
Chapter 4 – Eligibility, Applications, and the Waiting List Process in the Housing Choice Voucher Program

KEY CONCEPTS

TO BE ELIGIBLE for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, applicants must be very low-income.

TO BE ELIGIBLE for the HCV program, applicants must be United States citizens, or non-citizens with eligible immigration status.

MANY PEOPLE WHO MEET HCV ELIGIBILITY criteria are denied assistance based on information gathered through the screening process.

WHEN ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS for the HCV program, a public housing agency (PHA) must conduct outreach, but in some cases the outreach can be limited to "special populations" that meet specific eligibility criteria.

MANY PHAS MAINTAIN an HCV waiting list, which can be extremely long.

A PHA CAN ADD NAMES to its list by many methods, including chronologically or by lottery.

"PREFERENCES" CAN BE VERY HELPFUL in moving people up the waiting list.

PHAS CANNOT ESTABLISH a preference for people with a specific disability.

PHAS SHOULD UPDATE their HCV waiting list often to ensure that the applicants on the waiting list are still interested in receiving HCV assistance.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS can be requested at many stages in the application process.

Chapter 4 *Eligibility, Applications, and the Waiting List Process in the Housing Choice Voucher Program*

Program Eligibility

Although it often seems confusing, eligibility for the Housing Choice Voucher program is quite straightforward. To be eligible for the HCV program a household must:

- Have a household income at or below 50 percent of the area median income as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and
- Be a United States citizen, or a non-citizen with "eligible immigration status."¹

Virtually all people who are chronically homeless, including those who receive federal disability benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), are eligible for the HCV program based on their income. Nationally, the average income of a person receiving SSI is equal to 20.1 percent of the area median income (AMI) — well below 50 percent.² As mentioned in [Chapter 1](#), federal income-targeting laws require that at least 75 percent of a Public housing agency's HCV rental vouchers go to households with incomes at or below 30 percent of AMI. This law should result in increased access to vouchers for chronically homeless people and other low-income people with disabilities.

Note that although the Housing Choice Voucher program has only the two standard eligibility criteria listed above, many people who meet these criteria are denied assistance. This is because public housing agencies (PHAs) can also screen applicants on the basis of criminal history, housing history, and history within federal housing programs. For example, an applicant who is very low-income and a U.S. citizen, but who is also a registered lifetime sex offender, will be determined ineligible due to the sex offender designation. Chapter 5 provides more information about the elements that PHAs are required to review and act on as part of screening and those they can choose to disregard.

Outreach to Potential HCV Applicants (24 CFR 982.206)

The goal of all outreach activities is to reach as many potentially eligible households as possible within the PHA's jurisdiction to make them aware of the HCV program. Through this outreach, a PHA must, at a minimum, provide "public notice" of the opportunity to submit HCV applications.

¹ See [24 CFR Part 5 Subpart E](#) for more information about the HCV citizenship requirements.

² Priced Out in 2014, *TAC, Inc.*

GOOD TO KNOW

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY OVER TIME

Once a household has been determined eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and starts receiving housing assistance, that household continues to remain eligible as long as it continues to meet all program obligations outlined in [Chapter 8](#). Income is recertified to determine the amount of the tenant contribution, but other eligibility criteria such as citizenship and veteran, homeless, and disability status do not have to be recertified.

This means that although a household must have an income below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) to begin receiving assistance, once in the program the household can increase its income to over 50 percent of AMI without losing HCV assistance (however, the subsidy and tenant payment portion will be adjusted as described in [Chapter 8](#)).

This is also true for households that are required to meet specific criteria in order to be eligible. For example, vouchers that are targeted to nonelderly persons (i.e., under age 62) can continue to assist individuals as they age over 62.

According to HUD regulations, this public notice must at least include announcements in local newspapers and in minority media, as well as in other appropriate publications. These announcements must state:

- Where and when to apply for the HCV program; and
- Any limitations on eligibility for vouchers.

Public housing agencies use a variety of additional outreach strategies, such as:

- Delivering public service announcements through local television or radio;
- Posting the announcement on the PHA's website;
- Partnering with local social service organizations to assist in spreading the word;
- Distributing fliers to religious institutions, schools, welfare and government offices, hospitals, libraries, supermarkets, and other community agencies; and
- Sending out a listserv message or email blast to the PHA electronic mailing list.

