



2020 Potential Policy Priority Descriptions

HUD Programs

Housing Choice Voucher Program

The Housing Choice Voucher program is a federally funded program administered by state and local housing authorities (PHAs), which enables individuals with low incomes, older adults, and persons with disabilities to find housing in the private market. The voucher is a rental subsidy of the amount due after the recipient pays 30% of their income. The Voucher allows the renter to choose their housing so long as the landlord agrees to accept the voucher.

Project-Based Rental Assistance

Section 8/PBRA is similar to the Housing Choice Voucher program, except that the rental assistance is tied to the specific rental housing complex instead of the individual. A percentage of units in privately owned housing communities are set aside for low income persons who benefit from the rental assistance of the apartment.

Public Housing

Public housing is the oldest federal rental housing program, created in 1937. Public housing consists of apartment complexes owned by a government agency and rented to people with very low incomes. Public housing has been underfunded for decades and much of this aging stock is in desperate need of replacement.

Block Grant Programs

HOME Investment Partnership Program

HOME grants are flexible funds that encourage localities and local partners to work together to create housing for individuals and families with very low incomes, tailored to the needs of the community. Funds can be used for buying, building, rental assistance, and rehabilitation of housing.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

CDBGs are flexible grants awarded by HUD that help communities address a wide variety of needs for vulnerable community members. These grants can support affordable housing and support services, public facilities, job creation and expansion.

Federal Housing Creation/Preservation Programs/Resources

Low Income Housing Tax Credit

The LIHTC program gives State and local LIHTC-allocating agencies the equivalent of nearly \$8 billion in annual budget authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to households with incomes below 60% AMI. The LIHTC program is the largest federal program that supports new and rehabilitated rental housing. In Virginia, the LIHTC program produces thousands of housing units annually.

National Housing Trust Fund

The NHTF is a federal funding source from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) dedicated to the preservation and new development of quality and safe housing for families and individuals with very low incomes (less than 50% AMI). Allotments are made to states and eligible entities annually based on a formula and at least 80% must go toward rental housing, 10% to homeownership, and 10% to planning and administrative costs. In Virginia, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is responsible for receiving and distributing the NHTF funds. During Fiscal year 2016, which was the first year of the HTF program, DHCD received around \$3.1 million. In FY-17, DHCD received around \$3.8 million.

Federal Stimulus package related to housing and COVID-19

The CARES Act

"The CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act provides more than \$12 billion in funding for HUD programs, including: \$4 billion for Emergency Solutions Grants for homelessness assistance, \$5 billion in Community Development Block Grants, \$1.25 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher program, \$1 billion for project-based rental assistance, \$685 million for public housing, \$300 million for tribal nations, \$65 million for Housing for Persons with AIDS, \$50 million for Section 202 Housing for the Elderly, and \$15 million for Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities." (from NLIHC)

The Act also puts a 60 day moratorium on foreclosures of federally backed mortgages and a 120 day moratorium on eviction filings for renters in homes covered by a federally backed mortgage.

Also included in the Act is expanded coverage of unemployment insurance to laid off workers, which provides the full amount of the worker's income for 4 months.

Additional Coronavirus Relief Packages

Additional Coronavirus relief packages are being proposed in Congress which include support for housing infrastructure and investment. Advocates are hoping to see fixes to LIHTC provisions and additional LIHTC allocations, as well as support to lenders and property owners who are struggling to pay their bills because many of their tenants are unable to pay their rent due to lost or decreased wages. In NLIHC's response to the CARES Act, they outline urgent items needed to be addressed in future legislation. One proposal which would benefit both tenants and property owners is Emergency Rental Assistance.