



Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

DHCD Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan Amendment: 2019-01

Program: Mainstream 2018

Effective Date: June 20, 2019

This policy amendment is effective on the date listed above. The policy amendment will be incorporated into the body of the next published version of the Administrative Plan, and there, numbered accordingly in the body of the Plan.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy amendment is to add a section covering the new targeted Mainstream 2018 voucher program.

Amendment:

1.1 MAINSTREAM 2018 (MS2018)

1.1.1 Overview

MS2018 vouchers are subject to MTW policies.

1.1.2 Eligibility

Vouchers must be used to assist non-elderly persons with disabilities and their families. The non-elderly person with disabilities must be at least 18 years of age and less than 62 years of age. The eligible household member does not need to be the head of household. A household where a child under age 18 is the only family member with a disability is not eligible for this program.

DHCD's designees will verify an applicant's disability status for purposes of determining program eligibility in accordance with Chapter 7.

1.1.3 Waiting List Management and Selection

New increments of targeted vouchers must be issued to the specific target population in the NOFA. Upon turnover, DHCD's designees will issue MS2018 turnover vouchers to eligible, non-elderly disabled households selected from their regional standard HCV waiting list.

If a MS2018 applicant moves out of the initial designee's region, the applicant must be absorbed by the receiving designee with a MS2018 voucher when one becomes available. If a MS2018 voucher is not available, the receiving agency must bill the issuing agency until such time as a MS2018 voucher is available. This procedure will prevent over-issuance of MS2018 vouchers.

For MS2018 vouchers, preference is provided to the following populations¹, in the order listed below:

1. Qualifying applicants who are in institutional or other segregated settings
2. Qualifying applicants who are homeless

Institutional or other segregated settings include, but are not limited to:

1. congregate settings populated exclusively or primarily with individuals with disabilities;
2. congregate settings characterized by regimentation in daily activities, lack of privacy or autonomy, policies limiting visitors, or limits on individuals' ability to engage freely in community activities and to manage their own activities of daily living; or
3. settings that provide for daytime activities primarily with other individuals with disabilities.

Homeless means:

1. An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - i. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;

¹ As defined in HUD Notice of Funding Availability # FR-6100-N-43.

- ii. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
 - iii. An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
 2. An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - i. The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - ii. No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - iii. The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;
 3. Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
 - i. Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
 - ii. Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - iii. Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60- day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
 - iv. Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or
 4. Any individual or family who:
 - i. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime

- residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- ii. Has no other residence; and
 - iii. Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

1.1.4 Support Services

At the briefing, each applicant will be offered a list of contacts at the human service agencies in their region. This list should include staff that can:

- Assist in identifying supports for individuals with psychiatric disabilities including those who have mental health illnesses but may not be eligible for DMH programs.
- Assist in identifying supports for individuals with mental retardation including community-based supports.
- Assist in identifying detoxification, treatment, and support programs for people with substance abuse problems.
- Make referrals to resources that support people with HIV/AIDS including housing search services, specialized health services, support groups, meals programs and others.
- Assist in providing referrals for vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals with any type of disability who would like to go to work.
- Direct individuals to home care assistance, personal care assistance, home modifications, and independent living supports.

Participants will be encouraged to review the list and to contact any agency if they feel they need or want any support services. DHCD's designees will use the list as needed to make referrals if requested by participants and also to obtain advice from a human service professional if needed.

Housing Search

Each designee must provide applicants with housing search assistance that includes, at a minimum: a list of available units in the area. Applicants may utilize the designee's Housing Consumer Education Center resources that include listings of available units, a computer to access listings on the internet, local newspapers, and a telephone.