

Section 2.0 ISSUING VOUCHERS

After all family information has been verified, eligibility has been determined and the family has been briefed regarding general program rights and obligations, the LA will issue the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV). At this point the family begins its search for a unit.

2.01 Voucher Term

While HUD regulations specify a minimum voucher term of 60 days, HCR as the PHA has the discretion to modify this term and to grant a family one or more extensions of the initial voucher term in accordance with the policies set forth in the PHA's administrative plan. HCR reserves the right to revise its voucher term guidelines based on budget authority granted by HUD and utilization of unit baseline allocations. Changes in voucher term policies will be disseminated, as needed, in Statewide Section 8 notices.

The initial term of the voucher will be 60 days and must be stated on the voucher. The LA may grant one or more extensions of the term, but the initial term plus any extensions will not exceed 180 days from the initial date of issuance. If additional extensions are required for *reasonable accommodation and/or extenuating circumstances*, the LA must follow the guidelines outlined in Section 2.04 below.

The family must make a reasonable effort to locate a unit throughout the initial voucher term and/or any subsequent extensions. If necessary, the family may seek the assistance of the LA. The LA is responsible for informing the family of the requirement to maintain a search record after the first 30 days of the search. If the LA fails to do so, they may not deny the extension of the voucher on the basis that the family did not make a reasonable effort to locate a unit.

2.02 Voucher Expirations

Upon expiration of a Housing Choice Voucher, the LA must inform the applicant or participant in writing that the voucher has expired. The voucher expiration notice must include the following text: **“If you or a member of your household is a person with a disability, you may be eligible for an additional extension of the voucher, up to the term reasonably required for that purpose, upon request.”**

If a voucher has expired, has not been extended by the LA or expires after an extension, the family will be denied assistance. As allowed by program regulations, a decision by the LA **not** to extend a voucher is not subject to an informal hearing. An applicant whose voucher has expired and who is not eligible for any additional extension of the voucher may reapply to the waiting list if the LA's waiting list is open or, if the waiting list is closed, may reapply at such time as the waiting list reopens.

2.03 Suspensions

Suspension or tolling of the time that an applicant spends locating a unit is **not** permitted for the term of the voucher except for the time from the date that the family submits a request for PHA approval of the tenancy until the date the PHA notifies the family in writing whether the request has been approved or denied.

2.04 Extensions

2.04.01 Reasonable Accommodation Extensions:

If a family needs and requests an extension (beyond the term noted in Section 2.01 above) as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by a family member with a disability, it is the LA's responsibility to evaluate and grant the extension.

2.04.02 Extensions Due to Extenuating Circumstances:

Prior to granting any of the following voucher extensions, the LA must obtain documentation to substantiate the basis for his/her approval of the extension.

- (1) The LA must grant a 30-day extension of the voucher, beyond the term noted in Section 2.01 above, if extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization or a family emergency for an extended period of time affected the family's ability to find a unit. A written request for such extension must be submitted within 30 days of the expiration of the voucher.
- (2) A 30-day extension of the voucher must also be granted under the following circumstances:
 - (a) A family member submits a "Request for Tenancy Approval" prior to the expiration of the voucher. After the submission of the Request for Tenancy Approval, the landlord/owner rescinds the agreement and the voucher term, as noted in Section 2.01 above, has expired; or
 - (b) After the submission of the Request for Tenancy Approval and the completion of the HQS inspection, the landlord/owner refuses to correct the HQS deficiencies and the voucher term, as noted in Section 2.01 above, has expired.

2.05 LA Assistance to Voucher Holders

Families who require additional assistance during their search may call the LA office to request assistance. Voucher holders will be notified at their briefing session if the LA maintains and updates a listing of available units and how the updated list may be obtained.

The LA will assist families in negotiations with owners and provide other assistance related to the families' search for housing.

After the first 30 days of the search, the family is required to maintain a search record and report to the LA every 30 days. The search record will be in a form prescribed by HCR and the LA.

2.06 LA to LA Moves

In the case of a move between Local Administrators, the LA must absorb. If the LA does not have sufficient funding to absorb, the LA **must** contact HCR for further guidance.