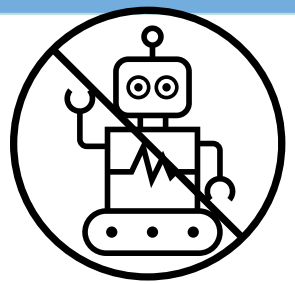
Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) Made Simple: Foundations of the HCV Program

Liz Stewart & Jim Yates

June 2, 2026

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) Overview
- Special Purpose Vouchers (SPVs)
- Public Housing Authorities (PHA) Policy Making & Flexibilities
- Special Housing Types
- Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)
- Q&A

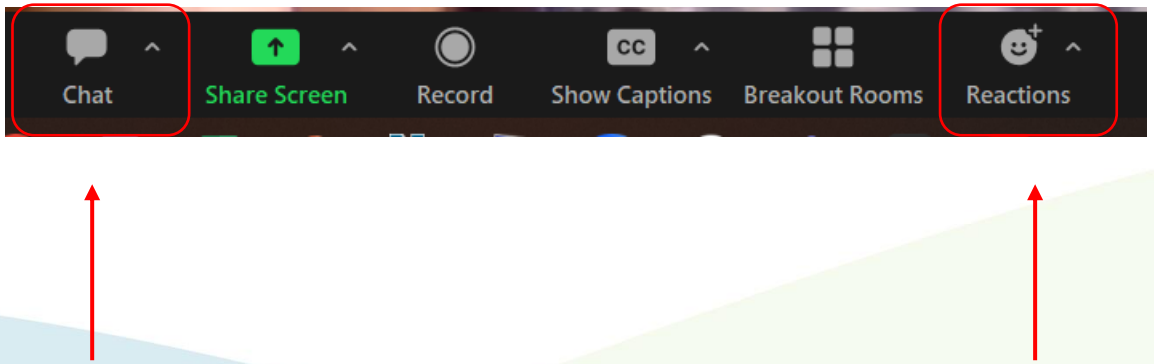


AI Bots and Transcription Tools Not Permitted

- The use of AI meeting bots (e.g. Otter.ai, Read.ai) in Commonwealth hosted meetings is prohibited.
- It is against the law in Pennsylvania to record oral conversations without the permission of the individuals involved, in most circumstances (Wiretap Act).
- Unauthorized transcription, recording, or attendance by bots will result in the immediate removal of the bot from the meeting. Unauthorized use may result in corrective action.

Housekeeping

- This session is being recorded
- Please keep yourself muted when not speaking (bottom left)
- If you have a question or comment, feel free to use the Chat function (Bottom of the Screen) or “Raise your hand” (Reactions at bottom of screen)



Introductions

- Office of Mental Health Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)
- Lauren MacWithey
- Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC):
- Liz Stewart
- Jim Yates

Please introduce yourself in the chat:

- **Name**
- **Agency**
- **Title and Role**

HCV Made Simple Series

Session Name	Date/Time
Session 1: Foundations of the HCV Program	Tuesday, June 2, 2026 10:00-11:30 AM ET
Session 2: Access, Eligibility, and Reasonable Accommodations	Tuesday, June 16, 2026 10:00-11:30 AM ET
Session 3: From Voucher Issuance to Leasing	Tuesday July 14, 2026 10:00-11:30 AM ET
Session 4: Housing Retention and Cross-System Collaboration	Tuesday July 28, 2026 10:00-11:30 AM ET

HCV Overview

Poll Question

How do you rate your familiarity with the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

- Not at all familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Extremely familiar

HCV Overview (1 of 5)

Public Housing Authorities (PHA)

- A PHA is any state, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body authorized under State law to administer a housing or rental assistance program.
- PHAs receive funding from HUD with the goal of providing safe, decent, and affordable housing to low-income households.
  - Additional income targeting applies (i.e. at least 75 percent of vouchers must go to "extremely low-income" households)
- Over 4,000 PHAs across the country; collectively they administer over 1.2 million public housing units and 2.1 million tenant-based housing vouchers.
- Each PHA reports to a Board of Commissioners, which are appointed by local governments (e.g. city councils or mayors).

