

**GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING  
COMMISSION**

**ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED  
OCCUPANCY POLICY  
FOR LOW-INCOME PUBLIC HOUSING**

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# **ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY**

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This Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy defines the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's policies for the operation for the Public Housing Program, incorporating Federal, State and local law. If there is any conflict between this policy and laws or regulations, the laws and regulations will prevail.

## **1.0 FAIR HOUSING**

It is the policy of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to fully comply with all Federal, State and local nondiscrimination laws; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, familial status, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's programs.

To further its commitment to full compliance with applicable Civil Rights laws, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will provide Federal/State/local information to applicants/tenants of the Public Housing Program regarding discrimination and any recourse available to them if they believe they may be victims of discrimination. Such information will be made available with the application, and all applicable Fair Housing Information and Discrimination Complaint Forms will be made available at the Grand Rapids Housing Commission office. In addition, all written information and advertisements will contain the appropriate Equal Opportunity language and logo.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will assist any family that believes they have suffered illegal discrimination by providing them copies of the appropriate housing discrimination forms. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will also assist them in completing the forms if requested, and will provide them with the address of the nearest HUD office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

## **2.0 REASONABLE ACCOMODATION**

Sometimes people with disabilities may need a reasonable accommodation in order to take full advantage of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission housing programs and related services. When such accommodations are granted, they do not confer special treatment or advantage for the person with a disability; rather, they make the program accessible to them in a way that would otherwise not be possible due to their disability. This policy clarifies how people can request accommodations and the guidelines the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will follow in determining whether it is reasonable to

provide a requested accommodation. Because disabilities are not always apparent, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will ensure that all applicants/tenants are aware of the opportunity to request reasonable accommodations.

## **2.1 COMMUNICATION**

Anyone requesting an application will also receive a Request for Reasonable Accommodation form.

Notifications of re-examination, inspection, appointment, or eviction will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation. Any notification requesting action by the tenant will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation.

All decisions granting or denying requests for reasonable accommodations will be in writing.

## **2.2 QUESTIONS TO ASK IN GRANTING THE ACCOMMODATION**

- A. Is the requestor a person with disabilities? For this purpose, the definition of person with disabilities is different than the definition used for admission. The Fair Housing definition used for this purpose is:

A person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. (The disability may not be apparent to others, i.e., a heart condition.)

If the disability is apparent or already documented, the answer to this question is yes. It is possible that the disability for which the accommodation is being requested is a disability other than the apparent disability. If the disability is not apparent or documented, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will obtain verification that the person is a person with a disability.

- B. Is the requested accommodation related to the disability? If it is apparent that the request is related to the apparent or documented disability, the answer to this question is yes. If it is not apparent, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will obtain documentation that the requested accommodation is needed due to the disability. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will not inquire as to the nature of the disability.
- C. Is the requested accommodation reasonable? In order to be determined reasonable, the accommodation must meet two criteria:
1. Would the accommodation constitute a fundamental alteration? The Grand Rapids Housing Commission's business is housing. If the request would alter the fundamental business that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission conducts, that would not be reasonable. For instance, the

Grand Rapids Housing Commission would deny a request to have the Grand Rapids Housing Commission do grocery shopping for a person with disabilities.

2. Would the requested accommodation create an undue financial hardship or administrative burden? Frequently, the requested accommodation costs little or nothing. If the cost would be an undue burden, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may request a meeting with the individual to investigate and consider equally effective alternatives.

- D. Generally, the individual knows best what it is they need; however, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission retains the right to be shown how the requested accommodation enables the individual to access or use the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's programs or services.

If more than one accommodation is equally effective in providing access to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's programs and services, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission retains the right to select the most efficient or economic choice.

The cost necessary to carry out approved requests, including requests for physical modifications, will be borne by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission if there is no one else willing to pay for the modifications. If another party pays for the modification, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will seek to have the same entity pay for any restoration costs.

If the tenant requests as a reasonable accommodation that they be permitted to make physical modifications at their own expense, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will generally approve such request if it does not violate codes or affect the structural integrity of the unit.

Any request for an accommodation that would enable a tenant to materially violate essential lease terms will not be approved, i.e. allowing nonpayment of rent, destruction of property, disturbing the peaceful enjoyment of others, etc.

### **3.0 SERVICES FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will endeavor to have bilingual staff or access to people who speak languages other than English in order to assist non-English speaking families. The following languages shall be covered: Spanish

### **4.0 FAMILY OUTREACH**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will publicize the availability and nature of its programs for extremely low-, very low- and low-income families in a newspaper of general circulation, minority media, and by other suitable means.

To reach people who cannot or do not read the newspapers, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will distribute fact sheets to the broadcasting media and initiate personal contacts with members of the news media and community service personnel. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will also try to utilize public service announcements.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will communicate the status of housing availability to other service providers in the community and inform them of housing eligibility factors and guidelines so they can make proper referrals for its program.

## **5.0 RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

All family members, 18 years and older of both applicant and tenant households are required to sign HUD Form #9886, Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice. The Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice states how family information will be released and includes the Federal Privacy Act Statement.

Any request for applicant or tenant information will not be released unless there is a signed release of information request from the applicant or tenant.

## **6.0 REQUIRED POSTINGS**

In each of its offices, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will post, in a conspicuous place and at a height easily read by all persons including persons with mobility disabilities, the following information:

- A. Statement of Policies and Procedures governing Admission and Continued Occupancy (ACOP).
- B. Notice of the status of the waiting list (opened or closed).
- C. A listing of all the developments by name, address, number of units, units designed with special accommodations, address of all project offices, office hours, telephone numbers, TDD numbers, and Resident Facilities and operation hours.
- D. Income Limits for Admission.
- E. Excess Utility Charges.
- F. Utility Allowance Schedule.
- G. Current Schedule of Routine Maintenance Charges.
- H. Dwelling Lease.
- I. Grievance Procedure.



- J. Fair Housing Poster.
- K. Equal Opportunity in Employment Poster.
- L. Any current Grand Rapids Housing Commission Notices.

## 7.0 TAKING APPLICATIONS

Families wishing to apply for the Public Housing Program will be required to complete an application for housing assistance. On-line applications are available to the public at [grhousing.org](http://grhousing.org). Paper applications are also available and will be accepted during regular business hours at all Grand Rapids Housing Commission’s properties:

**Grand Rapids Housing Commission**  
**1420 Fuller, SE**  
**Grand Rapids, MI 49507**

Adams Park Apartments  
 1440 Fuller, SE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Campau Commons Apartments  
 821 S. Division  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Creston Plaza Apartments  
 1014 Clancy, NE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Hope Community  
 1024 Ionia, SW  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Leonard Terrace Apartments  
 1315 Leonard, NE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Mt. Mercy Apartments  
 1425 Bridge, NW  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Ransom Tower Apartments  
 50 Ransom, NE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Sheldon Apartments  
 1010 Sheldon, SE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49507

Applications are taken to compile a waiting list. Due to the demand for housing in the Grand Rapids Housing Commission’s jurisdiction, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may take applications on an open enrollment basis, depending on the length of the waiting list.

Completed applications will be accepted for all applicants and the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will verify the information.

Applications may be made in person at the Grand Rapids Housing Commission offices Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Applications will be mailed to interested families upon request.

The completed application will be dated and time stamped upon its return to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

Persons with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation in completing an application may call the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to make special arrangements. A Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) is available for the deaf. The TDD telephone number is 1-800-649-3777.

The application process will involve two (2) phases. The first phase is the initial application for housing assistance or the pre-application. The pre-application requires the family to provide limited basic information establishing any preferences to which they may be entitled. This first phase results in the family's placement on the waiting list.

Upon receipt of the family's pre-application, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will make a preliminary determination of eligibility. If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission determines the family to be ineligible, it will notify the family in writing. The notice will state the reasons therefore and will offer the family the opportunity of an informal review of the determination.

The applicant may, at any time, report changes in their applicant status including changes in family composition, income, or preference factors. If applicants move, they must immediately notify the Housing Commission in writing of their new address. The only means by which the Housing Commission can contact applicants is through the mail. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will annotate the applicant's file and will update their place on the waiting list.

The second phase is the final determination of eligibility, referred to as the full application. The full application takes place when the family nears the top of the waiting list. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will ensure that verification of all preferences, eligibility, suitability and selection factors are current in order to determine the family's final eligibility for admission into the Public Housing Program.

## **8.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

There are five (5) eligibility requirements for admission to public housing: qualifies as a family, has an income within the income limits, meets citizenship/eligible immigrant criteria, provides documentation of Social Security numbers, and signs consent authorization documents. In addition to the eligibility criteria, families must also meet the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's screening criteria in order to be admitted to public housing.

### **8.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

#### **A. Family Status.**

- 1. A family with or without children.** Such a family is defined as a group of people related by blood, marriage, adoption or affinity that live together in a stable family relationship.

- a. Children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care are considered family members.
  - b. Unborn children and children in the process of being adopted are considered family members for the purpose of determining bedroom size but are not considered family members for determining income limit.
2. An **elderly family**, which is:
- a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age;
  - b. Two (2) or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or
  - c. One (1) or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides.
3. A **near-elderly family**, which is:
- a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62;
  - b. Two (2) or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or
  - c. One (1) or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living with one or more live-in aides.
4. A **disabled family**, which is:
- a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities;
  - b. Two (2) or more persons with disabilities living together; or
  - c. One (1) or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides.
5. A **displaced family**, which is a family in which each member, or whose sole member, has been displaced by governmental action, or whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws.
6. A **remaining member of a tenant family**, which is a person who is considered a member of the family on the most recent certification.

7. A **single person** who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family.

B. Income Eligibility.

1. To be eligible for admission to developments or scattered-site units that were available for occupancy before 10/1/81, the family's annual income must be within the low-income limit set by HUD. This means the family income cannot exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area.
2. To be eligible for admission to developments or scattered-site units that became available on or after 10/1/81, the family's annual income must be within the very low-income limit set by HUD, unless HUD grants an exception. This means that without a HUD exception, the family income cannot exceed 50 percent of the median income for the area.
3. To be eligible for admission to the Campau Commons development, the family's annual income must meet the income targeting schedule as defined by MSHDA; 6 units at 35% AMI, 28 units at 40% AMI, 46 units at 45% AMI, and 12 units at 50% AMI.
4. Income limits apply only at admission and are not applicable for continued occupancy.
5. A family may not be admitted to the public housing program from another assisted housing program (e.g., tenant-based Section 8) or from a public housing program operated by another housing authority without meeting the income requirements of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.
6. If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission acquires a property for federal public housing purposes, the families living there must have incomes within the low-income limit in order to be eligible to remain as public housing tenants.
7. Income limit restrictions do not apply to families transferring within the Adams Park, Creston Plaza, or Scattered Sites. Transfers from these developments to the Campau Commons development must meet the MSHDA established percentages found in Paragraph B3.

C. Citizenship/Eligibility Status.

1. To be eligible each member of the family must be a citizen, national, or a noncitizen who has eligible immigration status under one of the categories set forth in Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (see 42 U.S.C. 1436a(a)).
2. Family Eligibility for Assistance.
  - a. A family shall not be eligible for assistance unless every member

of the family residing in the unit is determined to have eligible status, with the exception noted below in Paragraph 2b.

- b. Despite the ineligibility of one or more family members, a mixed family may be eligible for one of three types of assistance. (See Section 13.6 for calculating rents under the noncitizen rule).
- c. A family without any eligible members and receiving assistance on June 19, 1995 may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance.

D. Social Security Number Documentation.

To be eligible, all household members of the applicant family must disclose and verify their assigned Social Security number. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will deny the eligibility of the applicant family for failure to meet this criteria. However, if the family is otherwise eligible to participate in the program, the family may maintain their position on the waiting list for a 90-day period to comply with the Social Security number disclosure and verification requirements. If all household members have not disclosed and verified their Social Security number at the time a unit becomes available, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission must offer the available unit to the next eligible applicant family on the waiting list. If the family is still unable to meet the Social Security number disclosure and verification requirements at the expiration of the 90-day period, the Housing Commission will default the application.

