

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED

The Housing Authority of Cook County's (HACC) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) based on appropriations authorized by Congress. The 2025 appropriations bills are being finalized, but the suggested funding levels are not sufficient to cover the increase in costs per family or to continue serving all the families currently receiving HCV Program assistance.

The past few years have seen a significant increase in rents, thus increasing the cost per family in the HCV Program. The HACC is facing a funding shortfall for its HCV Program. This means that the HACC does not have sufficient funding to cover rental assistance costs for all its current HCV Program participants at the current cost. In order to avoid having to terminate families from the program, the HACC has to implement cost savings measures for its HCV Program. It is imperative that the cost saving measures are implemented as soon as possible to help reduce the amount of the shortfall as quickly as possible. The HACC understands these difficult decisions will impact the family, but are absolutely necessary to continue serving all HCV Program participants.

Effective May 1, 2025, the following cost saving measures will be implemented for the HCV Program:

1. Reduction in subsidy standards – The subsidy standard represents the “family’s budget” for the amount of housing assistance the HACC will provide for the family. It is assigned by bedroom size. The HACC’s subsidy standards are based on household composition and will be changing to reflect **two people per bedroom**, regardless of age, sex, or relationship of household members. Heads of household will not be assigned their own bedroom and are included in the 2 people per bedroom count. Requests for a larger voucher size due to the age, sex, or relationship of family members will not be approved.

A reduction in the subsidy standard means that the voucher size allocated to your family may decrease at your next annual renewal on or after May 1, 2025. However, if you are in your first year of your lease at a new address, we will make the change on the lease anniversary date. For example:

- a. Family moved into a new unit on 11/01/2024
- b. Family’s annual recertification is 6/01/2025
- c. The subsidy standard change will take effect 11/01/2025
- d. The 6/01/2025 recertification will be processed without the change and an adjustment effective 11/01/2025 will be processed reflecting the change



The subsidy standard may also change if you choose to move as vouchers issued on or after March 10th may be adjusted to the new subsidy standards. Families moving into the HACC's jurisdiction under portability are subject to the same subsidy standards.

2. Reduction in payment standards – The HACC's payment standards, which are used to determine rent to the owner, will revert back to the 2024 payment standards effective May 1st. The reduction will impact families who are currently in move status or those requesting to move as the updated payment standards will be implemented with moves on or after May 1st. The reduction in the payment standards will also impact a family currently under contract, but not until the second annual recertification following the effective date of the reduction. For example:
 - a. Payment standard reduction effective May 1, 2025.
 - b. Family's annual recertification date is February 1, 2026.
 - c. The reduction in payment standards will not impact the family until the February 2027 annual recertification, the second recertification following the reduction.

However, if a family's subsidy standard changes, the payment standard will be adjusted to reflect the new subsidy standard. This does not constitute a decrease in the payment standard, but rather an adjustment to it for the change in subsidy standard.

3. Restrictions on move-in dates – For families currently under contract, the contract effective date to move to a new unit may be on the 1st of the month only. The HACC will not pay overlapping subsidy to more than one landlord for the same time period. For example:
 - a. It's the middle of March.
 - b. The current landlord has been paid the full month's payment for the month of March.
 - c. The family's new unit passes inspection on March 20th and is ready for move-in.
 - d. The family may not be approved to move into the new unit and a contract may not be executed until April 1st, even if the family wants to move in prior to.
 - e. If the family chooses to move in prior to the 1st of the month without HACC approval, then the family will be responsible for the full rent to the owner for that time period.

For families not currently under contract with the HACC, the contract effective date to move to the new unit may be negotiated with written approval from the HACC. A family may be considered "not currently under contract" if they are residing in a unit that is in abatement and are required to move, have vacated their current unit, or are a new portability move-in.

4. Restrictions on moves to higher cost units – The HACC may deny a family's request to move to a unit where the subsidy paid for the new unit will exceed the current subsidy paid. For example:
 - a. The family is currently under contract with a 3 bedroom voucher and the HACC's subsidy payment to the landlord is \$1000
 - b. The family wishes to move and will still have a 3 bedroom voucher

- c. The family may not be approved to move to a unit with a subsidy cost more than \$1000.
 - d. Situations will be addressed individually if there is a change in household composition or as a reasonable accommodation for a family member with a disability.
- 5. Limit rent increase requests – The HACC, to the greatest extent possible, will limit the amount of a rent increase to avoid higher subsidy costs.
- 6. Suspend issuing new vouchers – The HACC is not issuing new vouchers to applicants from its wait list, even when current participants exit the program. However, funding for some special purpose vouchers, such as Emergency Housing Vouchers, Mainstream Vouchers, and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers, is appropriated separately and vouchers will still be issued for these programs. All other cost saving measures, though, do apply.
- 7. Suspend absorbing vouchers – The HACC will only administer the voucher for families porting into its jurisdiction. The HACC will not be absorbing these vouchers.

If you have questions about this notice or need more clarification, please see additional information on our website. A copy of this notice will be placed in the family's master file. All adult household members age 18 and older must sign and date below. Please return this document to your Housing Specialist by May 1, 2025.

Signatures

Client ID # _____

Head-of-Household

Printed Name

Date

Co-Head or Spouse

Printed Name

Date

Other Adult

Printed Name

Date

Other Adult

Printed Name

Date