

Chapter 16

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses administrative policies and practices that are relevant to the activities covered in this ACOP. The policies are discussed in seven parts as described below:

Part I: Setting Utility Allowances. This part describes how utility allowances are established and revised. Also discussed are the requirements to establish surcharges for excess consumption of COC-furnished utilities.

Part II: Establishing Flat Rents. This part describes the requirements and policies related to establishing and updating flat rent amounts.

Part III: Repayment of Family Debts. This part contains policies for recovery of monies that have been underpaid by families, and describes the circumstances under which COC will offer repayment agreements to families. Also discussed are the consequences for failure to make payments in accordance with a repayment agreement.

Part IV: Public Housing Assessment System (COC). This part describes COC indicators, how COC are scored under COC, and how those scores affect a COC.

Part V: Record Keeping. All aspects of the program involve certain types of record-keeping. This part outlines the privacy rights of applicants and participants and record retention policies COC will follow.

Part VI: Reporting and Record Keeping for Children with Elevated Blood Lead Level. This part describes COC's reporting responsibilities related to children with elevated blood lead levels that are living in public housing.

Part VII: Violence against Women Act (VAWA): Notification, Documentation, and Confidentiality. This part contains key terms used in VAWA and describes requirements related to notifying families about their rights and responsibilities under VAWA; requesting documentation from victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking; and maintaining the confidentiality of information obtained from victims.

PART I: SETTING UTILITY ALLOWANCES

[24 CFR 965 Subpart E]

16-I.A. OVERVIEW

COC must establish allowances for COC-furnished utilities for all check metered utilities and for resident-purchased utilities for all utilities purchased directly by residents from a utility supplier [24 CFR 965.502(a)].

COC must also establish surcharges for excess consumption of COC-furnished utilities [24 CFR 965.506].

COC must maintain a record that documents the basis on which utility allowances and scheduled surcharges are established and revised, and the record must be made available for inspection by residents [24 CFR 965.502(b)].

16-I.B. UTILITY ALLOWANCES

COC must establish separate allowances for each utility and for each category of dwelling units COC determines to be reasonably comparable as to factors affecting utility usage [24 CFR 965.503].

The objective of a COC in establishing utility allowances for each dwelling unit category and unit size is to approximate a reasonable consumption of utilities by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment [24 CFR 965.505].

Utilities include gas, electricity, fuel for heating, water, sewage, and solid waste disposal for a dwelling unit. In addition, if COC does not furnish a range and refrigerator, the family must be granted a utility allowance for the range and refrigerator they provide [24 CFR 965.505].

Costs for telephone, cable/satellite TV, and internet services are not considered utilities [PH Occ GB, p. 138].

Utility allowance amounts will vary by the rates in effect, size and type of unit, climatic location and sitting of the unit, type of construction, energy efficiency of the dwelling unit, and other factors related to the physical condition of the unit. Utility allowance amounts will also vary by residential demographic characteristics affecting home energy usage [PH Occ GB, p. 138].

Chapter 14 of the *PH Occupancy Guidebook* provides detailed guidance to COC about establishing utility allowances.

Air-Conditioning

“If COC installs air conditioning, it shall provide, to the maximum extent economically feasible, systems that give residents the option of choosing to use air conditioning in their units. The design of systems that offer each resident the option to choose air conditioning shall include retail meters or check meters, and residents shall pay for the energy used in its operation. For systems that offer residents the option to choose air conditioning but cannot be check metered, residents are to be surcharged in accordance with 965.506. If an air conditioning system does not provide for resident option, residents are not to be charged, and these systems should be avoided whenever possible.” [24 CFR 965.505(e)]

COC Policy

If COC installs air conditioning that provides residents the option to choose air conditioning but cannot be check metered, residents will be surcharged. If COC installs air conditioning that does not provide for resident option, residents will not be charged. COC has installed air conditioning in some developments.

Utility Allowance Revisions [24 CFR 965.507]

COC must review at least annually the basis on which utility allowances have been established and must revise the allowances if necessary in order to adhere to the standards for establishing utility allowances that are contained in 24 CFR 965.505. The review must include all changes in circumstances (including completion of modernization and/or other energy conservation measures implemented by the PHA) indicating probability of a significant change in reasonable requirements and changes in utility rates [24 CFR 965.507(a)].

COC may revise its allowances for resident-purchased utilities if there is a rate change, and is required to do so if such change, by itself or together with prior rate changes not adjusted for, results in a change of 10 percent or more from the rate on which the allowance was based.

Adjustments to resident payments as a result of such changes must be retroactive to the first day of the month following the month in which the last rate change taken into account became effective. Such rate changes are not subject to the 60-day notice [24 CFR 965.507(b)].

COC Policy

Between annual reviews of utility allowances, COC will only revise its utility allowances due to a 10% or higher rate change, when required to by the regulation.

16-I.C. SURCHARGES FOR COC-FURNISHED UTILITIES [24 CFR 965.506]

For dwelling units subject to allowances for COC-furnished utilities where check meters have been installed, COC must establish surcharges for utility consumption in excess of the allowances. Surcharges may be computed on a straight per unit of purchase basis or for stated blocks of excess consumption and must be based on COC's average utility rate. The basis for calculating the surcharges must be described in COC's schedule of allowances. Changes in the amount of surcharges based directly on changes in COC's average utility rate are not subject to the advance notice requirements discussed under 16-I.D.

For dwelling units served by COC-furnished utilities where check meters have not been installed, COC must establish schedules of surcharges indicating additional dollar amounts residents will be required to pay by reason of estimated utility consumption attributable to resident-owned major appliances or to optional functions of COC-furnished equipment. The surcharge schedule must state the resident-owned equipment (or functions of COC-furnished equipment) for which surcharges will be made and the amounts of such charges. Surcharges must be based on the cost to COC of the utility consumption estimated to be attributable to reasonable usage of such equipment.

COC Policy

COC does have COC-furnished utilities.

16-I.D. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS [965.502]

COC must give notice to all residents of proposed allowances and scheduled surcharges, and revisions thereof. The notice must be given in the manner provided in the lease and must:

- Be provided at least 60 days before the proposed effective date of the allowances, scheduled surcharges, or revisions.
- Describe the basis for determination of the allowances, scheduled surcharges, or revisions, including a statement of the specific items of equipment and function whose utility consumption requirements were included in determining the amounts of the allowances and schedule of surcharges.
- Notify residents of the place where COC's documentation on which allowances and surcharges are based is available for inspection.
- Provide all residents an opportunity to submit written comments during a period expiring not less than 30 days before the proposed effective date of the allowances, scheduled surcharges, or revisions.

16-I.E. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AND INDIVIDUAL RELIEF [24 CFR 965.508]

On request from a family, COC must approve a utility allowance that is higher than the applicable amount for the dwelling unit if a higher utility allowance is needed as a reasonable accommodation to make the program accessible to and usable by the family with a disability [24 CFR 8 and 100, PH Occ GB, p. 172].

Likewise, residents with disabilities may not be charged for the use of certain resident-supplied appliances if there is a verified need for special equipment because of the disability [PH Occ GB, p. 172].

See Chapter 2 for policies regarding the request and approval of reasonable accommodations.

Further, COC may grant requests for relief from charges in excess of the utility allowance on reasonable grounds, such as special needs of the elderly, ill, or residents with disabilities, or special factors not within control of the resident, as the PHA deems appropriate. The family must request the higher allowance and provide the PHA with information about the additional allowance required.

COC should develop criteria for granting individual relief and to notify residents about the availability of individual relief, and also to notify participants about the availability of individual relief programs (sometimes referred to as “Medical Baseline discounts”) offered by the local utility company [Utility Allowance GB, p. 19, 24 CFR 965.508].

PART II: ESTABLISHING FLAT RENTS

16-II.A. OVERVIEW

Flat rents are designed to encourage self-sufficiency and to avoid creating disincentives for continued residency by families who are attempting to become economically self-sufficient.

Flat rents are also used to prorate assistance for a mixed family. A mixed family is one whose members include those with citizenship or eligible immigration status, and those without citizenship or eligible immigrations status [24 CFR 5.504].

This part discusses how COC establishes and updates flat rents. Policies related to the use of flat rents, family choice of rent, flat rent hardships, and proration of rent for a mixed family are discussed in Chapter 6.

16-II.B. FLAT RENTS [24 CFR 960.253(b) and Notice PIH 2022-33]

Establishing Flat Rents

The 2015 Appropriations Act requires that flat rents must be set at no less than 80 percent of the applicable fair market rent (FMR). Alternatively, COC may set flat rents at no less than 80 percent of the applicable small area FMR(SAFMR) for metropolitan areas, or 80 percent of the applicable unadjusted rents for nonmetropolitan areas.

