



PUBLIC HOUSING MANAGEMENT E-NEWSLETTER

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HUD Provides Guidance on Supporting Homeless Families

Under the leadership of HUD's Secretary Shaun Donovan, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness released [Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#) in 2010. Opening Doors has four goals:

- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness by 2015.
- Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans by 2015.
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020.
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness.

HUD is actively engaged with its national, state and local partners to explore the resources available to contribute to the goals outlined in Opening Doors. In these conversations, HUD has heard from countless Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) that are working with homeless service providers through their local [Continuum of Care](#) (CoC) to provide decent, safe and affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The goals outlined in Opening Doors cannot be met by targeted homelessness funds alone—increasing access to mainstream resources (public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assistance) is critical.

On June 10, 2013, HUD issued [PIH Notice 2013-15 \(HA\)](#) to provide PHAs with strategies to expand housing opportunities for individuals and families experiencing homelessness through the Public Housing and HCV programs in cooperation with local community partners. The Notice provides:

- Revised instructions to PHAs for data reporting on "homeless at admission"; and
- Guidance about serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness, regarding topics such as implementing preferences, waiting list management, admissions and termination or eviction policies, partnering with service providers, and supporting project-based vouchers.

In addition to the Notice, HUD sent a [letter](#) from Secretary Donovan and Assistant Secretary Sandra B. Henriquez, emphasizing the importance of their continued leadership and support in reaching the goals of Opening Doors. The Department continues to strive to provide clarity and guidance on ways PHAs can serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including the following resources:

- [Frequently Asked Questions- "Homeless Q and As"](#) posted on the PIH webpage that further clarifies the guidance found in Notice PIH 2013-15.
- Webinars hosted by HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development and PIH:
 - ["Ending Homelessness through the Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing Programs"](#)
 - ["PHA 101: A Guide for CoC's Understanding PHA Programs and Policies"](#)
 - ["CoC 101: A Guide for PHA's Understanding of CoC Functions and Partnerships"](#)

The Obama Administration believes that no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home. HUD is a committed partner in ending homelessness across the nation. For additional information on homelessness, please see: <http://www.usich.gov/> and <https://www.onecpd.info/homelessness-assistance/>. The Office of Public and Indian Housing expects to launch its own webpage in the next month with additional resources for PHAs and CoCs.

New Notice Issued on Tenant Participation Funds

HUD recently published [Notice PIH 2013-21](#), which provides guidance to PHAs and resident organizations on the use of tenant participation (TP) funds. This new guidance allows for a more active resident role in determining TP funding use and a broader range of eligible activities, including allowing self-sufficiency activities. The last time HUD published official guidance on the TP funds was in 2001 ([Notice PIH 2001-3](#)).

Under the updated guidance, activities are allowable when they are compatible with the activities listed under HUD's regulations at [24 C.F.R. § 964.150](#) and [§ 964.205\(b\)\(1\)-\(6\)](#). Resident organizations should submit budgets for the use of TP funds and ensure they are using TP funds in accordance with the PHA and HUD's requirements. PHAs should establish policies on the eligible and appropriate uses of TP funds, as well as help resident groups receive technical assistance in order to comply with these policies.

The Notice provides a set of questions that PHAs and residents should consider when thinking about eligible uses of TP funds, including:

- Is the proposed TP activity reasonable in cost?
- Does the request include consideration of other more affordable alternatives?
- Can other vendors provide a similar resource at a lower cost?
- Is the requested expense reasonable considering the PHA's size, residents served, and the amount of TP funds available?
- Is the proposed TP activity to take place locally? If not, is there a compelling reason for the activity to take place outside of the PHA's jurisdiction?
- Are the needs of the community, such as those documented in the PHA Plan, being met by the proposed TP activity?

HUD recommends that residents review and discuss the Notice with their PHAs.

Track Utility Consumption with EPA's Portfolio Manager

Did you know that property managers can save 2-10% of their energy costs, per year, just through better energy management? Many property managers, including PHAs, are beginning to see the value in tracking and managing their utility consumption, and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Portfolio Manager can help.

Portfolio Manager is a free web-based tool that allows property managers to track the energy and water consumption of buildings in their portfolio. After simply entering their utility consumption, costs and a few other details, users can start comparing weather-normalized energy use and water use from month-to-month, year-to-year, or across the buildings in their portfolio. Some utility companies have also partnered with Portfolio Manager; where this has occurred, the tool will automatically populate utility data upon request. Portfolio Manager can also automatically generate charts and graphs that can help you more easily see trends and identify outliers.

With this information, PHAs can set reduction targets, spot potential problem areas, target investments, and see the effectiveness of improvements. Users can start reducing energy consumption without large investments or Energy Performance Contracts—there are many low or no cost investments that can be implemented to capture savings, which can then lead to greater investments and greater savings.

EPA's Portfolio Manager website has a wealth of information and tools to help you get started, including start up guides, webinars, and tips on how property managers can reduce utility consumption and generate cost savings. Want to get started? Visit the [Energy Star Benchmarking Starter Kit](#).

PIH Notices

[PIH 2013-21 \(HA\)](#) **Guidance on the use of Tenant Participation Funds** - This notice serves to clarify previous guidance on the use of tenant participation (TP) funds as established by 24 C.F.R. § 964.150 and supersedes PIH Notice 2001-3.

[PIH 2012-32 \(HA\), REV-1](#) **Rental Assistance Demonstration – Final Implementation, Revision 1** - This revised notice (Notice) provides program instructions for the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD or Demonstration), including eligibility and selection criteria.

[PIH 2013-15 \(HA\)](#) **Guidance on Housing Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness through the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs** - The purpose of this Notice is to provide strategies that PHAs can pursue to expand housing opportunities for individuals and families experiencing homelessness through the Public Housing and HCV programs.

[PIH 2013-16](#) **Public Housing Operating Subsidy Eligibility Calculations for Calendar Year 2014** - This notice provides Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) with instructions for the calculation of operating subsidy eligibility in Calendar Year (CY) 2014.

[PIH 2013-14](#) **Disaster Housing Assistance Program - Sandy (DHAP-Sandy) Operating Requirements** - These operating requirements set forth the policies and procedures for the Disaster Housing Assistance Program- Sandy (DHAP-Sandy).

[PIH 2013-13 \(HA\)](#) **Extension: Administrative Guidance for Effective and Mandated Use of the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System** - This notice provides Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) with administrative guidance related to the mandated use of HUD's EIV system, as required in accordance with the new HUD regulation, 24 CFR §5.233, as issued in the Final Rule: Refinement of Income and Rent Determinations in Public and Assisted Housing Programs: Implementation of the Enterprise Income Verification System-Amendments, effective January 31, 2010, as published in the Federal Register (FR) at 74 FR 68924, on December 29, 2009.

[PIH 2013-09 \(HA\)](#) **Use of Operating Reserves for Capital Improvements** - The obligation deadline in Section 6 of Notice PIH 2012-2 has expired based on the Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 (P.L 113)-6.

HUD's PIH Notices can be viewed online [here](#)

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