Rental Assistance Demonstration

Guide to Choosing Between Project-Based Vouchers and Project-Based Rental Assistance for Public Housing Conversions



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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
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Introduction

Under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program's 1st Component, a public housing authority (PHA) may convert assistance under the public housing program to long-term, project-based Section 8 assistance. A PHA must choose between two forms of project-based Section 8 assistance: RAD Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) and RAD Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA). To assist PHAs in making this decision, this guide compares key requirements between these two forms of project-based Section 8 assistance. This document provides a short summary of the PBV and PBRA programs, followed by a table that compares key program elements.

The PBV Program

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program allows PHAs to take a portion of their voucher budget authority and "project-base" that authority. The PBV program, as it became known, allows PHAs to sponsor or promote the development of certain "hard" units of low-income housing. PBVs are administered by the local voucher agency, or PHA, which enters into a Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract with the project owner. For PBV contracts entered into following a public housing conversion under RAD, with few exceptions, standard Section 8 rules apply, including resident eligibility, tenant rent calculations, physical inspections, rent reasonableness, etc. Regulations implementing the PBV program are found at 24 CFR Part 983, with waivers or alternative requirements to the regulations established in the RAD Notice.

The PHA that enters into a HAP contract with the project owner is responsible for certain administrative functions and receives an Administrative Fee for the PBV units, in the same manner in which it receives an Administrative Fee for other vouchers under its administration. Where the PHA is part of the ownership structure, the PHA must seek a third party, or independent entity, to perform the rent reasonableness determination and to conduct annual unit inspections. The project owner may self-manage the property/properties or select a management agent to operate the property.

As of April 2025, it is estimated that there are over 370,000 PBV units nationally, including over 107,000 RAD PBV units (roughly 14% of the approximately 2.7 million vouchers that are in circulation).

The PBRA Program

The Section 8 PBRA program² is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Multifamily Housing, with the HAP oversight functions, such as rent adjustments and contract renewals, performed directly by HUD or contracted to Performance-Based Contract Administrators (PBCAs) on HUD's behalf. HUD performs oversight functions for a majority of converted RAD PBRA properties, and PBCAs have been assigned in some states.

¹ The project-based voucher law was initially enacted in 1998, as part of the statutory merger of the certificate and voucher tenant-based assistance programs. (See section 545 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (Pub L. 105–276) approved October 21, 1998) (QHWRA) amending 42 U.S.C. 1437f(o).) See also Section 8(o)(13) of the Housing Act of 1937.

² The Section 8 PBRA was authorized by Congress in 1974 to provide rental subsidies for eligible tenant families residing in newly constructed, substantially rehabilitated, and existing rental and cooperative apartment projects.

Owners may self-manage properties or may select a managing agent to operate the property, subject to HUD approval. Management agents are paid a management fee for their services, determined through negotiations between the owner and the agent. Management agents must cover the costs of supervising and overseeing project operations out of the fee they receive.

As of April 2025, there are over 17,000 properties comprising nearly 1.3 million PBRA units nationally, including over 75,000 RAD PBRA units (roughly 6% of the PBRA portfolio).

Program Comparisons

The table that follows compares the PBV program with the PBRA program against key programmatic requirements. The purpose of these comparisons are to simply provide a means of assisting PHAs in deciding, under RAD, whether to convert to PBV or PBRA.

