

## **Exhibit 2-6**

### **Waiting List Management**

AHFC must manage a waiting list consistent with written policies to establish the order in which housing offers are made to qualified applicants. It is important to assure that a waiting list has a sufficient number of eligible applicants so that new and turnover vouchers are issued as quickly as possible to eligible applicants. Leaving the waiting lists open, when assistance may be years away:

- Gives false hope to families that assistance will be available in the near future.
- Hinders families from making realistic plans.
- Causes AHFC unnecessary application processing costs.

The process for admission to AHFC's special programs may vary. See Chapter 11 and its exhibits for specific instructions for special or set aside programs.

#### **2-6.1 ANTICIPATING WAITING LIST SIZE**

Staff can anticipate the number of applications needed to maintain a healthy waiting list by:

- Reviewing available vacancies, vacancy trends, and turnover reports each month.
- Considering the average amount of time that it takes a family from the waiting list to complete the eligibility and rental assistance process.
- Considering the average number of applicants needed to issue one offer of assistance. Staff should consider the:
  - a. Number of responses to interview notification letters
  - b. Number of appointments that do not show
  - c. Number of applicant families that fail to meet eligibility criteria during the interview process
  - d. Number of applicant families that fail to complete the rental assistance process once an offer of admission is made

#### **2-6.2 CLOSING A WAITING LIST**

The Public Housing Director or designee will decide when to close or open a waiting list. AHFC will provide a minimum two week (14 calendar days) public notice prior to closing a waiting list.

At a minimum, the public notice process will include publication of a legal notice in the local newspaper, publication of the notice on AHFC's website, and notification to

community housing providers. AHFC will consider closing a waiting list where one or more of following conditions exist:

1. If AHFC has insufficient funds available to assist all applicants on the waiting list within 24 months; or
2. If the average waiting time is more than 24 months or it is no longer possible to provide applicants a reasonable time of when rental assistance may be available.
3. The waiting list includes a sufficient number of extremely low-income families (below 30% of Area Median Income) to continue to serve those most in need.

### **2-6.3 OPENING A WAITING LIST**

AHFC will consider reopening a waiting list when the condition(s) for closing the waiting list are addressed.

1. The same public notice process used to close a waiting list will be used to notify all potential applicants that a waiting list is reopened.
2. AHFC may set a period for acceptance of applications, such as a number of days or weeks, depending on the anticipated number of applications needed.
3. AHFC staff will not accept applications in person at site locations when a waiting list reopens. AHFC may choose one or all of the following application submission requirements: 1) mailing; 2) drop-off at a designated location, or 3) on-line submission.

AHFC may apply one of the following methods of ranking new applicants depending upon the number of applications needed and the number received. AHFC will enter all the applications received for the open list(s). AHFC may:

1. Apply a lottery to the entire list to rank and then choose the number of applicants that can reasonably expected to be housed in the following 24 months; or
2. Screen applications for eligibility by date and time and application of any existing preferences or combination of preferences; or
3. Screen applications for predefined income levels using date and time of application.

Prior to reopening a waiting list, AHFC will provide public notice of the ranking criteria that will be used to select applicants from a waiting list.

## **2-6.4 PULLING A WAITING LIST**

Applicants from the waiting list will be offered an opportunity for assistance in order of placement on the waiting list.

### **2-6.4.A Terminology**

The following computer software terms are associated with the waiting list process.

#### **1. Generate**

This function ranks applicants on a waiting list. Each time this function is run, applicants are assigned a number on a waiting list according to the rules for that list. For example, if the list is being ordered by date/time of application, all applicants will be sorted according to that criterion.

#### **2. Print**

This function allows staff to obtain a copy of a particular waiting list generation date. Formerly, staff used to call this function “pulling” the waiting list. Policy uses both terms for the same function.

#### **3. Selection**

This is the process to choose an applicant from a waiting list. Running this function in the software removes the applicant from the waiting list and puts him/her into “selected” status. This function should only be run when staff is actually ready to work an applicant.

### **2-6.4.B Waiting List Generation**

This function is performed by the Central Office. Each week (Friday morning is preferred), Central Office will generate the waiting lists to ensure applicants are properly ranked.

#### **1. Historical/Statistical Record**

On the first working day of each month, Central Office will generate and print a copy of every waiting list for statistical and historical purposes.

#### **2. Exhausted Lists**

If staff exhausts a waiting list, staff will enter applications according to the instructions in Chapter 2 before contacting Central Office. Central Office may generate a particular waiting list upon request by staff due to circumstances that fall outside the normal generation schedule.

### **2-6.4.C Waiting List Pulls**

The waiting list will be pulled and applicants selected according to the type of waiting list.