In accordance with 24 CFR 5.216, applicants are required to disclose their assigned Social Security number with the exception of the following individuals:

- 1. Those individuals who do not contend to have eligible immigration status (individuals who may be unlawfully present in the United States). These individuals in most instances would not be eligible for a Social Security number.
  - a. A family that consists of a single household member (including a pregnant individual) who does not have eligible immigration status is **not eligible** for housing assistance and cannot be housed.
  - b. A family that consists of two (2) or more household members **and at least one** household member that has eligible immigration status, is classified as a mixed family, and **is eligible** for prorated assistance in accordance with 24 CFR 5.520. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will not deny assistance to mixed families due to nondisclosure of a Social Security number by an individual who does not contend to have eligible immigration status.

Acceptable means of documentation to verify the Social Security number is the original Social Security card. If the card is not available, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will accept an original Social Security Administration issued document, which contains the name and Social Security number of the

individual or an original document issued by a federal, state, or local government agency, which contains the name and Social Security number of the individual.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission may reject documentation of the Social Security number provided by the applicant for only the following reasons:

1. The document is not an original document; or
2. The original document has been altered, mutilated, or not legible; or
3. The document appears to be a forged document (i.e. does not appear to be authentic).

Should the documentation be found to be unacceptable, Housing Commission staff will advise the applicant the reason(s) the document is not acceptable and request the individual to obtain acceptable documentation of the Social Security number and submit it to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission within 90 days. Should the applicant be unable to provide the acceptable documentation within the 90-day period, the application will be defaulted.

E. Signing Consent Forms.

1. In order to be eligible, each member of the family who is at least 18 years of age, and each family head and spouse regardless of age, shall sign one or more consent forms.
2. The consent form must contain, at a minimum, the following:
  - a. A provision authorizing HUD or the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to obtain from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) any information or materials necessary to complete or verify the application for participation or for eligibility for continued occupancy;
  - b. A provision authorizing HUD or the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to verify with previous or current employers' income information pertinent to the family's eligibility for or level of assistance;
  - c. A provision authorizing HUD or the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to request income information from the IRS and the SSA for the sole purpose of verifying income information pertinent to the family's eligibility or level of benefits; and
  - d. A statement that the authorization to release the information requested by the consent form expires 15 months after the date the consent form is signed.

### **8.3 SUITABILITY**

- A. Applicant families will be evaluated to determine whether, based on their recent

behavior, such behavior could reasonably be expected to result in noncompliance with the lease. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will look at past conduct as an indicator of future conduct. Emphasis will be placed on whether a family's admission could reasonably be expected to have a detrimental effect on the development environment, other tenants, Grand Rapids Housing Commission employees, or other people residing in the immediate vicinity of the property. Otherwise eligible families will be denied admission if they fail to meet the suitability criteria.

B. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will consider objective and reasonable aspects of the family's background, including the following:

1. History of meeting financial obligations, especially rent;
2. Ability to maintain (or with assistance, would have the ability to maintain) their housing in a decent and safe condition based on living or housekeeping habits and whether such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants;
3. History of criminal activity by any household member involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property;
4. History of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property;
5. Having committed fraud in connection with any Federal housing assistance program, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived there from; and
6. History of abusing alcohol, other legal substances, or illegal substances in a way that may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment by others.

C. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will ask applicants to provide information demonstrating their ability to comply with the essential elements of the lease. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will verify the information provided. Such verification will include but may not be limited to the following:

1. A credit check of the head, spouse, and co-head;
2. A rental history check of all adult family members;
3. A criminal background check on all adult household members, including live-in aides. This check will be made through State or local law enforcement or court records. Where the individual has lived outside the local area, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will contact law

enforcement agencies where the individual had lived or request a check through the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC);

4. A home visit. The home visit provides the opportunity for the family to demonstrate their ability to maintain their home in a safe and sanitary manner. This inspection considers cleanliness and care of rooms, appliances, and appurtenances. The inspection may also consider any evidence of criminal activity; and
5. A check of the State's lifetime sex offender registration program for each adult household member, including live-in aides. No individual registered with this program will be admitted to public housing.

#### **8.4 GROUNDWORK FOR DENIAL**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission is not required or obligated to assist applicants who:

- A. Do not meet one or more of the eligibility criteria;
- B. Do not supply information or documentation required by the application process;
- C. Have failed to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program;
- D. Lack sufficient or have unacceptable landlord references;
- E. Have a history of not meeting financial obligations, especially rent;
- F. Do not have the ability to maintain (with assistance) their housing in a decent and safe condition where such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants;
- G. Have a history of criminal activity by any household member involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property;
- H. Have a history of disturbing neighbors, destruction of property or housekeeping habits which may adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of other tenants or staff;
- I. Currently owes rent or other amounts to any housing authority in connection with their Public Housing or Section 8 programs;
- J. Have committed fraud, bribery or any other corruption in connection with any Federal housing assistance program, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived there from;



- K. Were evicted from assisted housing within three (3) years of the projected date of admission because of drug-related criminal activity involving the personal use or possession for personal use;
- L. Were evicted from assisted housing within five (5) years of the projected date of admission because of drug-related criminal activity involving the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or possession with the intent to manufacture, sell, distribute a controlled substance as defined in Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. 802;
- M. Are illegally using a controlled substance or are abusing alcohol or other legal substances in a way that may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission may waive this requirement if:
  - 1. The person demonstrates to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's satisfaction that the person is no longer engaging in drug-related criminal activity or abuse of alcohol or other legal substances;
  - 2. Has successfully completed a supervised substance abuse rehabilitation program;
  - 3. Has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully; or
  - 4. Is participating in a supervised substance abuse rehabilitation program.
- N. Have engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior towards any Grand Rapids Housing Commission staff or residents;
- O. Have a household member who has ever been evicted from public housing;
- P. Have a family household member who has been terminated under the Section 8 certificate or voucher program;
- Q. **Denied for Life:** If any household member has been convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine (speed) in a public housing development or in a Section 8 assisted property;
- R. **Denied for Life:** Has a lifetime registration under a State sex offender registration program.

## 8.5 *INFORMAL REVIEW*

- A. If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission determines that an applicant does not meet the criteria for receiving public housing assistance, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will promptly provide the applicant with written notice of the determination. The notice must contain a brief statement of the reason(s) for the decision and state that the applicant may request an informal review of the

decision within ten (10) calendar days of the denial. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will describe how to obtain the informal review.

The informal review may be conducted by any person designated by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission, other than the person who made or approved the decision under review or subordinate of this person. The applicant must be given the opportunity to present written or oral objections to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's decision. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission must notify the applicant of the final decision within fourteen (14) calendar days after the informal review, including a brief statement of the reasons for the final decision.

- B. The participant family may request that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission provide for an Informal Hearing after the family has notification of an INS decision on their citizenship status on appeal, or in lieu of request of appeal to the INS. This request must be made by the participant family within 30 days of receipt of the Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance, or within 30 days of receipt of the INS appeal decision.

For the participant families, the Informal Hearing Process above will be utilized with the exception that the participant family will have up to 30 days of receipt of the Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance, or of the INS appeal decision.

## **9.0 MANAGING THE WAITING LIST**

### **9.1 *OPENING AND CLOSING THE WAITING LIST***

Opening of the waiting list will be announced with a public notice stating that applications for public housing will again be accepted. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media. The public notice will state any limitations to who may apply.

The notice will state that applicants already on waiting lists for other housing programs must apply separately for this program and such applicants will not lose their place on other waiting lists when they apply for public housing. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

Closing of the waiting list will also be announced with a public notice. The public notice will state the date the waiting list will be closed and for what bedroom sizes. The public notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media.

### **9.2 *ORGANIZATION OF THE WAITING LIST***

The waiting list will be maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. The application will be signed by the applicant and be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years.
- B. All applications will be maintained in order of bedroom size, preference, and then in order of date and time of application; and
- C. Any contacts between the Grand Rapids Housing Commission and the applicant will be documented in the applicant file.

### **9.3 *FAMILIES NEARING THE TOP OF THE WAITING LIST***

When a family appears to be within three (3) months of being offered a unit, the family will be invited to an interview and the verification process will begin. It is at this point in time that the family's waiting list preference will be verified. If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top of the list, the family's name will be returned to the appropriate spot on the waiting list. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission must notify the family in writing of this determination and give the family the opportunity for an informal review.

Once the preference has been verified, the family will complete a full application, present Social Security number information, citizenship/eligible immigrant information, and sign the Consent for Release of Information forms.

### **9.4 *PURGING THE WAITING LIST***

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will update and purge its waiting list at least annually all applications on its waiting list that have an application date of 24 months or greater to ensure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom the Grand Rapids Housing Commission has current information, i.e. applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preferences.

### **9.5 *REMOVAL OF APPLICANTS FROM THE WAITING LIST***

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will not remove an applicant's name from the waiting list unless:

- A. The applicant requests in writing that the name be removed;
- B. The applicant fails to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program; or
- C. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program.

### **9.6 *MISSED APPOINTMENTS***

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment with the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will be sent a notice of termination of the process for eligibility.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will allow the family to reschedule without good cause. Generally, no more than one opportunity will be given to reschedule without good cause, and no more than two opportunities will be given for good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time. Applicants will be offered the right to an informal review before being removed from the waiting list.

### **9.7 NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE ACTIONS**

Any applicant whose name is being removed from the waiting list will be notified by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission, in writing, that they have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request an informal review. The letter will also indicate that their name will be removed from the waiting list if they fail to respond within the timeframe specified. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission system of removing applicant names from the waiting list will not violate the rights of persons with disabilities. If an applicant claims that their failure to respond to a request for information or updates was caused by a disability, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will verify that there is in fact a disability and the disability caused the failure to respond, and provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the waiting list based on the date and time of the original application.

## **10.0 TENANT SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT PLAN**

### **10.1 PREFERENCES**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will select families based on the following preferences within each bedroom size category:

- A. Displaced person(s): Individuals or families displaced by government action or whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of circumstance such as fire or lead paint or a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal Disaster Relief Laws.
- B. Families who live in the City limits of Grand Rapids whom are Veterans or surviving spouses of veterans.
- C. All other families who live in the City limits of Grand Rapids.
- D. Families who do not live in the City limits of Grand Rapids whom are Veterans or surviving spouses of Veterans.
- E. All other families that do not live in the City limits of Grand Rapids.

The date and time of application will be noted and utilized to determine the sequence within the above-prescribed preferences.

Notwithstanding the above, families who are elderly, disabled, or displaced will be offered housing before other single persons.

**Buildings Designed for the Elderly and Disabled:** Preference will be given to elderly and disabled families. If there are no elderly or disabled families on the list, preference will then be given to near-elderly families. If there are no near-elderly families on the waiting list, units will be offered to families who qualify for the appropriate bedroom size using these priorities. All such families will be selected from the waiting list using the preferences as outlined above.

**Accessible Units:** Accessible units will be first offered to families who may benefit from the accessible features. Applicants for these units will be selected utilizing the same preference system as outlined above. If there are no applicants who would benefit from the accessible features, the units will be offered to other applicants in the order that their names come to the top of the waiting list. Such applicants, however, must sign a release form stating they will accept a transfer (at their own expense) if, at a future time, a family requiring an accessible feature applies. Any family required to transfer will be given a 30 days notice.

**Network 180 Referrals:** Preference will be given to disabled or elderly applicants referred and actively treated by Network 180 for the Adams Park Apartments. Network 180 applicants will be required to meet all eligibility and screening criteria contained elsewhere in the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy.

