

Adopting a Multifamily Homeless Preference: An Overview for Property Owners and Agents

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PRESENTER: Welcome to today's presentation on adopting a homeless preference and multifamily housing. Owners and agents across the country have adopted the preference with success for their properties. Today, we will share simple steps for adopting a homeless preference.

Owners and agents that have adopted the preference have realized the benefits that the preference provides. Their staff are proud to help homeless families, individuals, elders, and veterans move to housing quickly. They have also discovered that the homeless households are not different from their current residents.

The preference can help reduce the vacancies. Service provider partners can provide complete applications. Owners have tapped into a coordinated system of service providers who can help residents thrive in their new home and maintain occupancy.

The multifamily homeless preference is part of a federal effort to address homelessness. Opening Doors is the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. It calls for the strength and alignment of federal, state, local, and private resources. The goal of the multifamily homeless preference is to encourage multifamily housing to be part of the solution to homelessness in local communities across the country.

Property owners and agents that wish to adopt the preference can find guidance and tools on the HUD exchange website. On the website, you will find the HUD notice for the homeless preference and the toolkit for implementing a homeless preference. The toolkit provides best practices and template documents to simplify

the process of adopting the preference.

The multifamily homeless preference is an optional, owner-adopted preference that applies to HUD-assisted multifamily housing with project-based Section 8 or PRAC rental subsidy. The homeless preference impacts the order in which applicants are selected from wait list, allowing homeless families and individuals to move quickly to the top of the list. The property eligibility and screening criteria remain the same after a homeless preference has been adopted.

Property owners and agents have flexibility with the homeless preference. They may choose which properties are a good fit for the preference. In addition, they may choose which homeless population to serve, for example, veterans or families.

Owners and agents select the rate of the preference for each property. For example, owners can choose to fill every other vacant unit with a homeless household or every third unit. Finally, owners and agents may choose to partner with local service providers who can refer applicants for available units and provide services for households once they move in.

HUD recommends partnering with service providers. Service providers can provide referrals for vacancies and help households build strong tenancies. Owners and agents can connect to service providers through the Continuum of Care, a local group of organizations that provide services to homeless households.

The Continuum of Care can work with owners and agents to determine the right population to target for the homeless preference. If you are interested in adopting the preference, reach out to your Continuum of Care and HUD to get started. Contact service providers through the Continuum of Care to discuss partnership opportunities. Also contact your HUD account executive, so that they can support your effort and approve changes in your tenant selection plan.

Once you've decided to adopt the homeless preference at your property, there are four simple steps to take. First, amend the tenant selection plan with templates provided in the toolkit and submit to your HUD account executive for fast approval. Also, review the affirmative fair housing marketing plan for any changes that might be needed. Then, once the preference is approved by HUD, notify applicants on the current wait list about the preference. Finally, set up a referral process with your service provider partners.

Thank you for listening to today's presentation and considering the homeless preference at your properties. For more information, go to HUD's website to access the toolkit for implementing a homeless preference. Share information about the preference with your colleagues. Send them the link to this presentation. If you have questions or are ready to adopt the preference, email HUD or reach out to your HUD account executive.

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Adopt the Homeless Preference at Your Properties

For more information:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/multifamily-housing-owners-managers/>

Questions? Ready to adopt the preference?

Contact your HUD Account Executive or email HUD at MFHP@hud.gov