

Request for Action
By
Board of Commissioners

Approval of Temporary Policy Supplement to the RIHousing Administrative Plan

1. Summary of Issues

Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) operates several federal housing programs, one of which is the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (the “HCV Program” or the “Program”). The HCV Program offers rental subsidies to help income-qualifying families, senior citizens and disabled individuals afford safe, healthy homes of their choosing. RIHousing serves as a Public Housing Authority (“PHA”) in those Rhode Island communities that do not have standalone municipal housing authorities. RIHousing’s operation of the HCV Program is governed by an Administrative Plan, as provided by federal regulation.

In May 2021 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) awarded RIHousing 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”). The targeted award requires a unique relationship with the local Continuum of Care (“RiCoC”), which is the governing and planning body enacted to address and end homelessness.

As part of the EHV award, RIHousing is required to formally adopt the terms of the program as an amendment to the Administrative Plan.

The full text of the changes is provided as Attachment B. The amendments will become effective upon approval and adoption by the Board of Commissioners.

2. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners approve the attached resolution adopting the amendments to the Administrative Plan, substantially in the form presented at this meeting.

3. Attachments
 - A. Resolution
 - B. Temporary Policy Supplement

Attachment A

Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

WHEREAS: Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) has been designated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) as a Public Housing Authority (“PHA”) in connection with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (the “HCV Program”);

WHEREAS: Part 982.54 of title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations requires each PHA to administer its HCV Program according to an Administrative Plan;

WHEREAS: RIHousing received an award of 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers and in accordance with HUD requirements must adopt a Temporary Policy Supplement; and

WHEREAS: The Temporary Policy Supplement must be approved by the PHA Board of Commissioners; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED: that RIHousing hereby approves and adopts the Temporary Policy Supplement as an amendment to the RIHousing Administrative Plan substantially in the form presented at this meeting; and

RESOLVED: that the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director, each acting singly, are hereby authorized to execute any document or take any other action necessary to carry out the foregoing resolutions.

Attachment B

Temporary Policy Supplement

EMERGENCY HOUSING VOUCHERS (EHVs)

INTRODUCTION

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) (P.L. 117-2). Section 3202 of the ARP appropriated \$5 billion for the creation, administration, and renewal of new incremental emergency housing vouchers (EHVs) and other eligible expenses related to COVID-19.

On May 5, 2021, HUD issued Notice PIH 2021-15, which described HUD's process for allocating approximately 70,000 EHVs to eligible PHAs and set forth the operating requirements for PHAs who administer them. Based on criteria outlined in the notice, HUD notified eligible PHAs of the number of EHVs allocated to their agency, and PHAs were able to accept or decline the invitation to participate in the program.

PHAs may not project-base EHVs; EHVs are exclusively tenant-based assistance.

All applicable nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements apply to the EHV program, including requirements that the PHA grant reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities, effectively communicate with persons with disabilities, and ensure meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).

This chapter describes HUD regulations and PHA policies for administering EHVs. The policies outlined in this chapter are organized into seven sections, as follows:

Part I: Funding

Part II: Partnering Agencies

Part III: Waiting List Management

Part IV: Family Eligibility

Part V: Housing Search and Leasing

Part VI: Use of Funds, Reporting, and Financial Records

Except as addressed by this chapter and as required under federal statute and HUD requirements, the general requirements of the HCV program apply to EHVs.

PART I: FUNDING

TPS-I.A. FUNDING OVERVIEW

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) provides administrative fees and funding for the costs of administering emergency housing vouchers (EHVs) and other eligible expenses defined in Notice PIH 2021-15. These fees may only be used for EHV administration and other eligible expenses and must not be used for or applied to other PHA programs or vouchers. The PHA must maintain separate financial records from its regular HCV funding for all EHV funding.

Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Funding

ARP funding obligated to the PHA as housing assistance payments (HAP) funding may only be used for eligible EHV HAP expenses (i.e., rental assistance payments). EHV HAP funding may not be used for EHV administrative expenses or for the eligible uses under the EHV services fee.

The initial funding term will expire December 31, 2022. HUD will provide renewal funding to the PHA for the EHVs on a calendar year (CY) basis commencing with CY 2023. The renewal funding allocation will be based on the PHA's actual EHV HAP costs in leasing, similar to the renewal process for the regular HCV program. EHV renewal funding is not part of the annual HCV renewal funding formula; EHVs are renewed separately from the regular HCV program. All renewal funding for the duration of the EHV program has been appropriated as part of the ARP funding.

Administrative Fee and Funding

The following four types of fees and funding are allocated as part of the EHV program:

- **Preliminary fees** support immediate start-up costs that the PHA will incur in implementing alternative requirements under EHV, such as outreach and coordination with partnering agencies:
 - \$400 per EHV allocated to the PHA, once the consolidated annual contributions contract (CACC) is amended.
 - This fee may be used for any eligible administrative expenses related to EHVs.
 - The fee may also be used to pay for any eligible activities under EHV service fees (TPS-I.B).

- **Placement fees/expedited issuance reporting fees** will support initial lease-up costs and the added cost and effort required to expedite leasing of EHV's:
 - \$100 for each EHV initially leased, if the PHA reports the voucher issuance date in Public Housing Information Center–Next Generation (PIC–NG) system within 14 days of voucher issuance or the date the system becomes available for reporting.
 - Placement fees:
 - o \$500 for each EHV family placed under a HAP contract effective within four months of the effective date of the ACC funding increment; or
 - o \$250 for each EHV family placed under a HAP contract effective after four months but less than six months after the effective date of the ACC funding increment.
 - o HUD will determine placement fees in the event of multiple EHV allocations and funding increment effective dates.
 - Placement/expedited issuance fees only apply to the initial leasing of the voucher; they are not paid for family moves or to turnover vouchers.
- **Ongoing administrative fees**, which are calculated in the same way as the standard HCV program:
 - PHAs are allocated administrative fees using the full column A administrative fee amount for each EHV under contract as of the first day of each month.
 - Ongoing EHV administrative fees may be subject to proration in future years, based on available EHV funding.
- **Services fees**, which are a one-time fee to support PHAs' efforts to implement and operate an effective EHV services program in its jurisdiction (TPS-I.B):
 - The fee is allocated once the PHA's CACC is amended to reflect EHV funding.
 - The amount allocated is \$3,500 for each EHV allocated.

TPS-I.B. SERVICE FEES

Services fee funding must be initially used for defined eligible uses and not for other administrative expenses of operating the EHV program. Service fees fall into four categories:

- Housing search assistance
- Security deposit/utility deposit/rental application/holding fee uses
- Owner-related uses
- Other eligible uses such as moving expenses or tenant-readiness services

The PHA must establish the eligible uses and the parameters and requirements for service fees in the PHA's administrative plan.

PHA Policy

The eligible uses for service fees include:

Housing search assistance, which may include activities such as, but not limited to, helping a family identify and visit potentially available units during their housing search, helping to find a unit that meets the household's disability-related needs, providing transportation and directions, assisting with the completion of rental applications and PHA forms, and helping to expedite the EHV leasing process for the family.

