

14A. DEFINITION OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Special Programs are all tenant-based voucher programs administered by HACK outside of the regular Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. This includes set aside vouchers from the regular HCV allocation, and specific awards made to HACK. Special programs are designed to serve sub populations that have specific circumstances and specific criteria for qualifying. Participants of special programs are subject to the same basic family obligations, termination procedures, hearings etc. as set in the Administrative Plan. Where there is a conflict between regulations outlined in the Administrative Plan and the Special Program regulations, the special program regulations will prevail.

Below is a list of each special program to include; the target population, a summary of each program, the funding source, and prevailing regulations.

14B. HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

Target Population: Homeless persons with a disabling condition, including the Chronically Homeless.

Summary: SNAP is tenant based rental assistance program with supportive services. This program follows the Housing First model and receives all referrals through the Kern County Homeless Collaborative (KCHC) Coordinated Entry System (CES). HACK has the responsibility for administering Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contracts for the duration of the program and assuring compliance with HUD regulations by property owners and program participants. HACK partners with several supportive service agencies to provide case management to the participants of the program. Supportive service agencies provide quarterly reports to include statistical information, types of services offered, and cost of services to HACK. These reports are used as a tool for continuous project evaluation. Annual reports are required detailing the support services provided and documenting their value. This information is used for HUD reporting purposes and/or billing requirements.

Funding Source: The SNAP program is awarded to HACK by HUD through an annual competitive grant process.

Prevailing Regulations:

1. There are no income eligibility criteria
2. At least one member of the household must have a disability as defined by HUD
3. No minimum rent is imposed

4. Reasons for denial include:
 - a. Applicants who are not homeless or disabled
 - b. Those who are registered sex offenders or offenders of a violent crime if the housing has in residence at least one family with a child under the age of 18, so long as the child is living in the home.

14C. THE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (HOPWA/TBRA)

Target Population: Homeless individuals and those at imminent risk of homelessness living with AIDS and/or HIV.

Summary: The HOPWA program is administered by the Department of Public Health who contracts with HACK to provide tenant based rental assistance to a specified number of clients enrolled in the program.

Funding Source: HOPWA formula grants are awarded to eligible cities and counties through HUD. HACK enters into an agreement with the Department of Public Health annually to administer the rental assistance portion of the program.

Prevailing Regulations: If eligible member passes; household can be helped for 60 days, then no longer eligible

14D. FAMILY STABILIZATION PROGRAM (FSP)

Target Population: Although not an exclusive list, W&I Code Section 11325.24 (a) (2) defines the type of situation or crisis that may qualify a client for family stabilization. These situations or crises include, but are not limited to:

1. Homelessness or imminent risk of homelessness;
2. A lack of safety due to domestic violence; and/or
3. Untreated or undertreated behavioral needs, including mental health or substance abuse-related needs.

Summary: FSP is administered & referred by the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS provides intensive case management and services that may be in addition to those provided by the county's Welfare to Work (WTW) program to clients who are experiencing an identified situation or crisis. DHS contracts with HACK to provide tenant based rental assistance to a specified number of clients enrolled in the program.

Funding Source: FSP is funded by DHS through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant. HACK enters into an agreement with DHS biennially to administer the rental assistance portion of the program.

Prevailing Regulations:

1. Tenant based rental assistance is time limited to 36 months.

14E. FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM (FUP)

Target Population: Families who are involved with the child welfare system and are at risk of losing their children or are trying to reunite with their children. This program also serves youth (18-24) who are emancipated from or will be emancipated from the child welfare system within 90 days and will otherwise be homeless.

Summary: The purpose of FUP is to promote family unification by providing tenant based rental assistance to families where lack of adequate housing is the primary factor in separation, or the threat of imminent separation of children from their families. FUP is administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and provides intensive case management and services to participants who have had involvement with the child welfare system. DHS contracts with HACK to provide the tenant based rental assistance to a specified number of clients enrolled in the program

Funding Source: FUP is a specific allocation of vouchers to the HCV program by HUD and requires a partnership with DHS.

Prevailing Regulations:

1. Assistance to youth is limited to 36 months

14F. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (HUD-VASH)

Target Population: Veterans who are, homeless, Veterans Affairs health care eligible, and referred by the local Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

Summary: The HUD-VASH program combines HCV rental assistance with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The VA refers eligible veterans to HACK for tenant based rental assistance.

Funding Source: The HUD-VASH program is a specific allocation of vouchers to the HCV program provided by HUD and requires a partnership with the VA.

Prevailing Regulations:

1. VA case managers will screen all families in accordance with VA screening criteria.
2. Criminal history not a reason for denial other than if the veteran or any member of the family appears on the list of registered sex offenders.