PHAs may administer multiple programs:

- Public Housing
- Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV), including Project-Based Vouchers
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Grants awarded for community revitalization, supportive services

HCV Overview (2 of 5)

PHA Differences

- Big PHAs vs small PHAs
- Public Housing only
- HCV only
- Special purpose only
- Moving to Work (MTW)
  - 4 MTW PHAs in PA

HCV Overview (3 of 5)

Housing Choice Voucher Program

- Provides a rent subsidy to pay a portion of the monthly housing costs based on the income of the tenant.
- Utilizes landlords in the private rental market
- Typically the tenant's share of the rent is 30% of their monthly adjusted income
- Program Components
  - Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
  - Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)
  - Homeownership Assistance

TBRA- Key Aspects

- Affordability
- Quality
- Choice

HCV Overview (4 of 5)

PHA HCV responsibilities include:

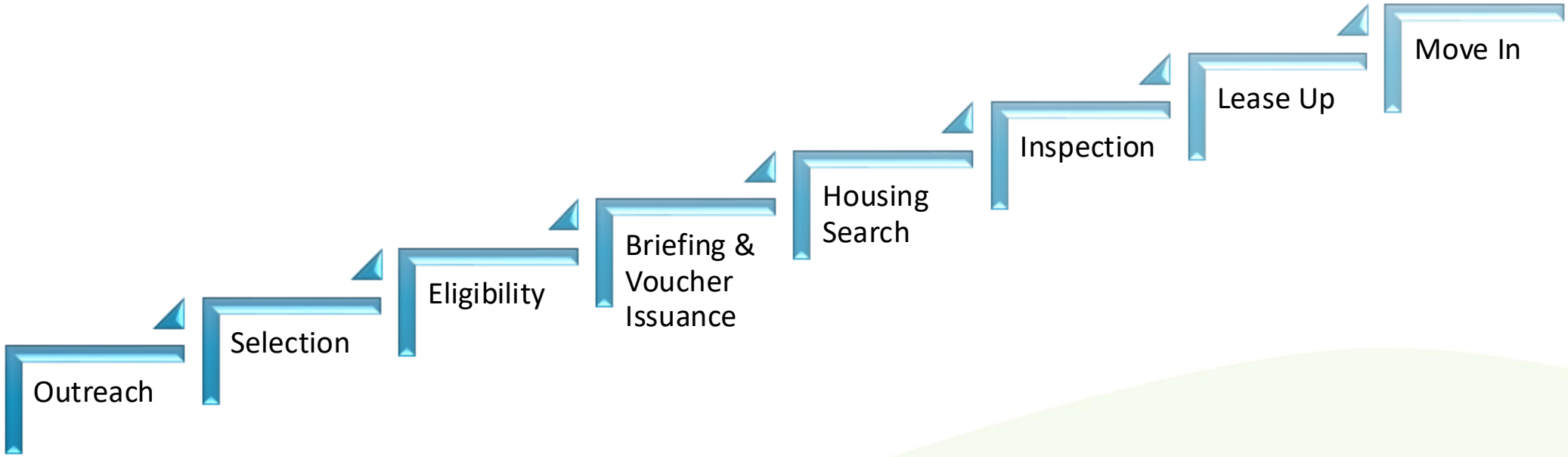
- Manage waiting lists
- Determining applicant's eligibility
- Ensuring housing is safe, decent, and sanitary
- Calculating a participant's income and rent
- Conducting program terminations

HCV Overview (5 of 5)

General Process

- A household applies to the PHA's waiting list.
- The PHA selects the household from its waiting list and determines the household's eligibility for the program (e.g., income, criminal history).
- The PHA briefs the household about the program and issues the household a voucher to begin searching for a suitable unit.
- The household finds a unit. The PHA approves the unit **if** it passes a unit inspection (HQS/NSPIRE) and the rent is determined reasonable. PHA calculates the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and household's share towards rent.
- PHA executes the HAP contract with the landlord. The household and landlord execute a lease agreement. **The PHA nor HUD is a party to the lease.** The household moves-in.
- At least annually, the household's composition and income are reexamined. The PHA will inspect the unit periodically depending on their policies (i.e. annually, bi-annually, tri-annually).

Key Phases: Outreach to Move-in



PHA Information-Pennsylvania (PA)

- A list of all PA PHAs can be found: https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/PHA_Contact_Report_PA.pdf
  - Low rent = Public Housing only
  - Section 8 = Housing Choice Vouchers only
  - Combined = PHA administers both programs
- Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Dashboard

PHA Information*-Pennsylvania (PA)

85 PHAs

- 78 Combined PHAs
- 6 HCV Only PHAs
- 1 PH Only PHA

99,791 HCVs

- 78,633 Leased (78.97%)
- 128% YTD Spending as % of Annual Budget Authority
- $934.93- Average Per Unit Cost

9,305 SPVs

- 2,333 Mainstream Vouchers
- 1,512 Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers
- 2,164 Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) Vouchers
- 3,296 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)

*Based on HCV Dashboard information as of December 2025

HCV Dashboard Demonstration



KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- True or False: In HCV, the tenant's share of the rent is typically 30% of their monthly adjusted income
- True or False: In HCV, the PHA is a party to the lease with the landlord and the HCV participant.

