



Office of Public Housing

News-to-Use Letter

November 2006

Greetings from Ann Roman, OPH Director: We continue to operate under a Continuing Resolution and anticipate this situation may continue for a few more months. We will keep you posted as we learn more as to how expiring operating and housing choice voucher funds will be replaced starting in 2007.

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2007!

Operating Fund Update

On 11/24/06 HUD published two proposed rules regarding the operating fund program. The first proposed rule addresses revised transition funding for 2007. This proposed rule would revise the transition-funding schedule for those PHAs that will experience a decline in funding (based on the difference in subsidy levels between the new formula and the formula in effect prior to the implementation of 9/19/05 final rule). For FFY 2007 only, the transition funding percentage loss for all PHAs will be capped at 5 percent of the difference between the two funding levels. Prior to this proposed rule, the funding loss percentage is 24 percent. The proposed rule will also affect those PHAs experiencing a gain in transition funding. Assuming no change in appropriations, HUD estimates that PHAs experiencing a subsidy increase under the new formula will have their subsidy reduced by approximately 0.7 percent as a result of the extended transition schedule established by this proposed rule. Comments on this proposed rule are due 12/26/06.

The second proposed rule addresses a revised transition-funding schedule for FY 2008 through FY 2012. This proposed rule would revise the schedule for those PHAs that will experience a decline in funding, by extending the transition phase-in period one additional year. The table below shows the transition-funding schedule for decliner PHAs for the current rule in effect and for this proposed rule. Comments on this proposed rule are due 1/23/07.

Transition Funding Comparison for Decliner PHAs

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Current Rule (9/1/05)	24%	43%	62%	81%	100%	--
Proposed Rule (11/24/06)	5%	24%	43%	62%	81%	100%

Asset Management

HUD posted a clarification on its Stop-Loss web page (www.hud.gov/offices/PIH/programs/ph/am/stoploss.cfm). The message states that the April 15, 2007 date is still the correct first-year deadline date for PHAs to submit stop-loss applications.

PIC Update

A new PIC release 5.9 will be implemented starting December 15, 2006. To make the system changes, PIC will be shutting down at 4:00 PM on Friday, December 15 and will reopen by 8:00 AM on Monday, December 18. A summary list of the changes will be posted to the PIC home page. With PIC 5.9 release, HUD will be moving entirely to the Web Access Security Sub-System (WASS) logon. **This means that after December 15, PIC IDs will no longer work. PIC users will need to access the system using their WASS MID.** Prior to December 15, PIC users should continue to verify their roles and responsibilities under their MID are what they should be and/or are what they are use to with their PIC ID. Staff can register online for a WASS ID at the following:

http://www.hud.gov/offices/reac/online/online_registration.cfm

The 5.9 release will also include changes that may impact you 50058 reporting software. HUD is in the process of updating the FRS software to reflect these changes and should have this software available close to December 15. PHAs should not implement the FRS update until after December 15. PHAs who use other reporting software are encouraged to consult with their provider to ensure their software will adequately address the new requirements.

Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) Update

New SSA Data to be Available: EIV will acquire new SSA data for all PIH and MF housing tenants by the end of December. This will allow EIV users to have SSA tenant data that includes the SSA 2006 cost of living increase.

Multi-Subsidy Tenant Report: The Multi-Subsidy Tenant Report (MSTR) is a relatively new EIV report that all PHAs should become familiar with if you have not already. The MSTR lists households where family members are getting multiple subsidy assistance. EIV users can search for records by 2 options: (1) Search within PIH Program Only and (2) Search within Public Housing and Multifamily Programs. Your search will result in 2 reports options (tabs). The Summary Report provides a simple listing of members receiving multiple subsidy. The Detail Report displays the information of each individual who received assistance in multiple PHAs or in multiple programs. This includes member information and household information for the member and where he/she receives subsidy. Section 4.3 of the EIV User Guide (available on-line at EIV) has more information and screen shots for the MSTR. In the future our staff will be contacting PHAs that have MSTR records to see what action has been taken to research the cases and to determine if any fraud has been committed.

EIV Usage: One of our local goals is to have all PHAs accessing EIV on a regular basis, ideally at least monthly. Toward that end we use the PHA Usage Report, which has information by PHA showing if EIV was accessed within the last 30 days or within the last 180 days. We are pleased to report that the majority of Region 8 PHAs are accessing EIV on a regular basis. There are a few PHAs that have not accessed the system for several months and there are a smaller number of PHAs that have not accessed the system at all for the last 180 days. We encourage EIV users to access the system regularly and if any of your staff are having difficulties with the system, please contact your Public Housing Revitalization Specialist.

Energy Conservation Success Stories

We want to thank those PHAs that have shared their energy conservation success stories with us and at this time we would like to share some of the successes with you. Jeff Valloric, Manager of Facilities/Maintenance, at the Fort Collins Housing Authority (FCHA) in Colorado, has been involved with energy conservation activities for many years. Jeff has had great success working with local utility companies and leveraging funds creatively. He has successfully used a program offered by the utility company, which offers a "bounty" for every old inefficient electrical appliance that is taken off the energy grid. FCHA recently changed out wall air conditioners and received a \$50 per unit rebate. By consolidating multiple grant rehab work with public housing capital replacement, Jeff has been able to get enough buying power to have General Electric give volume discounts. GE will also rebate the change out of incandescent light fixtures to Energy Star rated fixtures. FCHA did over 400 of these change outs and the rebates are flowing. The rebates defray the cost of the higher fixture and bulbs and the ultimate benefit will be to FCHA residents who will have lower energy costs and cooler units in the summer. Jeff has also had great success with refrigerator rebates. The local utility company pays \$35 for each refrigerator. They will also pick up old appliances, saving FCHA the \$25 it would cost to have the Freon removed plus the costs (and time) it would pay staff to haul the appliances to the dump. It is a "win-win" for the PHA and the utility company!