For areas where HUD has not determined a SAFMR or an unadjusted rent, COC must set flat rents at no less than 80 percent of the FMR or apply for an exception flat rent.

The 2015 Appropriations Act permits COC to apply for an exception flat rent that is lower than either 80 percent of the FMR or SAFMR/unadjusted rent if COC can demonstrate, through the submission of a market analysis, that these FMRs do not reflect the market value of a particular property or unit and HUD agrees with the PHA's analysis.

The market analysis must be submitted using form HUD-5880, "Flat Rent Market Analysis Summary."

COC must receive written HUD approval before implementing exception flat rents. COC with a previously approved flat rent exception request may submit a written request to extend the approved flat rents for up to two additional years, provided local market conditions remain unchanged. Detailed information on how to request exception flat rents can be found in Notice PIH 2022-33.

COC are now required to apply a utility allowance to flat rents as necessary. Flat rents set at 80 percent of the FMR must be reduced by the amount of the unit's utility allowance, if any.

Review of Flat Rents

No later than 90 days after the effective date of the new annual FMRs/SAFMRs/unadjusted rent, COC must implement new flat rents as necessary based changes to the FMR/SAFMR/unadjusted rent or request an exception.

If the FMR falls from year to year, COC may, but is not required to, lower the flat rent to 80 percent of the current FMR/SAFMR/unadjusted rent.

COC Policy

If the FMR/SAFMR/unadjusted rent is lower than the previous year, COC will reduce flat rents to 80 percent of the current FMR/SAFMR.

Applying Flat Rents

COC Policy

COC will apply updated flat rents at each family's next annual reexamination or flat rent update after implementation of the new flat rents.

Posting of Flat Rents

COC Policy

COC will publicly post the schedule of flat rents in a conspicuous manner in the applicable COC or project office.

Documentation of Flat Rents [24 CFR 960.253(b)(5)]

COC must maintain records that document the method used to determine flat rents, and that show how flat rents were determined by COC in accordance with this method.

PART III: FAMILY DEBTS TO COC

16-III.A. OVERVIEW

Families are required to reimburse COC if they were charged less rent than required because the family either underreported or failed to report income. COC is required to determine retroactive rent amounts as far back as COC has documentation of family unreported income [Notice PIH 2018-18].

This part describes COC's policies for recovery of monies owed to COC by families.

COC Policy

When an action or inaction of a resident family results in the underpayment of rent or other amounts, COC holds the family liable to return any underpayments to COC.

COC will enter into repayment agreements in accordance with the policies contained in this part as a means to recover underpayments .

When a family refuses to repay monies owed to COC, COC will utilize other available collection alternatives including, but not limited to, the following:

- Collection agencies
- Small claims court
- Civil law suit
- State income tax set-off program

16-III.B. REPAYMENT POLICY

Family Debts to COC

COC Policy

Any amount owed to COC by a public housing family must be repaid.

COC may enter into in-house repayment agreements at its sole discretion when a household can provide evidence satisfactory to show that past due balances can be paid in a timely manner.

Refusal to Enter into an Agreement

If the family refuses to repay the debt, does not enter into a repayment agreement, or breaches a repayment agreement, COC will terminate the family's tenancy..

No unit transfers will be approved until the debt is paid in full, unless the transfer is the result of a family exceeding maximum occupancy guidelines. In this case, the household must be current with a repayment agreement.

Repayment Agreement [24 CFR 792.103]

The term *repayment agreement* refers to a formal written document signed by a tenant or owner and provided to COC in which a tenant or owner acknowledges a debt in a specific amount and agrees to repay the amount due at specific time periods

General Repayment Agreement Guidelines

Down Payment Requirement

COC Policy

Before executing a repayment agreement with a family, COC will require a down payment of one-third or \$250, whichever is greater, at the time the agreement is executed. The minimum monthly amount after the initial payment for any repayment agreement is \$50.

If the family can provide evidence satisfactory to COC that a down payment of one third would impose an undue hardship, COC may, in its sole discretion, require a lesser percentage or waive the requirement.

Payment Thresholds

Notice PIH 2018-18 recommends that the total amount that a family must pay each month—the family’s monthly share of rent plus the monthly debt repayment amount—should not exceed 40 percent of the family’s monthly adjusted income, which is considered “affordable.” Moreover, Notice PIH 2018-18 acknowledges that COC have the discretion to establish “thresholds and policies” for repayment agreements with families [24 CFR 982.552(c)(1)(vii)].

COC Policy

COC has established the following thresholds for repayment of debts:

Amounts over \$3,000 must be repaid within 36 months.

Amounts between \$2,000 and \$2,999 must be repaid within 30 months.

Amounts between \$1,000 and \$1,999 must be repaid within 24 months.

Amounts under \$1,000 must be repaid within 12 months.

If a family can provide evidence satisfactory to COC that the threshold applicable to the family’s debt would impose an undue hardship, COC may, in its sole discretion, determine that a lower monthly payment amount is reasonable. In making its determination, COC will consider all relevant information, including the following:

The amount owed by the family to the COC

The reason for the debt, including whether the debt was the result of family action/inaction or circumstances beyond the family’s control

The family’s current and potential income and expenses

The family’s current family share, as calculated under 24 CFR 982.515

The family’s history of meeting its financial responsibilities

Execution of the Agreement

All repayment agreements must be in writing, dated, and signed by both the family and COC [Notice PIH 2018-18].

COC Policy

Any repayment agreement between COC and a family must be signed and dated by COC and by the head of household and spouse/cohead (if applicable).

Due Dates

COC Policy

All payments are due by the close of business on the 24th day of the month. If the 24th does not fall on a business day, the due date is the close of business on the first business day after the 24th.

Late or Missed Payments

COC Policy

If a payment is not received by the end of the business day on the date due, and prior approval for the missed payment has not been given by COC, COC will send the family a delinquency notice giving the family 14 business days to make the late payment. If the payment is not received by the due date of the delinquency notice, it will be considered a breach of the agreement and COC will terminate tenancy in accordance with the policies in Chapter 13.

No Offer of Repayment Agreement

COC Policy

COC will not enter into a repayment agreement with a family if there is already a repayment agreement in place with the family, if the amount owed exceeds the threshold in this policy, or if COC in consultation with HUD and local law enforcement, determine to pursue criminal charges in connection with the conduct and the amounts owed

Repayment Agreement Terms

All repayment agreements must be in writing, dated, signed by both the family and the PHA, include the total retroactive rent amount owed, amount of lump sum payment made at time of execution, if applicable, and the monthly repayment amount. Notice PIH 2018-18 requires certain provisions to be included in any repayment agreement involving amounts owed by a family because it underreported or failed to report income:

- A reference to the items in the public housing lease that state the family's obligation to provide true and complete information at every reexamination and the grounds on which COC may terminate assistance because of a family's action or failure to act
- A statement clarifying that each month the family not only must pay to COC the monthly payment amount specified in the agreement but must also pay to COC the monthly tenant rent

- A statement that the terms of the repayment agreement may be renegotiated if the family's income decreases or increases
- A statement that late or missed payments constitute default of the repayment agreement and may result in termination of tenancy

PART IV: PUBLIC HOUSING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (COC)

16-IV.A. OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Public Housing Assessment System (COC) is to improve the delivery of services in public housing and enhance trust in the public housing system among COC, public housing residents, HUD and the general public by providing a management tool for effectively and fairly measuring the performance of a public housing agency in essential housing operations.

16-IV.B. COC INDICATORS [24 CFR 902 Subparts A, B, C, D, and E]

The table below lists each of COC indicators, the points possible under each indicator, and a brief description of each indicator. A COC's performance is based on a combination of all four indicators.

Indicator 1: Physical condition of COC's projects
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Maximum Score: 40

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The objective of this indicator is to determine the level to which a COC is maintaining its public housing in accordance with the standard of safe, habitable dwelling units .• To determine the physical condition of a COC's projects, inspections are performed. using the National Standards for the Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). The inspections are performed by an independent inspector arranged by HUD, and include a statistically valid sample of the units in each project in COC's public housing portfolio. |
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Indicator 2: Financial condition of COC's projects

Maximum Score: 25

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The objective of this indicator is to measure the financial condition of COC's public housing projects for the purpose of evaluating whether COC has sufficient financial resources and is capable of managing those financial resources effectively to support the provision of housing that is decent, safe, sanitary, and in good repair.• A COC's financial condition is determined by measuring each public housing project's performance in each of the following sub indicators: quick ratio, months expendable net assets ratio, and debt service coverage ratio. |
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Indicator 3: Management operations of COC's projects**Maximum Score: 25**

- The objective of this indicator is to measure certain key management operations and responsibilities of a COC's projects for the purpose of assessing COC's management operations capabilities.
- Each project's management operations are assessed based on the following sub-indicators: occupancy, tenant accounts receivable, and accounts payable.
- An on-site management review may be conducted as a diagnostic and feedback tool for problem performance areas, and for compliance. Management reviews are not scored.