**10.2 ASSIGNMENT OF BEDROOM SIZES**

The following guidelines will determine each family’s unit size without overcrowding or over-housing:

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Persons	
	Minimum	Maximum
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8

These standards are based on the assumption that each bedroom will accommodate no more than two (2) persons. Zero-bedroom units will only be assigned to one-person families. Two adults will share a bedroom unless related by blood.

In determining bedroom size, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will include the presence of children to be born to a pregnant woman, children who are in the process of

being adopted, children whose custody is being obtained, children who are temporarily away at school, or children who are temporarily in foster-care.

In addition, the following considerations may be taken in determining bedroom size:

- A. Children of the same sex will share a bedroom.
- B. Children of the opposite sex, both under the age of six (6) will share a bedroom.
- C. Adults and children will not be required to share a bedroom.
- D. Foster – adults and/or foster - children will not be required to share a bedroom with family members.

Exceptions to normal bedroom size standards include the following:

- A. Units smaller than assigned through the above guidelines – A family may request a smaller unit size than the guidelines allow. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will allow the smaller size unit so long as generally no more than two (2) people per bedroom are assigned. In such situations, the family will sign a certification stating they understand they will be ineligible for a larger size unit for three (3) years or until the family size changes, whichever may occur first.
- B. Units larger than assigned through the above guidelines – A family may request a larger unit size than the guidelines allow. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will allow the larger size unit if the family provides a verified medical need that the family be housed in a larger unit.
- C. If there are no families on the waiting list for a larger size, smaller families may be housed if they sign a release form stating they will transfer (at the family's own expense) to the appropriate size unit when an eligible family needing the larger unit applies. The family transferring will be given a 30-day notice before being required to move.
- D. Larger units may be offered in order to improve the marketing of a development suffering a high vacancy rate.

### **10.3 SELECTION FROM THE WAITING LIST**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall follow the statutory requirement that at least 40% of newly admitted families in any fiscal year be families whose annual income is at or below 30% of the area median income. To insure this requirement is met we shall quarterly monitor the incomes of newly admitted families and the incomes of the families on the waiting list. If it appears that the requirement to house extremely low-income families will not be met, we will skip higher income families on the waiting list to reach extremely low-income families.

If there are not enough extremely low-income families on the waiting list we will conduct outreach on a non-discriminatory basis to attract extremely low-income families to reach the statutory requirement.

#### **10.4 DECONCENTRATION POLICY**

It is Grand Rapids Housing Commission's policy to provide for deconcentration of poverty and encourage income mixing by bringing higher income families into lower income developments and lower income families into higher income developments. Toward this end, we will skip families on the waiting list to reach other families with a lower or higher income. We will accomplish this in a uniform and non-discriminating manner.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will affirmatively market our housing to all eligible income groups. Lower income residents will not be steered toward lower income developments and higher income people will not be steered toward higher income developments.

Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, we will analyze the income levels of families residing in each of our developments, the income levels of census tracts in which our developments are located, and the income levels of the families on the waiting list. Based on this analysis, we will determine the level of marketing strategies and deconcentration incentives to implement. The worksheet for the analysis can be found in Appendix 1.

#### **10.5 DECONCENTRATION INCENTIVES**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission may offer one or more incentives to encourage applicant families whose income classification would help to meet the deconcentration goals of a particular development.

Various incentives may be used at different times, or under different conditions, but will always be provided in a consistent and nondiscriminatory manner.

#### **10.6 OFFER OF A UNIT**

When the Grand Rapids Housing Commission discovers that a unit will become available, it will contact the first family on the waiting list who has the highest priority for this type of unit or development and whose income category would help to meet the deconcentration goal and/or the income targeting goal.

The family will be notified of a unit offer via first class mail. The family will be given five (5) business days from the date the letter was mailed to contact the Grand Rapids Housing Commission regarding the offer.

The family will be offered the opportunity to view the unit. After the opportunity to view the unit, the family will have two (2) business days to accept or reject the unit. This

verbal offer and the family's decision must be documented in the tenant file. If the family rejects the offer of the unit, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will send the family a letter documenting the offer and the rejection.

#### **10.7 REJECTION OF UNIT**

If in making the offer to the family the Grand Rapids Housing Commission skipped over other families on the waiting list in order to meet their deconcentration goal or offered the family any other deconcentration incentive and the family rejects the unit, the family will not lose their place on the waiting list and will not be otherwise penalized.

If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission did not skip over other families on the waiting list to reach this family, did not offer any other deconcentration incentive, and the family rejects the unit without good cause, the family will forfeit their application's date and time. The family will keep their preferences, but the date and time of application will be changed to the date and time the unit was rejected.

If the family rejects with good cause any unit offered, they will not lose their place on the waiting list. Good cause includes reasons related to health, proximity to work, school, and childcare (for those working or going to school). The family will be offered the right to an informal review of the decision to alter their application status.

#### **10.8 ACCEPTANCE OF UNIT**

The family will be required to sign a lease that will become effective no later than three (3) business days after the date of acceptance or the business day after the day the unit becomes available, whichever is later, and prior to occupancy.

Prior to signing the lease the head of household and all other adult family members will be required to attend the Lease and Occupancy Orientation when they are initially accepted for occupancy.

The applicant will be provided a copy of the lease, the grievance procedure, utility allowances, utility charges, the current schedule of routine maintenance charges, and a request for reasonable accommodation form. These documents will be explained in detail. The applicant will sign a certification that they have received these documents and that they have reviewed them with Housing Commission personnel. The certification will be filed in the tenant's file.

The signing of the lease and the review of financial information are to be privately handled. The head of household and all adult family members will be required to execute the lease prior to admission. One executed copy of the lease will be furnished to the head of household and the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will retain the original executed lease in the tenant's file. A copy of the grievance procedure will be attached to the resident's copy of the lease.



The family will pay a security deposit at the time of lease signing. The security deposit will be equal to the Total Tenant Payment or that amount which is limited by Michigan Rent Security Deposit Law.

In exceptional situations, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission reserves the right to allow a new resident to pay their security deposit in up to three (3) payments. One third shall be paid in advance, one third with their second rent payment, and one third with their third rent payment. This shall be at the sole discretion of the Housing Commission.

In the case of a move within Grand Rapids Housing Commission properties, the security deposit for the first unit will be transferred to the second unit. Additionally, if the security deposit for the second unit is greater than that for the first, the difference will be collected from the family. Conversely, if the security deposit is less, the difference will be refunded to the family.

In the event there are costs attributable to the family for bringing the first unit into condition for re-renting, the family shall be billed for these charges.

## **11.0 INCOME, EXCLUSIONS FROM INCOME, AND DEDUCTIONS FROM INCOME**

To determine annual income, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission counts the income of all family members, excluding the types and sources of income that are specifically excluded. Once the annual income is determined, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission subtracts all allowable deductions (allowances) to determine the Total Tenant Payment.

### ***11.1 ANNUAL INCOME***

Annual income means all amounts, monetary or not, that:

- A. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head of household or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
- B. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual re-examination effective date; and
- C. Are not specifically excluded from annual income.

Annual income includes, but is not limited to:

- A. The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services.
- B. The net income from the operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets

used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is a reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family.

- C. Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, annual income includes the greater of the actual income derived from all net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD.
- D. The full amount of periodic amounts received from Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum amount or prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount. (However, deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts are excluded.)
- E. Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment and disability compensation, worker's compensation, severance pay, TANF and general welfare assistance. (However, lump sum additions such as insurance payments from worker's compensation are excluded.)
- F. Welfare assistance.
  - 1. If the welfare assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustment by the welfare assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of welfare assistance income to be included as income consists of:
    - a. The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus
    - b. The maximum amount that the welfare assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this requirement is the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

2. If the amount of welfare is reduced due to an act of fraud by a family member or because of any family member's failure to comply with requirements to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or work activity, the amount of rent required to be paid by the family will not be decreased. In such cases, the amount of income attributable to the family will include what the family would have received had they complied with the welfare requirements and/or had not committed an act of fraud.
  3. If the amount of welfare assistance is reduced as a result of a lifetime time limit, the reduced amount is the amount that shall be counted as income.
- G. Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony, child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling.
  - H. All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces. (Special pay to a member exposed to hostile fire is excluded.)

## **11.2 EXCLUSIONS FROM INCOME**

Annual income does not include the following:

- A. Income from employment of children (including foster children) under the age of 18 years;
- B. Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone);
- C. Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains, and settlement for personal or property losses;
- D. Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member;
- E. Income of a live-in aide;
- F. The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution;
- G. The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire;
- H. The amounts received from the following programs:
  1. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD;

2. Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS);
3. Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, transportation, child care, etc.) and that are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;
4. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the Housing Commission or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, and resident initiatives coordination. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time;
5. Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying State or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program;
6. Temporary, nonrecurring or sporadic income (including gifts);
7. Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era;
8. Earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household and spouse);
9. Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 per adopted child;
10. For family members who enrolled in certain training programs prior to 10/1/99, the earnings and benefits resulting from the participation if the program provides employment training and supportive services in accordance with the Family Support Act of 1988, Section 22 of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437t), or any comparable Federal, State, or local law during the exclusion period. For purposes of this exclusion the following definitions apply:
  - a. Comparable Federal, State or local law means a program providing employment training and supportive services that:

- i. Is authorized by a Federal, State or local law;
    - ii. Is funded by the Federal, State or local government;
    - iii. Is operated or administered by a public agency; and
    - iv. Has as its objective to assist participants in acquiring employment skills.
  - b. Exclusion period means the period during which the family member participates in a program described in this section, plus 18 months from the date the family member begins the first job acquired by the family member after completion of such program that is not funded by public housing assistance under the 1937 Act. If the family member is terminated from employment with good cause, the exclusion period shall end.
  - c. Earnings and benefits means the incremental earnings and benefits resulting from a qualifying employment training program or subsequent job.
11. The entire amount of earned income that is greater than the family's former income is excluded for the first 12 months following the point when the employment begins, and 50-percent of the increased amount is excluded for the second 12 months after the beginning of employment. The maximum term for the combined full and 50 per cent exclusion of 48 months begins the month following the time of the first employment-related exclusion. This exclusion (paragraph 11) will not apply for any family who concurrently is eligible for exclusion #10. Additionally, this exclusion is only available to the following families:
- a. Families whose income increases as a result of employment of a family member who was previously unemployed for one (1) or more years. A person is considered to have been unemployed if they have earned less money in the previous twelve (12) months than would have been earned working ten (10) hours per week for fifty (50) weeks at the established minimum wage.
  - b. Families whose income increases during the participation of a family member in any family self-sufficiency program.
  - c. Families who are or were, within 6 months, assisted under a State TANF program.
12. Deferred periodic amounts from supplemental security income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts;
13. Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under State or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit;

14. Amounts paid by a State agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep the developmentally disabled family member at home; or
15. Amounts specifically excluded by any other Federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits. These exclusions include:
  - a. The value of the allotment of food stamps.
  - b. Payments to volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973.
  - c. Payments received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.
  - d. Income from submarginal land of the U.S. that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes.
  - e. Payments made under Health and Human Services' Low-Income Energy Assistance Program.
  - f. Payments received under the Job Training Partnership Act.
  - g. Income from the disposition of funds of the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians.
  - h. The first \$2000 per capita received from judgment funds awarded for certain Indian claims.
  - i. Amount of scholarships awarded under Title IV including Work Study.
  - j. Payments received under the Older Americans Act of 1965.
  - k. Payments from Agent Orange Settlement.
  - l. Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Act.
  - m. The value of child care under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.
  - n. Earned income tax credit refund payments.
  - o. Payments for living expenses under the Americorps Program.

- p. Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation.
- q. Any allowance paid under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1805 to a child suffering from spina bifida who is the child of a Vietnam veteran.
- r. Any amount of crime victim compensation under the Victims of Crime Act.
- s. Allowances, earnings and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will not provide exclusions from income in addition to those already provided for by HUD.

