



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-5000

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

Dear Executive Directors:

HUD would like to inform Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) of a new opportunity to partner with local public child welfare agencies and community organizations. The Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) has recently announced a grant competition that will fund 5 sites that create innovative, collaborative supportive housing models for at least 50 families whose lack of adequate housing is a factor in the placement or imminent placement of their child in out-of-home care.

Inadequate housing and homelessness increase the risk that a child will become involved with the child welfare system, enter into foster care, and experience delays in reunification with their families. In fact, homelessness, rather than parental substance abuse or mental illness, is the strongest predictor of child out-of-home placement. Supportive housing that combines affordable housing with supportive services may be able to mitigate or prevent these negative experiences for children. For example, a recent demonstration indicated that out-of-home placements fell by about 50% for families living in supportive housing.

The competition seeks partnerships between PHAs or other housing agencies, public child welfare agencies, and other community partners. Grantees will receive funding to provide voluntary, team-based case management and supportive services to families. PHAs or other housing agencies will provide affordable housing for 50 families and become part of a team to help with relevant goals such as housing retention. Partners are also expected to engage in planning to sustain services after the five year period has ended.

While the competition does not provide additional housing funds, interested PHAs can use a combination of their existing resources to meet the 50 housing units requirement, including Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers, Housing Choice Vouchers, public housing units, and project-based and other affordable housing units. For example:

- PHAs can adopt a local preference for their public housing or Housing Choice Voucher program for families who are eligible for the demonstration program (as further defined by local needs and the partnership's specified target population). PHAs can limit local preferences to a certain number of slots and can open waiting lists specifically for families who meet the preference.
- FUP Vouchers target a similar population as this competition and have the potential to be used in the demonstration.
- Moving-to-Work Authorities have a range of additional flexibilities to provide housing resources.
- If applicable, PHAs have the option to use public housing program dollars from program income to provide additional low-income housing assistance.

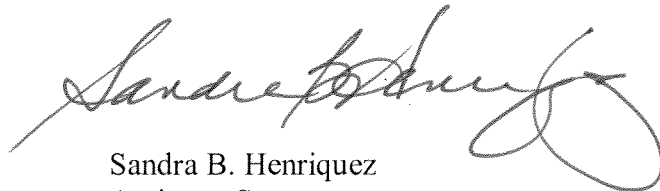
- PHAs can also provide a portion of the 50 affordable housing slots, while other housing providers such as faith-based housing organizations, nonprofit housing providers, state housing agencies, or philanthropies provide the difference.

Applicants, including PHAs, will need to sign third party agreements with the local child welfare agency, much like the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established for FUP vouchers. Applicants must also demonstrate a clear plan for securing the 50 affordable housing units. If relevant, PHAs may wish to include supporting data, such as average turnover rates and voucher lease up time, to demonstrate the feasibility of their plan. As always, when securing and providing the 50 affordable housing units, PHAs must abide by HUD program rules and eligibility standards.

HUD encourages PHAs who are approached by their local child welfare agencies to consider their ability to leverage supportive services for vulnerable families by participating in this effort. PHAs who have not yet been approached and are interested in exploring this opportunity should contact their local child welfare agency.

The competition ends on July 30, 2012. More information may be found in the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families' *Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families in the Child Welfare System* Funding Opportunity Announcement (HHS-2012-ACF-ACYF-CA-0538) at www.grants.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandra B. Henriquez', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Sandra B. Henriquez
Assistant Secretary