Application fees/non-refundable administrative or processing fees/refundable application deposit assistance. The PHA may choose to assist the family with some or all these expenses.

Holding fees are fees an owner requests that are rolled into the security deposit after an application is accepted but before a lease is signed. The PHA may cover part or all of the holding fee for units where the fee is required by the owner after a tenant's application has been accepted but before the lease signing. The PHA and owner must agree how the holding fee gets rolled into the deposit, and under what conditions the fee will be returned. In general, owners need to accept responsibility for making needed repairs to a unit required by the initial housing quality standards (HQS) inspections and can only keep the holding fee if the client is at fault for not entering into a lease.

Security deposit assistance. The amount of the security deposit assistance may not exceed the lesser of two months' rent to owner, the maximum security deposit allowed under applicable state and/or local law, or the actual security deposit required by the owner. The PHA may pay the security deposit assistance directly to the owner or may pay the assistance to the family. If paid to the family, the PHA will require documentation that the family paid the security deposit.

Utility deposit assistance/utility arrears. The PHA may provide utility deposit assistance for some or all of the family's utility deposit expenses. Assistance can be provided for deposits (including connection fees) required for the utilities to be supplied by the tenant under the lease. The PHA may pay the utility deposit assistance directly to the utility company or may pay the assistance to the family. If paid to the family, the PHA will require documentation the family paid the utility deposit. The PHA will require the utility supplier or family to return the utility deposit assistance to the PHA at such time the deposit is returned by the utility supplier (less any amounts retained by the utility supplier). In addition, some families may have large balances with gas, electric, water, sewer, or trash companies that will make it difficult if not impossible to establish services for tenant-supplied utilities. The PHA may also provide the family with assistance to help address these utility arrears to facilitate leasing. Utility deposit assistance returned to the PHA will be used for either services fee eligible uses or other EHV administrative costs, as required by HUD.

Owner recruitment and outreach for EHV's. The PHA may use the service fee funding to conduct owner recruitment and outreach specifically for EHV's. In addition to traditional owner recruitment and outreach, activities may include conducting pre-inspections or otherwise expediting the inspection process, providing enhanced customer service, and offering owner incentive and/or retention payments.

Owner incentive and/or retention payments. The PHA may make incentive or retention payments to owners that agree to initially lease their unit to an EHV family and/or renew the lease of an EHV family.

Payments will be made as a single payment at the beginning of the assisted lease term (or lease renewal if a retention payment). Owner incentive and retentions payments are not housing assistance payments, are not part of the rent to owner, and are not taken into consideration when determining whether the rent for the unit is reasonable.

Moving expenses (including move-in fees and deposits). The PHA may provide assistance for some or all of the family's reasonable moving expenses when they initially lease a unit with the EHV. The PHA will not provide moving expenses assistance for subsequent moves unless the family is required to move for reasons other than something the family did or failed to do (e.g., the PHA is terminating the HAP contract because the owner did not fulfill the owner responsibilities under the HAP contract or the owner is refusing to offer the family the opportunity to enter a new lease after the initial lease term, as opposed to the family choosing to terminate the tenancy in order to move to another unit), or a family has to move due to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Tenant-readiness services. The PHA may use fees to help create a customized plan to address or mitigate barriers that individual families may face in renting a unit with an EHV, such as negative credit, lack of credit, negative rental or utility history, or to connect the family to other community resources (including COVID-related resources) that can assist with rental arrears.

Essential household items. The PHA may use services fee funding to assist the family with some or all of the costs of acquiring essential household items such as tableware, cooking equipment, beds or bedding, and essential sanitary products such as soap and toiletries.

Renter's insurance if required by the lease. The PHA may choose to assist the family with some or all this cost.

Any services fee assistance that is returned to the PHA after its initial or subsequent use may only be applied to the eligible services fee uses defined in Notice PIH 2021-15 (or subsequent notice) or other EHV administrative costs. Any amounts not expended for these eligible uses when the PHA's EHV program ends must be remitted to HUD.

PART II: PARTNERING AGENCIES

TPS-II.A. CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)

PHAs that accept an allocation of EHV's are required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Continuum of Care (CoC) to establish a partnership for the administration of EHV's.

PHA Policy

The PHA has entered into an MOU with *Rhode Island Continuum of Care ("RiCoC")*. See Exhibit TPS-1 for a copy of the MOU.

TPS-II.B. OTHER PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

The PHA may, but is not required to, partner with other organizations trusted by persons experiencing homelessness, such as victim services providers (VSPs) and other community partners. If the PHA chooses to partner with such agencies, the PHA must either enter into an MOU with the partnering agency or the partnering agency may be added to the MOU between the PHA and CoC.

PHA Policy

The PHA has added *the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness ("RICEH")* to the MOU between the PHA and CoC. See Exhibit TPS-1 for a copy of the MOU. The RiCoC serves families that are fleeing, attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking so an MOU with a Victims Service Organization ("VSO") is not necessary.

TPS-II.C. REFERRALS

CoC and Partnering Agency Referrals

The primary responsibility of the CoC under the MOU with the PHA is to make direct referrals of qualifying individuals and families to the PHA. The PHA must generally refer a family that is seeking EHV assistance directly from the PHA to the CoC or other referring agency for initial intake, assessment, and possible referral for EHV assistance. Partner CoCs are responsible for determining whether the family qualifies under one of the four eligibility categories for EHV's. The CoC or other direct referral partner must provide supporting documentation to the PHA of the referring agency's verification that the family meets one of the four eligible categories for EHV assistance.

PHA Policy

The CoC or partnering agency must establish and implement a system to identify EHV-eligible individuals and families within the agency's caseload and make referrals to the PHA. The CoC or other partnering agency must certify that the EHV applicants they refer to the PHA meet at least one of the four EHV eligibility criteria. The PHA will maintain a copy of the referral or certification from the CoC or other partnering agency in the participant's file along with other eligibility paperwork. Homeless service providers may, but are not required to, use the certification form found in Exhibit TPS-2 of this chapter. Victim services providers may, but are not required to, use the certification form found in Exhibit TPS-3 of this chapter when identifying eligible families who qualify as victims of human trafficking.

As part of the MOU, the PHA and CoC or other partnering agency will identify staff positions to serve as lead EHV liaisons. These positions will be responsible for transmission and acceptance of referrals. The CoC or partnering agency must commit sufficient staff and resources to ensure eligible individuals and families are identified and determined eligible in a timely manner.

The PHA liaison responsible for acceptance of referrals will contact the CoC or partnering agency liaison via email indicating the number of vouchers available and requesting an appropriate number of referrals. No more than five business days from the date the CoC or partnering agency receives this notification, the CoC or partnering agency liaison will provide the PHA with a list of eligible referrals including the name, address, and contact phone number for each adult individual who is being referred; a completed release form for each adult family member; and a written certification for each referral indicating they are EHV-eligible.