### **11.3 DEDUCTIONS FROM ANNUAL INCOME**

The following deductions will be made from annual income:

- A. \$480 for each dependent.
- B. \$400 for any elderly family or disabled family.
- C. For any family that is not an elderly or disabled family but has a member (other than the head or spouse) who is a person with a disability, disability assistance expenses in excess of 3% of annual income. This allowance may not exceed the employment income received by family members who are 18 years of age or older as a result of the assistance to the person with disabilities.
- D. For any elderly or disabled family:
  - 1. That has no disability assistance expenses, an allowance for medical expenses equal to the amount by which the medical expenses exceed 3% of annual income.
  - 2. That has disability expenses greater than or equal to 3% of annual income, an allowance for disability assistance expenses computed in accordance with paragraph C, plus an allowance for medical expenses that equal the family's medical expenses.
  - 3. That has disability assistance expenses that are less than 3% of annual income, an allowance for combined disability assistance expenses and medical expenses that is equal to the total of these expenses less 3% of annual income.
- E. Child care expenses that enable a family member to be gainfully employed or to further his/her education.

## **12.0 VERIFICATION**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will verify information related to waiting list preferences, eligibility, admission, and level of benefits prior to admission. Periodically during occupancy, items related to eligibility and rent determination shall also be reviewed and verified. Income, assets, and expenses will be verified, as well as disability status, need for a live-in aide and other reasonable accommodations; full time student status of family members 18 years of age and older; Social Security numbers; and citizenship/eligible non-citizen status. Age and relationship will only be verified in those instances where needed to make a determination of level of assistance.

### **12.1 ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF VERIFICATION**

Age, relationship, U.S. citizenship, and Social Security numbers will generally be verified with documentation provided by the family. For citizenship, the family's declaration will be accepted. Verification of the family's declaration may be required. Documents that can be used as proof include a U.S. passport, U.S. birth certificate, a temporary resident card, or a document referenced by Department of Homeland Security.

Other information will be verified by third party verification. This type of verification includes written documentation with forms sent or faxed directly to and received directly by a source, not passed through the hands of the family. This verification may also be direct contact with the source, in person or by telephone. It may also be a report generated by a request from the Grand Rapids Housing Commission or automatically by another government agency, i.e. the Social Security Administration. Verification forms and reports received will be contained in the applicant/tenant file. Oral third party documentation will include the same information as if the documentation had been written, i.e. name, date of contact, amount received, etc.

When third party verification cannot be obtained, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will accept documentation received from the applicant/tenant. Hand-carried documentation will be accepted if the Grand Rapids Housing Commission has been unable to obtain third party verification in a 4-week period of time. Photocopies of the documents provided by the family will be maintained in the file.

When neither third party verification nor hand-carried verification can be obtained, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will accept a notarized statement signed by the head, spouse or co-head. Such documents will be maintained in the file.

### **12.2 TYPES OF VERIFICATION**

The chart below outlines the factors that may be verified and gives common examples of the verification that will be sought. To obtain written third party verification, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will send a request form to the source along with a release form signed by the applicant/tenant via first class mail.



Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Verification	Hand-Carried Verification
<b>General Eligibility Items</b>		
Social Security Number		Social Security card. Original SSA document with name and SSN, original document issued by federal, state, or local government agency with name and SSN of the individual.
Citizenship	N/A	Signed declaration, U.S. passport, U.S. birth certificate, a temporary resident card, or a document referenced by the Department of Homeland Security.
Eligible immigration status	INS SAVE confirmation #	INS card
Disability	Letter from medical professional, SSI, etc.	Proof of SSI or Social Security disability payments
Full time student status (if >18)	Letter from school	For high school students, any document evidencing enrollment
Need for a live-in aide	Letter from doctor or other professional knowledgeable of condition	N/A
Child care costs	Letter from care provider	Bills and receipts
Disability assistance expenses	Letters from suppliers, care givers, etc.	Bills and records of payment
Medical expenses	Letters from providers, prescription record from pharmacy, medical professional's letter stating assistance or a companion animal is needed	Bills, receipts, records of payment, dates of trips, mileage log, receipts for fares and tolls
<b>Value of and Income from Assets</b>		
Savings, checking accounts	Letter from institution	Passbook, most current statements

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Verification	Hand-Carried Verification
CDs, bonds, etc.	Letter from institution	Tax return, information brochure from institution, the CD, the bond
Stocks	Letter from broker or holding company	Stock or most current statement, price in newspaper or through Internet
Real Property	Letter from tax office, assessment, etc.	Property tax statement (for current value), assessment, records or income and expenses, tax return
Personal property	Assessment, bluebook, etc	Receipt for purchase, other evidence of worth
Cash value of life insurance policies	Letter from insurance company	Current statement
Assets disposed of for less than fair market value	N/A	Original receipt and receipt at disposition, other evidence of worth
<b>Income</b>		
Earned income	EIV print out, letter from employer	Multiple pay stubs
Self-employed	N/A	Tax return from prior year, books of accounts
Regular gifts and contributions	Letter from source, letter from organization receiving gift (i.e., if grandmother pays day care provider, the day care provider could so state)	Bank deposits, other similar evidence
Alimony/child support	Court order, letter from source, letter from Human Services	Record of deposits, divorce decree
Periodic payments (i.e., social security, welfare, pensions, worker's compensation, unemployment)	EIV print out, letter or electronic reports from the source	Award letter, letter announcing change in amount of future payments
Training program participation	Letter from program provider indicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether enrolled or completed</li> </ul>	N/A

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Item to Be Verified	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Verification	Hand-Carried Verification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether training is HUD-funded</li> <li>• whether Federal, State, local govt., or local program</li> <li>• whether it is employment training</li> <li>• whether it has clearly defined goals and objectives</li> <li>• whether program has supportive services</li> <li>• whether payments are for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in order to participate in a program</li> <li>• date of first job after program completion</li> </ul>	Evidence of job start

### **12.3 VERIFICATION OF CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE NONCITIZEN STATUS**

The citizenship/eligible non-citizen status of each family member regardless of age must be determined.

Prior to being admitted, or at the first re-examination, all citizens and nationals will be required to sign a citizen declaration under penalty of perjury. They will be required to show proof of their status by such means as a Social Security card, birth certificate, military ID, or military DD 214 Form.

Prior to being admitted or at the first re-examination, all eligible non-citizens who are 62 years of age or older will be required to sign a citizen declaration under penalty of perjury. They will also be required to show proof of age.

Prior to being admitted or at the first re-examination, all eligible non-citizens must sign a citizen declaration of their status and a verification consent form and provide their original INS documentation. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will make a copy of the individual's INS documentation and place the copy in the file. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will also verify their status through the INS SAVE system. If the INS SAVE system cannot confirm eligibility, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will mail information to the INS in order that a manual check can be made of INS records.

Family members who do not claim to be citizens, nationals, or eligible non-citizens must be listed on a statement of non-eligible members and the list must be signed by the head of the household.

Non-citizen students on student visas, though in the country legally, are not eligible to be admitted to public housing.

Any family member who does not choose to declare their status must be listed on the statement of non-eligible members.

If no family member is determined to be eligible under this section, the family's eligibility will be denied.

The family's assistance will not be denied, delayed, reduced, or terminated because of a delay in the process of determining eligible status under this section, except to the extent that the delay is caused by the family.

If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission determines that a family member has knowingly permitted an ineligible non-citizen (other than any ineligible non-citizens listed on the lease) to permanently reside in their unit, the family will be evicted. Such family will not be eligible to be readmitted for a period of 24 months from the date of eviction or termination.

#### **12.4 VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

Prior to admission, each family member is required to disclose and provide verification of their assigned Social Security number. New family members must provide this verification prior to being added to the lease.

When a participant requests to add a new household member who is under the age of six (6) and does not have an assigned Social Security number, the participant must disclose the assigned Social Security number and provide the Grand Rapids Housing Commission with the documentation within 90 calendar days of the child being added to the household.

If the family is unable to disclose and provide evidence of the Social Security number within 90 calendar days, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will grant the family an additional 90-day period to comply with the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirement, if the Grand Rapids Housing Commission determines that the family was unable to comply with the requirements due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and were outside the control of the family (i.e., delayed processing of the Social Security number application by the Social Security Administration, natural disaster, fire, death in family, etc.).

The child will be included as part of the assisted household and entitled to all the benefits of being a household member during the allotted time for the family to comply with the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirements. Upon expiration of the provided time period, if the family has not complied with the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirements, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will terminate the family's tenancy.

Acceptable means of documentation to verify the Social Security number is the original Social Security card. If the card is not available, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission

will accept an original Social Security Administration-issued document, which contains the name and Social Security number of the individual or an original document issued by a federal, state, or local government agency, which contains the name and Social Security number of the individual.

Should it come to the attention of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission that the Social Security number provided by the tenant be incorrect and the family is otherwise eligible for continued tenancy in the program, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will advise the family in writing and request that the correctly assigned Social Security number and documentation be forwarded. This notice shall also provide the family with 90 days in which to comply with the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirement. This 90-day period will be granted to the tenant to comply with the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirements, if the Housing Commission determines:

1. The failure to meet the Social Security number disclosure and documentation requirements was due to circumstances that could not have been foreseen and were outside the control of the family; and
2. There is a reasonable likelihood that the family will be able to disclose the Social Security number and provide such documentation of the Social Security number by the deadline.

If the tenant is unable to comply with the requirements by the deadline, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission must terminate the tenancy of the entire family.

## ***12.5 TIMING OF VERIFICATION***

Verification information must be dated within ninety (90) days of certification or re-examination. If the verification is older than this, the source will be contacted and asked to provide information regarding any changes.

When an interim re-examination is conducted, the Housing Commission will only verify and update those elements reported to have changed.

## ***12.6 FREQUENCY OF OBTAINING VERIFICATION***

For each family member, citizenship/eligible non-citizen status will be verified only once. This verification will be obtained prior to admission. If the status of any family member was not determined prior to admission, verification of their status will be obtained at the next regular re-examination. Prior to a new member joining the family, their citizenship/eligible non-citizen status will be verified.

For each family member, verification of Social Security number will be obtained only once. This verification will be accomplished prior to admission.

## **13.0 DETERMINATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT AND TENANT RENT**

### **13.1 FAMILY CHOICE**

At admission and each year in preparation for their annual re-examination, each family is given the choice of having their rent determined under the formula method or having their rent set at the flat rent amount.

- A. Families who opt for the flat or ceiling rent will be required to go through the income re-examination process every three years, rather than the annual review they would otherwise undergo.
- B. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a re-examination and return to the formula based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. The family's income has decreased.
  - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for child care, medical care, etc.
  - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the formula method would be more financially feasible for the family.

### **13.2 THE FORMULA METHOD**

The Total Tenant Payment is equal to the highest of:

- A. 10% of monthly income; or
- B. 30% of adjusted monthly income.

The family will pay the greater of the Total Tenant Payment or the minimum rent of \$50.00, but never more than the ceiling rent.

In the case of a family who has qualified for the income exclusion at Section 11.2(H)(11), upon the expiration of the 12-month period described in that section, an additional rent benefit accrues to the family. If the family member's employment continues, then for the 12-month period following the 12-month period of disallowance, the resulting rent increase will be capped at 50 percent of the rent increase the family would have otherwise received.

### **13.3 MINIMUM RENT**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission has set the minimum rent at \$50.00. However, if the family requests a hardship exemption, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will

immediately suspend the minimum rent for the family until the Housing Commission can determine whether the hardship exists and whether the hardship is of a temporary or long-term nature.

A. A hardship exists in the following circumstances:

1. When the family has lost eligibility for or is waiting an eligibility determination for a Federal, State, or local assistance program;
2. When the family would be evicted as a result of the imposition of the minimum rent requirement;
3. When the income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including loss of employment;
4. When the family has an increase in expenses because of changed circumstances, for medical costs, childcare, transportation, education, or similar items;
5. When a death has occurred in the family.