Comparison of Project Based Vouchers and Project Based Rental Assistance Under the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
General Provisi	ons	
Regulatory Requirements	Except for special provisions identified in RAD Notice Revision 4 (H-2019-09/PIH-2019-23) as amended by successor notices (as well as retained flexibilities of Moving to Work (MTW) agencies), all regulatory and statutory requirements of the PBV program in 24 CFR part 983 shall apply.	Except for special provisions identified in RAD Notice Revision 4 (H-2019-09/PIH-2019-23) as amended by successor notices, all regulatory and statutory requirements of the PBRA program in 24 CFR part 880 shall apply.
Congressional Appropriations	PBVs, including RAD PBVs, are funded through a PHA's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) funding. HCV funding is appropriated by Congress under the Tenant Based Rental Assistance account and is calculated based on a PHAs leasing and expenses in the prior year. If Congress provides less than full funding for the HCV program, then PHAs administering HCV programs are faced with decisions regarding how best to absorb the impact of these cuts across their HCV program. PHAs can choose to protect their PBV contracts and adopt other measures instead.	Project-Based Rental Assistance account. To date, HUD has never failed to fulfill monthly subsidy payments to owners.
Administrative Oversight		HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing regional or satellite office – specifically an assigned Account Executive (AE); or an assigned PBCA.
Section 8 Contract Terms and Conditions		
HAP Contract Administrator	The PHA with whom HUD has entered into the applicable Housing Choice Voucher Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) to fund the housing assistance payments will typically serve as contract administrator. This is often the same PHA that is converting the public housing assistance to	Typically, an assigned HUD Multifamily Housing Account Executive in a regional/satellite office will perform contract administrator functions, or a PBCA where one is assigned.

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
	Section 8 if the PHA also has a Housing	
	Choice Voucher program. If the PHA	
	converting its public housing assistance	
	does not have a HCV program, another	
	PHA with a HCV program will be selected	
	to administer the PBV contract.	
	The initial contract term for a RAD PBV	RAD PBRA HAP contracts shall have an
	HAP contract must be a minimum of 15	initial term of 20 years.
Initial Contract	years, but the administering voucher agency	
Term	may approve a contract term of up to 20	
	years.	
	At or prior to the expiration of the initial	Upon expiration of the initial contract and
0 (each renewal contract, HUD must offer, and
Contract	· ·	the Project Owner must accept, renewal of
Renewal		the contract subject to the terms and
		conditions applicable at the time of renewal.
Housing		For any unit occupied by an eligible family,
Assistance		the owner is due the difference between the
Payments	contract rent and the tenant rent.	contract rent and the tenant rent.
	The administering voucher agency may	The project is eligible for 60 days of vacancy
		payments equal to 80% of the contract rent
		pursuant to 24 CFR 880.611.
	payments per 24 CFR 983.352.	
Vacancy		If vacancies continue for more than 60
Payments		days, the owner may apply to receive
		additional payments equal to the principal
		and interest of a first mortgage loan
		attributable to the vacant unit – conditions
		apply.
		Except where the Section 8 Pass-Through
		is used, units covered under the HAP
	during the period of Work identified in the	Contract that are not occupied at any point
Rehab		during the period of Work identified in the
Assistance	, ,	RCC may be eligible for Rehab Assistance
Payments	1 7	Payments equal to the Public Housing
		Operating Fund and the Capital Fund
	calculation of initial contract rents.	amounts that formed the basis for the
		calculation of initial contract rents.
D	Owner must establish and maintain an R4R	Owner must establish and maintain an R4R
Reserve for		account as specified in the RCC and HAP
Replacement		contract.
(R4R) Account		

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
Section 8 Control Initial Contract Rent Setting	Funds will be maintained in a separate bank account held by the Owner. An owner may withdraw funds from the R4R account to address extraordinary maintenance and repair or replacement of capital items identified in the project's CNA.	Funds will be held by the mortgagee and may be drawn from the reserve account and used only in accordance with HUD guidelines and with written HUD approval.
	FMR. See the <u>CHAP Amendment Overview and Contract Rent Flexibilities</u> guide.	 • Opportunity Zone Rent Boost: in certain circumstances, contract rents may be increased up to \$100 PUPM for the term of the contract. See the <u>CHAP Amendment Overview and Contract Rent Flexibilities</u> guide
Initial Contract Rent Caps	The initial RAD PBV rents are capped by the lower of (1) reasonable rent or (2) 110% of the FMR less the UA. When the project is PHA owned, an Independent Entity (IE) must complete the rent reasonableness study.	Initial RAD PBRA rents are capped at