Offers of Assistance with CoC Referral

The PHA may make an EHV available without a referral from the CoC or other partnering organization in order to facilitate an emergency transfer under VAWA in accordance with the PHA's Emergency Transfer Plan (ETP) in Chapter 16.

The PHA must also take direct referrals from outside the CoC if:

- The CoC does not have a sufficient number of eligible families to refer to the PHA; or
- The CoC does not identify families that may be eligible for EHV assistance because they are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.

If at any time the PHA is not receiving enough referrals or is not receiving referrals in a timely manner from the CoC or other partner referral agencies (or the PHA and CoC cannot identify any such alternative referral partner agencies), HUD may permit the PHA on a temporary or permanent basis to take EHV applications directly from applicants and admit eligible families to the EHV program in lieu of or in addition to direct referrals in those circumstances.

PART III: WAITING LIST MANAGEMENT

TPS-III. A. HCV WAITING LIST

The regulation that requires the PHA to admit applicants as waiting list admissions or special admissions in accordance with admission policies in Chapter 4 does not apply to PHAs operating the EHV program. Direct referrals are not added to the PHA's HCV waiting list.

The PHA must inform families on the HCV waiting list of the availability of EHV by, at a minimum, either by posting the information to their website or providing public notice in their respective communities in accordance with the requirements listed in Notice PIH 2021-15.

PHA Policy

The PHA will post information about the EHV program for families on the PHA's HCV waiting list on their website. The notice will:

- Describe the eligible populations to which EHV are limited

- Clearly state that the availability of these EHV is managed through a direct referral process

- Advise the family to contact the CoC (or any other PHA referral partner, if applicable) if the family believes they may be eligible for EHV assistance

The PHA will ensure effective communication with persons with disabilities, including those with vision, hearing, and other communication-related disabilities in accordance with Chapter 2. The PHA will also take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) in accordance with Chapter 2.

TPS-III.B. EHV WAITING LIST

The HCV regulations requiring the PHA to operate a single waiting list for admission to the HCV program do not apply to PHAs operating the EHV program. Instead, when the number of applicants referred by the CoC or partnering agency exceeds the EHV available, the PHA must maintain a separate waiting list for EHV referrals, both at initial leasing and for any turnover vouchers that may be issued prior to September 30, 2023.

Further, the EHV waiting list is not subject to PHA policies in Chapter 4 regarding opening and closing the HCV waiting list. The PHA will work directly with its CoC and other referral agency partners to manage the number of referrals and the size of the EHV waiting list.

TPS-III.C. PREFERENCES

HCV Waiting List Preferences

If local preferences are established by the PHA for HCV, they do not apply to EHV. However, if the PHA has a homeless preference or a VAWA preference for the HCV waiting list, the PHA must adopt additional policies related to EHV in accordance with Notice PIH 2021-15.

PHA Policy

The PHA offers a homeless preference for the HCV waiting list. The PHA will refer any applicant on the waiting list who indicates they are eligible for this preference to the CoC referral agency. The CoC referral agency will determine if the family is eligible for an EHV, based on the qualifying definition as set forth by the RICoC.

The PHA offer a Domestic Violence preference for the HCV waiting list. The PHA will refer any applicant on the waiting list who indicates they are eligible for this preference to the CoC referral agency. The CoC referral agency will determine if the family is eligible for an EHV, based on the qualifying definition as set forth by the RICoC.

EHV Waiting List Preferences

With the exception of a residency preference, the PHA may choose, in coordination with the CoC and other referral partners, to establish separate local preferences for EHV. The PHA may, however, choose to not establish any local preferences for the EHV waiting list.

PHA Policy

No local preferences have been established for the EHV waiting list.

PART IV: FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

TPS-IV.A. OVERVIEW

The CoC or referring agency determines whether the individual or family meets any one of the four eligibility criteria described in Notice PIH 2021-15 and then refers the family to the PHA. The PHA determines that the family meets other eligibility criteria for the HCV program, as modified for the EHV program and outlined below.

TPS-IV.B. REFERRING AGENCY DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible for an EHV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility criteria:

- Homeless as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
- At risk of homelessness as defined in 24 CFR 578.3;
- Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking (as defined in Notice PIH 2021-15), or human trafficking (as defined in the 22 U.S.C. Section 7102); or
- Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability as determined by the CoC or its designee in accordance with the definition in Notice PIH 2021-15.

As applicable, the CoC or referring agency must provide documentation to the PHA of the referring agency's verification that the family meets one of the four eligible categories for EHV assistance. The PHA must retain this documentation as part of the family's file.

TPS-IV.C. PHA SCREENING

Overview

HUD waived 24 CFR 982.552 and 982.553 in part for the EHV applicants and established alternative requirement for mandatory and permissive prohibitions of admissions. Except where applicable, PHA policies regarding denials in Chapter 3 of this policy do not apply to screening individuals and families for eligibility for an EHV. Instead, the EHV alternative requirement listed in this section will apply to all EHV applicants.

The mandatory and permissive prohibitions listed in Notice PIH 2021-15 and in this chapter, however, apply only when screening the individual or family for eligibility for an EHV. When adding a family member after the family has been placed under a HAP contract with EHV assistance, the regulations at 24 CFR 982.551(h)(2) apply. Other than the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child, the PHA must approve additional family members and may apply its regular HCV screening criteria in Chapter 3 in doing so.

Mandatory Denials

Under alternative requirements for the EHV program, mandatory denials for EHV applicants include:

- 24 CFR 982.553(a)(1)(ii)(C), which prohibits admission if any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
- 24 CFR 982.553(a)(2)(i), which prohibits admission to the program if any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.

The PHA must deny admission to the program if any member of the family fails to sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information as required by 24 CFR 982.552(b)(3) but should notify the family of the limited EHV grounds for denial of admission first.

PHA Policy

While the PHA will deny admission to the program if any adult member (or head of household or spouse, regardless of age) fails to sign and submit consent forms, the PHA will first notify the family of the limited EHV grounds for denial of admission as part of the notice of denial that will be mailed to the family.

Permissive Denial

Notice PIH 2021-15 lists permissive prohibitions for which the PHA may, but is not required to, deny admission to EHV families. The notice also lists prohibitions that, while allowable under the HCV program, may not be used to deny assistance for EHV families.

If the PHA intends to establish permissive prohibition policies for EHV applicants, the PHA must first consult with its CoC partner to understand the impact that the proposed prohibitions may have on referrals and must take the CoC's recommendations into consideration.

PHA Policy

In consultation with the CoC, the PHA will not apply permissive prohibition to the screening of EHV applicants.

The PHA will deny assistance to household members already receiving assistance from another program in accordance with Section 9.h. of Notice PIH 2021-15.

In compliance with PIH 2021-15, the PHA **will not** deny an EHV applicant admission regardless of whether:

Any member of the family has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years;

A PHA has ever terminated assistance under the program for any member of the family;

The family currently owes rent or other amounts to the PHA or to another PHA in connection with Section 8 or public housing assistance under the 1937 Act;

The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease;

The family breached an agreement with the PHA to pay amounts owed to a PHA, or amounts paid to an owner by a PHA;

The family would otherwise be prohibited admission under alcohol abuse standards established by the PHA in accordance with 24 CFR 982.553(a)(3);

The PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in during a reasonable time before the admission, drug-related criminal activity.

