



Chicago Housing Authority Demonstration Program and Special Initiatives Overview

Reentry Pilot (Approved November 2014; updated August 2016)

Overview

Individuals who have been convicted of crimes that would otherwise make them ineligible for CHA housing may qualify for housing under the Reentry Pilot program. Those currently on a CHA wait list may qualify for subsidy, and those whose family lives in traditional public housing may be qualified to reunite with their family.

Purpose Why was this program created?

To test the provision of stable housing against recidivism.

Many individuals leaving incarceration are committed to getting their life back on track but struggle to find adequate, affordable housing. This demonstration will allow ex-offenders who are participating in re-entry services to continue their positive re-integration into society. CHA believes that the stable, affordable housing it offers can be a springboard for residents, including the ex-offenders in this demonstration, who are committed to improving their lives.

Eligibility Who can participate?

- Ex-offenders who have completed a minimum of six months in a re-entry program with one of the following Reentry Pilot service providers:
 - Safer Foundation
 - St. Leonard's Ministries
- Participants must be currently on a CHA wait list or reuniting with spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling or adult child currently in CHA's Public Housing or HCV program.
- Participants with the following convictions are not eligible: murder, attempted murder, terrorism, and any of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) mandatory criminal background exclusions including sex offenses and criminal drug activity resulting in eviction (see CHA's Administrative Plan and Admission and Continued Occupant Policies for detailed information).
- A maximum of 50 families may participate in the pilot over the two-year enrollment period.

Selection How are potential participants selected?

Track 1: From the wait list

- If a Reentry Pilot candidate is on a Public Housing or HCV wait list and is called for an intake interview, the Reentry Pilot service provider with which they are working will issue them a Reentry Pilot Certificate and application, provided that the individual has completed at least six months of services, is drug free, is current on their rent (if applicable) and compliant with CHA's work requirement.
- The Reentry Pilot candidate can present the Reentry Pilot Certificate as well as the signed *Consent to Participate in the Re-entry Pilot* during the screening process. Provided the

candidate does not have a conviction listed above in the Eligibility section, CHA will consider the Reentry Pilot Certificate and the signed consent to participate form as proof of mitigation of the individual's criminal record. The candidate will be admitted into the housing program, barring extreme circumstances in which CHA determines the individual would not be an acceptable tenant.

- Reentry Pilot candidates are considered to be part of a demonstration program wait list.

Selection How are potential participants selected? (continued)

Track 2: As family members of current residents

- The re-entry service providers listed in the eligibility section will identify potential participants who have completed at least six months of reentry services, are drug free, are current on their rent (if applicable), are compliant with CHA's work requirement and who have a spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling or adult child currently in CHA's Public Housing or HCV program.
- The re-entry service provider will provide a detailed plan signed by the provider and participant to document how the potential participant will be a good candidate for the demonstration program.
- The identified receiving household must participate in an intake interview. During the interview, CHA will determine the receiving household's willingness to participate and they will receive information about the pilot as well as the responsibilities involved if they agree to participate.
- The receiving household must sign an agreement accepting the terms of the Pilot (see responsibilities below).
- CHA has the discretion to exclude any potential participant.
- No more than one Reentry Pilot participant may reside in a receiving household at any time.
- The landlord (or Property Manager) must approve their participation in the Reentry Pilot. For HCV, if the landlord does not approve, a new landlord must be identified (after the family's existing lease expires, in the case of Track 2 participants).
- External agencies may refer candidates to the Reentry providers listed.

Housing Where and how will CHA house participants?

- Participants will be housed in traditional Public Housing or in the private market using a Housing Choice Voucher. Participants will not be housed in mixed-income housing. CHA may consider a transfer to traditional public housing if a unit is available (equal bedroom size), with the transfer considered as final.
- CHA will not increase a family's unit size (in Public Housing) or subsidy (for HCV families) to accommodate the pilot participant. In accordance with CHA policy, HCV families may move to a larger unit, provided they do not pay more than 40% of their income in rent.

Responsibilities What do participants have to do?

Of participants:

- Track 1 participants will be considered as a regular leaseholder, but must agree to continue to participate in services under this demonstration program as specified on the *Consent to Participate in the Re-Entry Pilot* form.

- Track 2 participants will sign a conditional tenancy agreement for a period of two years with the option to extend for an additional two years. The option period will be extended with mutual agreement of CHA, and in cases of HCV the landlord.
- Participants must engage in supportive services with one of the re-entry providers listed above, including weekly contacts with the provider for the first 90 days, as appropriate and monthly contacts thereafter, monthly in-home visits with the provider for the first 90 days and quarterly in-home visits thereafter, monthly visits from a CHA FamilyWorks representative and any additional meetings, contacts or home visits that the provider deems clinically necessary.
- Participants must show that they are drug-free by passing regular and/or random drug testing, as determined clinically necessary by the Reentry Pilot service provider. CHA and its property manager's experience with the participant will be considered in determining if a random drug test is warranted.
- Participants must meet the public housing work requirement regardless of housing type.
- The Participant must exit the household if found to be in violation of CHA policies.

Of receiving families (in the case of Track 2):

- Receiving households must participate in an intake interview as described in the Selection section.
- Receiving households must continue to be compliant with their lease and other CHA policies.
- Any violations on the part of the pilot participant could impact the receiving family if the family does not take appropriate actions, which may include barring the participant from the unit.
- After the successful completion of the four-year term (initial 2-year term plus a 2-year extension), the family can request that the pilot participant be added to their lease.
- There will be no increase in the number of bedrooms of the unit for the family as a result of the reentry participant joining the family.

Timeline When will the program take place?

- The program will be presented to the CHA Board of Commissioners for approval in November 2014.
- CHA submitted a request to HUD's MTW office to approve certain parameters of this proposed demonstration. Approved in 2015.
- Program implementation will begin after approval from CHA Board and HUD.
- CHA and the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, a partner in the Reentry Pilot, will hold quarterly meetings to discuss the pilot.
- The program will be evaluated for four years after it begins, following approval from HUD through Chicago State University.

Updates August 2016

- CHA reduced the amount of time necessary to be working with a provider from one year to six months.
- Lutheran Social Services was removed as an agency due to program closure



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- CHA approved external providers may refer candidates to one of the two Reentry Providers for consideration.
- CHA eliminated the statement that participants would receive no preference on the wait list because it was in conflict with the Demonstration Program language.