



Yolo County Housing

Lisa A. Baker, Executive Director

147 W. Main Street
WOODLAND, CA 95695

Woodland: (530) 662-5428
Sacramento: (916) 444-8982
TTY: (800) 545-1833, ext. 626

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DATE: January 13, 2011
TO: YCH Board of Commissioners
FROM: Lisa A. Baker, Executive Director
PREPARED BY: Marianne Krager, Director of Operations
SUBJECT: **REVIEW AND APPROVE A CHANGE TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN FOR THE HCV PROGRAM CLARIFYING THE DEFINITION OF EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE FOR APPLICANTS**

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

That the Board of Commissioners:

1. Review and approve "Working Preference language" for the Housing Choice Voucher Program to include the unemployed; and
2. Authorize the Executive Director to implement.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

HUD regulations contain a list of what must be included in a PHA's administrative plan. YCH's administrative plan must cover policies on selection and admission of applicants from the YCH waiting list.

The purpose of preferences is to ensure that YCH has established a fair and equitable system for selection of families admitted to the program. Currently the YCH Administrative Plan has a "Working Preference." The YCH is committed to affirming the value of work, but staff realizes that the preference is not necessarily reflective of current economic conditions within the region. Eligibility staff currently find that families on the wait list who originally claimed the working preference are now being returned to the wait list with lower preference status without receiving a voucher since they are now receiving unemployment benefits.

In order to both honor work and to recognize the difficult circumstances of those who, until recently, were employed but have suffered during the current economic downturn, staff proposes to clarify the language of its working preference. Staff proposes to clarify that those currently receiving unemployment benefits will be counted as eligible for the working preference.

The proposed clarification is as follows:

- 1) Working preference: families with at least one adult who is employed and has been employed for six months; this definition includes families where at least one adult was employed and is currently receiving unemployment benefits. This preference is automatically extended to elderly families or a family whose head or spouse is receiving income based on their permanent disability.

FISCAL IMPACT

None. Clarifying the working preference language will have no effect on Voucher Operations budget. Failure to implement will cause many families who are currently receiving unemployment benefits to wait longer for housing assistance and continue to exacerbate their financial difficulties.

CONCLUSION

In order for preferences to be consistent with local housing needs and priorities, staff is recommending that the Board adopt the proposed Administrative Plan change. The proposed language change is a clarification of policy and not a substantial amendment to the Administrative Plan. As such, no public hearing is required for adoption.