

Emergency Housing Voucher Program

By Steve Berg, Vice President for Programs and Policy, National Alliance to End Homelessness,

Administering Agency: HUD’s Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) in consultation with Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD)

Population Targeted: Households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Funding: \$5 billion “CARES Act” in the “American Rescue Plan Act of 2021”

HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher program has for decades been funded only enough to meet the needs of about one quarter of eligible households, frustrating attempts to reduce homelessness. The “American Rescue Plan Act” provides \$5 billion for additional vouchers for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Communities need to ensure coordination between housing authorities and homelessness systems to ensure an impact on homelessness. These relationships will be important when more vouchers are provided in the future.

THE EHV PROGRAM AND THE “AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT”

The “American Rescue Plan Act” added an additional \$5 billion for tenant-based rental assistance through HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher program. The new resource is called the Emergency Housing Voucher program. Eligible people are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including people trying to escape domestic violence. HUD has required that PHAs receiving these vouchers coordinate with their local Continuums of Care to determine which households should receive the vouchers and mechanisms for ensuring these households have access to additional services.

FORECAST FOR 2022

The Build Back Better legislation that passed the House and is being considered by the Senate includes substantial new funding for vouchers, some of the specifically targeted to address homelessness. If targeted properly, the resources would be enough to end homelessness for people with severe disabilities in many communities, or to completely stop domestic violence survivors from becoming homeless.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NLIHC, 202-662-1530, www.nlihc.org.

NAEH, www.endhomelessness.org.

Summary of relevant provisions in House Build Back Better legislation: <https://endhomelessness.org/legislation/summary/>.

The Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homeless Response, <https://housingequityframework.org/>, including help for communities on using vouchers.

HUD landing page for EHV: <https://www.hud.gov/EHV>.