist, train or facilitate the economic independence of HUD-assisted families or to provide work for such families. These programs include programs for job training, employment counseling, work placement, basic skills training, education, English proficiency, workfare, financial or household management, apprenticeship, and any program necessary to ready a participant for work (including a substance abuse or mental health treatment program), or other work activities.

**Elderly Family:** A family whose head (including co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age; two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or one or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Elderly/Disabled Family Allowance:** For elderly families, an allowance of \$400 is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

**Elderly Person:** A person who is at least 62 years of age. (1937 Housing Act)

**Emancipated Minor:** a family assumes all adult responsibilities before reaching the age of 18 years old. The emancipated minor's family is eligible to apply for public housing after the emancipated minor submits legal documents verifying their emancipation and it complies with all other eligibility requirements.

**Extremely low-income families:** A very low-income family whose income does not exceed the higher of 30% of the median income for the area (as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families) or the Federal poverty level, except that HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 30% of the median income for the area if HUD finds that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes.

**Fair Housing Act:** Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.). (24 CFR 5.100)

**Family** includes, but is not limited to, the following, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status:

1. A single person, who may be an elderly person, displaced person, disabled person, near-elderly person, or any other single person; or
2. A group of persons residing together, and such group includes, but is not limited to:
  - A. A family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family). Such a family is defined as a group of people related by blood, marriage, adoption or affinity (regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status), that lives together in a stable family relationship;
  - B. An elderly family (including co-head);
  - C. A near-elderly family (including co-head);
  - D. A disabled family (including co-head);

- E. A displaced family;
- F. The remaining member of a tenant family; and
- G. A single person who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Family Members:** All members of the household other than live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All family members permanently reside in the unit, though they may be temporarily absent. All family members are listed on the lease.

**Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS Program):** The program established by a housing authority to promote self-sufficiency among participating families, including the coordination of supportive services. (24 CFR 984.103(b))

**Fixed Income:** When 100% of the household's income comes from 1.) Social Security payments to include Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Supplemental Security Disability Insurance (SSDI); 2.) Federal, State, local, and private pension plans; and/or 3.) Other periodic payments received from annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts that are of substantially the same amounts from year to year.

**Flat Rent:** A rent amount the family may choose to pay in lieu of having their rent determined under the income method. The flat rent is established by the housing authority based on a HUD mandate.

**Foster Care and Absence of Children:** If the family includes a child or children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care, the PHA will determine from the appropriate agency when the child/children will be returned to the home.

**Full-Time Student:** A person who is attending school or vocational training on a full-time basis as defined by the institution.

**Gender identity:** Means actual or perceived gender-related characteristics.

**Guest:** Means a person temporarily staying in the unit with the consent of a tenant or other member of the household who has express or implied authority to so consent on behalf of the tenant.

**Head of Household:** The adult member of the family who is the head of the household for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Homeless (as defined for 50058 reporting purposes):** An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- a. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; or
- b. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
- c. An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

or

Any individual or family who:

- a. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; and
- b. Has no other residence; and
- c. Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g. family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

**Household Members:** All members of the household including members of the family, live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All household members are listed on the lease, and no one other than household members are listed on the lease.

**Housing Assistance Plan:** A housing plan that is submitted by a unit of general local government and approved by HUD as being acceptable under the standards of 24 CFR 570.

**Immediate Family Member:** a spouse, parent, brother or sister, or child of the person, or an individual to whom that person stands in loco parentis (in place of a parent); or any other person living in the household of that person and related to that person by blood or marriage.

**Imputed Income:** For households with net family assets of more than \$5,000, the amount calculated by multiplying net family assets by a HUD-specified percentage. If imputed income is more than actual income from assets, the imputed amount is used as income from assets in determining annual income.

**Imputed welfare income:** The amount of annual income not actually received by a family, as a result of a welfare benefit reduction for welfare fraud or the failure to comply with economic

self-sufficiency requirements, that is nonetheless included in the family's annual income for purposes of determining rent.

**In-Kind Payments:** Contributions other than cash made to the family or to a family member in exchange for services provided or for the general support of the family (e.g., groceries provided on a weekly basis, baby sitting provided on a regular basis).

**Income Method:** A means of calculating a family's rent based on the greater of 10% of their monthly income, 30% of their adjusted monthly income, the welfare rent, or the minimum rent. Under the income method, rents may be capped by a ceiling rent as long as the ceiling rent equals or exceeds the flat rent. Under this method, the family's income is evaluated at least annually.

**Interim (examination):** A reexamination of a family income, expenses, and household composition conducted between the regular annual recertifications when a change in a household's circumstances warrants such a reexamination.

