



2010 Housing Choice Voucher Program Initiatives

DESCRIPTION OF INITIATIVES AND INVITATION TO COMMENT

Summary of activities to be implemented in the first half of 2010

1. Recertification Activities

Regular recertifications will be scheduled triennially (a decrease from annually) for families whose total household income consists only of one or more of the following: SS, SSI, VA or pension.

Currently regular recertifications are conducted annually for all Housing Choice Voucher households. Upon implementation, regular recertifications will be conducted every three years for households whose total household income consists only of one or more of the following: SS, SSI, VA, or pension.

During the two years that a full recertification is not conducted, SHA will update each qualifying household's record to include changes to Utility Allowances, Voucher Payment Standards, and to apply any standard COLA to SS, SSI and VA benefits. These households will not receive a standard recertification package with forms to complete. Instead, after the updates have been made to the household record, a letter will be sent to the household informing them of any change to their rent amount and detailing the income used to calculate their rent. This letter will inform them that if the information on file is incorrect that they should contact us and provides a form to do that.

Should a qualifying household have a change in circumstances between regular recertifications, they would report this by submitting a Request for Special Review. If a Special Review is needed and the household begins receiving income other than SS, SSI, VA or pension, they will not be eligible for the tri-annual recertification schedule until such time as they again qualify.

2. Inspection Activities

Regular HQS Inspections will be scheduled every other year for residents who have not moved, which is a decrease from annually.

Seattle Housing Authority's current policy is to inspect every HCV-subsidized unit at least once per year. This policy will be changed so that the agency will regularly inspect every HCV-subsidized unit at least every two years. There is no change to the initial inspection policy. Residents and landlords will be notified that they have the right to request a complaint inspection if they feel the subsidized unit no longer meets Housing Quality Standards.

continued

2010 Housing Choice Voucher Program Initiatives

DESCRIPTION OF INITIATIVES AND INVITATION TO COMMENT, *CONTINUED*

2. Inspection Activities, *CONTINUED*

Landlords will be allowed to self-certify correction of minor Housing Quality Standards (HQS) fail items.

SHA's current policy is to reinspect each subsidized unit when HQS deficiencies are identified during a regular unit inspection. The policy will be changed to allow for a landlord to self-certify minor HQS fail items that do not pose a safety or health risk.

3. Asset Income Activities

The threshold for calculating asset income will be increased to \$50,000.

Currently, households in the HCV program are asked to provide verification of all household assets when those assets exceed \$1,000 for Tenant-based or \$5,000 for Project-based households. The HUD imputed rate for calculating income from assets is 0.2 percent. Using this HUD imputed rate of 0.2 percent at \$50,000 would equate to a monthly increase of just \$2 in the household's rent. All households will still be asked to declare their assets on the Personal Declaration form, but will not be required to verify those assets unless their total combined assets exceed \$50,000.