

CHAPTER 5

SUBSIDY STANDARDS

[24 CFR 982.54(d)(9)]

INTRODUCTION

HUD guidelines require that HA's establish subsidy standards for the determination of family unit size, and that such standards provide for a minimum commitment of subsidy while avoiding overcrowding. The standards used for the unit size selected by the family must be within the minimum unit size requirements of HUD's Housing Quality Standards. This Chapter explains the subsidy standards which will be used to determine the voucher size (family unit size) for various sized families when they are selected from the waiting list, as well as the HA's procedures when a family's size changes, or a family selects a unit size that is different from the Voucher.

A. DETERMINING FAMILY UNIT (VOUCHER) SIZE [24 CFR 982.402]

The HA does not determine who shares a bedroom/sleeping room, but there must be at least one person per bedroom on the Voucher. The HA's subsidy standards for determining voucher size shall be applied in a manner consistent with Fair Housing guidelines.

All standards in this section relate to the number of bedrooms on the Voucher, not the family's actual living arrangements. The unit size on the Voucher remains the same as long as the family composition remains the same, regardless of the actual unit size rented.

One bedroom will generally be assigned for each two family members.

| GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING VOUCHER SIZE | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Voucher Size | | Persons in Household | |
| | Min. # | Targeted. # | Max. # |
| 0 Bedroom | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 Bedroom | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| 2 Bedrooms | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 3 Bedrooms | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| 4 Bedrooms | 4 | 8 | 10 |
| 5 Bedrooms | 6 | 10 | 12 |
| 6 Bedrooms | 8 | 12 | 14 |

B. EXCEPTIONS TO SUBSIDY STANDARDS [24 CFR 982.403(a) & (b)]

The HA shall grant exceptions from the subsidy standards if the family requests and the HA determines the exceptions are justified by special relationships of: age, sex, health or disability of family members, or other individual circumstances.

The HA will grant an exception upon request as an accommodation for persons with disabilities. Circumstances may dictate a larger size than the subsidy standards permit when persons cannot share a bedroom because of a need, such as a:

- Verified medical or health reason; or
- Elderly persons or persons with disabilities who may require a live-in attendant.

1. Request for Exceptions to Subsidy Standards

The family may request a larger sized voucher than indicated by the HA's subsidy standards. Such request must be made in writing within 5 working days of the HA's determination of bedroom size. The request must explain the need or justification for a larger bedroom. Documentation verifying the need or justification will be required as appropriate.

The HA will not issue a larger voucher due to additions of family members other than by birth, adoption, marriage, or court-awarded custody.

Requests based on health related reasons must be verified by a medical doctor.

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2. Changes for Applicants

The voucher size is determined prior to the briefing by comparing the family composition to the HA subsidy standards. If an applicant requires a change in the voucher size, based on the requirements of the HA subsidy standards, the above referenced guidelines will apply.

3. Changes for Participants

The members of the family residing in the unit must be approved by the HA. The family must obtain approval of any additional family member before the new member occupies the unit except for additions by birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody, in which case the family must inform the HA within **30 calendar days**. The above referenced guidelines will apply.

4. Underhoused and Overhoused Families

If a unit does not meet HQS space standards due to an increase in family size, (unit too small), the HA will issue a new voucher of the appropriate size and assist the family in locating a suitable unit.

5. Transfer Waiting List

- When a change in family composition requires a larger Voucher size and no funds are available, the family will be placed on a Transfer List.
- Families will be selected from the Transfer List before families are selected from the applicant waiting list. This assures that families who are already on the program are in the appropriate sized units.
- Families will be selected from this list when there is available funding, in the following sequence:
- A participant family (whose family composition has been approved by the HA) who requires a change in Voucher size because they are living in a unit which is overcrowded according to Housing Quality Standards.
- A participant family (whose family composition has been approved by the HA) who requires a change in Voucher size under the Subsidy Standards, but not under Housing Quality Standards.
- All others who require a transfer as determined by the HA.

C. UNIT SIZE SELECTED [24 CFR 982.402(c)]

The family may select a different size dwelling unit than that listed on the Voucher. There are three criteria to consider:

Subsidy Limitation: The family unit size as determined for a family under the HA subsidy standard for a family assisted in the voucher program is based on the HA's adopted payment standards. The payment standard for a family shall be the *lower of*: The payment standard amount for the family unit size; or

The payment standard amount for the unit size rented by the family.

Utility Allowance: The utility allowance used to calculate the gross rent is based on the actual size of the unit the family selects, regardless of the size authorized on the family's Voucher.

Housing Quality Standards: The standards allow two persons per living/sleeping room and permit maximum occupancy levels (assuming a living room is used as a living/sleeping area) as shown in the table below. The levels may be exceeded if a room in addition to bedrooms and living room is used for sleeping.

| *HQS GUIDELINES FOR UNIT SIZE SELECTED | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Unit Size | Maximum Number in Household |
| 0 Bedroom | 1 |
| 1 Bedroom | 4 |
| 2 Bedrooms | 6 |
| 3 Bedrooms | 8 |
| 4 Bedrooms | 10 |
| 5 Bedrooms | 12 |
| 6 Bedrooms | 14 |