

Frequently Asked Questions About the Housing Choice Voucher Program

VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

1. What is the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program?

The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA provides these services for participating Veterans at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics.

2. If a veteran is interested in participating in the VASH Program, who should he or she contact?

All VASH applicants must be referred to the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston (CHA) through the Ralph Henry Johnson VA Medical Center, 109 Bee Street, Charleston, SC, 29401. The case managers are:

Ms. Yvonne Tucker (843) 789-7134

Ms. Maria Lundell (843) 789-6560

Ms. Natasha Simeon Major (843) 789-7071

Ms. Michelle Cook (843) 577-5011, ext. 5071

The Ralph Henry Johnson VA Medical Center also conducts VASH walk-in clinics Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

3. Is it acceptable for the VA case managers to review original documents on behalf of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Office?

The HCV Office is responsible for income and citizenship verifications. The VA case manager may compile the documents and look them over, but the HCV Office has the final say regarding their appropriateness.

4. What if a family is over-income?

As in the regular HCV program, the HCV Office must determine whether or not a family is income eligible prior to the provision of VASH assistance. If the family is over-income based on the most recently published income limits for the family size, the family will be ineligible for HCV assistance.

5. Can the HCV Office deny assistance to a VASH family that owes money to the HCV Office or any other public housing programs?

No. The HCV Office will only be able to screen for, and deny admission to, a family member that is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.

6. What if a family member, other than the veteran, is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program?

Unless the family member that is subject to lifetime registration under a state sex offender law is the homeless veteran, the remaining family member/s may be served if the family agrees to remove the sex offender from its family composition.

7. Can the HCV Office deny admission to an adult family member, other than the veteran, based on the previous behavior of that family member? For example, what if the co-head was previously terminated from the HCV Program for committing serious or repeated violations of the lease (e.g. non-payment of rent)?

No. The prohibition against screening families for anything other than lifetime sex offender status applies to all family members, not just the veteran. The VASH operating requirements state that, with the exception of screening to determine if any household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program, the HCV Office does not have the authority to screen “potentially eligible families” or deny assistance.

8. What procedures must the HCV Office follow when adding a member to the assisted VASH family?

Other than the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child, any other family member must be approved by the HCV Office in accordance with its policies. If adding someone other than those listed above, the request must be in writing and permission forms must be signed (if 18 or older) so that background checks can be performed.

9. Can a HCV Office refuse to readmit veterans that have been terminated from the VASH Program in accordance with Program

requirements (e.g. due to serious lease violation, program fraud, engaging in criminal activity or drug/alcohol abuse, etc.)?

No. If the VA case manager re-refers a veteran that has been previously terminated from the VASH Program for any reason other than being subject to a state lifetime sex offender registration requirement, the HCV Office may not deny VASH assistance to the referred veteran.

10.Can a VASH family also participate in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program?

Yes. VASH families are eligible to enroll in FSS.

11.What if the family no longer needs case management?

If a family no longer needs case management as determined by the VAMC, the family is still eligible for rental assistance under the HCV Program.

12.What happens to the Voucher if the veteran within the household dies?

The Voucher would remain with the remaining members of the tenant family.

13.What happens to the Voucher if there is a divorce?

Since VASH Vouchers are for veterans, the Voucher must remain with the veteran in the case of a separation or divorce.

14.Can the HCV Office terminate a family at the time of an annual reexamination for a violation that occurred before they were on the VASH Program?

No. The HCV Office cannot terminate a family for a reason that could not be used for denying admission. However, a VASH family can be terminated for Program violations that occur after the family was admitted to the VASH Program.

15.If a veteran, as the head of household of a family with a VASH Voucher, commits an act of domestic violence and is terminated from

the Program, does the VASH Voucher stay with the family members, or does it go to the next veteran on the VASH waiting list?

When a veteran's family member is receiving protection as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, and the veteran is the perpetrator of such violence, the victim must continue to be assisted.

16. Can a participant use a VASH Voucher to move long distance? For example, a VASH family wants to move from California to Florida.

Yes. This type of move is permissible if the Florida VAMC can serve the family and the HCV Office partnering with the VAMC in Florida has an available VASH voucher. In such cases, the receiving HCV Office must absorb the family into their VASH Program.