B. No hardship. If the Housing Commission determines there is no qualifying hardship, the minimum rent will be reinstated, including requiring back payment of minimum rent for the time of suspension.

C. Temporary hardship. If the Housing Commission reasonably determines that there is a qualifying hardship but that it is of a temporary nature, the minimum rent will not be imposed for a period of 90 days from the date of the family's request. At the end of the 90-day period, the minimum rent will be imposed retroactively to the time of suspension. The Housing Commission will offer a repayment agreement in accordance with the Section 19 of this policy for any rent not paid during the period of suspension. During the suspension period the Housing Commission will not evict the family for nonpayment of the amount of tenant rent owed for the suspension period.

D. Long-term hardship. If the Housing Commission determines there is a long-term hardship, the family will be exempt from the minimum rent requirement until the hardship no longer exists.

E. Appeals. The family may use the grievance procedure to appeal the Housing Authority's determination regarding the hardship. No escrow deposit will be required in order to access the grievance procedure.

### ***13.4 THE FLAT RENT***

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission has set a flat rent for each public housing unit. In doing so, it considered the size and type of the unit, as well as its condition, amenities, services, and neighborhood. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission determined the market value of the unit and set the rent at the market value. The amount of the flat rent

will be reevaluated annually and adjustments applied. Affected families will be given a 30-day notice of any rent change. Adjustments are applied on the anniversary date for each affected family (for more information on flat rents, see Section 15.3).

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will post the flat rents at each of the developments and at the central office and are incorporated in this policy upon approval by the Board of Commissioners.

### **13.5 CEILING RENT**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission has set a ceiling rent for each public housing unit. The amount of the ceiling rent will be reevaluated annually and the adjustments applied. Affected families will be given a 30-day notice of any rent change. Adjustments are applied on the anniversary date for each affected family.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will post the ceiling rents at each of the developments and at the central office and are incorporated in this policy upon approval by the Board of Commissioners.

### **13.6 RENT FOR FAMILIES UNDER THE NON-CITIZEN RULE**

A mixed family will receive full continuation of assistance if all of the following conditions are met:

- A. The family was receiving assistance on June 19, 1995;
- B. The family was granted continuation of assistance before November 29, 1996;
- C. The family's head of household or spouse has eligible immigration status; and
- D. The family does not include any person who does not have eligible status other than the head of household, the spouse of the head of household, any parent of the head of household or spouse, or any child (under the age of 18) of the head of household or spouse.

If a mixed family qualifies for prorated assistance but decides not to accept it, or if the family has no eligible members, the family may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance to permit the family additional time for the orderly transition of some or all of its members to locate other affordable housing. Under this provision, the family receives full assistance. If assistance is granted under this provision prior to November 29, 1996, it may last no longer than three (3) years. If granted after that date, the maximum period of time for assistance under the provision is eighteen (18) months. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will grant each family a period of six (6) months to find suitable affordable housing. If the family cannot find suitable affordable housing, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will provide additional search periods up to the maximum time allowable.



Suitable housing means housing that is not substandard and is of appropriate size for the family. Affordable housing means that it can be rented for an amount not exceeding the amount the family pays for rent, plus utilities, plus 25%.

The family's assistance is prorated in the following manner:

- A. Determine the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of gross rents (tenant rent plus utility allowance) for the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. The 95<sup>th</sup> percentile is called the maximum rent.
- B. Subtract the family's Total Tenant Payment from the maximum rent. The resulting number is called the maximum subsidy.
- C. Divide the maximum subsidy by the number of family members and multiply the result times the number of eligible family members. This yields the prorated subsidy.
- D. Subtract the prorated subsidy from the maximum rent to find the prorated Total Tenant Payment. From this amount subtract the full utility allowance to obtain the prorated tenant rent.

### **13.7 UTILITY ALLOWANCE - SURCHARGES**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall establish a utility allowance for all check-metered utilities and for all tenant-paid utilities. The allowance will be based on a reasonable consumption of utilities by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful environment. In setting the allowance, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will review the actual consumption of tenant families as well as changes made or anticipated due to modernization (weatherization efforts, installation of energy-efficient appliances, etc). Allowances will be evaluated at least annually as well as any time utility rate changes by 10% or more since the last revision to the allowances.

The utility allowance will be subtracted from the family's formula or flat rent to determine the amount of the Tenant Rent. The Tenant Rent is the amount the family owes each month to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. The amount of the utility allowance is then still available to the family to pay the cost of their utilities. Any utility cost above the allowance is the responsibility of the tenant. Any savings resulting from utility costs below the amount of the allowance belongs to the tenant.

Utility allowance revisions based on rate changes shall be effective retroactively to the first day of the month following the month in which the last rate change took place. Revisions based on changes in consumption or other reasons shall become effective at each family's next annual re-examination.

Families with high utility costs are encouraged to contact the Grand Rapids Housing Commission for an energy analysis. The analysis may identify problems with the dwelling unit that once corrected will reduce energy costs. The analysis can also assist the family in identifying ways they can reduce their costs.

Requests for relief from surcharges for excess consumption of Grand Rapids Housing Commission purchased utilities or from payment of utility supplier billings in excess of the utility allowance for tenant-paid utility costs may be granted by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission on reasonable grounds. Requests shall be granted to families that include an elderly member or a member with disabilities. Requests by the family shall be submitted under the Reasonable Accommodation Policy. Families shall be advised of their right to individual relief at admission to public housing and at time of utility allowance changes.

### **13.8 PAYING RENT**

Rent and other charges are due and payable on the first day of the month. All rents should be paid at the management office at each site. Reasonable accommodations for this requirement will be made for persons with disabilities. As a safety measure, no cash shall be accepted as a rent payment

If the rent is not paid by the fifth of the month, a Notice to Vacate will be issued to the tenant. In addition, a \$5 late charge or \$1 a day, whichever is greater, will be assessed to the tenant. If rent is paid by a personal check and the check is returned for insufficient funds, this shall be considered a non-payment of rent and will incur the late charge plus an additional charge as assessed to Grand Rapids Housing Commission by the bank for NSF charges.

## **14.0 OTHER PAYMENTS UNDER THE LEASE**

- A. Security Deposit shall be required of all tenants and shall be equal to one month's Total Tenant Payment or that amount which is limited by Michigan Rent Security Deposit Law. This amount shall be due and payable upon signing of the initial lease or in payments as discussed in 10.3.
- B. Court and processing costs incurred for purposes of eviction shall be passed on to the tenant.
- C. Charges for maintenance costs beyond normal wear and tear shall be charged according to the Housing Commission approved repair schedule.

## **15.0 CONTINUED OCCUPANCY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **15.1 GENERAL**

In order to be eligible for continued occupancy, each adult family member must either 1) contribute eight (8) hours per month of community service (not including political activities) within the community in which the public housing development is located, or 2) participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or 3) a combination of both, unless they are exempt from this requirement.

## **15.2 EXEMPTIONS**

The following adult family members of tenant families are exempt from this requirement.

- A. Family members who are 62 or older.
- B. Family members who are blind or disabled.
- C. Family members who are the primary care giver for someone who is blind or disabled.
- D. Family members engaged in vocational and other work activity as defined in Section 407(d) of the Social Security Act under 42 USC 607(d) and HUD Notice PIH 2003-17(HA) dated June 20, 2003.
- E. Family members who are exempt from work activity under part A title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other State welfare program, including the welfare-to-work program.
- F. Family members receiving assistance under a State program funded under part A title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other State welfare program, including welfare-to-work and who are in compliance with that program.

## **15.3 NOTIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENT**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall identify all adult family members as to their exempt or non-exempt status for the Community Service Requirement.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall notify all such family members of the community service requirement and of the categories of individuals who are exempt from the requirement. The notification will provide the opportunity for family members to claim and explain an exempt status. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall verify such claims.

The notification will advise families that their community service obligation will begin upon the effective date of their first annual re-examination on or after 10/1/99. For families paying a flat rent, the obligation begins on the date their annual re-examination would have been effective had an annual re-examination taken place. It will also advise them that failure to comply with the community service requirement will result in ineligibility for continued occupancy at the time of any subsequent annual re-examination.

## **15.4 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Community service includes performing work or duties in the public benefit that serve to improve the quality of life and/or enhance resident self-sufficiency, and/or increase the self-responsibility of the resident within the community.

An economic self sufficiency program is one that is designed to encourage, assist, train or facilitate the economic independence of participants and their families or to provide work for participants. These programs may include programs for job training, work placement, basic skills training, education, English proficiency, work fare, financial or household management, apprenticeship, and any program necessary to ready a participant to work (such as substance abuse or mental health treatment).

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will coordinate with social service agencies and local schools in identifying a list of volunteer community service positions. Together with the Resident Advisory Boards, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may create volunteer positions such as hall monitoring, litter patrols, and supervising and record keeping for volunteers.

### **15.5 THE PROCESS**

At each annual re-examination, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will do the following:

- A. Provide a list of volunteer opportunities to the family members.
- B. Provide information about obtaining suitable volunteer positions.
- C. Provide a volunteer time sheet to the family member. Instructions for the time sheet require the individual to complete the form and have a supervisor date and sign for each period of work.
- D. Assign family members to a volunteer coordinator who will assist the family members in identifying appropriate volunteer positions and in meeting their responsibilities. The volunteer coordinator will track the family member's progress monthly and will meet with the family member as needed to best encourage compliance.
- E. Thirty (30) days before the family's next lease anniversary date, the volunteer coordinator will advise the Grand Rapids Housing Commission whether each applicable adult family member is in compliance with the community service requirement.

### **15.6 NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will notify any family found to be in noncompliance of the following:

- A. The family member(s) has been determined to be in noncompliance;
- B. That the determination is subject to the grievance procedure; and

- C. That, unless the family member(s) enter into an agreement to comply, the lease will not be renewed or will be terminated.

### **15.7 OPPORTUNITY FOR CURE**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will offer the family member(s) the opportunity to enter into an agreement prior to the anniversary of the lease. The agreement shall state that the family member(s) agrees to enter into an economic self-sufficiency program or agrees to contribute to community service for as many hours as needed to comply with the requirement over the past 12-month period. The cure shall occur over the 12-month period beginning with the date of the agreement and the resident shall at the same time stay current with that year's community service requirement. The first hours a resident earns goes toward the current commitment until the current year's commitment is made.

The volunteer coordinator will assist the family member in identifying volunteer opportunities and will track compliance on a monthly basis.

If any applicable family member does not accept the terms of the agreement, does not fulfill their obligation to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, or falls behind in their obligation under the agreement to perform community service by more than three (3) hours after three (3) months, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall take action to terminate the lease.

## **16.0 RECERTIFICATIONS**

At least annually, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will conduct a re-examination of family income and circumstances for formula-based rents. The results of the re-examination determines 1) the rent the family will pay, and 2) whether the family is housed in the correct unit size.

### **16.1 GENERAL**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will send a notification letter to the family letting them know that it is time for their annual re-examination, giving them the option of selecting either the flat rent or formula method, and scheduling an appointment if they are currently paying a formula rent. If the family thinks they may want to switch from a flat rent to a formula rent, they should request an appointment. At the appointment, the family can make their final decision regarding which rent method they will choose. The letter also includes, for those families paying the formula method, forms for the family to complete in preparation for the interview. The letter includes instructions permitting the family to reschedule the interview if necessary. The letter tells families who may need to make alternate arrangements due to a disability that they may contact staff to request an accommodation of their needs.

During the appointment, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will determine whether family composition may require a transfer to a different bedroom size unit, and if so, the family's name will be placed on the transfer list.

