

**HOUSING WORKS EMERGENCY TRANSFER PLAN
For the Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher Programs**

For Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

Housing Works is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),¹ Housing Works allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The ability of Housing Works to honor such requests for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether Housing Works has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD is the Federal agency that oversees the Housing Works Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher Programs and its compliance with VAWA.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if: the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan. Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify Housing Works' management office and submit a written request for a transfer. Housing Works will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenants' written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under Housing Works' program; OR
2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

Housing Works will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives Housing Works written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Tenants for more information about Housing Work's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

Housing Works cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. Housing Works will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. Housing Works may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit. If Housing Works has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency transfer is eligible, Housing Works will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, Housing Works will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan.

Emergency Transfers: Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

If you are a participant in the tenant-based HCV program and request an emergency transfer as described in this plan, Housing Works will assist you to move to a safe unit quickly using your existing voucher assistance. Housing Works will make exceptions to program regulations

restricting moves as required. At your request, Housing Works will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

Emergency Transfers: Project Based Voucher (PBV) Program

If you are assisted under the project-based voucher (PBV) program, you may request an emergency transfer under the following programs for which you are not required to apply:

- ❖ Tenant-based voucher, if available
- ❖ Project-based assistance in the same project (if a vacant unit is available and you determine that the vacant unit is safe)
- ❖ Project-based assistance in another development owned by Housing Works (if a vacant unit is available and you determine that the vacant unit is safe)

Emergency transfers under VAWA will take priority over waiting list admissions for these types of assistance.

You may also request an emergency transfer under the following programs for which you are required to apply:

- ❖ Project-based assistance in another development not owned by Housing Works

Emergency transfers will not take priority over waiting list admissions for these programs. At your request, Housing Works will refer you to organizations that may be able to further assist you.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

Tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.