

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
Housing Choice Voucher Program
Emergency Transfer Plan for
Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

The Housing Authority of Prince George's County (HAPGC) is concerned about the safety of its participants, and such concern extends to participants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),¹ HAPGC allows participants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the participant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The ability of HAPGC to honor such request for participants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the participant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

This plan identifies participants who are eligible for a VAWA emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to participants on safety and security.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A participant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if the participant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the participant remains within the same unit. If the participant is a victim of sexual assault, the participant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

A participant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Participants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Qualifying for an emergency transfer does not guarantee continued assistance under the program or a transfer to another covered housing program (24 CFR 5.2005(e) (13).

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the participant shall notify their Rental Specialist located at 9200 Basil Court, Largo MD 20774; the participant must submit a written request for a transfer. The HAPGC will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities.

The participant must use the VAWA Emergency Transfer Request form (HUD form 5383) to request an emergency transfer. The emergency transfer form can be obtained by requesting it from your Rental Specialist, Housing Authority (suite 107) or online at ha.mypgc.us under VAWA.

If additional information is requested by the HAPGC, the individual may satisfy this request by providing **any** one of the following documents as described under 24 CFR 5.2007(b)(1):

- a. Form HUD-5382; or
- b. A document:
 - 1) Signed by an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or medical professional or a mental health professional (collectively, “professional”) from whom the victim has sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse:
 - 2) Signed by the applicant or tenant; and That specifies, under penalty of perjury, that the professional believes in the occurrence of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that is the ground for protection and remedies under the VAWA Final Rule, and that the incident meets the applicable definition of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under 24 CFR 5.2003; or
 - 3) A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency (may include a police report), court, or administrative agency; or
 - 4) At the discretion of a covered housing provider, a statement or other evidence provided by the applicant or tenant.

The time period to submit documentation is 14 business days from the date that you receive a written request from your housing provider asking that you provide documentation of the occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the requested information is not received within 14 business days of when you received the request for the documentation, or any extension of the date provided by your housing provider, your housing provider does not need to grant you any of the VAWA protections.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

HAPGC cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. HAPGC will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a participant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a participant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the participant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred participant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the participant has been transferred. HAPGC may be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit. A participant with proper documentation (see documentation requirements above) will follow the process listed below:

- **For the participant-based Housing Choice Voucher Program:** A voucher will be issued to the participant to enable them to search for another unit. The participant must notify their current Landlord of their need to move and provide them with written request certifying that they meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA, before they're approved to be transferred/moved. At the request of the participant, HAPGC will assist them in their communication with their current Landlord on their need to move from their unit as quickly as possible.
 - The HAPGC will also provide the victim with a list of providers in the community who serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Availability- is defined as vacant move-in ready unit.

- **For the Project-Based Voucher Programs:** If another Project-Based Voucher unit is available for which the participant qualifies, the participant will be presented with an offer to transfer. If a participant reasonably believes a proposed transfer on the same site would not be safe, the participant may request a transfer to a different site; if available. If a unit is available, the transferring participant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the new unit. The participant may notify their current Landlord of their need to move and provide them with written notice certifying that they meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA.
 - **Project Based Voucher-Assisted for one (1) year or more**
 - If there are not any Project Based units available, the participant will be issued a Housing Choice Voucher, if they have been on the PBV program for at least one (1) year as long as funding is available. If the participant would like to move prior to a voucher becoming available the HAPGC will refer the participant to one of our partnering Agency's using the Prince George's County Continuum of Care, The HAPGC may

- be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit or program if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit or program.
- The HAPGC will also provide the victim with a list of providers in the community who serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- **Project Based Voucher-Assisted less than one (1) year**
 - If there are not any Project Based units available, the participant will be placed on the Housing Choice Voucher & Public Housing Waitlist by time and date they were approved for an emergency transfer. If the participant would like to move prior to a voucher or Public Housing unit coming available the HAPGC will refer the participant to one of our partnering Agency's; using the Prince George's County Continuum of Care. The HAPGC may be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit or program if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit or program.
 - The HAPGC will also provide the victim with a list of providers in the community who serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- **For the Moderate Rehabilitation:** If another Moderate Rehabilitation unit is available for which the participant qualifies, the participant will be presented with an offer to transfer. If a participant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the participant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferring participant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the new unit. HAPGC may be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit. If there are not any Moderate Rehabilitation units available, the participant will be placed on the Public Housing Waitlist by time and date they were approved for an emergency transfer. If the participant would like to move prior to a Public Housing unit being available the HAPGC will refer the participant to one of our partnering Agency's; using the Prince George's County Continuum of Care. The HAPGC may be unable to transfer a participant to a particular unit or program if the participant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit or program. The participant must notify their current Landlord of their need to move and provide them with written notice certifying that they meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA.
 - The HAPGC will also provide the victim with a list of housing providers in the community for which the PHA has collaborated to serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Once a transfer has been completed, the person (s) that committed and act (s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant will not be approved to be added to the household in the future.

Actions Against Perpetrator:

1. The HAPGC /Landlord may evict, or deny admission to a program or bar the perpetrator from its property under this policy.
2. The victim shall take action to control or prevent the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Steps taken shall be reasonable to the circumstances of each case, and shall not create a risk of harm to the victim. The action may include but not limited to:
 - a) Obtaining and enforcing a restraining or no contact order for protection against the perpetrator from the property;
 - b) Obtaining and enforcing an order barring the perpetrator from the property;
 - c) Preventing the delivery of the perpetrators mail to the victims unit;
 - d) Other reasonable measures.

Confidentiality

HAPGC will keep confidential any information that the participant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the participant gives HAPGC written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the participant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the participant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Participants for more information about HAPGC's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Safety and Security of Participants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the participant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Participants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Participants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

Participants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

Local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Name	PHONE
1. Emergency Assistance	911
2. Resource Information	211
3. Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County	301-731-1203
4. Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence	800-MDHELPS (800-634-3577)
5. Prince George's County Sheriff's Office Domestic Violence Unit	301-780-8408
6. Prince George's County Police Dept. Domestic Violence Unit	301-772-4433
7. Prince George's County	
8. Hospital Center Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Center	301-618-3154
9. Still I Rise, Inc.	301-868-4903
10. House of Ruth (24-Hour Hotline)	410-889-RUTH (410-889-7884)
11. Community Advocates for Family and Youth (CAFY)	301-390-4902
12. Prince George's County Health	
13. Dept. Domestic Violence Coordinator	301-883-7873
14. Department of Family Services Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Division	301-248-0617
15. Courtney's House	301-870-8008
16. Turnaround.inc	410-377-8111
17. The Walbert	410-837-7000