



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: April 14, 2011
TO: YCH Board of Commissioners
FROM: Lisa A. Baker, Executive Director
PREPARED BY: Marianne Krager, Director of Operations
SUBJECT: **PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AMENDING THE VOUCHER ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN REGARDING PURGING AND REOPENING THE WAIT LIST AND AMENDING THE PLAN TO ADD THE DEFINITION OF "INVOLUNTARILY DISPLACED" TO THE LIST OF PREFERENCES**

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

That the Board of Commissioners:

1. Hold a public hearing to solicit public input;
2. After receiving public testimony, comments and any changes, approve the proposed amendments regarding purging and reopening the wait list and adding language regarding "Involuntarily Displaced" to the Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and;
2. Authorize the Executive Director to implement these amendments.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

HUD regulations contain a list of what must be included in the Administrative Plan. YCH's Plans must cover YCH policies on selection and admission of applicants from the YCH waiting list. This includes any YCH selection and admission policies and preferences for ordering the wait list. YCH is proposing two (2) amendments to the Administrative Plan designed to improve the wait list for both applicants and YCH and to improve YCH's ability to assist local governments in the case of involuntary displacement.

Purging and Reopening the Wait List

The purpose of the purge is to analyze the list that represents the applicant pool to ensure that individual applicants are still interested in the housing choice voucher program. Purging the list helps to move interested applicants into the program more quickly while helping to reduce administrative and financial burdens incurred when contacting applicants. When a wait list pool is not updated, agencies incur unnecessary

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costs associated with staff time, and costly postage and supplies associated with mailing multiple notices to families who have moved, are no longer eligible or who are no longer interested in the program. Additionally staff has to go through the process on a case-by-case basis to eliminate those ineligible or disinterested families. Purging the list, which involves the process of contacting all applicant families on the list to verify their continued interest and potential eligibility, reduces this large capital outlay and time consumption. In general, staff finds that the wait list is most successful if it is purged and considered for re-opening every three years. This gives the YCH the benefits of scheduling the purge on a three year cycle, the ongoing use of a recent list, while also not over-burdening staff with a large and expensive purge project.

Staff proposes that the following language regarding the Wait List be inserted in the Administrative Plan:

Purging the Waiting List

YCH Policy The wait list will be updated every three (3) years to ensure that the waiting list is current and accurate. After updating the list, the Executive Director will verify that it has sufficient families waiting for a voucher for at least one (1) year. Where there are insufficient families to serve within that one-year period, the Board will consider opening the wait list to receive new applicants.

Amendment to Add Language Regarding Involuntary Displacement

The purpose of preferences is to ensure the public housing agency has established a system for selection of families admitted to the program. Currently the YCH's Administrative Plan does not have "involuntarily displaced" language. The purpose of this language will be to include families who have found themselves in a position of either homelessness, having to live in sub-standard housing through no-fault of their own or having to relocate due to being part of a Witness Protection Program or displaced due to a family member being the victim of one or more hate crimes.

Staff proposes that the following language regarding Involuntary Displacement be inserted in the Administrative Plan:

Involuntarily Displaced:

Displaced by Government Action

Families who were receiving Housing Choice Voucher assistance will take precedence over other waiting list place holders. New applicants to the Housing Choice Voucher program must be a family displaced by a natural disaster, including disasters recognized by the Federal government, which extensively damaged or destroyed their dwelling, or is:

- Dilapidated as cited by city/county officials of a local code enforcement office and does not provide safe, adequate shelter; has one or more critical defects or a combination of defects requiring considerable repair or endangers the health, safety, and well-being of family.
- Has been declared unfit for habitation by a government agency.
- Part of a Witness Protection Program or the HUD Office or law enforcement agency and, after a threat assessment, the law enforcement agency recommends re-housing the family to avoid or reduce risk of violence against the family.
- Displaced due to a family member being the victim of one or more hate crimes, and the applicant has vacated the unit because of the crime or the fear of such a crime has destroyed the applicant's peaceful enjoyment of the unit.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time. Cost savings through a regular schedule for wait list maintenance.

CONCLUSION

In order for preferences to be consistent with local housing needs and priorities, staff is recommending that the Board adopt the proposed revisions to the Administrative Plan. As these are considered "Significant Amendments or Modifications" to the policy or policies pertaining to the operation of the Authority, YCH has published a "Public Notice" in local area media and giving "All citizens, residents and interested parties" 45 days to comment as required by our Administrative Plan and notifying them of the Public Hearing. That comment period ended on April 11, 2011. To date, YCH has received no public comments.