

Chapter 4

ESTABLISHING PREFERENCES AND MAINTAINING THE WAITING LIST

[24 CFR 982.54(d)(1)]

INTRODUCTION

It is PMHA's objective to ensure that the families are placed in the proper order on the waiting list so that an offer of assistance is not delayed to any family, or made to any family prematurely. By maintaining an accurate waiting list, PMHA will be able to perform the activities, which ensure that an adequate pool of qualified applicants will be available so that program funds are used in a timely manner.

A. APPLICATION POOL

The waiting list will be maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The application will be a permanent file.
2. All applicants in the pool will be maintained in the order of preference. Applications equal in preference will be maintained by date and time sequence.
3. All applicants must meet "Very Low Income" eligibility requirements as established by HUD. The HUD Field Office must have approved any exceptions to these requirements, other than those outlined in Chapter 2, Eligibility for Admission," previously.

B. WAITING LIST PREFERENCES [24 CFR 982.207]

Types of Applicants With Preference Over "Other Singles"

Elderly, disabled and displaced families with up to two members will be given a selection priority over all "Other Single" applicants regardless of preference status.

"Other Singles" denotes a one-person household in which the individual member is neither elderly nor disabled. Such applicants will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with their date and time of application, but cannot be selected for assistance before any elderly single, disabled single, or displaced single regardless of any preferences.

C. **LOCAL PREFERENCES**

The notice of adoption of and changes to local preferences will be publicized using the same guidelines as those for opening and closing the waiting list. The notice will be distributed following the same guidelines as those used for opening or closing the waiting list.

Effective ~~October 1, 2022~~ **October 1, 2025**, applicants meeting any of the following preferences will be placed at the top of the waiting list.

SECTION 8 WAITING LIST PREFERENCE POINT SYSTEM

<u>Preference</u>	<u>Points</u>
Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV)	3
Public Housing Transfers	2
Military Service	1
Re-Entry Initiative Referral	2
Landlord Referral	2

Emergency Housing Voucher- This preference is available to current Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) participants whose assistance is at risk of termination due to lack of program funding. This preference will allow the eligible family to transfer to either the Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV) or the Mainstream Voucher program dependent upon voucher availability. In order for a family to transfer to the Mainstream Voucher program they must meet all eligibility requirements.

Public Housing Transfer- Public Housing residents who wish to transfer to the Section 8 program for the following reasons:

1. To relocate closer to their employment if employment is five (5) or more miles from the unit the resident currently resides in.
2. To enable large families who are under housed to seek housing with more bedrooms than are available at their public housing development.
3. To enable families who become over housed, including sole remaining family members, the opportunity to move into more suitable housing.
4. To accommodate families who are eligible and desire to participate in a homeownership program sponsored by Neighborhood Development Program or by the PMHA.

Military Service- This preference is available to applicants where the head of household, spouse

or co-head is a veteran or survivor of a veteran (honorably discharged) who actively served in a branch of the United States Armed Services or an active member of a branch of the United States Armed Services. The term survivor includes the spouse or widow of a veteran (unless remarried). A person who served in the military that was dishonorably discharged is not eligible for the veteran's preference.

Re-Entry Initiative Referral- This preference is available to applicants who are referred from the Portage County Adult Probation office. Once a referral is received to PMHA, staff will Target Select the applicant from the Section 8 waiting list. Refer to Offender Re-Entry Initiative in Chapter 1 of this Administrative Plan.

Landlord Referral- This preference is available to individuals and families referred by their current landlord due to financial hardship, which have detrimentally impacted the household's ability to pay rent. Each participating landlord will be eligible for referrals as outlined below:

1. Owners are eligible to submit up to 4 referrals per year.
2. Owners of fifty (50) or more units are eligible to submit referrals for no more than ten percent (10%) of their housing portfolio, not to exceed twelve (12) referrals, per year.

All other Section 8 waiting list households would be ranked by order of date of application.