Indicator 4: Capital Fund**Maximum Score: 10**

- The objective of this indicator is to measure how long it takes COC to obligate capital funds and to occupy units.
- COC's score for this indicator is measured at COC level and is based on the following sub indicators: timeliness of fund obligation and occupancy rate.

16-IV.C. PHAS SCORING [24 CFR 902 Subpart F]

HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) issues overall COC scores, which are based on the scores of the four COC indicators, and the sub indicators under each indicator. COC's indicator scores are based on a weighted average of COC's public housing projects' scores. COC scores translate into a designation for each COC as high performing, standard, substandard, or troubled.

A high performer is a COC that achieves an overall COC score of 90 or greater, and achieves a score of at least 60 percent of the points available under the physical, financial, and management indicators and at least 50 percent of the points available under the capital fund indicator.

A standard performer is a COC that has an overall COC score between 60 and 89, and achieves a score of at least 60 percent of the points available under the physical, financial, and management indicators and at least 50 percent of the points available under the capital fund indicator.

A substandard performer is a COC that has an overall COC score of at least 60 percent and achieves a score of less than 60 percent under one or more of the physical, financial, or management indicators.

A troubled performer is a COC that achieves an overall COC score of less than 60, or achieves less than 50 percent of the total points available under the capital fund indicator.

These designations can affect a COC in several ways:

- High-performing COC are eligible for incentives including relief from specific HUD requirements and bonus points in funding competitions [24 CFR 902.71].
- COC that are standard performers may be required to submit and operate under a corrective action plan to eliminate deficiencies in COC's performance [24 CFR 902.73(a)(1)].
- COC that are substandard performers will be required to submit and operate under a corrective action plan to eliminate deficiencies in COC's performance [24 CFR 902.73(a)(2)].
- COC with an overall rating of "troubled" are subject to additional HUD oversight, and are required to enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with HUD to improve COC performance [24 CFR 902.75].
- COC that fail to execute or meet MOA requirements may be referred to the Assistant Secretary to determine remedial actions, including, but not limited to, remedies available for substantial default [24 CFR 902.75(g) and 24 CFR Part 907].

COC must post a notice of its final COC score and status in appropriate conspicuous and accessible locations in its offices within two weeks of receipt of its final score and designation [24 CFR 902.64(b)(2)].

PART V: RECORD KEEPING

16-V.A. OVERVIEW

COC must maintain complete and accurate accounts and other records for the program in accordance with HUD requirements, in a manner that permits a speedy and effective audit. All such records must be made available to HUD or the Comptroller General of the United States upon request.

In addition, COC must ensure that all applicant and participant files are maintained in a way that protects an individual's privacy rights, and that comply with VAWA confidentiality requirements.

16-V.B. RECORD RETENTION

COC must keep the last three years of the Form HUD-50058 and supporting documentation during the term of each assisted lease, and for a period of at least three years from the end of participation (EOP) date [24 CFR 908.101].

COC must maintain Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system Income Reports in the tenant file for the duration of the tenancy but for a period not to exceed three years from the EOP date [Notice PIH 2018-18].

Notice PIH 2014-20 requires COC to keep records of all complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions related to violations of the Fair Housing Act or the equal access final rule.

COC must keep confidential records of all emergency transfer requested under COC's Emergency Transfer Plan, and the outcomes of such requests, and retain the records for a period of three years, or for a period of time as specific in program regulations [24 CFR 5.2002(e)(12)].

COC Policy

COC will keep the last three years of the Form HUD-50058 and supporting documentation, and for at least three years after end of participation all documents related to a family's eligibility, tenancy, and termination, or longer as required by program retention requirements

COC will keep Income Verification (EIV) system Income Reports in the tenant file for the duration of the tenancy and for three years from the end of participation date.

In addition, COC will keep the following records for at least three years:

- An application from each ineligible family and notice that the applicant is not eligible

- Lead-based paint records as required by 24 CFR 35, Subpart B

- Documentation supporting the establishment of flat rents

- Documentation supporting the establishment of utility allowances and surcharges

- Documentation related to COC

- Accounts and other records supporting COC budget and financial statements for the program

Complaints, investigations, notices, and corrective actions related to violations of the Fair Housing Act, the equal access final rule, or VAWA

Confidential records of all emergency transfers related to VAWA requested under the COC's Emergency Transfer Plan and the outcomes of such requests

Other records as determined by COC or as required by HUD

If a hearing to establish a family's citizenship status is held, longer retention requirements apply for some types of documents. For specific requirements, see Section 14-II.A.

Confidential records of all emergency transfers related to VAWA requested under COC's Emergency Transfer Plan and the outcomes of such requests

Other records as determined by COC or as required by HUD

If a hearing to establish a family's citizenship status is held, longer retention requirements apply for some types of documents. For specific requirements, see Section 14-II.A.

16-V.C. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

COC must maintain applicant and participant files and information in accordance with the regulatory requirements described below.

COC Policy

All applicant and participant information will be kept in a secure location and access will be limited to authorized COC staff.

COC staff will not discuss personal family information unless there is a business reason to do so. Inappropriate discussion of family information or improper disclosure of family information by staff will result in disciplinary action.

Privacy Act Requirements [24 CFR 5.212 and Form-9886]

The collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of social security numbers (SSN), employer identification numbers (EIN), any information derived from these numbers, and income information of applicants and participants must be conducted, to the extent applicable, in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, and all other provisions of Federal, State, and local law.

Applicants and participants, including all adults in the household, are required to sign a consent form, HUD-9886, Authorization for Release of Information. This form incorporates the Federal Privacy Act Statement and describes how the information collected using the form may be used, and under what conditions HUD or COC may release the information collected.

Upfront Income Verification (UIV) Records

COC that access UIV data through HUD's Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system are required to adopt and follow specific security procedures to ensure that all EIV data is protected in accordance with federal laws, regardless of the media on which the data is recorded (e.g. electronic, paper). These requirements are contained in the HUD-issued document, *Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) System, Security Procedures for Upfront Income Verification (UIV) Data*.

COC Policy

Prior to utilizing HUD's EIV system, COC will adopt and implement EIV security procedures required by HUD.

Criminal Records

COC may only disclose the criminal conviction records which COC receives from a law enforcement agency to officers or employees of COC, or to authorized representatives of COC who have a job-related need to have access to the information [24 CFR 5.903(e)].

COC must establish and implement a system of records management that ensures that any criminal record received by COC from a law enforcement agency is maintained confidentially, not misused or improperly disseminated, and destroyed, once the purpose for which the record was requested has been accomplished, including expiration of the period for filing a challenge to COC action without institution of a challenge or final disposition of any such litigation [24 CFR 5.903(g)].

COC must establish and implement a system of records management that ensures that any sex offender registration information received by COC from a State or local agency is maintained confidentially, not misused or improperly disseminated, and destroyed, once the purpose for which the record was requested has been accomplished, including expiration of the period for filing a challenge to COC action without institution of a challenge or final disposition of any such litigation. However, a record of the screening, including the type of screening and the date performed must be retained [Notice PIH 2012-28]. This requirement does not apply to information that is public information or is obtained by a COC other than under 24 CFR 5.905.

Medical/Disability Records

COC are not permitted to inquire about the nature or extent of a person's disability. COC may not inquire about a person's diagnosis or details of treatment for a disability or medical condition. If COC receives a verification document that provides such information, COC should not place this information in the tenant file. COC should destroy the document.

Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, or Human Trafficking Records

For requirements and COC policies related to management of documentation obtained from victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking see section 16-VII.E.

PART VI: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVEL

16-VI.A. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS [24 CFR 35.1130(e); Notice PIH 2017-13]

COC has certain responsibilities relative to children with elevated blood lead levels that are living in public housing.

COC must report the name and address of a child identified as having an elevated blood lead level (EBLL) to the public health department within five business days of being so notified by any other medical health care professional. COC must also report each known case of a child with an EBLL to the HUD field office.

COC Policy

COC will provide the public health department notice by mail or by e-mail of the name and address of any child identified as having an elevated blood lead level.