**Law enforcement agency:** The National Crime Information Center (NCIC), police departments and other law enforcement agencies that hold criminal conviction records.

**Live-In Aide:** A person who resides with one or more elderly persons, near-elderly persons, or persons with disabilities and who:

- A. Is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons;
- B. Is not obligated for the support of the persons; and
- C. Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

A live-in aide is not a party to the lease. However, a live-in aide will be subject to the same screening process as anyone else on a lease except for income verification.

**Low-Income Families:** Those families whose incomes do not exceed 80% of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 80% of the median for the area on the basis of HUD's findings that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes.

**Medical Expenses:** Medical expenses (of all family members of an elderly or disabled family), including medical insurance premiums, that are anticipated during the period for which annual income is computed and that are not covered by insurance. (24 CFR 5.603(d)). These expenses include, but are not limited to, acupuncture, artificial limbs, Braille books and magazines, chiropractor, crutches, dental treatment, eye glasses, hearing aides & batteries, home care, hospital services, laboratory fees, long term care, monthly payment on medical bills, prescription

medicines, nursing home, optometrist, over the counter medicine as prescribed by doctor, oxygen, surgery, therapy, and transportation.

**Mixed Family:** A family whose members include those with citizenship or eligible immigration status and those without citizenship or eligible immigration status. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Mixed population development:** A public housing development, or portion of a development, that was reserved for elderly and disabled families at its inception (and has retained that character). If the development was not so reserved at its inception, the PHA has obtained HUD approval to give preference in tenant selection for all units in the development (or portion of development) to elderly families and disabled families. These developments were formerly known as elderly projects.

**Monthly Adjusted Income:** One twelfth of adjusted income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Monthly Income:** One twelfth of annual income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**National:** A person who owes permanent allegiance to the United States, for example, as a result of birth in a United States territory or possession. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Near-Elderly Family:** A family whose head (including co-head), spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62; two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or one or more persons who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62 living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

**Net Family Assets:**

- A. Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and excluding equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles shall be excluded.
- B. In cases where a trust fund has been established and the trust is not revocable by, or under the control of, any member of the family or household, the value of the trust fund will not be considered an asset so long as the fund continues to be held in trust. Any income distributed from the trust fund shall be counted when determining annual income.
- C. In determining net family assets, housing authorities or owners, as applicable, shall include the value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value (including a disposition in trust, but not in a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale) during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or reexamination, as applicable, in excess of

the consideration received therefore. In the case of a disposition as part of a separation or divorce settlement, the disposition will not be considered to be for less than fair market value if the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Non-Citizen:** A person who is neither a citizen nor national of the United States. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Occupancy Standards:** The standards that a housing authority establishes for determining the appropriate number of bedrooms needed to house families of different sizes or composition.

**Other person under the tenant's control:** For the purposes of the definition of covered person it means the person, although not staying as a guest (as defined in this section) in the unit, is, or was at the time of the activity in question, on the premises (as premises is defined in this section) because of an invitation from the tenant or other member of the household who has express or implied authority to so consent on behalf of the tenant. Absent evidence to the contrary, a person temporarily and infrequently on the premises solely for legitimate commercial purposes is not under the tenant's control.

**Participant:** A family or individual that is assisted by the public housing program.

**Permanently Absent:** A person or persons not actually residing in the unit who once lived there and has vacated the unit; has been continuously incarcerated for more than 90 (ninety) consecutive days; has been permanently confined to a nursing home, or is absent from the unit in accordance with the PHA's definition of "Absence of Any Member".

**Person with Disabilities:** A person who:

- A. Has a disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. 423
- B. Is determined, pursuant to HUD regulations, to have a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that:
  - 1. Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
  - 2. Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and
  - 3. Is of such a nature that the ability to live independently could be improved by more suitable housing conditions; or
- C. Has a developmental disability as defined in 42 U.S.C. 6001.

This definition does not exclude persons who have the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.

**Personally Identifiable Information (PII):** Information which can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as their name, social security number, biometric records, etc. alone, or when combined with other personal or identifying information which is linked or linkable to a specific individual, such as date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, etc.

**Premises:** for purposes of the anti-drug provisions of this policy it means the building or complex or development in which the public or assisted housing dwelling unit is located, including common areas and grounds.

**Previously unemployed:** This includes a person who has earned, in the 12 months previous to employment, no more than would be received for 10 hours of work per week for 50 weeks at the established minimum wage.

**Processing Entity:** The person or entity that is responsible for making eligibility and related determinations and an income reexamination. In the Section 8 and public housing programs, the processing entity is the responsibility entity.