GOOD TO KNOW

CONTINUUM OF CARE COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEMS AND PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OUTREACH

The [Community of Care \(CoC\) Program interim rule](#) requires CoCs to implement and operate a [coordinated entry system](#) that provides an assessment of the housing and service needs of individuals and families and has a systematic mechanism for linking people with resources to meet their needs. Guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in [PIH Notice 2013-15](#) strongly encourages public housing agencies to participate in the CoC coordinated entry system in their locality, including using the system for Housing Choice Voucher outreach and referrals.

It is important to be aware of HCV outreach activities. Check the PHA's website periodically for outreach efforts. Review the local newspaper carefully, particularly the section containing public notices from government agencies. Look for fliers in the library, supermarkets, and other local institutions. Sign up for the PHA's email distribution lists. Make sure to read all outreach notices carefully and ask questions to determine how and when to submit an application. The best way to find out if a PHA is accepting HCV applications is to visit the PHA website or call and speak to someone who is in charge of the HCV application process.

[Federal guidance to PHAs](#) has emphasized that outreach activities and related public notices should be simple, direct, and clear. The notification process must also comply with HUD requirements, such as adopting suitable means to assure the notice reaches eligible individuals with disabilities and people with limited English language proficiency.

QUICK TIP

MARKET YOUR ORGANIZATION AS AN OUTREACH PARTNER TO A PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY

You can play a very important role in outreach activities. In some communities, as a reasonable accommodation under fair housing laws, public housing agencies (PHAs) notify disability or homeless organizations ahead of time about their plans to start accepting applications. This advance notice helps the PHA and the organizations work together to ensure that chronically homeless people are informed about the opportunity to submit Housing Choice Voucher applications. These partner organizations play a key role in distributing applications, helping people complete applications, collecting completed applications, and making sure the applications are received by the PHA on time.

Outreach to Special Populations

Sometimes a PHA may open its waiting list only for certain types of applicants, such as veterans who are homeless. In these instances, the PHA will only accept HCV applications from people who meet specified criteria, and may limit its outreach efforts to activities that will most effectively reach this group. For example, a PHA opening its HCV waiting list for applications from homeless veterans may choose to limit outreach to informational meetings and fliers at local veterans' service organizations and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers. Again, it is important to ask questions and read all outreach materials carefully to learn about any limitations on the application process.

Applying for a Voucher

Since the demand for housing assistance usually exceeds the number of HCV vouchers available, PHAs must create and administer an HCV waiting list. [A PHA is only allowed to have one waiting list for its tenant-based HCV program.](#)

In many communities, these waiting lists are extremely long — sometimes there are ten times as many households on the list as there are vouchers to distribute! Not surprisingly, long waiting lists can result in extremely long waiting periods (i.e., several years) for applicants to be selected. Therefore, people experiencing chronic homelessness should apply to as many PHAs as possible. However, a separate application must be submitted to each PHA.

Completing the HCV Application

The first step to obtaining a voucher is successfully completing an HCV application. Unfortunately, there is no standardized HCV application. Instead, each PHA creates its own application form. In general, however, most HCV applications request information about:

- Household composition;
- Income and assets;
- Disability status; and
- Other eligibility criteria.

Many PHAs offer a shortened initial HCV application — often referred to as a "pre-application." Information requested on this pre-application may include: name, address, social security number, age, household size, disability status, total household income, and other information deemed pertinent by the PHA. Other PHAs require interested applicants to "complete a full HCV application that requests more comprehensive information — such as amounts and sources of income for the household, and previous tenant history — and provide documentation verifying the information contained in the application.

All PHAs are required to allow the applicant to list another contact person on the application. Most PHAs communicate via mail and this person would be copied on all PHA correspondence sent to the applicant. Make sure to

complete this part of the application and list someone who is reliable and whom the applicant often contacts such as an advocate, service provider, family member, or friend. Given the unstable housing situations of people experiencing chronic homelessness, this small yet significant tool can help to ensure that an applicant does not miss any critical information from the PHA.