COC will provide written notice of each known case of a child with an EBLL to the HUD field office, and to HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control (OLHCHH), within five business days of receiving the information.

PART VII: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA): NOTIFICATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

16-VII.A. OVERVIEW

The Violence against Women Act (VAWA) provides special protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking who are applying for or receiving assistance under the public housing program. If your state or local laws provide greater protection for such victims, those apply in conjunction with VAWA.

- Although the VAWA 2022 statute does not specifically include human trafficking in the list of victims protected under VAWA, in 2022 HUD began including human trafficking as part of the list of victims protected under VAWA (as seen in Notices PIH 2022-06, PIH 2022-22, and PIH 2022-24). In the absence of a final rule implementing VAWA 2022 and to mirror HUD's recent usage, this policy includes human trafficking in addition to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking anywhere such a list appears.

In addition to definitions of key terms used in VAWA, this part contains general VAWA requirements and COC policies in three areas: notification, documentation, and confidentiality. Specific VAWA requirements and COC policies are located in Chapter 3, "Eligibility" (sections 3-I.C and 3-III.F); Chapter 5, "Occupancy Standards and Unit Offers" (section 5-II.D); Chapter 8, "Leasing and Inspections" (section 8-I.B); Chapter 12, "Transfer Policy" (sections 12-III.C, 12-III.F, and 12-IV.D); and Chapter 13, "Lease Terminations" (sections 13-III.F and 13-IV.D).

16-VII.B. DEFINITIONS [24 CFR 5.2003, FR Notice 8/6/13]

As used in VAWA:

- The term *affiliated person* means, the tenant's spouse, parent, sibling, or child; or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the tenant's household; or anyone for whom the tenant acts as parent/guardian
- The term *bifurcate* means, with respect to a public housing or Section 8 lease, to divide a lease as a matter of law such that certain tenants can be evicted or removed while the remaining family members' lease and occupancy rights are allowed to remain intact.
- The term *dating violence* means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - The length of the relationship
 - The type of relationship
 - The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship
- The term *domestic violence* includes felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant funding, and in the case of victim services, includes the user or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who is:

- The current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, or person similarly situated to a spouse or intimate partner of the victim
- A person who is cohabitating or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner
- A person with whom the victim shares a child in common
- A person who commits acts against an youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction
- The term *economic abuse* means behavior that is coercive, deceptive, or unreasonably controls or restrains a person's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources to which they are entitled, including using coercion, fraud, and manipulation to:
 - Restrict a person's access to money, assets, credit, or financial information
 - Unfairly use a person's personal economic resources, including money, assets, and credit, for one's own advantage
 - Exert undue influence over a person's financial and economic behavior or decisions, including forcing default on joint or other financial obligations, exploiting powers of attorney, guardianship, or conservatorship, or to whom one has a fiduciary duty
- The term *sexual assault* means:
 - Any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks the capacity to consent
- The term *stalking* means:
 - To engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- The term *technological abuse* means an act or pattern of behavior that occurs within domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and is intended to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, extort, or monitor another person, except as otherwise permitted by law, that occurs using any form of technology, including but not limited to:
 - Internet enabled devices
 - Online spaces and platforms
 - Computers
 - Mobile devices
 - Cameras and imaging programs
 - Apps
 - Location tracking devices
 - Communication technologies

- Any other emergency technologies. The term *victim* means any victim of VAWA violence/abuse, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, or marital status.

16-VII.C. NOTIFICATION [24 CFR 5.2005(a)]

Notification to Public

COC adopts the following policy to help ensure that all actual and potential beneficiaries of its public housing program are aware of their rights under VAWA.

COC Policy

COC will post the following information regarding VAWA in its offices and on its website. It will also make the information readily available to anyone who requests it.

A copy of Form HUD-5380, Notice of Occupancy Rights under VAWA to public housing program applicants and participants who are or have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking (Form HUD-5380, see Exhibit 16-1)

A copy of Form HUD-5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (see Exhibit 16-2)

A copy of COC's emergency transfer plan (Exhibit 16-3)

A copy of Form HUD-5383, HUD's Emergency Transfer Request for Certain Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking, Form HUD-5383 (Exhibit 16-4)

The National Domestic Violence Hot Line: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY) (included in Exhibit 16-1)

Notification to Applicants and Tenants [24 CFR 5.2005(a)(1)]

COC are required to inform public housing applicants and tenants of their rights under VAWA, including their right to confidentiality and the limits thereof, when they are denied assistance, when they are admitted to the program, and when they are notified of an eviction or termination of housing benefits.

COC must distribute a notice of VAWA rights, along with the VAWA self-certification form (HUD-5382) at each of these three junctures.

COC Policy

The VAWA information provided to applicants and participants will consist of the notices in Exhibit 16-1 and 16-2.

COC will provide all applicants with information about VAWA at the time they request an application for housing assistance. COC will also include such information in all notices of denial of assistance (see section 3-III.G).

COC will provide all tenants with information about VAWA at the time of admission (see section 8-I.B) and at annual reexamination. COC will also include such information in all lease termination notices (see section 13-IV.F).

COC is not limited to providing VAWA information at the times specified in the above policy. If COC decides to provide VAWA information to a tenant following an incident of domestic violence, Notice PIH 2017-08 cautions against sending the information by mail, since the abuser may be monitoring the mail. The notice recommends that in such cases COC make alternative delivery arrangements that will not put the victim at risk.

COC Policy

Whenever COC has reason to suspect that providing information about VAWA to a public housing tenant might place a victim of domestic violence at risk, it will attempt to deliver the information by hand directly to the victim or by having the victim come to an office or other space that may be safer for the individual, making reasonable accommodations as necessary and as indicated by the victim on form HUD-5382 or the emergency transfer request form. For example, COC may, based on victim information, determine not to send mail regarding VAWA protections to the victim's unit if COC believes the perpetrator may have access to the victim's mail, unless requested by the victim.

When discussing VAWA with the victim, COC will take reasonable precautions to ensure that no one can overhear the conversation such as having conversations in a private room.

The victim may, but is not required to, designate an attorney, advocate, or other secure contact for communications regarding VAWA protections.

16-VII.D. DOCUMENTATION [24 CFR 5.2007]

A COC presented with a claim for initial or continued assistance based on status as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, or criminal activity related to any of these forms of abuse may—but is not required to—request that the individual making the claim document the abuse. Any request for documentation must be in writing, and the individual must be allowed at least 14 business days after receipt of the request to submit the documentation. COC may extend this time period at its discretion. [24 CFR 5.2007(a)]

The individual may satisfy COC's request by providing any one of the following three forms of documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(b)]:

- (1) A completed and signed HUD-approved certification form (HUD-5382, Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking), which must include the name of the perpetrator only if the name of the perpetrator is safe to provide and is known to the victim. The form may be filled out and submitted on behalf of the victim.
- (2) A federal, state, tribal, territorial, or local police report or court record, or an administrative record
- (3) Documentation signed by a person who has assisted the victim in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking or the effects of such abuse. This person may be an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider; an attorney; a mental health professional; or a medical professional. The person signing the documentation must attest under penalty of perjury to the person's belief that the incidents in question are bona fide incidents of abuse. The victim must also sign the documentation.

Tenants cannot be expected and cannot be asked or required to claim, document, or prove victim status or VAWA violence/abuse other than as stated in the Notice of Occupancy rights [Form HUD-5382]. COC may not require third-party documentation (forms 2 and 3) in addition to certification (form 1), except as specified below under "Conflicting Documentation," nor may it require certification in addition to third-party documentation [FR Notice 11/16/16].

COC Policy

Any request for documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or human trafficking will be in writing, will specify a deadline of 14 business days following receipt of the request, will describe the three forms of acceptable documentation, will provide explicit instructions on where and to whom the documentation must be submitted, and will state the consequences for failure to submit the documentation or request an extension in writing by the deadline.

COC may, in its discretion, extend the deadline for 10 business days. In determining whether to extend the deadline, COC will consider factors that may contribute to the victim's inability to provide documentation in a timely manner, including cognitive limitations, disabilities, limited English proficiency, absence from the unit, administrative delays, the danger of further violence, and the victim's need to address health or safety issues. Any extension granted by COC will be in writing.

Once the victim provides documentation, COC will acknowledge receipt of the documentation within 10 business days.