TPS-IV.D. INCOME VERIFICATION AT ADMISSION

Self-Certification at Admission

The requirement to obtain third-party verification of income in accordance with Notice PIH 2018-18 does not apply to the EHV program applicants at admission, and alternatively, PHAs may consider self-certification the highest form of income verification at admission. As such, PHA policies related to the verification of income in Section 7-I.B. do not apply to EHV families at admission. Instead, applicants must submit an affidavit attesting to their reported income, assets, expenses, and other factors that would affect an income eligibility determination.

Additionally, applicants may provide third-party documentation that represents the applicant's income within the 60-day period prior to admission or voucher issuance but is not dated within 60 days of the PHA's request.

PHA Policy

Any documents used for verification must be the original (not photocopies) and dated within the 60-day period prior to admission. The documents must not be damaged, altered, or in any way illegible.

Printouts from webpages are considered original documents.

Any family self-certifications must be made in a format acceptable to the PHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified.

The PHA will incorporate additional procedures to remind families of the obligation to provide true and complete information in accordance with Chapter 14. The PHA will address any material discrepancies (i.e., unreported income or a substantial difference in reported income) that may arise later. The PHA may, but is not required to, offer the family a repayment agreement in accordance with Chapter 16. If the family fails to repay the excess subsidy, the PHA will terminate the family's assistance in accordance with the policies in Chapter 12.

Recently Conducted Income Determinations

PHAs may accept income calculations and verifications from third-party providers or from an examination that the PHA conducted on behalf of the family for another subsidized housing program in lieu of conducting an initial examination of income as long as:

- The income was calculated in accordance with rules outlined at 24 CFR Part 5 and within the last six months; and
- The family certifies there has been no change in income or family composition in the interim.

PHA Policy

The PHA will accept income calculations and verifications from third-party providers provided they meet the criteria outlined above.

The family certification must be made in a format acceptable to the PHA and must be signed by all adult family members whose information or status is being verified.

At the time of the family's annual reexamination the PHA must conduct the annual reexamination of income as outlined at 24 CFR 982.516 and PHA policies in Chapter 11.

EIV Income Validation

Once HUD makes the EIV data available to PHAs under this waiver and alternative requirement, the PHA must:

- Review the EIV Income and Income Validation Tool (IVT) reports to confirm and validate family-reported income within 90 days of the PIC submission date;
- Print and maintain copies of the EIV Income and IVT Reports in the tenant file; and
- Resolve any income discrepancy with the family within 60 days of the EIV Income or IVT Report dates.

Prior to admission, PHAs must continue to use HUD's EIV system to search for all household members using the Existing Tenant Search in accordance with PHA policies in Chapter 3.

If a PHA later determines that an ineligible family received assistance, the PHA must take steps to terminate that family from the program in accordance with Chapter 12.

TPS-IV.E. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND CITIZENSHIP STATUS VERIFICATION

For the EHV program, the PHA is not required to obtain and verify SSN documentation and documentation evidencing eligible noncitizen status before admitting the family to the EHV program. Instead, PHAs may adopt policies to admit EHV applicants who are unable to provide the required SSN or citizenship documentation during the initial eligibility determination. As an alternative requirement, such individuals must provide the required documentation within 180 days of admission to be eligible for continued assistance, pending verification, unless the PHA provides an extension based on evidence from the family or confirmation from the CoC or other partnering agency that the family has made a good-faith effort to obtain the documentation.

If a PHA determines that an ineligible family received assistance, the PHA must take steps to terminate that family from the program.

PHA Policy

The PHA will admit EHV applicants who are unable to provide the required SSN or citizenship documentation during the initial eligibility determination. These individuals must provide the required documentation in accordance with policies in Chapter 7 within 180 days of admission. The PHA may provide an additional 60-day extension based on evidence from the family or confirmation from the CoC or other partnering agency that the family has made a good-faith effort to obtain the documentation.

If the PHA determines that an ineligible family received assistance, the PHA will take steps to terminate that family from the program in accordance with policies in Chapter 12.

TPS-IV.F. AGE AND DISABILITY VERIFICATION

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

If a PHA determines that an ineligible family received assistance, the PHA must take steps to terminate that family from the program.

PHA Policy

The PHA will accept self-certification of date of birth and disability status if a higher form of verification is not immediately available. The certification must be made in a format acceptable to the PHA and must be signed by the family member whose information or status is being verified. If self-certification is accepted, within 90 days of admission, the PHA will verify the information in EIV or through other third-party verification if the information is not available in EIV. The PHA will note the family's file that self-certification was used as initial verification and include an EIV printout or other third-party verification confirming the applicant's date of birth and/or disability status.

If the PHA determines that an ineligible family received assistance, the PHA will take steps to terminate that family from the program in accordance with policies in Chapter 12.

TPS-IV.G. INCOME TARGETING

The PHA must determine income eligibility for EHV families in accordance with 24 CFR 982.201 and PHA policy in Chapter 3; however, income targeting requirements do not apply for EHV families. The PHA may still choose to include the admission of extremely low-income EHV families in its income targeting numbers for the fiscal year in which these families are admitted.

PHA Policy

The PHA will not include the admission of extremely low-income EHV families in its income targeting numbers for the fiscal year in which these families are admitted.

PART V: HOUSING SEARCH AND LEASING

TPS-V.A. INITIAL VOUCHER TERM

Unlike the standard HCV program, which requires an initial voucher term of at least 60 days, EHV vouchers must have an initial search term of at least 120 days. PHA policies on extensions as outlined in Section 5-II.E. will apply.

PHA Policy

All EHV's will have an initial term of 120 calendar days.

The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 120-day period unless the PHA grants an extension. Extensions will be granted according to the PHA Administrative Plan, Section 5-II. E.

TPS-V.B. HOUSING SEARCH ASSISTANCE

The PHA must ensure housing search assistance is made available to EHV families during their initial housing search. The housing search assistance may be provided directly by the PHA or through the CoC or another partnering agency or entity.

At a minimum, housing search assistance must:

- Help individual families identify potentially available units during their housing search, including physically accessible units with features for family members with disabilities, as well as units in low-poverty neighborhoods;
- Provide transportation assistance and directions to potential units;
- Conduct owner outreach;
- Assist with the completion of rental applications and PHA forms; and
- Help expedite the EHV leasing process for the family

PHA Policy

As identified in the MOU between the PHA and CoC, the following housing search assistance will be provided to each EHV family:

The PHA will:

Conduct owner outreach in accordance with policies in Chapter 13

Provide directions to potential units as upon issuance of the EHV

Expedite the EHV leasing process for the family to the extent practicable and in accordance with policies in this chapter

At least every 30 days, conduct proactive check-ins via email and telephone with families who are searching with an EHV and remind them of their voucher expiration date

Assign a dedicated landlord liaison for EHV voucher families

The CoC will:

Help families identify potentially available units during their housing search, including physically accessible units with features for family members with disabilities, as well as units in low-poverty neighborhoods

Provide transportation assistance to potential units

Assist the family with the completion of rental applications and PHA forms

TPS-V.C. HQS PRE-INSPECTIONS

To expedite the leasing process, PHAs may pre-inspect available units that EHV families may be interested in leasing in order to maintain a pool of eligible units.