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
Eligibility for RAD/Section 18 Blend	Yes. All units would be placed under a single RAD PBV HAP contract HUD with a blended rent schedule for all units resulting from a RAD/Section 18 Blend.	Yes. All units would be placed under a single RAD PBRA HAP contract HUD with a blended rent schedule for all units resulting from a RAD/Section 18 Blend.
Contract Rent Increases	For the initial 20 years of the initial contract or contract extension, contract rents are adjusted annually by HUD's published	_
Rent Adjustments Upon HAP Contract Renewal	After 20 years, the RAD PBV HAP contract rents shall not be limited by the OCAF and be shall be re-determined in accordance with 983.301 and 983.302: lesser of Reasonable Rent or 110% of FMR (or any exception payment standard in place). The PHA covers any rent adjustment from its HAP renewal funds or reserves.	After the 20 year initial term, the RAD PBRA HAP contract shall be eligible for renewal under the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997 (MAHRAA) as promulgated in the Section 8 Renewal Policy Guidebook. Contract Rents can be set at comparable market rents. Rent adjustments upon HAP contract renewal are funded by the Section 8 PBRA account.
Utility Allowances	The initial utility allowances at a Covered Project must be the public housing utility allowances. Each family transitions to the utility allowance specific to the Contract Administrator's voucher program at its first recertification following conversion. In lieu of using a utility allowance applicable to its general HCV program, the Contract Administrator may establish a site-specific utility allowance for a Project. The RAD Notice specifies that such a utility allowance must be calculated consistent with Notice H-2015-04, Methodology for Completing a Multifamily Housing Utility Analysis.	The initial utility allowances at a Covered Project must be the public housing utility allowances. Each family transitions to the utility allowance schedule developed for the project in accordance with Housing Notice H-2015-04, Methodology for Completing a Multifamily Housing Utility Analysis, properties undergoing new construction or substantial rehab may establish initial utility allowances based on an analysis completed at underwriting through an energy consumption model, but only in the first year of occupancy post-construction. When the property is occupied and the owner can obtain 12 months of consumption data, the owner must then follow the methodology in Notice H-2015-04 and establish a baseline analysis.

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
		For properties not undergoing new construction or substantial rehab, the owner must follow the methodology in Notice H-2015-04 and establish a baseline analysis beginning with the first contract anniversary after the RAD conversion.
Resident Rights	for In-Place Residents at the Time of Co	nversion
tenant rent increa Disregard, Jobs F	protections, including no rescreening of in-pases, resident participation and funding, resions, ROSS-SC, and under-occupied units and property. The resident rights that differ beto	dent procedural rights, Earned Income re the same for both a RAD PBV property
FSS	Public Housing residents that are FSS participants prior to RAD conversion will continue to participate in the PHA's FSS program. The PHA may continue to use any FSS funds already awarded to serve those FSS participants who live in units converted by RAD. At the completion of the FSS grant, PHAs should follow the normal closeout procedures outlined in the grant agreement. If the PHA continues to run an FSS program that serves PH and/or HCV participants, the PHA will continue to be eligible (subject to FSS Funding requirements) to apply for FSS funding.	Public Housing residents that are FSS participants prior to RAD conversion will continue to participate in the PHA's program. Owners of converted properties will be required to administer the FSS program for current participants until either those households graduate or leave the program. The PHA and new owner may collaborate, allowing the PHA to continue to operate the FSS program for currently participating households. Once converted, the Owner may choose to run its own voluntary FSS program in accordance with Housing Notice H-2016-08.
Choice Mobility	Residents have the right to move with tenant-based assistance any time after 12 months of occupancy. See 24 CFR 983.260. The tenant-based voucher comes from the PHA's existing voucher authority, subject to availability. If no tenant-based rental assistance is available at the time of the request, the family receives the next available voucher. This is a standard program requirement for all residents in a PBV project and applies to all existing and future residents.	Residents have the right to move with tenant-based assistance after the later of 24 months from date of execution of the HAP contract or 24 months after the movein date (including residents who move in after conversion). The PHA that is applying to convert assistance is responsible for carrying out Choice-Mobility options for residents even when the PHA does not retain any ownership interest in the project. Turnover Cap: HUD allows PHAs to limit the number of Choice-Mobility moves under the PBRA program in two ways:

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
	Turnover Cap: The Contract Administrator may implement a voucher inventory turnover cap if, as a result of RAD, the Contract Administrator has project-based more than 20 percent of their authorized ACC units. If a Contract Administrator adopts such a cap, then it is not required to provide more than 75 percent of available vouchers turnover vouchers in any single year to the residents of Covered Projects.	of assisted units in each RAD property.
	There are no Choice Mobility exemptions in PBV.	Choice-Mobility applies to all PBRA conversions unless a project has received a good-cause exemption for PHAs that: • do not administer a voucher program either directly or through an affiliate. • have more than one-third of their turnover vouchers set aside for veterans or homeless populations.
Management an	d Occupancy	
Ownership	If the PHA remains the owner of the converted units, then certain contract administration duties – conducting inspections and adjusting rents – must be performed either by the unit of general local government or by a HUD-approved independent entity.	The PHA may continue to directly own the property. Most PHAs establish at a minimum a "single asset entity" over which it has complete control.
	In the year the public housing property converts to a Section 8 contract, follow instructions provided in the "Year of Conversion Funding Instruction" In the year following conversion, HUD will provide new HAP funding to the PHA	In the year the public housing property converts to a Section 8 contract, follow instructions provided in the "Year of Conversion Funding Instruction" In the year following conversion, by the 10 th day of each month, the Owner submits a HAP
Subsidy Administration	administering the HAP contract. See further detail in the RAD PBV Quick Reference Guide. The Contract Administrator will use its own	voucher payment request for Section 8 housing assistance for the following month (in advance) to HUD or the PBCA. The payment amount is based on current tenant income certifications and is submitted via a HUD
	software for administering subsidy payments in accordance with the HAP contract and is responsible for reporting Unit Months Leased (UMLs) and	computer system called the <i>Tenant Rental</i> Assistance Certification System (TRACS). Owners must transmit HAP vouchers beginning in the year of conversion even

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	associated HAP expenses in the Voucher Management System (VMS).	though subsidy will not flow until January of the year after conversion.
		It is worth noting that setting up TRACS and learning the Management and Occupancy requirements of the HUD Multifamily Section 8 program can be a lengthy and challenging process. Procuring a consultant to assist with the process is encouraged.
		See further detail in the RAD PBRA Quick Reference Guide.
Physical Inspection Standards	RAD PBV units are subject to HQS inspections and protocols. PBV programs will be required to implement NSPIRE in alignment with required deadlines. ³ When construction, rehab, or repair work is occurring under RAD, HUD requires that all units meet HQS (NSPIRE) no later than the date of completion of the scope of work as indicated in the RCC. When a project is PHA-owned, an Independent Entity (IE) must perform the physical inspections.	
Management and Occupancy Reviews (MORs)	program unless a project has an FHA- insured loan.	Subject to MORs and associated protocols, as administered by the Office of Multifamily Housing. The frequency of MORs depends on the property's risk classification as determined by the local HUD regional/satellite office and the last MOR score. The unit for a family with a TTP that equals
Tenant	or exceeds Gross Rent must be placed on	or exceeds Gross Rent must be placed on the PBRA HAP contract and the family
Exceeds the Gross Rent on	be admitted to the PBV program.	shall be admitted to the PBRA program.

 $^{^{\}rm 3}$ Not needed for Section 18 Blends.

