



August 21, 2024

HCV PROGRAM NEWS

HUD Issues Waivers and Alternative Requirements for Mainstream Vouchers

Late yesterday HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing ([PIH](#)) published Notice [PIH 2024-30](#), titled “Statutory and Regulatory Waivers for Mainstream Vouchers.” As the document explains, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, authorized HUD to establish waivers and alternative requirements for [Mainstream Vouchers](#) that are necessary for the effective delivery and administration of funds. The waivers and alternative requirements described in the notice are intended to provide programmatic flexibilities to help PHAs improve Mainstream utilization and more successfully target Mainstream-eligible populations, including persons exiting institutions or at serious risk of institutionalization.

Section 6 of the notice describes the mandatory waivers and alternative requirements:

- **Initial search term:** HUD waives the regulation that requires an initial search term of at least 60 days and establishes an alternative requirement that the initial search term for a Mainstream Voucher must be at least 120 days.
- **Extensions of term:** HUD waives the ability for PHAs to grant first extensions at its discretion and establishes an alternative requirement for the process of requesting search extensions. PHAs must adopt an extension policy that includes the following:
 - Each extension must be for a minimum of 90 days
 - The PHA must approve the first extension request, regardless of how the request is made (written or verbal) or when it is made, as long as the request is made on or before the term expiration date and is consistent with applicable requirements. Subsequent requests should be processed in accordance with the PHA’s administrative plan.
 - The PHA must, on at least one occasion after voucher issuance, notify the family prior to the initial term expiration to remind them of the term expiration date, the process for requesting an extension, and to inquire if the family is in need of assistance with their housing search
- **Residency preference:** HUD waives the ability for PHAs to establish a residency preference for Mainstream Voucher applicants and establishes an alternative requirement under which a PHA cannot apply a residency preference to Mainstream Voucher applicants.

PHAs must adopt the mandatory policies within 120 days from publication of the notice.

Section 7 of the notice describes the discretionary program policies:

- **Waiting list:** HUD waives the requirement that PHAs maintain one HCV waiting list and establishes an optional waiver to maintain a separate Mainstream waiting list. HUD also waives the requirement that date and time of application, if used by the PHA, applies only to the HCV waiting list (not mandatory, unless establishing a separate waiting list). For PHAs that opt to establish a separate Mainstream waiting list and rely on the date and time of application method, they must rely on the date and time of application for their Mainstream waiting list as well.
- **Local preferences:** HUD waives the requirement that PHAs maintain one set of HCV preferences and establishes an optional waiver permitting PHAs to establish separate preferences for Mainstream Voucher applicants.

PHAs may choose, but are not required, to adopt any optional waivers. PHAs that choose to adopt any of the optional waivers must describe those policies in their administrative plan.

The waivers and alternative requirements are applicable to all PHAs awarded Mainstream Vouchers and PHAs that administer Mainstream Vouchers through a portability billing arrangement. The notice does not apply to Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) Vouchers or “Mainstream 1 Year” Vouchers. A summary of the mandatory waivers and alternative requirements is included in [Attachment I](#) of the document. The notice is effective upon publication.



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