Most PHAs provide HCV applications in more than one language and in — such as Braille or large print. A PHA must provide assistance to complete an application if a chronically homeless person or any other person with a disability requests it. For example, a person who is visually impaired or who cannot read or write because of their disability may request that PHA staff help fill out the application.

GOOD TO KNOW

APPLYING TO MULTIPLE PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCIES

It is a common misperception that a person can only apply to one public housing agency (PHA) and be put on one Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waiting list at any given time. This is untrue, and chronically homeless people should be encouraged to submit an HCV application whenever a PHA waiting list opens — at any PHA in the country!

It is important to review all outreach materials to find out if there are any limitations on who may submit an application. Also, some PHAs may have restrictions regarding where a person can live once they receive a voucher (see Chapter 8), or may have a waiting list preference for people living or working within the PHA's jurisdiction.

Accepting and Processing HCV Applications

Each PHA has its own policies regarding when applications are accepted and how they are collected and processed. These policies must be described in a PHA's HCV Administrative Plan (see Chapter 11).

Some PHAs require interested applicants to pick up and drop off an application in person. If this method presents a hardship for a person due to their disability, a reasonable accommodation can be requested. Some PHAs allow an applicant to mail or fax a written application.

Methods for Accepting Applications

There are several methods used by PHAs to accept applications:

- PHAs may designate one day on which they distribute or receive applications. This method often leads to long lines at the PHA's office and can create a hardship for people with disabilities, especially those people who are experiencing chronic homelessness.

- PHAs may distribute applications to local agencies and interested applicants for a short time period (e.g., two weeks) and require that they be submitted to the PHA by a specific deadline.
- PHAs may accept applications on an ongoing basis (see the discussion of opening/closing a waiting list below).

QUICK TIP

PROVIDE COMPLETE HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

It is important to completely fill out the Housing Choice Voucher application since public housing agencies may discard incomplete applications. To prevent delay in being placed on the waiting list, an applicant should complete every question on the application without leaving blanks. Use 'N/A' in spaces where questions do not apply. Include information about all members of the household who will be living with the applicant if they receive the voucher even if these members are not living with the applicant now.

Verification of Information

At some point in the application process — either at the time the application is submitted, when the applicant is about to receive a voucher, or sometimes at both points — the applicant will be required to submit or provide access to documents that help verify the information provided in the application. The PHA may contact other local agencies, employers, and banks to supplement and verify this documentation. In most situations, the applicant will be required to sign a Release of Information form so that the PHA has permission to contact these "third parties."

The information gained through the verification process is used for two purposes: to determine overall eligibility for the HCV program and to determine the amount of the subsidy the PHA will contribute toward the household's housing costs. How this subsidy amount is determined is discussed further in [Chapter 6](#).

Waiting Lists

Opening and Closing a Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List ([24 CFR 982.206](#))

Applications are only accepted while a PHA's HCV waiting list is "open." A PHA opens the HCV waiting list to increase the number of applicants on its list. PHAs are required by HUD to open the HCV waiting list if they do not have enough applicants to be able to distribute vouchers they anticipate will be available.

In general, PHAs use one of two methods to add applications to the waiting list:

- Chronological order, based on the date and time received; or
- Randomly ordered, referred to as a "lottery." Occasionally, the applications that are put into the lottery are limited to a specific

number (e.g., the first 200 received by the PHA) or to those received by a specified date.

A PHA's policies about how applications are added to the waiting list should be included in all outreach material and must be described in the HCV Administrative Plan.

QUICK TIP

MAKE SURE THE PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY CAN CONTACT THE APPLICANT

Public housing agencies (PHAs) communicate mainly via written letters. Some PHAs attempt to contact an applicant in order to fill in any missing data, so it is particularly important that the contact information on the application be accurate and current. Changes of address typically have to be sent to the PHA in writing (a verbal change over the phone is usually not accepted).

Closed Lists

If a PHA determines that there are enough applicants on the waiting list to be able to distribute all vouchers expected to be available in the near future, HUD permits the PHA to "close" its list. When the list is closed, no applications can be accepted. The PHA can grant some exceptions to this policy for people displaced by fire, flood, natural disaster, or in response to a specific federal action. These exceptions must be clearly documented in the HCV Administrative Plan. When a closed waiting list is "reopened," the PHA must follow the outreach requirements described earlier.