Conflicting Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(e)]

In cases where COC receives conflicting certification documents from two or more members of a household, each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the perpetrator, COC may determine which is the true victim by requiring each to provide acceptable third-party documentation, as described above (forms 2 and 3). COC may also request third-party documentation when submitted documentation contains information that conflicts with existing information already available to COC. COC must honor any court orders issued to protect the victim or to address the distribution of property. Individuals have 30 calendar days to return third-party verification to COC. If COC does not receive third-party documentation, and COC will deny or terminate assistance as a result, COC must hold separate hearings for the tenants [Notice PIH 2017-08].

COC Policy

If presented with conflicting certification documents from members of the same household, COC will attempt to determine which is the true victim by requiring each of them to provide third-party documentation in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007(e) and by following any HUD guidance on how such determinations should be made. If COC does not receive third-party documentation within the required timeframe (and any extensions) COC will deny VAWA protections and will notify the applicant or tenant in writing of the denial. If, as a result, the applicant or tenant is denied or terminated from the program, for the applicants or tenants may request a hearing. COC

Discretion to Require No Formal Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(d)]

COC has the discretion to provide benefits to an individual based solely on the individual's statement or other corroborating evidence i.e., without requiring formal documentation of abuse in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007(b). HUD recommends documentation in a confidential manner when a verbal statement or other evidence is accepted.

COC Policy

If COC accepts an individual's statement or other corroborating evidence (as determined by the victim) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, COC will document acceptance of the statement or evidence in the individual's file.

Failure to Provide Documentation [24 CFR 5.2007(c)]

In order to deny relief for protection under VAWA, a COC must provide the individual requesting relief with a written request for documentation of abuse. If the individual fails to provide the documentation within 14 business days from the date of receipt, or such longer time as COC may allow, COC may deny relief for protection under VAWA.

16-VII.E. CONFIDENTIALITY [24 CFR 5.2007(b)(4)]

If a tenant inquires or requests any VAWA protections or represents that they or a household member are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, and therefore entitled to VAWA protections, the PHA must keep any information they provide concerning the VAWA violence/abuse strictly confidential, including their or a household member's status as a victim. This information should be securely and separately kept from tenant files. COC (1) may not enter the information into any shared database, (2) may not allow employees or others to access the information unless they are explicitly authorized to do so and have a need to know the information for purposes of their work, and (3) may not provide the information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that the disclosure is (a) requested or consented to by the individual in writing, (b) required for use in an eviction proceeding, or (c) otherwise required by applicable law.

COC Policy

If disclosure is required for use in an eviction proceeding or is otherwise required by applicable law, COC will inform the victim before disclosure occurs so that safety risks can be identified and addressed.

EXHIBIT 16-1: SAMPLE NOTICE OF OCCUPANCY RIGHTS UNDER THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT, FORM HUD-5380

Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

When should I receive this form? A covered housing provider must provide a copy of the Notice of Occupancy Rights Under The Violence Against Women Act (Form HUD-5380) and the Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (Form HUD-5382) when you are admitted as a tenant, when you receive an eviction or termination notice and prior to termination of tenancy, or when you are denied as an applicant. A covered housing provider may provide these forms at additional times.

What is the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”)? This notice describes protections that may apply to you as an applicant or a tenant under a housing program covered by a federal law called the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”). VAWA provides housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. VAWA protections must be in leases and other program documents, as applicable. VAWA protections may be raised at any time. You do not need to know the type or name of the program you are participating in or applying in order to seek VAWA protections.

What if I require this information in a language other than English? To read this information in Spanish or another language, please contact a housing advocate, at Domestic Violence Crisis Center at 203-588-9097. You can read translated VAWA forms at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/forms/hud5a#4. If you speak or read in a language other than English, your covered housing provider must give you language assistance regarding your VAWA protections (for example, oral interpretation and/or written translation).

What do the words in this notice mean?

- *VAWA violence/abuse* means one or more incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- *Victim* means any victim of VAWA violence/abuse, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, or marital status.
- *Affiliated person* means the tenant’s spouse, parent, sibling, or child; or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the tenant’s household; or anyone for whom the tenant acts as parent/guardian.
- Covered housing program¹ includes the following HUD programs:
 - Public Housing
 - Tenant-based vouchers (TBV, also known as Housing Choice Vouchers or HCV) and Project-based Vouchers (PBV) Section 8 programs
 - Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)
 - Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy
 - Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly
 - Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities
 - Section 221(d)(3)/(d)(5) Multifamily Rental Housing
 - Section 236 Multifamily Rental Housing
 - Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program

¹ For information about non-HUD covered housing programs under VAWA, see Interagency Statement on the Violence Against Women Act’s Housing Provisions at <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/InteragencyVAWAHousingStmnt092024.pdf>.

- HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program
- The Housing Trust Fund
- Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program
- Continuum of Care program
- Rural Housing Stability Assistance program
- Covered housing provider means the individual or entity under a covered housing program that is responsible for providing or overseeing the VAWA protection in a specific situation. The covered housing provider may be a public housing agency, project sponsor, housing owner, mortgagor, housing manager, State or local government, public agency, or a nonprofit or for-profit organization as the lessor.

What if I am an applicant under a program covered by VAWA? You can't be denied housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA just because you (or a household member) are or were a victim or just because of problems you (or a household member) had as a direct result of being or having been a victim. For example, if you have a poor rental or credit history or a criminal record, and that history or record is the direct result of you being a victim of VAWA abuse/violence, that history or record cannot be used as a reason to deny you housing or homeless assistance covered by VAWA.

What if I am a tenant under a program covered by VAWA? You cannot lose housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA or be evicted just because you (or a household member) are or were a victim of VAWA violence/abuse. You also cannot lose housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA or be evicted just because of problems that you (or a household member) have as a direct result of being or having been a victim. For example, if you are a victim of VAWA abuse/violence that directly results in repeated noise complaints and damage to the property, neither the noise complaints nor property damage can be used as a reason for evicting you from housing covered by VAWA. You also cannot be evicted or removed from housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA because of someone else's criminal actions that are directly related to VAWA abuse/violence against you, a household member, or another affiliated person.

How can tenants request an emergency transfer? Victims of VAWA violence/abuse have the right to request an emergency transfer from their current unit to another unit for safety reasons related to the VAWA violence/abuse. An emergency transfer cannot be guaranteed, but you can request an emergency transfer when:

1. You (or a household member) are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse;
2. You expressly request the emergency transfer; AND
3. EITHER
 - a. you reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) stay in the same dwelling unit; OR
 - b. if you (or a household member) are a victim of sexual assault, either you reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) were to stay in the unit, or the sexual assault occurred on the premises and you request an emergency transfer within 90 days (including holidays and weekend days) of when that assault occurred.

You can request an emergency transfer even if you are not lease compliant, for example if you owe rent. If you request an emergency transfer, your request, the information you provided to make the request, and your new unit's location must be kept strictly confidential by the covered housing provider. The covered housing provider is required to maintain a VAWA emergency transfer plan and make it available to you upon request.

To request an emergency transfer or to read COC's VAWA emergency transfer plan, the tenant shall notify Beth Janney, 504 Coordinator, at 203-977-1400 ext. 3339 or email Bjanney@charteroakcommunities.org. If COC does not already have documentation of the occurrence of VAWA violence/abuse, COC may ask for documentation in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2005. COC will require a written request for an emergency transfer on Form-HUD 5383. The VAWA emergency transfer plan includes information about what the covered housing provider does to make sure your address and other relevant information are not disclosed to your perpetrator.

Can the perpetrator be evicted or removed from my lease? Depending on your specific situation, your covered housing provider may be able to divide the lease to evict just the perpetrator. This is called "lease bifurcation."

What happens if the lease bifurcation ends up removing the perpetrator who was the only tenant who qualified for the housing or assistance? In this situation, the covered housing provider must provide you and other remaining household members an opportunity to establish eligibility or to find other housing. If you cannot or don't want to establish eligibility, then the covered housing provider must give you a reasonable time to move or establish eligibility for another covered housing program. This amount of time varies, depending on the covered housing program involved. The table below shows the reasonable time provided under each covered housing programs with HUD. Timeframes for covered housing programs operated by other agencies are determined by those agencies

Covered Housing Program(s)

HOME and Housing Trust Fund, Continuum of Care Program (except for permanent supportive housing), ESG program, Section 221(d)(3) Program, Section 221(d)(5) Program, Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program

Permanent supportive housing funded by the Continuum of Care Program

Housing Choice Voucher, Project-based Voucher, and Public Housing programs (for Special Purpose Vouchers (e.g., HUD-VASH, FUP, FYI, etc.), see also program specific guidance)

Reasonable Time for Remaining Household Members to Continue to Receive Assistance, Establish Eligibility, or Move.