3. HACK must accept the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD-214) or the VA-Verified Application for Health Benefits (10-10EZ) as verification of social security number and proof of age.
4. VA issued ID's must be accepted by HACK in lieu of another type of government issued photo identification (these cards can also be used to determine social security number and proof of age).
5. HUD VASH vouchers must have an initial search term of 120 days.
6. Initial leases may be less than 12 months if a shorter term would improve housing opportunities for the tenant and the shorter term is a prevailing market practice.
7. If a Veteran wants to port to a jurisdiction outside of the local VA's catchment area and the local VA cannot continue to provide case management, they must first work with their HUD-VASH case manager to determine if services are available in the jurisdiction they wish to port to.
8. HUD-VASH eligible families must receive case management services from the VA. Assistance must be terminated for failure to comply with services.
9. If VASH eligible member passes- family is entitled to keep voucher.

14G.MAINSTREAM VOUCHER PROGRAM

Target Population: Non-elderly disabled persons who are: exiting an institutional setting, at risk of entering an institutionalized setting, or who are homeless.

Summary: The Mainstream Voucher Program helps further the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act by helping persons with disabilities live in the most integrated setting. Eligible homeless persons are referred through the Coordinated Entry System, while other eligible participants can directly apply or are referred to HACK by partnering agencies.

Funding Source: The Mainstream Voucher Program is a specific allocation of vouchers to the HCV program provided by HUD and requires community partnerships.

Prevailing Regulations: None

14H. HOMELESS YOUTH

Target Population: Youth who are between the ages of 18-24 and are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

Summary: The Homeless Youth program was developed to provide tenant based rental assistance and supportive services to an extremely vulnerable population. Eligible youth are referred to HACK from partnering agencies.

Funding Source: The Homeless Youth Program is a set aside of vouchers from the HCV program.

Prevailing Regulations: None

14I. HOME AT LAST

Target Population: Individuals who are homeless as defined by the HEARTH Act.

Summary: The Home at Last program was established to house homeless persons in Kern County. This program offers tenant based rental assistance and supportive services. All referrals come to HACK through the Coordinated Entry System. Once referred, supportive services are provided by partner agencies. A minimum of two years of supportive services required by referring agency.

Funding Source: The Home at Last program is a set aside of vouchers from the HCV program.

Prevailing Regulations: None

14J. EMERGENCY HOUSING VOUCHERS (EHV)

Target Population: Individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness; at risk of experiencing homelessness; fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; or were recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

Summary: EHV vouchers are a special onetime allocation meant to address the increase in homelessness caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. These are Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers that follow Housing First principles. If an EHV household is no longer being assisted, the voucher can be re-issued to a newly eligible household as long as the newly assisted family is referred on or before September 30, 2023.

Funding source: The EHV program is a specific allocation of vouchers to the HCV program authorized under the American Rescue Plan.

Prevailing Regulations:

1. Requires partnership with the Coordinated Entry System (CES) for direct referrals.
 - a. Direct referrals for EHVs are not added to the regular HCV waiting list. A separate waiting list for EHV referrals/applicants shall be established.

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- b. Local preference for HCV program is not applicable to HCV vouchers
2. Self-certification of income may be accepted as the highest form of income verification at admission.
 - a. This income will be verified within 90 days through the EIV system. Discrepancies in reported income can lead to adjustments of Tenant portions of rent, repayments to the Housing Authority, and/or termination from the program.
3. Applicants may provide third-party documentation which 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 request.
4. Self-Certification of social security number or eligible noncitizen status can be accepted at admission. Verification must be obtained within 180 days of voucher issuance.
5. Self-Certification of date of birth and disability status can be accepted at admission. Verification must be obtained within 90 days of voucher issuance.
6. Denial or termination of voucher assistance limited to:
 - a. If any member of the family has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal housing program within the last 12 months.
 - b. If any member of the family engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward Housing Authority personnel or their partner agencies within the last 12 months.
 - c. If any member of the household has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
 - d. If any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program
 - e. If any member of the family fails to sign and submit consent forms or other required program documents.
7. To expedite the leasing process, the HACK may pre-inspect available units. The Request for Tenancy Approval must be submitted within 45 days of the Pre-inspection date.
8. The initial search term for EHV vouchers must be at least 120 days.
9. EHV families may immediately move under portability without residing in Kern County for a 12-month period prior to the request to port out.

14K. FAIR HOUSING POLICY [24 CFR 582.330]:

It is the policy of HACK to comply fully with all Federal, State and local nondiscrimination laws and with the rules and regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in

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Revised: 6/2021

Board Approved: 7/14/2021

housing and Employment.

HACK will not deny any family or individual the equal opportunity to apply for or receive assistance under any special program on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, age, familial or marital status, handicap or disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. In addition, the non-discrimination and equal opportunity requirements set forth in 24 CFR part 5, recipients serving a designated population of homeless persons must, within the designated populations, comply with the prohibition against discrimination against handicapped individuals under section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C 794) and implementing regulations at 41 CFR chapter 60-741.

14L. TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE [CFR 582.320]:

HACK may terminate assistance to any participant in a special program who violates program requirements or condition of occupancy as noted in the HACK Administrative Plan and Federal Regulations.

For the tenant-based component of special programs, HACK will follow the regulations established by HUD for the tenant-based program and the procedures incorporated into the Administrative Plan except as noted above. HACK will exercise judgment and examine extenuating circumstances in determining when violations are serious enough to warrant termination.