Many PHAs have long waiting lists that have been closed for several years. Unfortunately, lists that have been closed for a long time may include applicants who can no longer be easily contacted. Applicants on the list may have found other housing and no longer need a voucher, or may have moved without providing a forwarding address.

Because a PHA is required to try to contact each applicant on the waiting list, outdated information on HCV waiting lists can mean long delays in getting HCV vouchers to people who need them. Public housing agencies have been known to contact as many as 100 applicants in order to issue 10 vouchers. It is critical to stress the importance of good waiting list management to the PHA and help it to develop fair policies. To prevent old HCV waiting lists from being a problem, PHAs should be encouraged to update their waiting lists at least once a year. Further encouragement to directly inform organizations of waiting list updates will help those organizations identify households that may need assistance completing the update form. HCV applicants and their advocates should always notify the PHA when they have moved or if there has been a change in their contact information.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Some examples of changes to the application process that can be requested as reasonable accommodations if needed by someone because of their disability include:

- Allowing additional time to submit an application.
- Allowing applications to be dropped off at the public housing agency (PHA) by a friend, family member, advocate, or service provider.
- Conducting visits to shelters, hotels/motels, or other temporary living situations in order to allow an applicant to complete the application.
- Providing alternatives to standing in line for either receiving or returning applications including: receiving applications by mail or fax, and/or allowing a proxy to stand in line for an applicant.
- Mailing out application forms in advance in order to provide a person who is chronically homeless sufficient time to apply.
- Accepting preliminary applications by telephone.
- Using a simplified initial application form and allowing applicants to complete a more detailed application when they reach the top of the waiting list.
- Allowing homeless and human service agencies to copy the application and distribute them to the people with whom they work.
- Offering assistance in completing the applications.
- Making sure the application states that the PHA provides reasonable accommodations and explains the process to request a reasonable accommodation.

Waiting List Preferences ([24 CFR 982.207](#))

Waiting list preferences are a very important aspect of the HCV program. Each PHA is allowed to establish "local preferences" that reflect the needs of its particular community. Applicants who qualify for these preferences may be able to move ahead of other households on the waiting list. Any preference must be described in the HCV Administrative Plan.

A PHA's preferences for the HCV program must be documented in both its HCV Administrative Plan and its PHA Plan (see Chapter 11). Common local preferences include:

- People who work in, or are residents of, a specific locality (known as a "residency" preference)
- Working families

- People living in substandard housing
- People paying more than 50 percent of income for rent (known as "rent burdened")
- People with disabilities (not a specific disability)
- People who are homeless (as defined by the PHA)

QUICK TIP

GET AN APPLICATION RECEIPT

When submitting an application (in person or via mail/fax), make sure that the public housing agency provides you with a written receipt for your records, verifying that it received the application. The receipt may be useful if the application gets lost in transit between departments.

Since some waiting lists are extremely long, preferences are an invaluable mechanism for ensuring that the people with the most severe housing needs — such as those experiencing chronic homelessness — don't have to wait as long as other eligible households. Unfortunately, many PHAs have not implemented a preference for chronically homeless people. Table 4.01 on [page 41](#) demonstrates how local preferences can affect the position of applicants on the HCV waiting list.

Cumulative Preferences

Note that in the example in [Table 4.01](#), applicants who meet multiple preference criteria are treated the same as those who meet only one. Some creative PHAs have implemented a system that allows for the different criteria to be cumulatively applied; in other words, an applicant with multiple preference qualifications would be served before someone with fewer qualifications. Table 4.02 on [page 42](#) provides an example of cumulative preferences.

Weighted Preferences

Similar to cumulative preferences, which add up the number of preference categories that a household meets, weighted preferences assign relative weights to each preference category. Table 4.03 on [page 43](#) provides an example of weighted preferences.

Limited Preferences ([24 CFR 982.2079 \[a\]\[3\]](#))

Many PHAs have implemented "limited preferences." These preferences can be any of those types described above, but the number of people who can be prioritized on the waiting list based on a given preference is limited or "capped." Often referred to as a "set-aside," limited preferences provide a way for PHAs to help meet the housing needs of a specific group in the community, such as people experiencing chronic homelessness, while balancing the supply of HCV for general waiting list applicants.