**Proration of Assistance:** The reduction in a family's housing assistance payment to reflect the proportion of family members in a mixed family who are eligible for assistance. (24 CFR5.520)

**Public Housing:** Housing assisted under the 1937 Act, other than under Section 8. Public housing includes dwelling units in a mixed-finance project that are assisted by a PHA with capital or operating funds.

**Public Housing Agency (PHA):** Any State, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body (or agency or instrumentality thereof) which is authorized to engage in or assist in the development or operation of low-income housing under the 1937 Housing Act. (24 CFR 5.100)

**Recertification:** The annual reexamination of a family's income, expenses, and composition to determine the family's rent.

**Remaining Member of a Tenant Family:** A member of the family listed on the lease who continues to live in the public housing dwelling after all other family members have left.

**Rental Insurance:** The Allegheny County Housing Authority encourages that all families purchased rental insurance to cover any personal loss. The Allegheny County Housing Authority will not compensate any families with loss of personal items, unless the Housing Authority is liable for the loss.

**Responsible Entity:**

- A. For the public housing program, the Section 8 tenant-based assistance program 24 CFR 982), and the Section 8 project-based certificate or voucher program (24

CFR 983), and the Section 8 moderate rehabilitation program (24 CFR 882), responsible entity means the PHA administering the program under an ACC with HUD;

- B. For all other Section 8 programs, responsible entity means the Section 8 project owner.

**Self-Declaration:** A type of verification statement by the tenant as to the amount and source of income, expenses, or family composition. Self-declaration is acceptable verification only when third-party verification or documentation cannot be obtained.

**Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information:** PII that when lost, compromised or disclosed without authorization could substantially harm an individual. Examples of sensitive PII include social security or driver's license numbers, medical records, and financial account numbers such as credit or debit card numbers.

**Sexual assault:** any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

**Sexual Orientation:** Means homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

**Shelter Allowance:** That portion of a welfare benefit (e.g., TANF) that the welfare agency designates to be used for rent and utilities.

**Single Person:** Someone living alone or intending to live alone who does not qualify as an elderly family, a person with disabilities, a displaced person, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (Public Housing: Handbook 7465.1 REV-2, 3-5)

**Site-based Waiting Lists:** Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each community that has Public Housing. Single-family homes will be grouped on their own waiting list.

**Specified Welfare Benefit Reduction:**

- A. A reduction of welfare benefits by the welfare agency, in whole or in part, for a family member, as determined by the welfare agency, because of fraud by a family member in connection with the welfare program; or because of welfare agency sanction against a family member for noncompliance with a welfare agency requirement to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program.
- B. "Specified welfare benefit reduction" does not include a reduction or termination of welfare benefits by the welfare agency:
  - 1. at the expiration of a lifetime or other time limit on the payment of welfare benefits;

2. because a family member is not able to obtain employment, even though the family member has complied with welfare agency economic self-sufficiency or work activities requirements; or
3. because a family member has not complied with other welfare agency requirements.

**Split Family:** A family household that becomes divided into two otherwise eligible families due to divorce, legal separation or other division of the family.

**Stalking:** engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others; or (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

**State Wage Information Collection Agency (SWICA):** The State agency receiving quarterly wage reports from employers in the State or an alternative system that has been determined by the Secretary of Labor to be as effective and timely in providing employment-related income and eligibility information. (24 CFR 5.214)

**Temporarily absent:** A person or persons not actually residing in a unit for a period of time while still maintaining control of the unit. If the absence exceeds fourteen (14) calendar days, the Housing Authority must agree to the absence.

**Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF):** The program that replaced the Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) that provides financial assistance to needy families who meet program eligibility criteria. Benefits are limited to a specified time period.

**Tenant:** The person or family renting or occupying an assisted dwelling unit. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Tenant Rent:** The amount payable monthly by the family as rent to the housing authority. Where all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing authority or owner, tenant rent equals total tenant payment. Where some or all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing authority and the cost thereof is not included in the amount paid as rent, tenant rent equals total tenant payment less the utility allowance. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Third-Party (verification):** Written or oral confirmation of a family's income, expenses, or household composition provided by a source outside the household.

**Total Tenant Payment (TTP):**

- A. Total tenant payment for families whose initial lease is effective on or after August 1, 1982:

1. Total tenant payment is the amount calculated under Section 3(a)(1) of the 1937 Act which is the higher of :
  - a. 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income;
  - b. 10% of the family's monthly income; or
  - c. If the family is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of such payments, adjusted in accordance with the family's actual housing costs, is specifically designated by such agency to meet the family's housing costs, the portion of such payments which is so designated.