## **16.2 MISSED APPOINTMENTS**

If the family fails to respond to the letter and fails to attend the interview, a second letter will be mailed. The second letter will advise of a new time and date for the interview, allowing for the same considerations for rescheduling and accommodation as above. The letter will also advise that failure by the family to attend the second scheduled interview will result in the Grand Rapids Housing Commission taking eviction actions against the family.

## **16.3 FLAT RENTS**

The annual letter to flat rent payers regarding the re-examination process will state the following:

- A. Each year at the time of the annual re-examination, the family has the option of selecting a flat rent amount in lieu of completing the re-examination process and having their rent based on the formula amount.
- B. The amount of the flat rent.
- C. A fact sheet about formula rents that explains the types of income counted, the most common types of income excluded, and the categories allowances that can be deducted from income.
- D. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income re-examination process every three years, rather than the annual review they otherwise would undergo.
- E. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a re-examination and return to the formula-based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. The family's income has decreased.
  - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for child care, medical care, etc.
  - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the formula method would be more financially feasible for the family.
- F. The dates upon which the Grand Rapids Housing Commission expects to review the amount of the flat rent, the approximate rent increase the family could expect, and the approximate date upon which a future rent increase could become effective.
- G. The name and phone number of an individual to call to get additional information or counseling concerning flat rents.

H. A certification for the family to sign accepting or declining the flat rent.

Each year prior to their anniversary date, Grand Rapids Housing Commission will send a re-examination letter to the family offering the choice between a flat or a formula rent. The opportunity to select the flat rent is available only at this time. At the appointment, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may assist the family in identifying the rent method that would be most advantageous for the family. If the family wishes to select the flat rent method without meeting with the Grand Rapids Housing Commission representative, they may make the selection on the form and return the form to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. In such case, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will cancel the appointment.

#### **16.4 THE FORMULA METHOD**

During the re-certification interview, the family will provide all information regarding income, assets, expenses, and other information necessary to determine the family's share of rent. The family will sign the HUD consent form and other consent forms that later will be mailed to the sources that will verify the family circumstances.

Upon receipt of verification, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will determine the family's annual income and will calculate their rent as follows.

The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:

- A. 10% of monthly income; or
- B. 30% of adjusted monthly income.

The family will pay the greater of the total tenant payment or the minimum rent of \$50.00, but never more than the ceiling rent.

#### **16.5 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES FOR ANNUAL RE-EXAMINATIONS**

The new rent will generally be effective upon the anniversary date with thirty (30) days written notice of any rent increase to the family.

If the rent determination is delayed due to a reason beyond the control of the family, then any rent increase will be effective the first of the month after the month in which the family receives a 30-day notice of the amount. If the new rent is a reduction and the delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective as scheduled on the anniversary date.

If the family caused the delay, then any increase will be effective on the anniversary date. Any reduction will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

#### **16.6 INTERIM RE-EXAMINATIONS**

During an interim re-examination, only the information affected by the changes being reported will be reviewed and verified.

Families are required to report the following changes to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission between regular re-examinations. If the family's rent is being determined under the formula method, these changes will trigger an interim re-examination. The family shall report these changes within ten (10) days of their occurrence.

- A. A member has been added to the family through birth or adoption or court-awarded custody.
- B. A household member is leaving or has left the family unit.
- C. Any increase in income or decreases in allowable expenses.

In order to add a household member other than through birth or adoption (including a live-in aide), the family must request that the new member be added to the lease. Before adding the new member to the lease, the individual must complete an application form stating their income, assets, and all other information required of an applicant. The individual must provide their Social Security number, if they have one, and must verify their citizenship/eligible immigrant status. (Their housing will not be delayed due to delays in verifying eligible immigrant status other than delays caused by the family.) The new family member will go through the screening process similar to the process for applicants. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will determine the eligibility of the individual before adding them to the lease. If the individual is found to be ineligible or does not pass the screening criteria, they will be advised in writing and given the opportunity for an informal review. If they are found to be eligible and do pass the screening criteria, their name will be added to the lease. At the same time, if the family's rent is being determined under the formula method, the family's annual income will be recalculated taking into account the circumstances of the new family member. The effective date of the new rent will be in accordance with paragraph 16.8.

Families are not required to, but may at any time, request an interim re-examination based on a decrease in income, an increase in allowable expenses, or other changes in family circumstances. Upon such request, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will take timely action to process the interim re-examination and recalculate the tenant's rent.

#### **16.7 SPECIAL RE-EXAMINATIONS**

If a family's income is too unstable to project for twelve (12) months, including families that temporarily have no income (zero renters) or have a temporary decrease in income, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may schedule special re-examinations every sixty (60) days until the income stabilizes and an annual income can be determined.

#### **16.8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES DUE TO INTERIM OR SPECIAL RE-EXAMINATIONS**

Unless there is a delay in re-examination processing caused by the family, any rent increase will be effective the first of the second month after the month in which the family receives notice of the new rent amount. If the family causes a delay, then the rent



increase will be effective on the date it would have been effective had the process not been delayed (even if this means a retroactive increase).

If the new rent is a reduction and any delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective the first of the month after the interim re-examination should have been completed.

If the new rent is a reduction and the family caused the delay or did not report the change in a timely manner, the change will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

## **17.0 UNIT TRANSFERS**

### **17.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSFER POLICY**

The objectives of the Transfer Policy include the following:

- A. To address emergency situations.
- B. To fully utilize available housing resources while avoiding overcrowding by insuring that each family occupies the appropriate size unit.
- C. To facilitate a relocation when required for modernization or other management purposes.
- D. To facilitate relocation of families with inadequate housing accommodations caused by changes in family composition family size, or other medical reasons certified by a doctor.
- E. To provide an incentive for families to assist in meeting the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's deconcentration goal.
- F. To eliminate vacancy loss and other expense due to unnecessary transfers.

### **17.2 CATEGORIES OF TRANSFERS**

Category 1: Emergency transfers. These transfers are necessary when conditions pose an immediate threat to the life, health, or safety of a family or one of its members. Such situations may involve defects of the unit or the building in which it is located, the health condition of a family member, a hate crime, the safety of witnesses to a crime, or a law enforcement matter particular to the neighborhood.

Category 2: Immediate administrative transfers. These transfers are necessary in order to permit a family needing accessible features to move to a unit with such a feature or to enable modernization work to proceed.

Category 3: Regular administrative transfers. These transfers are made to offer incentives to families willing to help meet certain Grand Rapids Housing Commission occupancy

goals, to correct occupancy standards where the unit size is inappropriate for the size and composition of the family, to allow for non-emergency but medically advisable transfers, and other transfers approved by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission when a transfer is the only or best way of solving a serious problem.

### **17.3 DOCUMENTATION**

When the transfer is at the request of the family, the family may be required to provide third party verification of the need for the transfer.

### **17.4 INCENTIVE TRANSFERS**

Transfer requests will be encouraged and approved for families who live in a development where their income category (below or above 30% of area median) predominates and wish to move to a development where their income category does not predominate.

Families living in multifamily developments have the opportunity to transfer to Scattered-Site housing. Families approved for such transfers will meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A. Have been a tenant for three (3) years.
- B. For a minimum of one (1) year, at least one (1) adult family member is enrolled in an economic self-sufficiency program or is working at least thirty-five (35) hours per week, the adult family members are 62 years of age or older, or are disabled, or are the primary care givers to others with disabilities.
- C. Adult members who are required to perform community service have been current in these responsibilities since the inception of the requirement or for one (1) year which ever is less.
- D. The family is current in the payment of all charges owed the Grand Rapids Housing Commission and has not paid late rent for at least (1) one year.
- E. The family passes a current housekeeping inspection and does not have any record of housekeeping problems during the last year.
- F. The family has not materially violated the lease over the past two (2) years by disturbing the peaceful enjoyment of their neighbors, by engaging in criminal or drug-related activity, or by threatening the health or safety of tenants or Housing Authority staff.
- G. Participates in a series of classes conducted by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission on basic home and yard care.

## **17.5 PROCESSING TRANSFERS**

Transfers on the waiting list will be sorted by the categories as found in Section 16.2 and within each category by date and time.

Transfers in *Category 1* and 2 will be housed ahead of any other families, including those on the applicant waiting list. Transfers in *Category 1* will be housed ahead of transfers in *Category 2*.

Transfers in *Category 3* will be housed along with applicants for admission at a ratio of one (1) transfer for every seven (7) admissions.

Upon offer and acceptance of a unit, the family will execute all lease up documents and pay any rent and/or security deposit within two (2) days of being informed the unit is ready to rent. The family will be allowed seven (7) days to complete a transfer. The family will be responsible for paying rent at the old unit as well as the new unit for any period of time they have possession of both. The prorated rent and other charges must be paid at the time of lease execution.

The following is the policy for the rejection of an offer to transfer:

- A. If the family rejects with good cause any unit offered, they will not lose their place on the transfer waiting list.
- B. If the transfer is being made at the request of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission and the family rejects two offers without good cause, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will take action to terminate their tenancy. If the reason for the transfer is that the current unit is too small to meet the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's optimum occupancy standards, the family may request in writing to stay in the unit without being transferred so long as their occupancy will not exceed two (2) people per living/sleeping room.
- C. If the transfer is being made at the family's request and the rejected offer provides deconcentration incentives, the family will maintain their place on the transfer list and will not otherwise be penalized.
- D. If the transfer is being made at the family's request, the family may, without good cause and without penalty, turn down one offer that does not include deconcentration incentives. After turning down a second such offer without good cause, the family's name will be removed from the transfer list.

## **17.6 COST OF THE FAMILY'S MOVE**

The cost of the transfer generally will be borne by the family in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is made at the request of the family or by others on behalf of

the family (i.e. by the police);

- B. When the transfer is needed to move the family to an appropriately sized unit, either larger or smaller;
- C. When the transfer is necessitated because a family with disabilities needs the accessible unit into which the transferring family moved (The family without disabilities signed a statement to this effect prior to accepting the accessible unit); or
- D. When the transfer is needed because action or inaction by the family caused the unit to be unsafe or uninhabitable.

The cost of the transfer will be borne by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is needed in order to carry out rehabilitation activities; or
- B. When action or inaction by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission has caused the unit to be unsafe or uninhabitable.

The responsibility for moving costs in other circumstances will be determined on a case by case basis.

### ***17.7 TENANTS IN GOOD STANDING***

When the transfer is at the request of the family, it will not be approved unless the family is in good standing with the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. This means the family must be in compliance with their lease, current in all payments to the Housing Commission, and must pass a housekeeping inspection.

### ***17.8 TRANSFER REQUESTS***

A tenant may request a transfer at any time by completing a transfer request form. In considering the request, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission may request a meeting with the tenant to better understand the need for transfer and to explore possible alternatives. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will review the request in a timely manner and if a meeting is desired, it shall contact the tenant within ten (10) business days of receipt of the request to schedule a meeting.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will grant or deny the transfer request in writing within ten (10) business days of receiving the request or holding the meeting, whichever is later.

If the transfer is approved, the family's name will be added to the transfer waiting list.

If the transfer is denied, the denial letter will advise the family of their right to utilize the grievance procedure.

### **17.9 RIGHT OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION IN TRANSFER POLICY**

The provisions listed above are to be used as a guide to insure fair and impartial means of assigning units for transfers. It is not intended that this policy will create a property right or any other type of right for a tenant to transfer or refuse to transfer.

## **18.0 INSPECTIONS**

An authorized representative of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission and an adult family member will inspect the premises prior to commencement of occupancy. A written statement of the condition of the premises will be made, all equipment will be provided, and the statement will be signed by both parties with a copy retained in the Grand Rapids Housing Commission file and a copy given to the family member. An authorized Grand Rapids Housing Commission representative will inspect the premises at the time the resident vacates and will furnish a statement of any charges to be made provided the resident turns in the proper notice under State law. The resident's security deposit can be used to offset against any Grand Rapids Housing Commission damages to the unit.

