



Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs)

For USDA Rural Development Properties

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the EHV Program?

The EHV program was created as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“the Act,” P.L. 117-2), which provided over \$1.9 trillion in relief to address the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act appropriated \$5 billion for new incremental EHVs and the cost of administering EHVs.

70,000 EHVs were awarded to 626 Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) throughout the country. This includes state agencies and PHAs serving rural counties.

EHV assistance is Section 8 tenant-based assistance and is administered under the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) regulations at 24 CFR part 982 except where HUD has exercised its authority to waive HCV requirements and establish alternative requirements for EHVs, which are described in PIH Notice 2021-15. Tenant-based assistance means that the rental assistance is provided on behalf of the family, who is free to select an eligible unit on the rental market. If the unit is approved for leasing by the PHA, the family enters into a lease with the owner. The PHA executes a housing assistance payments (HAP) contract with the owner. The PHA makes monthly rental assistance payments directly to the owner, and the family is responsible for paying their share of the rent directly to the owner.

Who is eligible to apply for the EHV program?

Eligibility for EHVs is limited to individuals and families who are:

- (1) homeless;
- (2) at risk of homelessness;
- (3) fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking; or
- (4) recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family’s homelessness or having high risk of housing instability.

Are Section 515 USDA Rural Housing Development properties eligible to participate in the EHV program?

Yes, provided the unit is not already under another form of rental assistance (e.g., the unit is already covered by a Section 8 project-based HAP contract). As is the case with the HCV program, units already subsidized under Section 521 of the Housing Act of 1949 (the USDA Rural Rental Assistance Program) are ineligible.

How do eligible families apply for the EHV program?

In general, people who wish to apply for the EHV program must be referred to a PHA by a Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC will verify the person or family meets the eligibility criteria and refer them to the PHA administering the EHV program.



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A listing of local CoCs that may refer people and offer assistance may be found at <https://www.hud.gov/ehv>.

Which PHAs have been awarded EHVs?

A list of EHV awardees may be found on the HUD website at: <https://www.hud.gov/ehv>.

For how long will EHVs be available?

The ARP made funds available for EHV through September 30, 2030 to assist eligible families.

Do EHVs come with supportive services?

PHAs are paid a service fee to provide required housing search assistance, security deposit assistance, utility deposit assistance, application deposit fee assistance, owner recruitment and outreach activities, owner incentive/retention payments, moving expenses, tenant-readiness services, essential household items, and rental insurance if required by the lease. The exact mix of services is designed by the local PHA. No other supportive services are funded through the EHV program. However, some EHV programs may provide supportive services to EHV participants using other resources available to the community.

Is the rent to owner for an EHV determined in a Section 515 project of the Rural Development Administration in the same manner as the rent to owner for a HCV unit?

Yes, the HCV program regulations at 24 CFR § 982.521 that pertain to section 515 projects also are applicable to the EHV program.

Can EHV be used to pay back rent?

No – EHV may be used to pay rent after admission only. EHV cannot pay back rent on behalf of a person or family. There are, however, other Federal programs available to assist families who are in rent arrears.

Can an otherwise eligible USDA Rural Development property pre-qualify units to rent to persons and families receiving EHV assistance?

Potentially – if the unit is otherwise eligible, the PHA may pre-inspect the unit to maintain a pool of eligible units for persons and families receiving EHV assistance. People and families are free to choose where they will live, but they will be informed that the unit is pre-qualified.

Are owners permitted to screen people and families receiving EHV assistance for suitability for tenancy?

Yes – as is the case with the HCV program, owners may screen people and families receiving EHV assistance for suitability for tenancy.