

Mainstream Vouchers – The Basics

Mainstream vouchers are tenant-based vouchers that assist non-elderly persons with disabilities and their families. The vouchers are a part of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and follow the same regulations and program policies as the PHA’s regular HCV program except that these vouchers assist a special population. This topic guide outlines key elements of Mainstream vouchers to assist PHAs and their partners in their administration.

Participant Eligibility

- Vouchers must assist non-elderly persons (at least 18 and less than 62 years of age) who have disabilities and their families.
- The eligible household member does not need to be the head of household.
- Non-elderly persons with disabilities who turn 62 **after** admission can keep their rental assistance.
- Assisted households must meet all HCV eligibility requirements such as those related to income, citizenship or immigration status, and mandatory screening exclusions.

Applicable Regulations & Guidance

- [24 CFR Part 982 – HCV Tenant-based Regulations](#)
- [24 CFR Part 982 – HCV Project-based Regulations](#)
- [PIH Notice 2020-01](#)
- [FY17 NOFA FAQs](#)
- [FY19 NOFA Q&A](#)
- [PIH’s Mainstream Voucher Page](#)

Target Populations

In response to Mainstream voucher funding opportunities, many PHAs have committed to providing an admissions preference to non-elderly persons with disabilities who are:

- Transitioning out of institutional or other segregated settings
- At serious risk of institutionalization
- Currently experiencing homelessness
- Previously experienced homelessness and currently a client in a permanent supportive housing or rapid rehousing project
- At risk of experiencing homelessness

Administrative Policies & Procedures

PHAs must use the same administrative policies for Mainstream vouchers as their regular housing choice vouchers. PHAs may want to review existing policies and consider if revisions are necessary to better utilize Mainstream vouchers. Key policies to review include:

- Screening Criteria
- Waiting List & Preferences
- Payment Standards
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Project-basing
- Portability

This resource is prepared by technical assistance providers and intended only to provide guidance. The contents of this document, except when based on statutory or regulatory authority or law, do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Tracking & Reporting

PHAs are responsible for tracking their use of Mainstream vouchers and must report specific voucher information in the reporting or financial systems outlined below. [PIH Notice 2020-01](#) provides more details.

Reporting/ Financial System	Requirements
IMS/PIC	PHAs must submit a form HUD-50058. On line 2n, the Special Program Type=MS5. On Line 4c, indicate if family was homeless at admission.
SEMAP	PIC excludes Mainstream from PIC-calculated indicators. The Financial Management Center (FMC) recalculates PHA's leasing rate to include Mainstream vouchers. Detailed example in PIH Notice 2020-01.
VMS	Report HAP under Mainstream 5 year.
FASS-PH	Report in FASS-PH under different CFDA number 14.879. See accounting brief on Mainstream webpage for details on reporting.

Mainstream Vouchers vs NED: Key Differences

Mainstream Vouchers and Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) Vouchers serve the same population and both follow the program policies of the HCV Program. However, there are key differences:

Category	Mainstream Vouchers	NED Vouchers
Eligibility	Eligible member can be any member of household	Eligible member must be Head of Household, Co-head or Spouse
Financial Reporting	Separate financial reporting from regular HCV	NED reporting is combined with regular HCV
50058-Line 2N	MS5	NED
Program Name References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream 5 Year • Mainstream 5 • Section 811 Vouchers • MS5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) Voucher Program • Designated housing vouchers • Certain development vouchers

Additional Resources

Topic Guides	HUD Guidance	Notices/Regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOFA Preferences and Waiting List Management • Serving Persons At Serious Risk of Entering or Transitioning out of Institutional Settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY17 NOFA FAQs • FY19 NOFA Q&A • PIH's Mainstream Voucher Page • HCV Guidebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 CFR Part 982-HCV Tenant-Based Regulations • PIH Notice 2020-01 • PIH Notice 2013-15