



Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

Overview of CF-23-0302, regarding Emergency Housing Vouchers and
Housing Navigation with the City of Los Angeles

May 30, 2023

Introduction

This memorandum is in response to [Council File No. 23-0302](#) approved by the Los Angeles City Council's Housing and Homelessness Committee on May 5, 2023. This motion directed the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to report back on several items related to Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) and Housing Navigation. Specifically, the second moving clause of the motion states:

- Request LAHSA to report to Council within 15 days, on how housing navigation services are allocated throughout the LAHSA system and how many are allocated to each interim site; and how these services are prioritized

In the third moving clause of the motion, LAHSA is mentioned in a joint directive:

- The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and LAHSA to review EHVs that have expired and/or will be expiring and report to Council within 15 days, on how requests for extensions will be processed and fulfilled.

LAHSA has shared with HACLA that the third moving clause should be completed by HACLA since it is the sole public housing authority (PHA) for the City of Los Angeles that reviews, processes, and fulfills expiring EHVs for extensions.

Below are the requested details of the EHV program and Housing Navigation Services.

Housing Navigation Services

Housing Navigation Overview

Housing Navigation (HN) bridges a critical gap in services in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC). HN provides housing-focused supportive services for people experiencing homelessness in Interim Housing (IH), Transitional Housing (TH), and other housing programs as identified by LAHSA to help participants identify, apply for, secure, and move into permanent housing within 120 days of enrollment. Housing Navigators assist with the pre-lease up activities including locating potential rental units, assisting with application and transportation to unit viewing, paying for application fees and security deposits, advocating for the participant with landlords, and supporting moving activities, while case managers in the housing programs provide ongoing stabilization services and case management once participants are housed. HN is essential in ensuring the success of a rental voucher program in a competitive real estate market like Los Angeles.

The EHV program in the LA CoC did not receive any local funding for HN or supportive services. EHVs are administered by PHAs and solely provide rental assistance support to participants. Due to this limitation in funding, service providers must utilize existing program resources to provide essential HN services to the participants.

Housing Navigation Allocation throughout the LAHSA System

HN slots are allocated annually to HN services providers based on the availability of County/City funding for the fiscal year and the most recent Homeless Count. Many of these slots for the adult population are then paired to LAHSA IH sites to provide flow through. Currently, approximately 30% of IH beds have a subsequent HN slot available throughout the system.

Housing Navigation Prioritization

The CES Policy Council prioritizes those experiencing homelessness with EHV's who are document-ready for HN slots. The goal is to provide efficient throughput so voucher holders, who are move-in ready, receive HN services and secure a unit before the voucher expires. Persons in IH are prioritized for available HN slots, in the following order:

- Participants who have personal identification uploaded in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and have an EHV, prioritized by the soonest voucher expiration date.
- Participants who have personal identification uploaded in HMIS and have a non-EHV housing voucher (with no services attached) in hand, prioritized by the soonest voucher expiration date.
- Participants who have personal identification uploaded in HMIS, prioritized by the length of stay at the current IH site (from longest to shortest).

Emergency Housing Vouchers and LAHSA

HACLA is the primary entity that is responsible for notifying, processing, and extending EHV's for all clients, regardless of where they are in the City of Los Angeles. LAHSA provides clear guidance in its Scope of Required Services (SRS) to providers that offer HN services at IH sites on the process for working with PHAs to extend dates for expiring EHV's, engaging clients with EHV's, and accommodating those with mobility or higher acuity needs. The service providers who are working with the households with EHV's are responsible for completing the voucher extension requests and submitting them to HACLA directly for review and processing.

Should the service provider have challenges in connecting with HACLA, they can reach out to LAHSA by emailing ehv@lahsa.org for support in connecting with HACLA. This is LAHSA's only role in supporting those with expiring EHV's.

EHV's are matched following the [Interim CES Policy: Emergency Housing Voucher](#), passed by the CES Policy Council in 2021 and amended in June 2022. This policy emphasized equity as a guiding principle. The Interim CES Policy: Emergency Housing Voucher was used to determine the priority of eligible households matched to EHV's for the opportunity to submit an application and receive a voucher issued by HACLA. Data collected from EHV-eligible groups was monitored to support equitable access and allocation.

HACLA releases monthly EHV reports providing an aggregate break-down of:

- Clients with EHV's
- Date the EHV's were issued per client
- Date the EHV's expire(d)
- Clients with EHV's enrolled in HN
- Clients with EHV's enrolled in Time-Limited-Subsidies (TLS)
- Clients with EHV's that have leased up (have a move-in date)

Challenges and Suggested Improvements

LAHSA has shared with the City Administrative Officer the following challenges and recommendations for improvements to increase efficiency in securing permanent housing for voucher holders:

- The largest obstacle hampering the utilization of EHV is the lack of eligible, available units in the community.
- More EHV can be utilized by transitioning in-place individuals who are on TLS to EHV. Voucher holders are not always aware of the type of voucher they have or when it is expiring.
- LAHSA and LAHSA-funded service providers also need easier access to data on who has an EHV to make participants with EHV aware of options.
- LAHSA recommends service providers whose participants have EHV receive additional technical assistance on how to apply for extensions.
- Service providers should have access to unit acquisition listings with available, eligible units for program participants with EHV.