#### **1. Waiting Lists with Preferences**

- a. Staff will print (pull) a waiting list **every other month** between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of the respective month.
- b. Staff will choose the most recent generation version of the waiting list. The generation date does not have to be between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Staff is not required to print an entire list at one time as each generated version of a waiting list is saved in a historical record.
- d. This waiting list generation date will be used until exhausted or until the next regularly scheduled time to pull a new waiting list (whichever comes first).
- e. Staff will select applicants from the waiting list and work in accordance with actual and projected voucher availability.

#### **2. Waiting Lists by Date/Time**

- a. Staff will print (pull) a waiting list **every other month** between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of the respective month.
- b. Staff will choose the most recent generation version of the waiting list. The generation date does not have to be between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Staff will select applicants from the waiting list and work in accordance with actual and projected voucher availability.
- d. If a waiting list is exhausted, it must be generated before beginning the selection process.

### **2-6.5 APPLICANT SELECTION**

The Public Housing Division's department goal is to utilize 100 percent of allocated vouchers while staying within the HAP budget. Staff will select applicants in the order they are listed on the waiting list. Family size or family unit size will not affect the families' order for selection.

#### **2-6.5.A Utilization History**

Staff can anticipate the number of applicants needed to utilize vouchers by:

1. Reviewing the monthly *Budget Report*.
2. Reviewing the *Vacates Trend Report* monthly to look for trends.

3. Considering the average number of applicants needed to issue one voucher, including: number of applicants that respond to interview notifications, no shows to appointments, available briefing sessions, and voucher turn-backs.

To find the Budget Utilization Report:

1. Go to the Intranet, @Home (<http://athome>)
2. Choose Departments
3. When the pop-up menu comes up, choose Budget
4. Scroll down Budget's home page until you come to the section called "Current & Prior Years Reports"
5. Choose "Section 8 Budget Management Reports..."
6. Select the fiscal year desired, and a new window will open
7. The reports are posted shortly after the first week of each month

To find the *Vacates Trend* report:

1. Housing Department icon
2. HCV Monthly Report folder
3. Open the fiscal year folder desired
4. Open the month you want
5. Look for the *Vacates Trend* file

Refer to the Administrative Desk Manual, Building Waiting List History, for assistance with selecting applicants using the computer software.

### **2-6.5.B Applicant "Skip" Requests**

When an applicant is selected from a waiting list, the applicant may request to be "skipped" for a particular waiting list pull. When an applicant is skipped, it means that the applicant does not incur any penalty. The applicant does not receive any "favored" placement on subsequent waiting lists and will be ranked according to the date/time of his/her application and any applicable preferences.

#### **1. Skip Request Information**

Applicants must put their request to skip in writing. The applicant must include his/her name, the date of the request, and the reason that the applicant wishes to be skipped on the particular waiting list.

If an applicant is unable to put the request in writing due to extenuating circumstances, staff may complete the request on an applicant's behalf. Staff may document a skip request by using the *Client File Notes* (form PW300). The request will be filed with the applicant's application documentation.

## 2. Skip Request Justification

Requests to be skipped on a waiting list must be based on reasonable mitigating or extenuating circumstances. Examples may include hospitalization, completion of a treatment program, a death in the family, short-term care of a family member outside the state, etc.

Staff will exercise prudent, professional judgment when deciding whether to allow an applicant to be skipped on a waiting list or whether the applicant must be withdrawn.

## 3. Waiting List Annotation

Staff must annotate the skipped waiting list entry. An example would be “skipped at applicant request” with the date and time of the applicant’s request to skip.

### 2-6.6 POOL FILES

Staff may create “pool” files to have available for unanticipated vacancies. Staff may have two types of applicant files that carryover from one waiting list pull to another.

- Applicants scheduled for eligibility interviews from a prior waiting list.
- Applicant files completed from a prior waiting list that are being held for vouchers that become available during the month.

#### 2-6.6.A Applicant Eligibility Interview Files

AHFC will allow a family to complete the eligibility process once a family has been notified (through the *Interview Notification* (form AP109) or a record of telephone conversation (using form PW300 *Client Notes*)) assistance may be available.

- Staff does not have to complete the eligibility process before the expiration of the waiting list.
- Staff does have to make the eligibility determination before the expiration of the next waiting list.

An eligibility determination means that the family receives an offer of admission, an *Ineligibility Notice* for failure to meet eligibility criteria, or an *Ineligibility Notice* for failure to comply with documentation submission deadlines.

### **Example: Applicant Eligibility Files**

Staff pulls a waiting list on February 10. Staff sends a set of *Interview Notification* letters on March 30. Staff pulls a new waiting list on April 6.

All families notified on March 30 are allowed to schedule an eligibility interview and complete the process. The eligibility determination must be made before the April 6 waiting list expires on the day before the next scheduled waiting list is pulled in June.