PHA Policy

To expedite the leasing process, the PHA may pre-inspect available units that EHV families may be interested in leasing to maintain a pool of eligible units. If an EHV family selects a unit that passed a HQS pre-inspection (without intervening occupancy) within 45 days of the date of the Request for Tenancy Approval, the unit may be approved provided that it meets all other conditions under 24 CFR 982.305.

The family will be free to select his or her unit.

When a pre-inspected unit is not selected, the PHA will make every effort to fast-track the inspection process, including adjusting the normal inspection schedule for any required reinspections.

TPS-V.D. INITIAL LEASE TERM

Unlike in the standard the HCV program, EHV voucher holders may enter into an initial lease that is for less than 12 months, regardless of the PHA policy in Section 9-I.E., Term of Assisted Tenancy.

TPS-V.E. PORTABILITY

The normal HCV portability procedures and requirements outlined in Chapter 10 generally apply to EHV. Exceptions are addressed below.

Nonresident Applicants

Under EHV, applicant families may move under portability even if the family did not have legal residency in the jurisdiction of the initial PHA when they applied, regardless of PHA policy in Section 10-II.B.

Billing and Absorption

A receiving PHA cannot refuse to assist an incoming EHV family, regardless of whether the PHA administers EHV under its own ACC.

- If the EHV family moves under portability to another PHA that administers EHV under its own ACC:
 - The receiving PHA may only absorb the incoming EHV family with an EHV (assuming it has an EHV voucher available to do so).
 - If the PHA does not have an EHV available to absorb the family, it must bill the initial PHA. The receiving PHA must allow the family to lease the unit with EHV assistance and may not absorb the family with a regular HCV when the family leases the unit.
 - Regardless of whether the receiving PHA absorbs or bills the initial PHA for the family's EHV assistance, the EHV administration of the voucher is in accordance with the receiving PHA's EHV policies.
- If the EHV family moves under portability to another PHA that does not administer EHV under its own ACC, the receiving PHA may absorb the family into its regular HCV program or may bill the initial PHA.

Family Briefing

In addition to the applicable family briefing requirements at 24 CFR 982.301(a)(2) as to how portability works and how portability may affect the family's assistance, the initial PHA must inform the family how portability may impact the special EHV services and assistance that may be available to the family.

The initial PHA is required to help facilitate the family's portability move to the receiving PHA and inform the family of this requirement in writing, taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).

PHA Policy

In addition to following PHA policy on briefings in Chapter 5, as part of the briefing packet for EHV families, the PHA will include a written notice that the PHA will assist the family with moves under portability.

For limited English proficient (LEP) applicants, the PHA will provide interpretation services in accordance with the PHA's LEP plan (See Chapter 2).

Coordination of Services

If the portability move is in connection with the EHV family's initial lease-up, the receiving PHA and the initial PHA must consult and coordinate on the EHV services and assistance that will be made available to the family.

PHA Policy

For EHV families who are exercising portability, when the PHA contacts the receiving PHA in accordance with Section 10-II.B. Preapproval Contact with Receiving PHA, the PHA will consult and coordinate with the receiving PHA to ensure there is no duplication of EHV services and assistance, and ensure the receiving PHA is aware of the maximum amount of services fee funding that the initial PHA may provide to the receiving PHA on behalf of the family.

Services Fee

Standard portability billing arrangements apply for HAP and ongoing administrative fees for EHV families.

For service fees funding, the amount of the service fee provided by the initial PHA may not exceed the lesser of the actual cost of the services and assistance provided to the family by the receiving PHA or \$1,750, unless the initial PHA and receiving PHA mutually agree to change the \$1,750 cap. Service fees are paid as follows:

- If the receiving PHA, in consultation and coordination with the initial PHA, will provide eligible services or assistance to the incoming EHV family, the receiving PHA may be compensated for those costs by the initial PHA, regardless of whether the receiving PHA bills or absorbs.
- If the receiving PHA administers EHV, the receiving PHA may use its own services fee and may be reimbursed by the initial PHA, or the initial PHA may provide the services funding upfront to the receiving PHA for those fees and assistance.
- If the receiving PHA does not administer EHV, the initial PHA must provide the services funding upfront to the receiving PHA. Any amounts provided to the receiving PHA that are not used for services or assistance on behalf of the EHV family must promptly be returned by the receiving PHA to the initial PHA.

Placement Fee/Issuance Reporting Fee

If the portability lease-up qualifies for the placement fee/issuance reporting fee, the receiving PHA receives the full amount of the placement component of the placement fee/issuing reporting fee. The receiving PHA is eligible for the placement fee regardless of whether the receiving PHA bills the initial PHA or absorbs the family into its own program at initial lease-up. The initial PHA qualifies for the issuance reporting component of the placement fee/issuance reporting fee, as applicable.

TPS-V.F. PAYMENT STANDARDS

Payment Standard Schedule

For the EHV program, HUD has waived the regulation requiring a single payment standard for each unit size. Instead, the PHA may, but is not required to, establish separate higher payment standards for EHV. Lower EHV payment standards are not permitted. If the PHA is increasing the regular HCV payment standard, the PHA must also increase the EHV payment standard if it would be otherwise lower than the new regular HCV payment standard. The separate EHV payment standard must comply with all other HCV requirements with the exception of the alternative requirements discussed below.

Further, if the PHA chooses to establish higher payments standards for EHV, HUD has provided other regulatory waivers:

- Defining the “basic range” for payment standards as between 90 and 120 percent of the published Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the unit size (rather than 90 to 110 percent).
- Allowing a PHA that is not in a designated Small Area FMR (SAFMR) area or has not opted to voluntarily implement SAFMRs to establish exception payment standards for a ZIP code area above the basic range for the metropolitan FMR based on the HUD published SAFMRs. The PHA may establish an exception payment standard up to 120 percent (as opposed to 110 percent) of the HUD published Small Area FMR for that ZIP code area. The exception payment standard must apply to the entire ZIP code area.
 - The PHA must notify HUD if it establishes an EHV exception payment standard based on the SAFMR.

PHA Policy

The PHA has not established a higher payment standard amount for EHV. The PHA will use the same payment standards for HCV and EHV. The PHA will use 120% SAFMR for both EHV and HCV programs.

Rent Reasonableness

All rent reasonableness requirements apply to EHV units, regardless of whether the PHA has established an alternative or exception EHV payment standard.