Because these programs do not provide housing or assistance based on just one person's status or characteristics, the remaining tenant(s), or family member(s) in the CoC program, can keep receiving assistance or living in the assisted housing as applicable.

The remaining household member(s) can receive rental assistance until expiration of the lease that is in effect when the qualifying member is evicted.

If the person removed was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

For HUD-VASH, if the veteran is removed, the remaining family member(s) can keep receiving assistance or living in the assisted housing as applicable. If the veteran was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

Section 202/811 PRAC and SPRAC

The remaining household member(s) must be given 90 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation or until the lease expires, whichever is first, to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

Section 202/8

The remaining household member(s) must be given 90 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation or when the lease expires, whichever is first, to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

If the person removed was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

Section 236 (including RAP); Project-based Section 8 and Mod Rehab/SRO

The remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.

HOPWA

The remaining household member(s) must be given no less than 90 calendar days, and not more than one year, from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing. The date is set by the HOPWA Grantee or Project Sponsor.

Are there any reasons that I can be evicted or lose assistance? VAWA does not prevent you from being evicted or losing assistance for a lease violation, program violation, or violation of other requirements that are not due to the VAWA violence/abuse committed against you or an affiliated person. However, a covered housing provider cannot be stricter with you than with other tenants, just because you or an affiliated person experienced VAWA abuse/violence. VAWA also will not prevent eviction, termination, or removal if other tenants or housing staff are shown to be in immediate, physical danger that could lead to serious bodily harm or death if you are not evicted or removed from assistance. **But only if no other action can be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat** should a covered housing provider evict you or end your assistance, if the VAWA abuse/violence happens to you or an affiliated person. A covered housing provider must provide a copy of the Notice of Occupancy Rights Under The Violence Against Women Act (Form HUD-5380) and the Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (Form HUD-5382) when you receive an eviction or termination notice and prior to termination of tenancy.

What do I need to document that I am a victim of VAWA abuse/violence? If you ask for VAWA protection, the covered housing provider may request documentation showing that you (or a household member) are a victim. BUT the covered housing provider must make this request in writing and must give you at least 14 business days (weekends and holidays do not count) to respond, and you are free to choose any one of the following:

1. A self-certification form (for example, Form-HUD 5382), which the covered housing provider must give you along with this notice. Either you can fill out the form or someone else can complete it for you;
2. A statement from a victim/survivor service provider, attorney, mental health professional or medical professional who has helped you address incidents of VAWA violence/abuse. The

professional must state “under penalty of perjury” that he/she/they believes that the incidents of VAWA violence/abuse are real and covered by VAWA. Both you and the professional must sign the statement;

3. A police, administrative, or court record (such as a protective order) that shows you (or a household member) were a victim of VAWA violence/abuse; OR
4. If allowed by your covered housing provider, any other statement or evidence provided by you.

It is your choice which documentation to provide and the covered housing provider must accept any one of the above as documentation. The covered housing provider is prohibited from seeking additional documentation of victim status or requiring more than one of these types of documentation, unless the covered housing provider receives conflicting information about the VAWA violence/abuse.

If you do not provide one of these types of documentation by the deadline, the covered housing provider does not have to provide the VAWA protections you requested. If the documentation received by the covered housing provider contains conflicting information about the VAWA violence/abuse, the covered housing provider may require you to provide additional documentation from the list above, but the covered housing provider must give you another 30 calendar days to do so.

Will my information be kept confidential? If you share information with a covered housing provider about why you need VAWA protections, the covered housing provider must keep the information you share strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from your other tenant files. No one who works for your covered housing provider will have access to this information, unless there is a reason that specifically calls for them to access this information, your covered housing provider explicitly authorizes their access for that reason, and that authorization is consistent to applicable law.

Your information **will not be disclosed** to anyone else or put in a database shared with anyone else, except in the following situations:

1. If you give the covered housing provider written permission to share the information for a limited time;
2. If the covered housing provider needs to use that information in an eviction proceeding or hearing; or
3. If other applicable law requires the covered housing provider to share the information.
- 4.

How do other laws apply? VAWA does not limit the covered housing provider’s duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property, or civil protection orders issued to protect a victim of VAWA abuse/violence. Additionally, VAWA does not limit the covered housing provider’s duty to comply with a court order with respect to the distribution or possession of property among household members during a family break up. The covered housing provider must follow all applicable fair housing and civil rights requirements.

Can I request a reasonable accommodation? If you have a disability, your covered housing provider must provide reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services that may be necessary to allow you to equally benefit from VAWA protections (for example, giving you more time to submit documents or assistance with filling out forms). You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even for the first time during an eviction. If a provider is denying a specific reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, your covered housing provider must first engage in the interactive process with you to identify possible alternative accommodations. To request a reasonable accommodation, please contact Beth Janney, 504 Coordinator, at 203-977-1400 ext. 3339 or email Bjanney@charteroakcommunities.org. Your covered housing provider must also ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities.

Have your protections under VAWA been denied? If you believe that the covered housing provider has violated these rights, you may seek help by contacting 1-800-669-9777 **or by mail at Boston Regional Office of FHEO, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Thomas P.**

O'Neill Jr. Federal Building, 10 Causeway St. Room 553, Boston, Massachusetts 02222 & CONTACT INFORMATION]. You can also find additional information on filing VAWA complaints at <https://www.hud.gov/VAWA> and https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/VAWA. To file a VAWA complaint, visit <https://www.hud.gov/fairhousing/fileacomplaint>.

Need further help?

- For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit <https://www.hud.gov/vawa>.
- To talk with a housing advocate, contact to speak with a housing advocate, contact Domestic Violence Crisis Center at 203-588-9097 and Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. at 860-344-0382 or visit <https://www.slsct.org>.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to range from 45 to 90 minutes per each covered housing provider's response, depending on the program. This includes time to print and distribute the form. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing this burden can be sent to the Reports Management Officer, QDAM, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20410. This notice is required for covered housing programs under section 41411 of VAWA and 24 CFR 5.2003. Covered housing providers must give this notice to applicants and tenants to inform them of the VAWA protections as specified in section 41411(d)(2). This is a model notice, and no information is being collected. A Federal agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.

EXHIBIT 16-2: CERTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING, FORM HUD-5382
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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Exp. 1/31/2028

**CERTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT,
OR STALKING**

Confidentiality Note: Any personal information you share in this form will be maintained by your covered housing provider according to the confidentiality provisions below.

Purpose of Form: If you are a tenant of or applicant for housing assisted under a covered housing program, or if you are applying for or receiving transitional housing or rental assistance under a covered housing program, and ask for protection under the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”), you may use this form to comply with a covered housing provider's request for written documentation of your status as a "victim". This form is accompanied by a “Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act,” Form HUD-5380.

VAWA protects individuals and families regardless of a victim’s age or actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, or marital status.

You are not expected and cannot be asked or required to claim, document, or prove victim status or VAWA violence/abuse other than as stated in “Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act,” Form HUD-5380.

This form is **one of your available options** for responding to a covered housing provider’s written request for documentation of victim status or the incident(s) of VAWA violence/abuse. If you choose, you may submit one of the types of third-party documentation described in Form HUD-5380, in the section titled, “What do I need to document that I am a victim?”. Your covered housing provider must give you at least 14 business days (weekends and holidays do not count) to respond to their written request for this documentation.

Will my information be kept confidential? Whenever you ask for or about VAWA protections, your covered housing provider must keep any information you provide about the VAWA violence/abuse or the fact you (or a household member) are a victim, including the information on this form, strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from your other tenant files. This information can only be accessed by an employee/agent of your covered housing provider if (1) access is required for a specific reason, (2) your covered housing provider explicitly authorizes that person’s access for that reason, and (3) the authorization complies with applicable law. This information will not be given to anyone else or put in a database shared with anyone else, unless your covered housing provider (1) gets your written permission to do so for a limited time, (2) is required to do so as part of an eviction or termination hearing, or (3) is required to do so by law.

In addition, your covered housing provider must keep your address strictly confidential to ensure that it is not disclosed to a person who committed or threatened to commit VAWA violence/abuse against you (or a household member).

What if I require this information in a language other than English? To read this in Spanish or another language, please contact Beth Janney, 504 Coordinator, at 203-977-1400 ext. 3339 or email Bjanney@charteroakcommunities.org. You can read translated VAWA forms at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/forms/hud5a#4. If you speak or read in a language other than English, your covered housing provider must give you language assistance regarding your VAWA protections (for example, oral interpretation and/or written translation).