FCHA also participated in two large and successful Make a Difference Day sites. At one public housing site 170 Intel staff were building a new playground, residing some of the buildings, and installing sod and paving stones. At a second site some 90 Hewlett Packard staff were building a second playground from scratch. Jeff reports it was a great event with some 270 men and women volunteering working over a 6-day period and providing a big savings to FCHA for labor costs.

Please feel free to contact Jeff Valloric at 970-416-2093 if you would like more information about FCHA's energy conservation programs.

SAGIS

On November 27, 2006, PHAs with a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program were notified that PIH is developing a new system to replace the programmatic aspects of the present HUDCAPS system and to provide additional capabilities. This system, titled SAGIS, will be implemented in a series of releases over a period of time. The first release of this program that directly involves PHAs is scheduled to be implemented on or about December 15, 2006, and will allow HUD to provide each PHA with their projected and final annual HCV program renewal funding calculations and amounts via the web. This will replace the current practice of receiving hard or soft (email) copies of the documents from HUD. For this to work, will need to identify a person who should be granted access to SAGIS. The November notification also addressed additional actions each PHA will need to undertake. On December 4, additional clarification regarding SAGIS was issued. A PHA's Secure Systems Coordinator should set up the PHA's designee with the SAGIS role **after December 20, 2006** – not by December 11 as was in the original instructions.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) – Update

We are still waiting additional guidance on VAWA. However, we wish to inform you that the HUD certification form has been issued. Form HUD-50066, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or Stalking, is available at HUDCLIPS: http://www.hudclips.org/sub_nonhud/html/pdfforms/50066.doc

Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Initiative

Many of you may have seen Secretary Jackson's October 5, 2006, letter to Executive Directors discussing the Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Initiative (Initiative). This Initiative is funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which will give states a total of \$1.75 billion over 5 years to help shift Medicaid from its historical emphasis on institutional long-term care services to those that encourage more consumer choice. The two web addresses below provide more background information. The first address is a CMS site and it provides information on the waiver process. The second address is for HUD's Senior Housing Information Center.

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidStWaivProgDemoPGI/01_Overview.asp#TopOgPage
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pihcc/index.cfm>

This Initiative is new and we are only starting to learn more about it. It is possible to use this program to rehab units and provide services that would then allow elderly participants to "age in place". Our Headquarters office is currently in discussions with CMS and is developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies. If you are interested in pursuing options available under this Initiative we suggest you first contact your state Medicaid agency to see if it is a recipient of funding under this initiative. We will keep you posted as we learn more. Please feel free to contact our office

Clarification Regarding Disabled and Elderly Families

We recently had several discussions with PHA staff, Office of Counsel and Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity staff regarding HUD's definition of family, especially as it relates to elderly and/or disabled projects. We realized there might be confusion and so we take this opportunity to remind PHAs that an elderly or disabled family may include children and that the presence of children should not exclude the elderly or disabled family from residency in a housing development servicing these families. The PHA's occupancy standards will obviously be a consideration, but the mere presence of children should not be an automatic exclusion.

Recent Issuances



Federal Register Issuances – Rules and Program Changes:

- 11/24/06: Public Housing Operating Fund Program; Revised Transition Funding Scheduled for Fiscal Year 2008 Through Fiscal Year 2012; Proposed Rule: Comment due date is 1/23/07.
- 11/24/06: Public Housing Operating Fund Program; Revised Transition Funding Provision for Federal Fiscal Year 2007; Proposed Rule: Comment due date is 12/26/06.

Federal Register Issuances – Information Collection:

- 11/9/06: Notice of Proposed Information Collection for Public Comment; Civil Rights Front End and Limited Monitoring Review: Comment due date is 1/8/07.
- 11/13/06: Notice of Submission of Proposed Information Collection to OMB; Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Certification: Comment due date is 12/13/06.
- 11/16/06: Notice of Proposed Information Collection for Public Comment; Public Housing Contracting With Resident-Owned Businesses: Comment due date is 1/15/06.
- 11/20/06: Notice of Submission of Proposed Information Collection to OMB; Utility Allowance Adjustments: Comment due date is 12/20/06.
- 11/24/06: Notice of Submission of Proposed Information Collection to OMB; Maintenance Wage Rate Wage Recommendation and Maintenance Wage Survey; Report of Additional Classification and Wage Rate; Comment due date is 12/26/06.

Reminders

- 12/13/06 – Due date for resident address certification for RASS survey for 3/31/07 PHAs
- 12/14/06 – 1/8/07: 3/31/07 PHAs promote RASS survey
- 12/31/06: Audit reports due for 3/31/06 PHAs
- 1/5 – 3/12/07: Resident survey period for 12/31/06 PHAs
- 1/8/07 – RASS Implementation Plan Certification due for 3/31/07 PHAs
- 1/24 – 3/27/07: Residents surveyed for 3/31/07 PHAs
- 3/31/07: Audit reports due for 6/30/06 PHAs.

*OPH would like articles, comments, and/or questions from housing authorities in the Rocky Mountain Region.
Please send these contributions to Ann Roman at Carol_A._Roman@hud.gov. Thanks!*