Increases in Payment Standards

The requirement that the PHA apply increased payment standards at the family’s first regular recertification on or after the effective date of the increase does not apply to EHV. The PHA may, but is not required to, establish an alternative policy on when to apply the increased payment standard, provided the increased payment standard is used to calculate the HAP no later than the effective date of the family’s first regular reexamination following the change.

PHA Policy

The PHA will not establish an alternative policy for increases in the payment standard. PHA policy in Section 11-III.B. governing increases in payment standards will apply to EHV.

TPS-V.G. TERMINATION OF VOUCHERS

After September 30, 2023, a PHA may not reissue EHV when assistance for an EHV-assisted family ends. This means that when an EHV participant (a family that is receiving rental assistance under a HAP contract) leaves the program for any reason, the PHA may not reissue that EHV to another family unless it does so no later than September 30, 2023.

If an applicant family that was issued the EHV is unsuccessful in finding a unit and the EHV expires after September 30, 2023, the EHV may not be reissued to another family.

All EHV under lease on or after October 1, 2023, may not under any circumstances be reissued to another family when the participant leaves the program for any reason.

An EHV that has never been issued to a family may be initially issued and leased after September 30, 2023, since this prohibition only applies to EHV that are being reissued upon turnover after assistance to a family has ended. However, HUD may direct PHAs administering EHV to cease leasing any unleased EHV if such action is determined necessary by HUD to ensure there will be sufficient funding available to continue to cover the HAP needs of currently assisted EHV families.

ART VI: USE OF FUNDS, REPORTING, AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

EHV funds allocated to the PHA for HAP (both funding for the initial allocation and HAP renewal funding) may only be used for eligible EHV HAP purposes. EHV HAP funding obligated to the PHA may not be used for EHV administrative expenses or the other EHV eligible expenses under this notice. Likewise, EHV administrative fees and funding obligated to the PHA are to be used for those purposes and must not be used for HAP.

The appropriated funds for EHV are separate from the regular HCV program and may not be used for the regular HCV program but may only be expended for EHV eligible purposes. EHV HAP funds may not roll into the regular HCV restricted net position (RNP) and must be tracked and accounted for separately as EHV RNP. EHV administrative fees and funding for other eligible expenses permitted by Notice PIH 2021-15 may only be used in support of the EHV and cannot be used for regular HCVs. EHV funding may not be used for the repayment of debts or any amounts owed to HUD by HUD program participants including, but not limited to, those resulting from Office of Inspector General (OIG), Quality Assurance Division (QAD), or other monitoring review findings.

The PHA must comply with EHV reporting requirements in the Voucher Management System (VMS) and Financial Data Schedule (FDS) as outlined in Notice PIH 2021-15.

The PHA must maintain complete and accurate accounts and other records for the program and provide HUD and the Comptroller General of the United States full and free access to all accounts and records that are pertinent the administration of the EHV in accordance with the HCV program requirements at 24 CFR 982.158.

Exhibit TPS-1: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

This Memorandum of Agreement is entered into on this 1 day of July , 2021 by and between the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, a public corporation and instrumentality of the State of Rhode Island having a business address of 44 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903 (“RIHousing”) and the Rhode Island Continuum of Care (“RiCoC”), a governing body organized under the requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (“HEARTH”) Act, having a business address of Care of RiCoC Planner, 44 Washington Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903.

RIHousing and RiCoC collectively may be referred to herein as the “Parties.” The purpose of this Agreement is to set forth the roles of RIHousing and the RiCoC for the implementation and on-going operations of the Emergency Housing Voucher (“EHV”) program, as required by HUD, to support the community’s goals to prevent and end homelessness.

I. Introduction and Goals

a. Commitment of the parties to administer the EHV’s in accordance with all program requirements. The RIHousing and the RiCoC commit to comply with all program requirements. RIHousing agrees to comply with the requirements of Notice PIH 2021-15 [‘Notice’] including eligibility requirements, EHV waivers, alternative requirements, and special rules outlined in the Notice. The RiCoC agrees to fulfill its responsibilities as specified in the Notice including prioritizing individuals and families for EHV assistance, determining the homelessness eligibility, referring individuals and families through the RiCoC’s coordinated entry system, supporting individuals and families in processing voucher applications, supporting the housing search process, and planning for and coordinating the delivery of supportive services to support the housing stability of EHV participants.

b. RIHousing goals and standards of success in administering the program. RIHousing shares the underlying goal of the RiCoC to prevent and end homelessness in the community. In support of the overall goal, RIHousing aims to rapidly lease the allocation of EHV’s through close coordination with the RiCoC in the referral, voucher issuance and lease-up process. RIHousing will measure its success in administering the EHV program by: tracking the number of referrals from the RiCoC that are issued or a voucher or denied entry; tracking the length of time from referral to the PHA to voucher issuance; tracking the time from voucher issuance to lease up; minimizing the number of voucher holders who do not succeed in leasing a unit with EHV assistance; increasing the length of participation in the EHV program.

c. Identification of staff person at RIHousing and the RiCoC who will serve as the lead EHV liaisons:

Lead PHA EHV Liaison: Jessica Mowry, Assistant Director of Leased Housing

Lead RiCoC Liaison: Amy Ferguson, Director of Coordinated Entry System

Responsibilities of the PHA liaison: serve as the key point of contact between the PHA and the RiCoC; in coordination with the RiCoC, develop benchmarks for successful implementation of the EHV program; have regular meetings with the RiCoC liaison and provide updates on available vouchers, vouchers under lease, commitment and expenditure of services fees to assist participants to locate and secure housing; coordinate PHA efforts to outreach to area landlords to

secure participation in the EHV program; identify barriers to voucher issuance or unit lease-up and collaborate with RICoC to address barriers; ensure that the PHA or entity providing services to EHV participants is informed regarding key program issues including whether vouchers are about to expire without leasing, whether the PHA is planning action that could lead to the termination of participation, and/or whether the PHA is unable to contact the participant. Have periodic meetings with RICoC counterpart to monitor lease-up and identify actions needed to maintain leasing schedule and to maintain occupancy for those placed in housing.

Responsibilities of the RICoC Liaison: serve as the key point of contact between the RICoC and PHA; ensure that sufficient individuals and families, eligible for the EHV program, are referred to the PHA through coordinated entry to lease all available EHV vouchers; ensure that referred individuals are able to engage with the PHA, attend necessary briefings, complete documentation requirements, and understand actions that need to be taken to secure a qualified unit, obtain PHA approval of the unit, and enter into a lease; and coordinate services providers so that participants are able to access support in maintaining housing stability. Have periodic meetings with PHA counterpart to monitor lease-up and identify actions needed to maintain leasing schedule and to maintain occupancy for those placed in housing.

II. Populations Eligible for EHV Assistance to be Referred by RICoC

a. Universe of Eligible Households for EHV. The below listed groups are eligible for referral for a EHV voucher.

The eligible population for EHV assistance includes: 1. Households meeting HUD's definition of homelessness

2. Households meeting HUD's definition of 'at risk of homelessness'

3. Any household fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking

4. Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability b. Priority Populations for EHV Assistance.

