

A stylized illustration of a lit lantern on a pedestal. The lantern is green with a yellow flame and is set on a white pedestal. The background is a solid green color.

2019 Boston

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& SHOWPLACE

New Approaches to Housing Our Heroes

A Brief Overview of the
Housing and Urban
Development – Veterans Affairs
Supportive Housing Program
(HUD-VASH)



Brief Introduction of HUD-VASH

- Collaborative program with HUD, who provides Housing Choice Vouchers allocated to participating Public Housing Authorities (PHA) to assist with rental payments
- VA provides clinical case management and services to assist Veterans to obtain and sustain permanent housing while also assisting Veterans with access to treatment and other supportive services that promote their quality of life
- Operates utilizing the principles of Housing First
- Targets and prioritizes the chronically homeless and most vulnerable homeless Veterans first
- Primary goal is to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness into permanent supportive housing while promoting maximum Veteran recovery and independence in the community

HUD-VASH Numbers

- Between fiscal year (FY) 2008 and FY 2018 there have been 97,255 vouchers allocated
 - 92,331 of these vouchers are active with the remaining vouchers awarded for project-based voucher development or shelved for conversion to project-based vouchers
- Voucher use at the end of September 2019
 - Vouchers under lease: 77,799
 - Veterans with a voucher looking for housing: 4,689
 - Veterans referred to a public housing authority for a voucher: 1,290
 - Total vouchers in use: 83,778
 - Total vouchers available for use: 8,553
- Working with HUD to award approximately 5,000 new vouchers from HUD's FY 2019 budget

Using Project-Based Vouchers in HUD-VASH

- Nationally there is a shortage of safe and affordable rental housing across the country
 - In high cost markets Veterans in HUD-VASH are having challenges finding housing
 - Utilization of HUD-VASH has trended down in the past year
- HUD-VASH vouchers can help developers in operating sustainable multi-family rental projects
 - Assists with the efficient lease up of units
 - Provides case management and services to those in the units
 - Long term commitment of project-based rental assistance at the PHA's payment standard as well as the potential for vacancy allowance support

Using Project-Based Vouchers in HUD-VASH - 2

- May be able to better meet the needs of sub-populations more efficiently and effectively
 - Elderly
 - Seriously Mentally Ill
 - Allows for more efficient delivery of case management
 - Can allow for a stronger alliance between the landlord and the case manager
- Provides the VA with the opportunity to increase the level of choice to Veterans on where and what type of housing they reside

How We Can Work with Housing Finance Agencies

- Align and Coordinate HFA LIHTC financing with HUD-VASH project basing
 - Support of HFAs to encourage the creation of rental housing with dedicated HUD-VASH project-based units by coordinating with local PHAs to dedicate HUD-VASH project-based subsidies for new development
 - Coordinate with HFAs to incent Developers to include project-based HUD-VASH in multi-family elder housing projects
 - Align
 - Use HUD-VASH vouchers to offer a guaranteed, long-term commitment of Section 8 Project Based Vouchers and offer dedicated supportive services sources
- Align/coordinate or possibly combine the underwriting and review of both LIHTC funding and HUD-VASH project basing in proposed multi-family rental projects

Next Steps

- Determine interest in Communities
 - How many vouchers to be developed as project-based HUD-VASH
 - What populations should be targeted
- Determine interest of PHAs to convert HUD-VASH vouchers to project-based HUD-VASH
 - Identify and select a developer
- Determine interest with specific HFAs on using project-based HUD-VASH and how best to coordinate efforts going forward
- What financing is needed to develop the units
 - Are there opportunities to combine funds to meet needs or coordinate efforts

Contact Information

- Please feel free to contact me so that we can continue this discussion, explore opportunities, or if I can answer any questions.

Jesse K. Vazzano, LICSW

National Director, HUD-VASH

Homeless Program Office

Veterans Health Administration

E-Mail: jesse.vazzano@va.gov

Direct: 802.359.3327