### **18.1 MOVE-IN INSPECTIONS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission and an adult member of the family will inspect the unit prior to signing the lease. Both parties will sign a written statement of the condition of the unit. A copy of the signed inspection will be given to the family and the original will be placed in the tenant file.

### **18.2 ANNUAL INSPECTIONS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will inspect each housing unit annually to ensure that each unit meets the Grand Rapids Housing Commission's housing standards. Work orders will be submitted and completed to correct any deficiencies.

### **18.3 PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS**

This is generally conducted along with the annual inspection. This inspection is intended to keep items in good repair. It checks weatherization; checks the condition of the smoke detectors, stoves, refrigerators, water heaters, furnaces, automatic thermostats and water temperatures; checks for leaks; and provides an opportunity to change furnace filters and provide other minor servicing that extends the life of the unit and its equipment.

### **18.4 SPECIAL INSPECTIONS**

Special inspections may be scheduled to enable HUD or others, such as a local authority, to inspect a sample of the housing stock maintained by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

## **18.5 HOUSEKEEPING INSPECTIONS**

Generally, at the time of the annual inspection, or at other times as necessary, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will conduct a housekeeping inspection to ensure the family is maintaining the unit in a safe and sanitary condition.

## **18.6 NOTICE OF INSPECTION**

For inspections defined as annual inspections, preventative maintenance inspections, special inspections, and housekeeping inspections, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will give the tenant at least two (2) days written notice.

## **18.7 EMERGENCY INSPECTIONS**

If any employee and/or agent of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission has reason to believe that an emergency exists within the housing unit, the unit can be entered without notice. The person(s) that enters the unit will leave a written notice to the resident that indicates the date and time the unit was entered and the reason why it was necessary to enter the unit.

## **18.8 PRE-MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS**

When a tenant gives notice that they intend to move, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will offer to schedule a pre-move-out inspection with the family. The inspection allows the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to help the family identify any problems which, if left uncorrected, could lead to vacate charges. This inspection is a courtesy to the family and has been found to be helpful both in reducing costs to the family and in enabling the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to ready units more quickly for the future occupants.

## **18.9 MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission conducts the move-out inspection after the tenant vacates to assess the condition of the unit and determine responsibility for any needed repairs. When possible, the tenant is notified of the inspection and is encouraged to be present. This inspection becomes the basis for any claims that may be assessed against the security deposit.

# **19.0 PET POLICY**

## **19.1 EXCLUSIONS**

This policy does not apply to animals that are used to assist persons with disabilities. Assistive animals are allowed in all housing facilities with no restrictions other than those imposed on all tenants to maintain their units and associated facilities in a decent, safe, and sanitary manner and to refrain from disturbing their neighbors.

## **19.2 APPROVAL**

Residents must have the prior approval of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission before moving a pet into their unit. Residents must request approval on the Authorization for Pet Ownership Form that must be fully completed before the Housing Commission will approve the request. Residents must comply with the established Pet Policy of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

## **19.3 TYPES AND NUMBER OF PETS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will allow only domesticated dogs, cats, birds, and fish in aquariums in units. All dogs and cats must be spayed or neutered or neutered.

Only one (1) pet per unit allowed.

Any animal deemed to be potentially harmful to the health or safety of others, including attack or fight trained dogs, will not be allowed.

No animal may exceed 20 pounds in weight.

## **19.4 INOCULATIONS**

In order to be registered, pets must be appropriately inoculated against rabies and other conditions prescribed by local ordinances. Proof will be required annually at the time of annual re-examination.

## **19.5 PET DEPOSIT**

A pet deposit of up to \$300.00 or that amount which is limited by the Michigan Rent Security Deposit Law is required at the time of registering a pet. The deposit is refundable when the pet or the family vacates the unit, less any amounts owed due to damage beyond normal wear and tear.

## **19.6 FINANCIAL OBLIGATION OF RESIDENTS**

Any resident who owns or keeps a pet in their dwelling unit will be required to pay for any damages caused by the pet. Also, any pet-related insect infestation in the pet owner's unit will be the financial responsibility of the pet owner and the Grand Rapids Housing Commission reserves the right to exterminate and charge the resident.

## **19.7 NUISANCE OR THREAT TO HEALTH OR SAFETY**

The pet and its living quarters must be maintained in a manner to prevent odors and any other unsanitary conditions in the owner's unit and surrounding areas.

Repeated substantiated complaints by neighbors or Grand Rapids Housing Commission personnel regarding pets disturbing the peace of neighbors through noise, odor, animal

waste, or other nuisance will result in the owner having to remove the pet or move him/herself.

### **19.8 DESIGNATION OF PET AREAS**

Pets must be kept in the owner's apartment or on a leash at all times when outside (no outdoor cages may be constructed). Pets will be allowed only in designated areas on the grounds of the project. Pet owners must clean up after their pets and are responsible for disposing of pet waste. Pet owners must comply with the terms and conditions of a separate posted Pet Policy of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

### **18.9 REMOVAL OF PETS**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission, or an appropriate community authority, shall require the removal of any pet from a project if the pet's conduct or condition is determined to be a nuisance or threat to the health or safety of other occupants of the project or of other persons in the community where the project is located.

## **20.0 REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS**

When a resident owes the Grand Rapids Housing Commission back charges and is unable to pay the balance by the due date, the resident may request that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission allow them to enter into a Repayment Agreement. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission has the sole discretion of whether to accept such an agreement. All Repayment Agreements must be in writing and signed by both parties. Failure to comply with the Repayment Agreement terms may subject the resident to eviction procedures.

## **21.0 TERMINATION**

### **21.1 TERMINATION BY TENANT**

The tenant may terminate the lease at any time upon submitting a 30-day written notice. If the tenant vacates prior to the end of the thirty (30) days, they will be responsible for rent through the end of the notice period or until the unit is re-rented, whichever occurs first.

### **21.2 TERMINATION BY THE HOUSING COMMISSION**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will not renew the lease of any family that is not in compliance with the community service requirement or an approved Agreement to Cure. If they do not voluntarily leave the property, eviction proceedings will begin.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will terminate the lease for serious or repeated violations of material lease terms. Such violations include, but are not limited to the following:



- A. Nonpayment of rent or other charges.
- B. A history of late rental payments.
- C. Failure to provide timely and accurate information regarding family composition, income circumstances, or other information related to eligibility or rent.
- D. Failure to allow inspection of the unit.
- E. Failure to maintain the unit in a safe and sanitary manner.
- F. Assignment or subletting of the premises.
- G. Use of the premises for purposes other than as a dwelling unit (other than for housing authority approved resident businesses).
- H. Destruction of property.
- I. Acts of destruction, defacement, or removal of any part of the premises or failure to cause guests to refrain from such acts.
- J. Any criminal activity on or near the property or drug-related criminal activity on or off the premises. This includes, but is not limited to, the manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.
- K. Non-compliance with Non-Citizen Rule requirements.
- L. Permitting persons not on the lease to reside in the unit more than fourteen (14) days each year without the prior written approval of the Housing Commission.
- M. If a tenant is a fugitive, felon or parole violator.
- N. If a tenant's abuse of alcohol or other legal substances threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- O. Harassment, intimidation or acts of physical violence against other residents, residents' guests, Housing Commission personnel or its representatives.
- P. Other good cause.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will take immediate action to evict any household that includes an individual who is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program.

### **21.3 ABANDONMENT**

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will consider a unit to be abandoned when a resident has both fallen behind in rent **AND** has clearly indicated by words or actions an intention not to continue living in the unit.

When a unit has been abandoned, a Grand Rapids Housing Commission representative may enter the unit and remove any abandoned property. It will be stored in a reasonably secure place. A notice will be mailed to the resident stating where the property is being stored and how long until disposal of said property. If the Grand Rapids Housing Commission does not have a new address for the resident, the notice will be mailed to the unit address so it can be forwarded by the post office.

If the total value of the property is estimated at less than \$500, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will mail a notice of the sale or disposition to the resident and then wait 30 days. Family pictures, keepsakes, and personal papers cannot be sold or disposed of until 30 days after the Grand Rapids Housing Commission mails the notice of abandonment.

If the estimated value of the property is more than \$500, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will mail a notice of the sale or disposition to the resident and then wait 30 days before sale or disposition. Personal papers, family pictures, and keepsakes can be sold or disposed of at the same time as other property.

Any money raised by the sale of the property goes to cover money owed by the family to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission such as back rent and the cost of storing and selling the goods. If there is any money left over and the family's forwarding address is known the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will mail it to the family. If the family's address is not known, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will keep it for the resident for one year. If it is not claimed within that time, it belongs to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

When learning of an abandonment, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will either return the deposit or provide a statement of why the deposit is being kept in accordance with State law.

#### **21.4 RETURN OF SECURITY DEPOSIT**

After a family moves out, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will return the security deposit within the time frame established by State law or give the family a written statement of why all or part of the security deposit is being kept. The rental unit must be restored to the same conditions as when the family moved in, except for normal wear and tear. Deposits will not be used to cover normal wear and tear or damage that existed when the family moved in.

If State law requires the payment of interest on security deposits, it shall be complied with.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will be considered in compliance with the above if the required payment, statement, or both, are deposited in the U.S. mail with first class postage paid within the time frame established by State law.

## GLOSSARY

**50058 Form:** The HUD form that housing authorities are required to complete for each assisted household in public housing to record information used in the certification and recertification process and, at the option of the housing authority, for interim re-examinations.

**1937 Housing Act:** The United States Housing Act of 1937. (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.) (24 CFR 5.100)

**Adjusted Annual Income:** The amount of household income, after deductions for specified allowances, on which tenant rent is based. (24 CFR 5.611)

**Adult:** A household member who is 18 years or older or who is the head of the household, or spouse, or co-head.

**Allowances:** Amounts deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income (the income amount used in the rent calculation). Allowances are given for elderly families, dependents, medical expenses for elderly families, disability expenses, and child care expenses for children under 13 years of age. Other allowances can be given at the discretion of the Housing Commission.

**Annual Contributions Contract (ACC):** The written contract between HUD and a housing commission under which HUD agrees to provide funding for a program under the 1937 Act, and the housing commission agrees to comply with HUD requirements for the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Annual Income:** All amounts, monetary or not, that:

- A. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
- B. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual re-examination effective date; and
- C. Are not specifically excluded from annual income.

Annual Income also includes amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access. (1937 Housing Act; 24 CFR 5.609)

**Applicant (applicant family):** A person or family that has applied for admission to a program but is not yet a participant in the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

**As-Paid States:** States where the welfare agency adjusts the shelter and utility component of the welfare grant in accordance with actual housing costs. Currently, the four as-paid States are New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, and Vermont.

**Assets:** The value of equity in savings, checking, IRA and Keogh accounts, real property, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles are not counted as assets. (Also see "net family assets.")

**Asset Income:** Income received from assets held by family members. If assets total more than \$5,000, income from the assets is "imputed" and the greater of actual asset income and imputed asset income is counted in annual income. (See "imputed asset income" below.)

**Ceiling Rent:** Maximum rent allowed for some units in public housing projects.

**Certification:** The examination of a household's income, expenses, and family composition to determine the family's eligibility for program participation and to calculate the family's share of rent.

**Child:** For purposes of citizenship regulations, a member of the family other than the family head or spouse who is under 18 years of age. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Child Care Expenses:** Amounts anticipated to be paid by the family for the care of children under 13 years of age during the period for which annual income is computed, but only where such care is necessary to enable a family member to actively seek employment, be gainfully employed, or to further his or her education and only to the extent such amounts are not reimbursed. The amount deducted shall reflect reasonable charges for child care. In the case of child care necessary to permit employment, the amount deducted shall not exceed the amount of employment income that is included in annual income. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**Citizen:** A citizen or national of the United States. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Consent Form:** Any consent form approved by HUD to be signed by assistance applicants and participants for the purpose of obtaining income information from employers and SWICAs, return information from the Social Security Administration, and return information for unearned income from the Internal Revenue Service. The consent forms may authorize the collection of other information from assistance applicants or participant to determine eligibility or level of benefits. (24 CFR 5.214)

**Decent, Safe, and Sanitary:** Housing is decent, safe, and sanitary if it satisfies the applicable housing quality standards.