**Table 4.01 Preferences in a
Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List**

Imagine that the Jonesville public housing agency (PHA) administers 100 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs). It currently has a waiting list of 11 applicants. The Jonesville PHA uses two preferences to select people from its HCV waiting list: residency and veteran status. These preferences are applied equally. As shown in this example, those applicants who meet at least one of these preferences are selected before those who do not meet any preference, despite the fact that the non-preference applicants may have applied first.

DATE OF APPLICATION	NAME	PREFERENCES			ORDER SELECTED
		NONE	RESIDENCY	VETERAN	
Feb 2014	Smith	X			7
Apr 2014	Ramirez	X			8
May 2014	Mann		X		1
July 2014	Lee	X			9
Sep 2014	McMillian	X			10
Oct 2014	Martinez		X		2
Dec 2014	Miller		X		3
Apr 2015	O'Rourke		X	X	4
Sep 2015	Cooper			X	5
Oct 2015	Schwartz	X			11
Dec 2015	Chang		X	X	6

Table 4.02 Cumulative Preferences in a Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List

Imagine that the Elizabethtown public housing agency (PHA) administers 350 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs). It currently has a waiting list of 11 applicants. The Elizabethtown PHA uses multiple preferences to select people from its HCV waiting list: residency, homeless status, disability, and veteran status. These preferences are cumulative. As shown in this example, the more preferences an applicant meets, the sooner they will be selected, even if other households have applied earlier.

DATE OF APPLICATION	NAME	PREFERENCES					ORDER SELECTED
		NONE	RESIDENCY	HOMELESS	DISABILITY	VETERAN	
Jan 2013	Sloane		X				8
Mar 2013	Fox	X					10
Jun 2013	Martone		X		X		3
Dec 2013	Gary			X		X	4
Jan 2014	Eliot					X	9
Apr 2014	Herb			X	X		5
Jul 2014	Yates			X	X		6
Nov 2014	Stewart			X	X	X	1
Oct 2014	Hart		X		X	X	2
Jan 2015	Miller	X					11
Feb 2015	Cokin		X			X	7

Table 4.03 Weighted Preferences in a Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List

Imagine that the Southfield public housing agency (PHA) administers 225 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) and currently has a waiting list of 11 applicants. This PHA uses multiple preferences to select people from its HCV waiting list including: residency, elderly status and disability, with the preferences weighted as follows:

- Residency = 3 points
- Elderly = 2 points
- Disability = 1 point

The higher the number of points an applicant scores, the sooner they will be selected, even if other households have applied earlier.

DATE OF APPLICATION	NAME	PREFERENCES				TOTAL POINTS	ORDER SELECTED
		NONE	RESIDENCY	ELDERLY	DISABILITY		
Jan 2013	Knott	X				0	10
Mar 2013	Pabon		X			3	5
Jun 2013	Horton			X		2	8
Jul 2014	Delman			X	X	3	6
Aug 2014	Holland		X		X	4	4
Sep 2014	Douglas		X	X		5	3
Dec 2014	Walker		X			3	7
Jan 2015	Berry	X				0	11
Mar 2015	Mondello		X	X	X	6	1
May 2015	Schaak				X	1	9
Jun 2015	Watkins		X	X	X	6	2

GOOD TO KNOW

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPACT OF THE RESIDENCY PREFERENCE

Most public housing agencies (PHAs) use a residency preference as a way to increase the likelihood that Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) applicants will lease units within the PHA's jurisdiction. When applicants use vouchers outside a PHA's jurisdiction, the PHA receives less administrative funding (see Chapter 8) so there is financial incentive to encourage local households to use their vouchers within the PHA's jurisdiction.

Anyone may submit an application to any PHA in the nation that has an open HCV waiting list; however if that PHA has a residency preference then non-residents will only be assisted once all the residents on the waiting list are vetted — which in some communities could take years!

For chronically homeless people who lack "residency," most PHAs use the address included on the application, which may be a shelter. If the applicant moves from the shelter, they should notify the PHA since this may impact their eligibility for the residency preference.