D. EXCEPTIONS FOR SPECIAL ADMISSIONS [24 CFR 982.203, 982.54(d)(3)]

If HUD awards PMHA program funding that is targeted for specifically named families, the housing authority will admit these families under a Special Admission procedure.

Special admissions families will be admitted outside of the regular waiting list process. They do not have to qualify for any preferences, nor are they required to be on the program waiting list. The following are HUD may designate examples of types of program funding that for families living in a specified unit:

1. A family displaced because of demolition or disposition of a public or Indian housing project;
2. A family residing in a multifamily rental housing project when HUD sells, forecloses or demolishes the project;
3. For housing covered by the Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990;
4. A family residing in a project covered by a project-based Section 8 HAP contract at or near the end of the HAP contract term; and

5. A non-purchasing family residing in a HOPE 1 or HOPE 2 project.

E. PREFERENCE ELIGIBILITY [24 CFR 982.210 (c) (3-4)]

Change in Circumstances

Changes in an applicant's circumstances while on the waiting list may affect the family's entitlement to a preference. Applicants are required to notify PMHA in writing when their circumstances change.

Applicants may claim or change Preference Points at any time from the date of the pre-application through admission to the program. To claim preference points, the applicant must complete a Preference Certification. When Preference Points are claimed/changed, the applicant's name will be moved to the appropriate position on the waiting list according to the time and date of the pre-application.

Applicants who qualify for Preferences will be issued a Voucher before any other applicant who is not so qualified. If an applicant no longer qualifies for a preference or a preference cannot be verified when assistance is offered, the applicant will be assigned a place on the waiting list based on the time and date the original application was received.

Cross-Listing of Public Housing and Section 8

PMHA will not merge the waiting lists for public housing and Section 8. However, if the Section 8 waiting list is open when the applicant is placed on the public housing list, PMHA will offer to place the family on both lists. If the public housing waiting list is open at the time an applicant applies for Section 8, PMHA will offer to place the family on the public housing waiting list.

The PMHA has a merged waiting list for the Voucher program and the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation program.

F. ORDER OF SELECTION [24 CFR 982.207 (e), 982.210 (a)(b)]

Applicants having one or more preferences on the waiting list will be organized by date and time.

Applicants having no preferences will be selected based on a first-come, first-served basis based on date of application.

G. FINAL VERIFICATION OF PREFERENCES [24 CFR 982.210 (c) (3)(4)]

Preference information on applications will be updated as applicants are selected from the waiting list. At that time, PMHA will obtain necessary verifications of preference by third party verification.

H. PREFERENCE DENIAL [24 CFR 982.210 (d)]

If PMHA denies a preference, the housing authority will notify the applicant in writing of the reasons why the preference was denied and offer the applicant an opportunity for an informal meeting. If the preference denial is upheld as a result of the meeting, or the applicant does not request a meeting, the applicant will be placed on the waiting list without benefit of the preference. If the applicant falsifies documents or makes false statements in order to qualify for any preference, they will be removed from the waiting list. Applicants may exercise other rights if they believe they have been discriminated against.

I. REMOVAL FROM WAITING LIST AND PURGING [24 CFR 982.204 (c)]

Applicants are instructed on the application form, and in the notification letter verifying placement on PMHA's Waiting List, that their application is valid for one year from the date of application. The notification letter will also state it is the applicant's responsibility to provide, in writing, any changes in their contact information (address and phone numbers). Applicants will also be required to provide written notice of their interest in remaining on the waiting list within 12 months from the date of their notification letter. The initial 12-month period begins on the date of the application being approved for the waiting list and will be reset with reported changes in address or notice of continued interest.

The waiting list will be purged at the beginning of each month, with those applicants who have not provided a change of address or notice of continued interest within the previous 12 months to be removed at that time. An applicant may have a 30 day grace period to request re-instatement to the waiting list in their original position. An applicant removed from the waiting list in this manner will be eligible to re-apply immediately (if the wait list is open) or immediately upon the opening of the waiting list for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.

PMHA will consider a request for reasonable accommodation for persons with disability.