**Department:** The Department of Housing and Urban Development. (24 CFR 5.100)

**Dependent:** A member of the family (except foster children and foster adults), other than the family head or spouse, who is under 18 years of age or is a person with a disability or is a full-time student. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**Dependent Allowance:** An amount, equal to \$480 multiplied by the number of dependents, that is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

**Disability Assistance Expenses:** Reasonable expenses that are anticipated, during the period for which annual income is computed, for attendant care and auxiliary apparatus for a disabled family member and that are necessary to enable a family member (including the disabled member) to be

employed, provided that the expenses are neither paid to a member of the family nor reimbursed by an outside source. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**Disability Assistance Expense Allowance:** In determining adjusted annual income, the amount of disability assistance expenses deducted from annual income for families with a disabled household member.

**Disabled Family:** A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities; two or more persons with disabilities living together; or one or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides. [24 CFR 5.403(b)] (Also see "person with disabilities.")

**Disabled Person:** See "person with disabilities."

**Displaced Family:** A family in which each member, or whose sole member, is a person displaced by governmental action (such as urban renewal), or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

**Displaced Person:** A person displaced by governmental action or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. [1937 Act]

**Drug-Related Criminal Activity:** Drug trafficking or the illegal use, or possession for personal use, of a controlled substance as defined in Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

**Elderly Family:** A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age; two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or one or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Elderly Family Allowance:** For elderly families, an allowance of \$400 is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

**Elderly Person:** A person who is at least 62 years of age. (1937 Housing Act)

**Extremely low-income families:** Those families whose incomes do not exceed 30% of the median income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

**Fair Housing Act:** Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.). (24 CFR 5.100)

**Family** includes but is not limited to:

- A. A family with or without children;
- B. An elderly family;
- C. A near-elderly family;
- D. A disabled family;
- E. A displaced family;
- F. The remaining member of a tenant family; or
- G. A single person who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (24 CFR 5.403)

**Family Members:** All members of the household other than live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All family members permanently reside in the unit, though they may be temporarily absent. All family members are listed on the lease.

**Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS Program):** The program established by a housing authority to promote self-sufficiency among participating families, including the coordination of supportive services. (24 CFR 984.103(b))

**Flat Rent:** A rent amount the family may choose to pay in lieu of having their rent determined under the formula method. The flat rent is established by the housing authority, set at the lesser of the market value for the unit or the cost to operate the unit. Families selecting the flat rent option have their income evaluated once every three years, rather than annually.

**Formula Method:** A means of calculating a family's rent based on 10% of their monthly income, 30% of their adjusted monthly income, the welfare rent, or the minimum rent. Under the formula method, rents may be capped by a ceiling rent. Under this method, the family's income is evaluated at least annually.

**Full-Time Student:** A person who is carrying a subject load that is considered full-time for day students under the standards and practices of the educational institution attended. An educational institution includes a vocational school with a diploma or certificate program, as well as an institution offering a college degree. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**Head of Household:** The adult member of the family who is the head of the household for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Household Members:** All members of the household including members of the family, live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All household members are listed on the lease, and no one other than household members are listed on the lease.

**Housing Assistance Plan:** A housing plan that is submitted by a unit of general local government and approved by HUD as being acceptable under the standards of 24 CFR 570.

**Imputed Income:** For households with net family assets of more than \$5,000, the amount calculated by multiplying net family assets by a HUD-specified percentage. If imputed income is more than actual income from assets, the imputed amount is used as income from assets in determining annual income.

**In-Kind Payments:** Contributions other than cash made to the family or to a family member in exchange for services provided or for the general support of the family (e.g., groceries provided on a weekly basis, baby sitting provided on a regular basis).

**Interim (examination):** A re-examination of a family income, expenses, and household composition conducted between the regular annual recertifications when a change in a household's circumstances warrants such a re-examination.

**Live-In Aide:** A person who resides with one or more elderly persons, near-elderly persons, or persons with disabilities and who:

- A. Is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons;
- B. Is not obligated for the support of the persons; and
- C. Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services. [24 CFR 5.403(b)]

**Low-Income Families:** Those families whose incomes do not exceed 80% of the median income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 80% of the median for the area on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of prevailing levels of construction costs or unusually high or low family incomes. (1937Act)

**Medical Expenses:** Medical expenses (of all family members of an elderly or disabled family), including medical insurance premiums, that are anticipated during the period for which annual income is computed and that are not covered by insurance. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]. These expenses include, but are not limited to, prescription and non-prescription drugs, costs for doctors, dentists, therapists, medical facilities, care for a service animals, transportation for medical purposes.

**Mixed Family:** A family whose members include those with citizenship or eligible immigration status and those without citizenship or eligible immigration status. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Monthly Adjusted Income:** One twelfth of adjusted income. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**Monthly Income:** One twelfth of annual income. [24 CFR 5.603(d)]

**National:** A person who owes permanent allegiance to the United States, for example, as a result of birth in a United States territory or possession. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Near-Elderly Family:** A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62; two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or one or more persons who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62 living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

**Net Family Assets:**

- A. Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and excluding equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles shall be excluded.
- B. In cases where a trust fund has been established and the trust is not revocable by, or under the control of, any member of the family or household, the value of the trust fund will not be considered an asset so long as the fund continues to be held in trust. Any income distributed from the trust fund shall be counted when determining annual income.
- C. In determining net family assets, housing authorities or owners, as applicable, shall include the value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value (including a disposition in trust, but not in a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale) during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or re-examination, as applicable, in excess of the consideration received therefor. In the case of a disposition as part of a separation or divorce settlement, the disposition will not be considered to be for less than fair market value if the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Non-Citizen:** A person who is neither a citizen nor national of the United States. [24 CFR 5.504(b)]

**Occupancy Standards:** The standards that a housing authority establishes for determining the appropriate number of bedrooms needed to house families of different sizes or composition.

**Person with Disabilities:** A person who:

- A. Has a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act, which states:

"Inability to engage in any substantial, gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months, or

In the case of an individual who attained the age of 55 and is blind and unable by reason of such blindness to engage in substantial, gainful activity requiring skills or ability comparable to those of any gainful activity in which he has previously engaged with some regularity and over a substantial period of time."



- B. Is determined, pursuant to regulations issued by the Secretary, to have a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that:
1. Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
  2. Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and
  3. Is of such a nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions, or
- C. Has a developmental disability as defined in Section 102(7) of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, which states:

"Severe chronic disability that:

1. Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments;
2. Is manifested before the person attains age 22;
3. Is likely to continue indefinitely;
4. Results in substantial functional limitation in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: (1) self care, (2) receptive and responsive language, (3) learning, (4) mobility, (e) self-direction, (6) capacity for independent living, and (7) economic self-sufficiency; and
5. Reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic care, treatment, or other services that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated."

This definition does not exclude persons who have the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. (1937 Act)

No individual shall be considered to be a person with disabilities for purposes of eligibility solely based on any drug or alcohol dependence.

**Proration of Assistance:** The reduction in a family's housing assistance payment to reflect the proportion of family members in a mixed family who are eligible for assistance. (24 CFR5.520)

**Public Housing Agency (PHA):** Any State, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body (or agency or instrumentality thereof) which is authorized to engage in or assist in the development or operation of low-income housing under the 1937 Housing Act. (24 CFR 5.100)

**Recertification:** The annual re-examination of a family's income, expenses, and composition to determine the family's rent.

**Remaining Member of a Tenant Family:** A member of the family listed on the lease who continues to live in the public housing dwelling after all other family members have left. (Handbook 7565.1 REV-2, 3-5b.)

**Self-Declaration:** A type of verification statement by the tenant as to the amount and source of income, expenses, or family composition. Self-declaration is acceptable verification only when third-party verification or documentation cannot be obtained.

**Shelter Allowance:** That portion of a welfare benefit (e.g., TANF) that the welfare agency designates to be used for rent and utilities.

**Single Person:** Someone living alone or intending to live alone who does not qualify as an elderly family, a person with disabilities, a displaced person, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (Public Housing: Handbook 7465.1 REV-2, 3-5)

**State Wage Information Collection Agency (SWICA):** The State agency receiving quarterly wage reports from employers in the State or an alternative system that has been determined by the Secretary of Labor to be as effective and timely in providing employment-related income and eligibility information. (24 CFR 5.214)

**Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF):** The program that replaced the Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) that provides financial assistance to needy families who meet program eligibility criteria. Benefits are limited to a specified time period.

**Tenant:** The person or family renting or occupying an assisted dwelling unit. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

**Tenant Rent:** The amount payable monthly by the family as rent to the housing authority. Where all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing authority or owner, tenant rent equals total tenant payment. Where some or all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing authority and the cost thereof is not included in the amount paid as rent, tenant rent equals total tenant payment less the utility allowance. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Third-Party (verification):** Written or oral confirmation of a family's income, expenses, or household composition provided by a source outside the household.

**Total Tenant Payment (TTP):**

- A. Total tenant payment for families whose initial lease is effective on or after August 1, 1982:
  1. Total tenant payment is the amount calculated under Section 3(a)(1) of the 1937 Act which is the higher of :
    - a. 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income;
    - b. 10% of the family's monthly income; or

- c. If the family is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of such payments, adjusted in accordance with the family's actual housing costs, is specifically designated by such agency to meet the family's housing costs, the portion of such payments which is so designated.

If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under section 3(a)(1) shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

2. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing does not include charges for excess utility consumption or other miscellaneous charges.
- B. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982: Paragraphs (b) and (c) of 24 CFR 913.107, as it existed immediately before November 18, 1996, will continue to govern the total tenant payment of families, under a public housing program, whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982.

**Utility Allowance:** If the cost of utilities (except telephone) and other housing services for an assisted unit is not included in the tenant rent but is the responsibility of the family occupying the unit, an amount equal to the estimate made by a housing authority of the monthly cost of a reasonable consumption of such utilities and other services for the unit by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment. (24 CFR 5.603)

**Utility Reimbursement:** The amount, if any, by which the utility allowance for the unit, if applicable, exceeds the total tenant payment for the family occupying the unit. (24 CFR 5.603)

**Very Low-Income Families:** Low-income families whose incomes do not exceed 50% of the median family income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 50% of the median for the areas on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes. Such ceilings shall be established in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture for any rural area, as defined in Section 520 of the Housing Act of 1949, taking into account the subsidy characteristics and types of programs to which such ceilings apply. (1937 Act)

**Welfare Assistance:** Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, that are made under programs funded by Federal, State or local governments. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

**Welfare Rent:** In "as-paid" welfare programs, the amount of the welfare benefit designated for shelter and utilities.

## ACRONYMS

ACC	Annual Contributions Contract
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FSS	Family Self Sufficiency (program)
HCDA	Housing and Community Development Act
HQS	Housing Quality Standards
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
INS	(U.S.) Immigration and Naturalization Service
NAHA	(Cranston-Gonzalez) National Affordable Housing Act
NOFA	Notice of Funding Availability
OMB	(U.S.) Office of Management and Budget
PHA	Public Housing Agency
QHWR	Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998
SSA	Social Security Administration
TTP	Total Tenant Payment

**Appendix I**

**Income Limits and Deconcentration Worksheet**

<b>Development Name</b>	<b>Number of Units Under ACC</b>	<b>Number of Occupied Units</b>	<b>Number of Units Occupied by Very Poor Families</b>	<b>% Occupied by Very Poor Families</b>

**%Very Poor in**

**Census Tract**

**Target Number**

**Number Needed of below 30% of median area income**

**Number Needed above 30% of median area income**

**Waiting list number of families Appendix 2**