In some communities with few or no shelters, homeless providers, Continuums of Care, and advocates may want to encourage PHAs to expand their [definition of residency](#) to include people forced to live in shelters outside their jurisdiction. In such cases, a PHA could consider the household's previous residency and circumstances.

Preference for People Referred by Partner Agencies

There are some special purpose voucher programs authorized by HUD and Congress that require referrals to come from specific designated partner agencies — such as HUD-VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) or HUD's Family Unification Program (both described in [Chapter 9](#)). For these programs, the partner agencies are responsible for conducting all outreach to the target population and making referrals to the PHA for vouchers.

Beyond these special initiatives, [HUD allows PHAs to partner with specific agencies to make referrals for vouchers](#) — especially vouchers that have been prioritized for a certain population. For instance, a PHA with a waiting list preference for chronically homeless people could choose to accept referrals for that preference category only from specific partner organizations, such as a homeless service organization.

After the Application Process

PHAs must notify applicants of their application status by letter. This letter may state that the application has been added to the HCV waiting

list. Sometimes the PHA's letter may state that the application is incomplete, and request the missing information. In other cases, the letter may state that the PHA held a lottery and this application was not successful — meaning that it was not added to the waiting list.

After the application is submitted, it is extremely important for HCV applicants to stay as informed as possible about their waiting list status. HCV preferences are one reason why it is difficult for both the PHA and HCV applicants to know exactly how long they may have to wait for a voucher. At some PHAs, applicants without a preference may never receive a voucher because applicants with a preference will always be moved ahead of them on the waiting list. If a PHA has several preferences and uses a more complex preference system such as those in [Tables 4.02](#) and [4.03](#), it is even more difficult to predict when a voucher will be available for an applicant with a lower-ranked preference.

GOOD TO KNOW

REFERRALS AND LIMITED PREFERENCES

A public housing agency (PHA) may not limit the source of referrals to an agency, organization, or consortium that denies its services to people of any particular race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or familial status. This means that a PHA may not receive all of its referrals from an agency that only serves one disability subgroup, such as people with serious mental illness.

NEW LOCAL PREFERENCES AND THE EXISTING WAITING LIST

When a PHA adopts a new local preference, it must first go through its existing Housing Choice Voucher waiting list to determine if anyone already on the list meets the new preference criteria. Homeless providers and Continuums of Care may want to develop data-sharing practices to examine which applicants on the existing waiting list meet the new preference criteria. By sharing this information, all parties will be able to better plan for the number of people that should be referred to the waiting list in order to ensure sufficient applicants for the new limited preference. Such data-sharing activities must incorporate the appropriate consent forms and systems-level assurances for privacy (see Chapter 11).

It is sometimes possible to learn more about an applicant's status by calling the PHA or checking online. Some PHAs assign a number to each application and include this control number on all written correspondence with the applicant. This control number should be referenced when contacting the PHA. However, most PHAs are unable to provide reliable information about the status of an application and may only be able to give a general idea (e.g., within the next year).

Because the majority of PHAs correspond with HCV applicants by mail, it is important that any change in contact information be relayed promptly to the PHA. It is helpful to include a secondary contact so that the PHA can copy this person on all PHA correspondence.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

WAITING LIST UPDATES

A person who is chronically homeless and whose disability prevents them from responding to a waiting list update letter, causing their name to be removed from the waiting list, can request that their name be reinstated as a reasonable accommodation.

Public Housing Agency Waiting List Updates

To best manage the hundreds or even thousands of applicants on an HCV waiting list, PHAs should regularly update the list. Keep in mind that people may apply to many different PHAs, and be on many waiting lists at the same time. Therefore, some PHAs update their waiting list once a year, or even every six months, to keep it as current as possible. This is often referred to as "purging" the waiting list.

In order to update their waiting lists, PHAs must send out letters to applicants asking them to reconfirm their interest in the HCV program. Often these update letters require the applicant to respond by a certain date. If the PHA does not receive a response, the applicant is automatically removed from the waiting list. Through this process, PHAs eliminate any applicants who do not respond to the update letter or who are no longer interested in the program.