As with all assistance provided by the RICoC, certain groups of the universe of eligible households are prioritized for the receipt of EHV's. The RICoC will use its Statewide Coordinated Entry System to refer eligible households to partner PHAs for EHV voucher issuance.

Referrals by the RICoC to the PHA will be made according to the order of priority described in the RICoC's Statewide Coordinated Entry System Policy and Procedures or the RICoC's COVID-19 addendum to the Statewide Coordinated Entry System Policy and Procedure as applicable. As is the case with prioritization of all resources overseen by the RICoC, prioritization is subject to change by a vote of the RICoC Board of Directors. Regardless of the current priority population(s) for EHV, all individuals and families referred to the PHA will meet one of the eligibility criteria for EHV described in the Universe of Eligible Households section above.

Effective at the execution of this MOU, the current priority populations for EHV's within the RICoC are:

1. "Moving on from Rapid Rehousing": Households enrolled in Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

or a State Rental Assistance program who are approaching the expiration of their rental assistance and no longer require supportive services as measured by the housing assessment but do require ongoing subsidy of their rent to afford their housing.

2. Households Enrolled in Rapid Rehousing or State Rental Assistance who are approaching the expiration of their rental assistance, continue to require supportive services to maintain their housing as measured by the housing assessment, and have a confirmed supportive services plan documented with the CES lead agency (The RI Coalition to End Homelessness), the RICoC and RIHousing.

III. Services to be Provided to Eligible EHV Families The Continuum of Care's CES lead agency and/or nonprofit service provider member agencies of the RICoC shall provide the following services to individuals and families referred for EHV's to support them in acquiring vouchers, securing housing, and maintaining housing stability:

1. Preparation for voucher issuance. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV's will assist in securing necessary documentation, which may include household composition, income verification for all household members, Social Security cards, and any need for reasonable accommodations in the voucher issuance or housing search process.

2. Coordination with RIHousing. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV's will assist participants to access the appropriate technology required to attend RIHousing briefings prior to issuance of the voucher, complete intake interviews, assembling of additional required documentation, and facilitating access to technology required to access any other necessary meetings.

3. Housing Search Assistance. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV's will communicate with RIHousing's Housing Navigator and other Housing Navigators, to learn of available housing opportunities; provide transportation for households to view apartments and meet prospective landlords, as well as coach households on a successful presentation when meeting with prospective landlords.

4. Understanding obligations of tenancy. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV's will support voucher holders and EHV tenants in meeting their tenancy obligations. As part of the program entry process, partners will familiarize participants with the key obligations of leaseholders including rent and utility payments, authorized and unauthorized occupancy, minimum housekeeping standards, and allowing fellow residents to have peaceful enjoyment of their units. Providers will reinforce those understandings once the participants have signed their leases by again reviewing the key lease terms with participants. Providers will regularly engage property owners/property managers in the event that there are tenant behaviors that could lead to the loss of housing and to support the client and landlord to resolve challenges prior to commencing eviction proceedings or voucher termination.

5. Support in equipping unit for residency. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV's will assist EHV participants in securing moving assistance as needed, including securing essential household furnishings and supplies. To the extent possible, providers will rely on existing community resources and use EHV services funds only when there are no viable alternatives. EHV services funds may be available but require prior authorization by RIHousing EHV Liaison.

6. Support in securing necessary utilities. RICoC service providers assigned to

households referred for EHV will facilitate utility hook-ups by arranging deposits and securing utilities for the unit. EHV services funds may be available but require prior authorization by RIHousing EHV Liaison.

7. Support in maintaining housing stability. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV will assist participants in developing a housing stability plan to proactively address issues that could lead to housing instability including income, behavioral health concerns, and employment. Support must be provided at least bi-weekly for the first six (6) months of tenancy and as needed thereafter, throughout the first year of tenancy.

8. Linkages to benefits and community supports. RICoC service providers assigned to households referred for EHV will assist EHV participants in applying for and securing benefits to which they are entitled. They will also introduce participants to services based in their communities, including self-help groups, clinics, and workforce resources. Providers will support participants in securing benefits and accessing community resources. As appropriate this will include introductions and support in initial access of services.

IV. RIHousing Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Administer EHV vouchers consistent with the operating requirements established by HUD and assure that allocated vouchers are utilized.

2. Reach agreement with the RICoC on the uses of the EHV services fee. RIHousing and RICoC will jointly agree on the uses of the EHV services fee and will seek existing community resources prior to reliance on the services fee.

3. Housing search assistance. RIHousing will assist voucher holders to locate and secure housing. This may include providing information on rental opportunities within the housing market, negotiating rent and timelines for move-in with landlord, and coordinating necessary activities for securing housing with service providers.

4. RIHousing agrees to designate a staff lead to oversee the EHV program and to make special provisions for EHV voucher holders including: providing specialized, accessible voucher briefings solely for EHV participants; committing to expediting inspections for EHV voucher holders and accepting inspections conducted by properly trained RICoC partner agencies; and promptly notifying partnering providers of any possible issues that could jeopardize the continuation of the voucher. Upon request from the RICoC or partnering service provider, the PHA agrees to pre-inspect identified units to expedite the leasing process.

5. RIHousing agrees that the only persons to be admitted to the EHV program will be those that are referred by the RICoC through its Statewide Coordinated Entry process. Since households experiencing or fleeing domestic abuse or violence are already incorporated into the RICoC's CES, there is no alternative referral process for survivors.

6. RIHousing agrees that any services fees used to pay security deposits on a residential unit or service deposits for utilities, do not need to be repaid but may be retained by the participant for future housing need.

7. RIHousing understands that the goal of the EHV program is to assist in preventing and ending homelessness in the community and that to achieve this goal, rental assistance must be provided to households that might not otherwise be eligible for PHA assistance. RIHousing agrees that all current and prior actions by applicants that may be grounds for denying entry to

the EHV program will be considered on a case-by-case basis and that blanket prohibitions will not be issued for: violent criminal activity, criminal activities that could interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of other residents, crime or criminal activity in association with Federal housing programs, and/or threatening or abusive behavior to PHA staff. An individualized assessment will be made of all prospective EHV voucher holders – only those persons individually determined to pose a risk to themselves, other residents, or program staff will be denied a voucher.

8. The PHA agrees that with the exception of persons who must be excluded from the EHV program and those denied based on an individualized determination, it will accept all referrals from coordinated entry and, if income eligible, will process the households for an EHV voucher. HUD requires a denial of assistance to individuals who are lifetime registered sex offenders and those convicted of manufacturing methamphetamines in federally assisted housing.

9. To expedite the leasing of units under the EHV program, RIHousing agrees to accept self-certification of income when requiring other documentation would lead to delays in the issuance of a voucher.

10. To expedite the leasing of units under the EHV program, RIHousing agrees to accept self-certification of citizenship and eligible immigration status.

11. To facilitate the leasing of units under the EHV program, the RIHousing will set the payment standard for EHV vouchers at 120% of the applicable Small Area Fair Market Rent. This will increase the availability of housing for EHV voucher holders.