Special Purpose Vouchers (SPVs)

- SPVs are specifically funded by Congress in separate appropriations from regular HCV program funding
- Provide assistance to specific target populations. Each SPV program has its own eligibility criteria, rules, and policies that must be followed.
- Often require partnerships with community or service agencies.

SPVs include:

- Family Unification Program (FUP)
- Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program
- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Mainstream
- Non-Elderly Disabled (NED)
- Emergency Housing Voucher program
- Stability Voucher program

Examples of SPV Target Populations

Special Purpose Voucher	Target Population
Family Unification Program (FUP):	Families who are at risk of family instability
Foster Youth to Independence (FYI)	Young adults aging out of the foster care system
Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)	Homeless Veterans
Mainstream and Non-Elderly Disabled (NED)	Non-elderly individuals with disabilities.

Check **page 7** of the HCV Dashboard for award and utilization information on the following programs:

- FUP
- VASH
- Mainstream
- NED

SPV Resources

- Mainstream Program
  - HUD's Mainstream Webpage
  - PIH Notice 2024-30-Statutory and Regulatory Waivers for Mainstream Vouchers

- HUD-VASH
  - HUD's HUD-VASH Webpage
  - HUD-VASH Operating Requirements

- FYI
  - HUD's FYI Webpage
  - PIH 2025-08-Statutory and Regulatory Waivers for Family Unification Program (FUP) and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers

Basics of PHA Policymaking

PHA Plan – a five year plan and annual plan

- Master plan for both the HCV and Public Housing programs
- Must include a needs assessment including the needs for people with disabilities and the number of persons with disabilities on the Section 8 waiting list
- HUD approved plan

HCV Administrative Plan

- Must be developed and made publicly if receiving HCV funds
- Outlines policies and procedures for managing their HCV program
- Primary resource for learning what discretionary policies a PHA has established
- Policies include:
  - Eligibility Criteria
  - Application Process
  - Wait List Management
  - Tenant Selection Policies

Basics of PHA Policymaking

- Important to understand what areas are statutory or regulatory and discretionary/PHA policy.
- Statutory/Regulatory
  - Parts of the HCV Program that cannot be changed or need a waiver from HUD for a PHA to change.
  - HCV Regulations: 24 CFR Part 982
  - HCV PIH Notices: https://www.hud.gov/hudclips/notices/pih
- Discretionary PHA policy
  - Areas of the Admin Plan where the PHAs has discretion
  - Includes areas such as: screening criteria, preferences, wait list policies, payment standards, search time, adopting special housing types etc.
  - These are the areas where your advocacy and partnership with a PHA may result in changes in these policies to reduce barriers to access and participation for people with disabilities or who are homeless

Examples of Local Flexibilities

- Raising payment standards
- Screening & Documentation
- Extending search times for hard-to-house clients
- Adopting special housing types (shared, SRO, homeownership)
- Implementing preferences including referral-based preferences
- Resources:
  - https://www.tacinc.org/resources/section-8-made-simple/

Special Housing Types

- PHAs may opt to allow additional housing arrangements:
  - Shared Housing
  - Single Room Occupancy (SRO)
  - Group Home
  - Congregate Housing
  - Cooperative Housing
  - Manufactured Housing
  - Homeownership Option
- Each offers unique opportunities for supportive housing models

More Info on Special Housing Types:
HCV Guidebook: Special Housing Types

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

- True or False: PHAs **do not** have any discretion in setting polices around screening criteria, preferences or waiting list management.
- True or False: Community partners can submit comments during updates to administrative plans and advocate for flexibilities or preferences.

Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)

- Measures the performance of PHAs that administer the HCV program in 14 key areas
- Helps HUD target monitoring and assistance to PHA programs that need the most improvement

Self-Certified Indicators	Not Self-Certified (evidence of certification is required)
• Waiting list selection • Rent reasonableness • Determination of Adjusted Income • Utility Allowance Schedule • Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Quality Control • HQS Enforcement • Expanding Housing Opportunities	• Payment Standards • Annual Reexaminations • Correct Tenant Rent Calculations • Initial HQS Inspections • Periodic HQS Inspections • Lease-up/Voucher utilization • Family Self Sufficiency Program Enrollment

SEMAP

- Used to remotely measure PHA performance and program administration
- Uses HUD's national database of tenant information and information from annual audits
- Each PHA is given an overall rating based on the score from the 14 factors
  - High Performer
  - Standard Performer
  - Troubled Performer
  - Failing to meet an indicator or a trouble rating requires corrective action by the PHA

HCV Resources

- HCV Guidebook
- HCV Landlord Resources
- HCV Tenant Resources
- HCV Dashboard

Questions and Discussion