#### **2-6.6.B Applicant Anticipated Voucher Files**

Staff may accumulate eligible applicant files in excess of available vouchers because:

- A family provides good cause for declining a briefing class and is placed in the pool;
- In order to decrease issuance time and increase leasing rates, staff prepares a few extra applicant files to account for vouchers which become available during or between waiting list pulls.

These files are often called “pool” files.

- Pool files may be retained by staff until the expiration of the following waiting list pull.
- Any pool files not briefed and issued by the end of the following waiting list period will be returned to the waiting list with their appropriate ranking.

### **Example: Pool File**

Staff pulls a waiting list on August 6 and works the list through September 30. Staff pulls a new waiting list on October 6.

1. Staff determined eligibility for two files from the August 6 waiting list.
2. There were no available vouchers.
3. These files may be held in the pool and will expire the day before the next scheduled waiting list pull in December.
4. If not briefed by the day before the next waiting list is pulled in December, the files will be returned to the waiting list with their proper ranking.

#### **2-6.6.C Verification Expiration**

Because files may be held from one waiting list to the expiration of the next waiting list, verifications may expire. Staff must update any expired verifications before briefing an applicant from the pool. See the Data Analysis section of this Exhibit and Chapter 3 for Timing of Verifications.

## **2-6.7 APPLICATION STATUS**

Applicants may request information regarding their approximate waiting time with proper identification. Proper identification may include the last four digits of the client's social security number. AHFC will not release any information regarding the applicant family except to a source authorized by the family in writing or by such authorized agents as listed in Chapter 1.

### **2-6.7.A Application Update**

Applicants must provide AHFC written notice of any changes in mailing address or family composition while they are on the waiting list. Upon receipt of written notification from the applicant, staff will change family composition and income, change mailing addresses, and otherwise keep the computer information current.

### **2-6.7.B Application Removal**

Staff may withdraw an application at any time from a waiting list for the following reasons:

1. The applicant requests to be withdrawn.
2. The applicant declines the offer of a voucher. The applicant's decline of an offer of assistance does not affect their status on any other waiting lists.
3. The applicant reports changes that make the family ineligible.
4. The applicant fails to submit required verifications or attend an eligibility appointment.

For all instances above, staff will send an *Ineligibility Notice* (form AP110) to the applicant. Staff will include the *Applicant Informal Review* (form V702) with the letter.

### **2-6.7.C Returned Mail**

If any notice or appointment letter to the applicant is returned by the postal service unopened or as undeliverable, AHFC will withdraw the applicant from the waiting list. Staff will not send an *Ineligibility Notice* for returned mail due to an incorrect address; staff will make a note in the "memo" field regarding the reason for the withdrawal. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep AHFC updated with the current mailing address.

## **2-6.8 PURGING THE WAITING LIST**

AHFC must ensure that the waiting list is kept current in order to minimize the number of "no-shows" and "ineligible" determinations. Central Office or the local AHFC office periodically mails update letters to applicants. Applicants are given a time frame to respond. Failure to respond will result in withdrawal of the applicant's name from the waiting list.

When an applicant's name is withdrawn from a waiting list due to a waiting list update process, staff will not send the *Ineligibility Notice* (AP110). The waiting list update letter advises the applicant that his/her application will be removed for failure to respond.

### **2-6.9 APPLICATION REINSTATEMENT**

If an applicant who was withdrawn contacts AHFC within a reasonable time and inquires about their waiting list status, staff will identify the reason the applicant was withdrawn (i.e. non-response to *Interview Notification*, or for not responding to the waiting list update letter). Staff may then determine if reinstatement to the waiting list is reasonable. Some examples might include:

- A person who was hospitalized and has recently returned to their home.
- A person who doesn't have a permanent mailing address might not have received his/her letter if he/she is using a bulletin board service at a shelter.
- A person who was out of the state because of extenuating family circumstances did not respond timely to the letter.

If staff decides to reinstate the application, the application's original date and time will be used when placing the applicant back on the waiting list. If staff experiences difficulty with an applicant's situation or is unsure about reinstatement, staff should contact a supervisor.

### **2-6.10 WAITING LIST NOTATIONS**

For tracking and audit purposes, staff must document each pulled waiting list with the result of each applicant's selection. This is especially important when an applicant requests to skip, AHFC staff is "skipping" applicants on a waiting list to find the next eligible family for a specialty voucher such as NED or DIS-SW, when a "pool" file expires prior to being issued a voucher, or an applicant is reinstated to a waiting list. Notate the status of each applicant beside their name on the waiting list being used. See Exhibit 4-1 (Initial Examination) for specific instructions on documenting the client file.

### **2-6.11 ARCHIVING**

See the Administrative Desk Manual, File Maintenance-Applicants, for archiving instructions.

#### **Forms**

AP109 Interview Notification

AP110 Ineligibility Notice

PW300 Client File Notes

V702 Applicant Informal Review

**Administrative Desk Manual**  
Building Waiting List History  
File Maintenance-Applicants