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
the HAP	The zero-HAP family will pay rent to owner	The zero-HAP family will pay rent to owner
Contract	that is the lower of:	that is the lower of:
Contract	 the family's TTP less the Utility Allowance, subject to any required phase-in pursuant to Section 1.6.C.3 of this Notice; or the Zero-HAP Rent Cap, which is the lower of: 110% of the applicable FMR less the Utility Allowance; or In the event the units are subject to more restrictive rent setting requirements under the LIHTC or HOME programs, or other programs approved by HUD on a project-specific basis, the rent to owner set to comply with such requirements. After 180 days of no assistance payments for a unit, the PHA shall remove the unit from the HAP Contract. The unit must be added back onto the HAP contract if the 	 The family's TTP less the Utility Allowance, subject to any required phase-in pursuant the RAD Notice; or the Zero-HAP Rent Cap, which is the lower of: The applicable FMR less the Utility Allowance; or In the event the units are subject to more restrictive rent setting requirements under another federal, state,
	family's income decreases to the extent that TTP is less than Gross Rent, or the family moves out and an income-eligible family moves in.	
Financial Reporting	The annual operating budget must be approved by the PHA board. The PHA must confirm owner is making monthly deposits into a capital replacement reserve.	Owners are required to submit annual financial statements for each project separately in the Multifamily FASS system.
	Administering PHA may request annual financial statements.	
Cash Flow	No restrictions on owner distributions of surplus cash.	No restrictions on owner distributions of surplus cash.
HUD paid Administrative Fees	Beginning in the first full year of funding, HUD will pay an administrative fee to the Contract Administrator based on the number of RAD PBV units in the HAP.	N/A. Since HUD administers the contract, no administrative fee is paid unless the contract is assigned to a PBCA.

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
Management Fee	Management agents operating PBRA properties are paid a management fee for their services and must cover the costs of supervising and overseeing project operations out of the fee they receive. The management fee paid to the management agent is determined through negotiations between the owner and the agent and is not subject to HUD approval. The management fee is payable from project funds only.	Management agents operating PBRA properties are paid a management fee for their services and must cover the costs of supervising and overseeing project operations out of the fee they receive. The management fee paid to the management agent is determined through negotiations between the owner and the agent and is subject to HUD approval. The management fee is payable from project funds only.
Income Targeting	Current households grandfathered in, 100% of future residents admitted to the property must be at or below 80% AMI. 75% of new residents must be at or below 30% AMI.	Current households grandfathered in. 100% of future residents admitted to the property must be at or below 80% AMI. 40% of new residents must be at or below 30% AMI.
Waiting List	 24 CFR 983.251 sets out PBV program requirements related to establishing and maintaining a voucher-wide, PBV program-wide, or site-based waiting list from which residents for the Covered Project will be admitted. The PHA shall consider the best means to transition applicants from the current public housing waiting list, including: Transferring an existing site-based waiting list to a new site-based waiting list Transferring an existing site-based waiting list to a PBV program-wide or HCV program-wide waiting list Transferring an existing community-wide public housing waiting list to a PBV program-wide or HCV program-wide or HCV program-wide waiting list (an option particularly relevant for PHAs converting their entire portfolio under RAD) Informing applicants on a community-wide public housing waiting list how to transfer their application to one or more newly created site-based waiting lists 	under RAD) Informing applicants on a

Program Requirement	RAD Project Based Vouchers	RAD Project Based Rental Assistance
Lease Requirements	The PBV lease must meet the requirements of 24 CFR Part 983.256, include the required Tenancy Addendum, and incorporate tenancy provisions provided under RAD.	All properties converting under RAD PBRA must use form HUD 90105-A Model Lease for Subsidized Programs and all attachments listed in paragraph 27 of the lease, including an approved RAD lease addendum.

Additional Resources

RAD Notice - https://www.hud.gov/RAD/library/notices

RAD Resource Desk Document Library - https://www.radresource.net/doclibrary.cfm

- Quick Reference Guide for Projects Converting to PBV
- Quick Reference Guide for Projects Converting to PBRA