If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under section 3(a)(1) shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

2. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing does not include charges for excess utility consumption or other miscellaneous charges.

- B. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982: Paragraphs (b) and (c) of 24 CFR 913.107, as it existed immediately before November 18, 1996), will continue to govern the total tenant payment of families, under a public housing program, whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982.

**Tuition:** The amount of tuition and required fees covering a full academic year most frequently charged to students. These values represent what a typical student would be charged and may not be the same for all students at an institution. If tuition is charged on a per-credit-hour basis, the average full-time credit hour load for an entire academic year is used to estimate average tuition. Required fees include all fixed sum charges that are required of a large proportion of all students. The student who does not pay the charges is an exception. Verification of tuition and fees can be obtained from the student's bill or annual statement, by contacting the bursar's office, or from the school's website.

Examples of required fees include, but are not limited to, writing and science lab fees and fees specific to the student's major or program (i.e., nursing program).

Expenses related to attending an institution of higher education must **not** be included as tuition. Examples of these expenses include, but are not limited to, room and board, books, supplies, meal plans, transportation and parking, student health insurance plans, and other non-fixed sum charges.

For Section 8 programs only, PHAs must include amounts of financial assistance an individual receives in excess of tuition and other required fees and charges when determining annual income.

For the Public Housing program, the full amount of financial assistance a student receives while participating in the program continues to be excluded from the program participant's annual income.

**Universal Effective Date:** The date a group of residents are scheduled to have their income re-examined if they are income rent payers.

**Utility Allowance:** If the cost of utilities (except telephone) and other housing services for an assisted unit is not included in the tenant rent but is the responsibility of the family occupying the unit, an amount equal to the estimate made by a housing authority of the monthly cost of a reasonable consumption of such utilities and other services for the unit by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment. (24 CFR 5.603)

**Utility Reimbursement:** The amount, if any, by which the utility allowance for the unit, if applicable, exceeds the total tenant payment for the family occupying the unit. (24 CFR 5.603)

**VAWA:** the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, as amended (42 U.S.C. 13925 and 42 U.S.C. 14043e et seq.).

**Very Low-Income Families:** Families whose incomes do not exceed 50% of the median family income for the area, as determined by HUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that HUD may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 50% of the median for the area if HUD finds that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes.

**Victims of Domestic Violence:** See Section 10.1.

**Violent criminal activity:** means any criminal activity that has as one of its elements the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force substantial enough to cause, or be reasonably likely to cause, serious bodily injury or property damage. Arrests alone are not sufficient evidence of criminal activity.

**Welfare Assistance:** Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, that are made under programs funded, separately or jointly, by Federal, State or local governments (including assistance provided under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, as that term is defined under the implementing regulations issued by the Department of Health and Human Services at 45 CFR 260.31).

45 CFR 260.31 defines the term “assistance” to include cash, payments, vouchers, and other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs (i.e., for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items, and general incidental expenses).

It includes such benefits even when they are:

- A. Provided in the form of payments by a TANF agency, or other agency on its behalf, to individual recipients; and
- B. Conditioned on participation in work experience or community service (or any other work activity under 45 CFR 261.30).

Except where excluded later in this definition, it also includes supportive services such as transportation and childcare provided to families who are not employed.

The term “assistance” excludes:

- A. Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that:
  - 1. Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
  - 2. Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
  - 3. Will not extend beyond four months.
- B. Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training);
- C. Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed;
- D. Refundable earned income tax credits;
- E. Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts;
- F. Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, childcare information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support; and
- G. Transportation benefits provided under a Job Access or Reverse Commute project, pursuant to section 404(k) of the Act, to an individual who is not otherwise receiving assistance.

**Welfare Rent:** In "as-paid" welfare programs, the amount of the welfare benefit designated for shelter and utilities.

Widow or Widower of a Deceased Veteran: A person who has lost their spouse by death where the deceased spouse served in the US military and received a discharge other than a dishonorable discharge or died while on active duty.

**Written notification:** All written notifications required in this policy shall be hand delivered with a signed receipt or mailed via first class mail unless specified otherwise.

## ACRONYMS

ACC	Annual Contributions Contract
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FSS	Family Self Sufficiency (program)
HCDA	Housing and Community Development Act
HQS	Housing Quality Standards
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
INS	(U.S.) Immigration and Naturalization Service
NAHA	(Cranston-Gonzalez) National Affordable Housing Act
NOFA	Notice of Funding Availability
OMB	(U.S.) Office of Management and Budget
PHA	Public Housing Agency
QHWRA	Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998
SSA	Social Security Administration
TTP	Total Tenant Payment
UIV	Up-Front Income Verification