12. To facilitate leasing of units and if needed due to market conditions, RIHousing agrees to use services fees, as available, but not allocated to providing housing search assistance, as an incentive payment to landlords to encourage their participation in the EHV program. Incentive and/or retention payments to landlords are fully earned upon leasing or renewing the lease of an eligible program participant. Incentive fees may be up to twice the monthly unit rent.

V. CoC Roles and Responsibilities

1. Designate an EHV lead to have regular communication with the RIHousing and set regular monthly meetings to review voucher utilization, rate of referrals of eligible participants from RICoC, denials of referrals by RIHousing, vouchers terminated or at risk of termination, and strategies to support participant housing stability.

2. Establish assessment and prioritization policies for the EHV program and refer sufficient eligible households to the PHA to meet the lease-up schedule agreed 7 | Page to by the PHA and RICoC. RIHousing and RICoC will jointly agree to a referral and leasing schedule that will ensure that there are sufficient referrals to lease available EHV vouchers and that the timing of referrals is coordinated to ensure that the PHA and partnering service providers are not overburdened but have a steady pipeline of eligible applicants. As part of the referral process, the RICoC will provide RIHousing with sufficient documentation to establish eligibility for the EHV program.

3. The CoC will prioritize the referral of households to RIHousing that are living outside the city of Providence to ensure efficient and expeditious lease up efforts

4. RIHousing will provide the CoC with the names and contact information of households

on the Housing Choice Voucher program waiting list who have selected the PHA's Homeless Preference. The CoC will determine whether the family is eligible for an EHV (based on the qualifying definition for EHV assistance for homelessness or another eligible category as applicable). The CoC will also determine if the family is eligible for other homeless assistance through the CE system.

5. Developing a funding strategy for supportive services for EHV program participants that will allow for sufficient resources to support the transition of participants into the EHV program, allow them to develop housing stability, and target continuing support to those at risk of losing housing. Wherever possible, services will be funding through mainstream resources. When that is not possible, the RICoC will seek to identify resources from other COVID specific resources such as ESG-CV or CDBG-CV, and if possible, through the RICoC program.

6. Ensure that partnering service providers are assisting participants in developing plans to increase income, are supporting participants in applying for benefit assistance, link participants to workforce and other employment training and supports, and regularly monitor participant progress in increasing income.

7. Have periodic meetings of senior officials of RIHousing, RICoC leadership, and leadership of participating service providers. These high-level meetings will review leasing progress, the rate of referrals to the PHA, and the prioritization for vouchers.

VI. Program Evaluation The PHA, and RICoC or designated RICoC recipient agree to cooperate with HUD, provide requested data to HUD or HUD-approved contractor delegated the responsibility of program evaluation protocols established by HUD or HUD-approved contractor, including possible random assignment procedures.

VII. Further Cooperation The parties hereby commit to cooperating with one another to address these issues as they arise and to resolve them based on the agreements in this MOU.

Signatures:

Rhode Island Continuum of Care

Signed by: _____

Printed Name: Michelle Brophy

Title: Chair

Date: 7/1/2021

RIHousing

Signed by: _____

Printed Name: Claribel Shavers

Title: Director, Leased Housing Division

Date: 7/1/2021

Exhibit TPS-2: HOMELESS PROVIDER'S CERTIFICATION

Attachment 3 of Notice PIH 2021-15 Example of a Homeless Provider's Certification

Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV)

HOMELESS CERTIFICATION

EHV Applicant Name: _____

Household without dependent children (complete one form for each adult in the household)

Household with dependent children (complete one form for household)

Number of persons in the household: _____

This is to certify that the above named individual or household meets the following criteria based on the check mark, other indicated information, and signature indicating their current living situation-

Check only one box and complete only that section

Living Situation: place not meant for human habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)

The person(s) named above is/are currently living in (or, if currently in hospital or other institution, was living in immediately prior to hospital/institution admission) 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 station, airport, or camp ground.

Description of current living situation:

Homeless Street Outreach Program

Name: _____

This certifying agency must be recognized by the local Continuum of Care (CoC) as an agency that has a program designed to serve persons living on the street or other places not meant for human habitation. Examples may be street outreach workers, day shelters, soup kitchens, Health Care for the Homeless sites, etc.

Authorized Agency Representative Signature: _____

Date: _____

Living Situation: Emergency Shelter

The person(s) named above is/are currently living in (or, if currently in hospital or other institution, was living in immediately prior to hospital/institution admission) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter as follows:

Emergency Shelter Program Name: _____

This emergency shelter must appear on the CoC's Housing Inventory Chart submitted as part of the most recent CoC Homeless Assistance application to HUD or otherwise be recognized by the CoC as part of the CoC inventory (e.g., newly established Emergency Shelter).

Authorized Agency Representative Signature: _____ Date
: _____

Living Situation: Recently Homeless

The person(s) named above is/are currently receiving financial and supportive services for persons who are homeless. Loss of such assistance would result in a return to homelessness (ex. Households in Rapid Rehousing Programs, residents of Permanent Supportive Housing Programs participating in Moving On, etc.)

Authorized Agency Representative Signature: _____

This referring agency must appear on the CoC's Housing Inventory Chart submitted as part of the most recent CoC Homeless Assistance application to HUD or otherwise be recognized by the CoC as part of the CoC inventory.

Immediately prior to entering the household's current living situation, the person(s) named above was/were residing in:

emergency shelter OR a place unfit for human habitation

Authorized Agency Representative Signature: _____
Date: _____

Exhibit TPS-3: EXAMPLE OF A VICTIM SERVICES PROVIDER'S CERTIFICATION

Attachment 4 of Notice PIH 2021-15: Example of a Victim Services Provider's Certification

Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV)

SAMPLE HUMAN TRAFFICKING CERTIFICATION

Purpose of Form:

The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 provides assistance to victims of trafficking making housing, educational health care, job training and other Federally-funded social service programs available to assist victims in rebuilding their lives.

Use of This Optional Form:

In response to this request, the service provider may complete this form and submit it to the Public Housing Agency (PHA) to certify eligibility for EHV assistance.

Confidentiality: All information provided to the service provider concerning the incident(s) of human trafficking shall be kept confidential and such details shall not be entered into any shared database. Employees of the PHA will not have access to these details, and such employees may not disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is: (i) consented to by you in writing in a time-limited release; (ii) required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or (iii) otherwise required by applicable law.

TO BE COMPLETED ON BEHALF OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR

EHV Applicant Name: _____

This is to certify that the above named individual or household meets the definition for persons who are fleeing or attempting to flee human trafficking under section 107(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.

Immediately prior to entering the household's current living situation, the person(s) named above was/were residing in:

This is to certify that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that the individual(s) named above is/has been a victim of human trafficking. I acknowledge that submission of false information could jeopardize program eligibility and could be the basis for denial of admission, termination of assistance, or eviction.

Authorized Agency Representative Signature: _____ **Date:** _____