

NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS AND TENANTS REGARDING PROTECTIONS UNDER THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT (VAWA)

A federal law that went into effect in 2006 protects individuals who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The name of the law is the Violence against Women Act, or "VAWA." This notice explains your rights under VAWA.

Protections for Victims

If you are eligible for a Section 8 voucher, the CDA cannot deny you rental assistance solely because you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.

If you are the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, you cannot be terminated from the Section 8 program based on acts or threats of violence committed against you. Also, criminal acts directly related to the domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking that are caused by a member of your household or a guest can't be the reason for terminating your rental assistance if you were the victim of the abuse.

Reasons You Can Be Evicted

Your rental assistance can be terminated if the CDA or your landlord can show there is an *actual* and *imminent* (immediate) threat to other tenants or employees at the property if you remain in your housing. Also, you can be evicted and your rental assistance can be terminated for serious or repeated lease violations that are not related to the domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking committed against you. The housing authority and your landlord cannot hold you to a more demanding set of rules than it applies to tenants who are not victims.

Removing the Abuser from the Household

The CDA may allow the victim and other household members to stay in the assisted unit, but require the abuser to vacate the assisted unit.

Moving to Protect Your Safety

The CDA may permit you to move and still keep your rental assistance, even if your current lease has not yet expired. CDA may require that you be current on your rent or other obligations in the housing choice voucher program. The CDA may ask you to provide proof that you are moving because of incidences of abuse.

Proving that You Are a Victim of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking

The CDA can ask you to prove or "certify" that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking. The CDA must give you at least 14 business days to provide this proof. There are three ways you can prove that you are a victim:

- Complete a Form HUD -50066 certification form provided by the CDA
- Statement from a victim service provider, attorney, or medical professional who has helped with domestic violence, dating or stalking
- Provide a police or court record

If you fail to provide one of these documents within the required time the CDA may terminate your rental assistance.

Confidentiality

The CDA must keep confidential any information you provide about the violence against you, unless:

- You give written permission to the CDA to release the information.
- A law requires the CDA to release the information.

If release of the information would put your safety at risk, you should inform the housing authority and your landlord.

VAWA and Other Laws

VAWA does not limit the CDA duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property. This includes orders issued to protect a victim and orders dividing property among household members in cases where a family breaks up.

VAWA does not replace any federal, state, or local law that provides greater protection for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.

For Additional Information

For help and advice on escaping an abusive relationship, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).