Can I request a reasonable accommodation? If you have a disability, your covered housing provider must provide reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services that may be necessary to allow you to equally benefit from VAWA protections (for example, giving you more time to submit documents or assistance with filling out forms). You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even for the first time during an eviction. If a provider is denying a specific reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, your covered housing provider must first engage in the interactive process with you to identify possible alternative accommodations. Your covered housing provider must also ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities. Need further help? For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit <https://www.hud.gov/vawa>. To speak with a housing advocate, contact Domestic Violence Crisis Center at 203-588-9097 and Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. at 860-344-0382 or visit <https://www.slsct.org>.

TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

1. Name(s) of victim(s):: _____
2. Your name (if different from victim's): _____
3. Name(s) of other members of the household:: _____

4. Name of the perpetrator (if known and can be safely disclosed): _____

5. What is the safest and most secure way to contact you? (You may choose more than one.): _____

If any contact information changes or is no longer a safe contact method, notify your covered housing provider.

- ☐ Phone Phone Number: _____
- Safe to receive a voicemail: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ E-mail E-mail address: _____
- Safe to receive an e-mail: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ Mail Mailing Address: _____
- Safe to receive mail from your housing provider: ☐ Yes ☐ No
- ☐ Other Please List: _____

6. Anything else your housing provider should know to safely communicate with you?

Applicable definitions of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking:

Domestic violence includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who lives with or has lived with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

Spouse or intimate partner of the victim includes a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, as determined by the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Dating violence means violence committed by a person:

- (1) Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
- (2) Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) The length of the relationship; (ii) The type of relationship; and (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Sexual assault means any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

- (1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others or
- (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Certification of Applicant or Tenant: By signing below, I am certifying that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that one or more members of my household is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking as described in the applicable definitions above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Public Reporting Burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing this burden can be sent to the Reports Management Officer, QDAM, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410. Housing providers in programs covered by VAWA may request certification that the applicant or tenant is a victim of VAWA violence/abuse. A Federal agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.

EXHIBIT 16-3: EMERGENCY TRANSFER PLAN FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

Attachment: Certification form HUD-5382

Charter Oak Communities

Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking Public Housing Program

Emergency Transfers

COC is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),⁴ COC allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. VAWA protections are not limited to women and are available regardless of age or actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, or marital status. Victims cannot be discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity), familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must also be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals and families regardless of age, or actual or perceived gender identity, sexual orientation, or marital status.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency that oversees that the public housing and housing choice voucher (HCV) programs are in compliance with VAWA.

Definitions

- **External emergency transfer** refers to an emergency relocation of a tenant to another unit where the tenant would be categorized as a new applicant; that is, the tenant must undergo an application process in order to reside in the new unit. An example of external emergency transfer includes applying for a unit at a Low- Income Tax Credit (LIHTC) community.
- **Internal emergency transfer** refers to an emergency relocation of a tenant to another unit where the tenant would not be categorized as a new applicant; that is, the tenant may reside in the new unit without having to undergo an application process. An example of an internal emergency transfer includes transferring to a different unit within the same property.

- **Safe unit** refers to a unit that the victim of VAWA violence/abuse believes is safe.
- **VAWA violence/abuse means** an incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as those terms are defined in 24 CFR 5.2003 and “Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking” (Form HUD-5382).

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant may seek an emergency transfer to another unit if they or their household member is a victim of VAWA violence/abuse, as outlined in the “Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act,” Form HUD-5380. This emergency transfer plan provides further information on emergency transfers, and the PHA must provide a copy if requested. The PHA may ask for submission of a written request for an emergency transfer, such as form HUD-5383, to certify eligibility for the emergency transfer.

1. The tenant (or their household member) is a victim of VAWA violence/abuse;
2. The tenant expressly requests the emergency transfer; **AND**
3. **EITHER**
 - a. The tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if they or (their household member) stays in the same dwelling unit; OR
 - b. If the tenant (or their household member) is a victim of sexual assault, either the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if the tenant (or their household member) were to stay in the unit, or the sexual assault occurred on the premises and the tenant requested an emergency transfer within 90 days (including holidays and weekend days) of when that assault occurred.

COC, in response to an emergency transfer request, should not evaluate whether the tenant is in good standing as part of the assessment or provision of an emergency transfer. Whether or not a tenant is in good standing does not impact their ability to request an emergency transfer under VAWA. A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

Emergency Transfer Policies

Internal transfers when a safe unit is immediately available:

If you are a public housing resident and request an emergency transfer as described in this plan, once a full request is received and absent of any conflicting or missing information, COC will attempt to assist you in moving to a safe unit quickly. COC will make exceptions as required to policies restricting moves.

Emergency transfers for which you are not required to apply for assistance include the following:

- Public housing unit in a different development
- Public housing unit in the same development, if you determine that the unit is safe

These options will be provided as applicable, and without disclosing your location. Priority will be given relative to other tenants seeking transfers as outlined in the Priority for Transfers section below.

At your request, COC will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

Internal transfers when a safe unit is not immediately available:

If an internal transfer to a safe unit is not immediately available, COC will assist you in seeking an external emergency transfer either within or outside COCs programs.

External transfers:

You may also request an emergency transfer to the following programs for which you are required to apply for assistance:

- HCV tenant-based program
- HCV project-based assistance
- Other programs administered by COC (such as state housing programs)

Emergency transfers will not take priority over waiting list admissions for these types of assistance. At your request, COC will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

VAWA provisions do not supersede eligibility or other occupancy requirements that may apply under a covered housing program. The PHA may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify COC's management office and submit a written request for a transfer to any COC property management office. If COC does not already have documentation of the occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, the PHA may ask for this documentation in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007. Unless COC receives documentation that contains conflicting information, as described in 24 CFR 5.2007(b)(2), COC cannot require third-party documentation to determine status as a VAWA victim for emergency transfer eligibility. COC will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities.

The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if the tenant (or household member) were to remain in the same dwelling unit; OR
2. In the case of a tenant (or household member) who is a victim of sexual assault, **either** a statement that the tenant reasonably believes there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence or trauma if the tenant (or household member stays in the same dwelling unit), **or** a statement that the sexual assault occurred on the premises and the tenant requested an emergency transfer within 90 days (including holidays and weekend days) of when the assault occurred.

Form HUD-5383 may be used for making a written request for an emergency transfer. Any request for documentation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking will be in writing, will specify a deadline of 14 business days following receipt of the request, will describe the three forms of acceptable documentation, will provide explicit instructions on where and to whom the documentation must be submitted, and will state the consequences for failure to submit the documentation or request an extension in writing by the deadline.

COC may, in its discretion, extend the deadline for 10 business days. In determining whether to extend the deadline, COC will consider factors that may contribute to the victim's inability to provide documentation in a timely manner, including cognitive limitations, disabilities, limited English proficiency, absence from the unit, administrative delays, the danger of further violence, and the victim's need to address health or safety issues. Any extension granted by COC will be in writing.

Once the victim provides documentation, COC will acknowledge receipt of the documentation within 10 business days.

COC has the discretion to provide benefits to an individual based solely on the individual's statement or other corroborating evidence i.e., without requiring formal documentation of abuse in accordance with 24 CFR 5.2007(b). HUD recommends documentation in a confidential manner when a verbal statement or other evidence is accepted.

If COC accepts an individual's statement or other corroborating evidence (as determined by the victim) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, COC will document acceptance of the statement or evidence in the individual's file.

Priority for Transfers

Tenants who qualify for an emergency transfer under VAWA will be given priority over other categories of tenants seeking transfers and individuals seeking placement on waiting lists.

COC will maintain a centralized transfer list to ensure that transfers are processed in the correct order and that procedures are uniform across all properties.

Emergency transfers will not automatically go on the transfer list. Instead emergency transfers will be handled immediately, on a case by case basis. If the emergency cannot be resolved by a temporary accommodation, and the resident requires a permanent transfer, the family will be placed at the top of the transfer list.

Transfers will be processed in the following order:

1. Emergency transfers (VAWA, hazardous maintenance conditions)
2. High-priority transfers (verified medical condition, threat of harm or criminal activity, and reasonable accommodation)
3. Transfers to make accessible units available
4. Demolition, renovation, etc.
5. Occupancy standards
6. Other PHA-required transfers
7. Other resident-requested transfers

Confidentiality

If a tenant inquires about or requests any VAWA protections or represents that they or a household member are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse entitled to VAWA protections, COC must keep any information they provide concerning the VAWA violence/abuse, their request for an emergency transfer, and their or a household member's status as a victim strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from tenant files. All the information provided by or on behalf of the tenant to support an emergency transfer request, including information on the Certification Form (HUD-5382) and the Emergency Transfer Request Form (HUD-5383) (collectively referred to as "Confidential Information") may only be accessed by COC employees or contractors if explicitly authorized by COC for reasons that specifically call for those individuals to have access to that information under applicable federal, State, or local law.

