

**Philadelphia Housing Authority  
Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan Appendix  
Emergency Transfer Plan for  
Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking**

---

**Emergency Transfers:**

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) is concerned about the safety of its clients, and such concern extends to clients who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), PHA allows clients who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the client's current unit to another unit. Clients are able to request a VAWA emergency transfer regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Clients must provide certification showing that they are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in order for PHA to make a determination regarding a request for a VAWA emergency transfer.

This plan includes information on eligibility for a VAWA emergency transfer, the VAWA transfer request and unit offer process, VAWA victim safety, and confidentiality. Guidance on VAWA client rights and VAWA certification requirements is contained in the VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights.

**Eligibility for Emergency Transfers:**

A client who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and who provides certification of same is eligible for an emergency transfer if the client reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the client remains in their current unit. If the client is a victim of sexual assault, the client may be eligible for a VAWA emergency public safety transfer if the client reasonably believes there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the client remains in their current unit or if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding the client's request for a VAWA emergency transfer. Clients who are not in good standing may still request a VAWA emergency transfer if they meet the VAWA emergency transfer eligibility requirements.

**Emergency Transfer Request Documentation:**

To request a VAWA emergency transfer, the client shall complete and submit to PHA a VAWA Emergency Transfer Request Form and also provide certification, as described in Section 3.12.7 of the Administrative Plan, that the client is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. PHA will provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

**Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability:**

PHA cannot guarantee that a VAWA emergency transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a VAWA emergency transfer request. PHA will, however, act as quickly as possible to issue a voucher to a client who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, subject to HCV's transfer policies.

If the client who needs a VAWA emergency transfer is unable to locate a safe and available unit, PHA may refer the client to other housing providers. See Section 17.8 and Section 23.35 of HCV's Administrative Plan.

**HCV Transfer Hierarchy:**

Transfers made pursuant to VAWA are considered emergency transfers. Clients in PHA's HCV Program who request and are approved for a VAWA emergency transfer will be processed for a transfer voucher in accordance with HCV's hierarchy of transfers as established in the Administrative Plan Section 17.3 and Section 23.61.

**Safety and Security of Participants:**

Clients who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, Women Against Abuse's 24-hour domestic violence hotline at 1-866-

723-3014 or a local domestic violence shelter for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, the Women Against Abuse's hotline can be accessed by calling 215-456-1529 (TTY).

Clients who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://oh.rainn.org/online/>.

Clients who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

**Confidentiality:**

PHA will keep confidential any information that the client submits in connection with requesting VAWA protections, including keeping confidential the location of the client's new unit, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the client. PHA may disclose information related to a client's request for VAWA protections if the client gives PHA written permission to release the information on a time-limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the housing program.

DRAFT