Confidential information must not be entered into any shared database or disclosed to any other entity or individual, except if:

- Written permission by the victim in a time-limited release;
- Required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or
- Otherwise required by applicable law.

In addition, HUD's VAWA regulations require emergency transfer plans to provide strict confidentiality measures to ensure that the location of the victim's dwelling unit is never disclosed to a person who committed or threatened to commit the VAWA violence/abuse.

Accordingly, COC will require a signed Release of Information from any tenant that COC communicate with advocates or other community partners.

Emergency Transfer Procedure

COC cannot specify how long it will take from the time a transfer request is approved until the tenant can be placed in a new, safe unit. COC will, however, act as quickly as possible to assist a tenant who qualifies for an emergency transfer. If COC identifies an available unit and the tenant believes that unit would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. The PHA may be unable to transfer a tenant and their household to a particular unit if the tenant and their household has not established or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If COC does not have any safe and available units for which the tenant is eligible, COC will assist the tenant in identifying other covered housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, COC will also assist the tenant in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of VAWA violence/abuse

Making the Emergency Transfer Plan Available

COC will post a copy of the Emergency Transfer Plan in its offices and on its website. It will also make the information readily available to anyone who requests it.

All materials will ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities, including making materials available in alternative accessible formats, as well as providing reasonable accommodations.

Additionally, COC will make VAWA forms available in the language(s) outlined in their language access plan to meet limited English proficiency (LEP) obligations.

Safety and Security of Tenants

When COC receives any inquiry or request regarding an emergency transfer, the COC will encourage the person making the inquiry or request to take all reasonable precautions to be safe, including seeking guidance and assistance from a victim service provider. However, tenants are not required to receive guidance or assistance from a victim service provider.

For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit <https://www.hud.gov/vawa>.

- **Tenants who have been a victim of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or locate a local domestic violence shelter , for creating a safety plan.**
- **Tenant who has been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE or visit online at <https://rainn.org/help-and-healing/hotline/>**
- **Tenant who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victim's of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://victimsofcrime.org/>.**

EXHIBIT 16-4: EMERGENCY TRANSFER REQUEST FOR CERTAIN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING, FORM HUD-5383

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Exp. 1/31/2028

CERTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

Confidentiality Note: Any personal information you share in this form will be maintained by your covered housing provider according to the confidentiality provisions below.

Purpose of Form: If you are a tenant of housing assisted under a covered housing program, or if you are receiving transitional housing or rental assistance under a covered housing program, you may use this form to request an emergency transfer and certify that you qualify for an emergency transfer under the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”). This form refers to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking as “VAWA violence/abuse.”

VAWA protects individuals and families regardless of a victim’s age or actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, or marital status.

You may request an emergency transfer when:

1. You (or a household member) are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse;
2. You expressly request the emergency transfer; **AND**
3. **EITHER**
 - a. you reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) stay in the same dwelling unit; or
 - b. if you (or a household member) are a victim of sexual assault, either you reasonably believe there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) stay in the unit, or the sexual assault occurred on the premises and you request an emergency transfer within 90 days (including holidays and weekend days) of when that assault occurred.

A covered housing provider, in response to an emergency transfer request, should not evaluate whether you are in good standing as part of the assessment or provision of an emergency transfer. Whether or not you are in good standing does not impact your ability to request an emergency transfer under VAWA.

However, submitting this form does not necessarily mean that you will receive an emergency transfer. See your covered housing provider’s VAWA Emergency Transfer Plan for more information about VAWA emergency transfers and see “Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act,” Form HUD-5380, for additional housing rights you may be entitled to.

Am I required to submit any documentation to my covered housing provider? Your covered housing provider may request documentation proving that you, or a household member, are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse, in addition to completing this emergency transfer request form. The request can be met by completing and submitting the VAWA Self-certification Form (Form HUD-5382), unless the covered housing provider receives conflicting information about the VAWA violence/abuse. If you have third-party documentation that demonstrates why you are eligible for an emergency transfer, you may, instead, choose to submit that documentation to your covered housing provider. See “Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act,” Form HUD-5380, for more information.

Will my information be kept confidential? Whenever you ask for or about VAWA protections, your covered housing provider must keep any information you provide about the VAWA violence/abuse or the fact you (or a household member) are a victim, including the information on this form, strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from your other tenant files. This

information can only be accessed by an employee/agent of your covered housing provider if (1) access is required for a specific reason, (2) your covered housing provider explicitly authorizes that person's access for that reason, and (3) the authorization complies with applicable law. This information will not be given to anyone else or put in a database shared with anyone else, unless your covered housing provider (1) gets your written permission to do so for a limited time, (2) is required to do so as part of an eviction or termination hearing, or (3) is required to do so by law.

In addition, your covered housing provider must keep your address strictly confidential to ensure that it is not disclosed to a person who committed or threatened to commit VAWA violence/abuse against you (or a household member).

What if I need this information in a language other than English? To read this in Spanish or another language, please contact Charter Oak Communities. You can read translated VAWA forms at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/forms/hud5a#4. If you speak or read in a language other than English, your covered housing provider must give you language assistance regarding your VAWA protections (for example, oral interpretation and/or written translation).

Can I request a reasonable accommodation? If you have a disability, your covered housing provider must provide reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services that may be necessary to allow you to equally benefit from VAWA protections (for example, giving you more time to submit documents or assistance with filling out forms). You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even for the first time during an eviction. If a provider is denying a specific reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, your covered housing provider must first engage in the interactive process with you to identify possible alternative accommodations. Your covered housing provider must also ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities. Need further help? For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit <https://www.hud.gov/vawa>. To speak with a housing advocate, contact Domestic Violence Crisis Center at 203-588-9097 and Statewide Legal Services of Connecticut, Inc. at 860-344-0382 or visit <https://www.slsc.org>.

TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE TENANT REQUESTING AN EMERGENCY TRANSFER

1. Name(s) of victim(s): _____

2. Your name (if different from victim's): _____

3. Name(s) of other household member(s): _____

4. Name(s) of other household member(s) who would transfer with the victim: _____

5. Name of the perpetrator (if known and can be safely disclosed): _____

6. Address of location from which the victim seeks to transfer: _____

7. Current Unit Size (# of bedrooms): _____

8. What is the safest and most secure way to contact you? (You may choose more than one.)

If any contact information changes or is no longer a safe contact method, notify your covered housing provider.

☐ Phone Phone Number: _____

Safe to receive a voicemail: ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ E-mail E-mail address: _____

Safe to receive an e-mail: ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Mail Mailing Address: _____

Safe to receive mail from your housing provider: ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Other Please List: _____

9. Anything else your housing provider should know to safely communicate with you?

10. What features are requested for a safe unit? You may list here any information that would facilitate a suitable transfer, such as accessibility needs, and a description of where it is safe or unsafe for you to live.

(Please note that the ability to provide an emergency transfer is based on unit availability.)

☐ New Neighborhood ☐ New Building

☐ First Floor Unit ☐ Second Floor Unit (and above)

☐ Near an Exit ☐ Well-lit hallways/walkways

☐ 24-hour Security ☐ Accessible unit

☐ Other _____

11. To approve your request for an emergency transfer, your covered housing provider may require that you provide written documentation that you (or a household member) are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse. Your covered housing provider must make this request for documentation in writing. You can choose to submit any one of the following types of documentation:

- Form HUD-5382 Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking, and Alternate Documentation, which asks your name and the perpetrator's name (if known and safe to provide);

- A document signed by a victim service provider, attorney, mental health professional, or medical professional who has helped you address the VAWA violence/abuse. The professional must state “under penalty of perjury” that he/she/they believe in the occurrence of the incident of VAWA violence/abuse and that it is covered by VAWA. Both you and the professional must sign the statement;
- A police, administrative, or court record (such as a protective order) that shows you (or a household member) are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse; OR
- If permitted by your covered housing provider, a statement or other evidence provided by you.

Certification of Tenant: By signing below, I am certifying that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that I meet the conditions described on this form to qualify for an emergency transfer.

Signature _____ Date _____

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing this burden can be sent to the Reports Management Officer, QDAM, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410. Covered housing providers in programs covered by VAWA may ask for a written request for an emergency transfer for a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Housing providers may distribute this form to tenants and tenants may use it to request an emergency transfer. The information is subject to the confidentiality requirements of VAWA. A Federal agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.