



***Interagency Council on Homelessness***  
***Housing Solutions Committee***



***20 November 2023***



**Convention for Recording ICH Committee Meetings:**

- ❖ Recording for purposes of complying with the open meeting act requirements
- ❖ Available for anyone who requests a copy at [ich.info@dc.gov](mailto:ich.info@dc.gov).

# Meeting Agenda



- i. Welcome & Agenda Review (5 mins)**
  - a) Intros & Call for Announcements
  - b) Adopting Meeting Notes & Managing the Listserv
- ii. System Check-In (20 mins)**
- iii. Discussion Items (60 mins)**
  - a) Rent Reasonableness (30 mins)
  - b) Annual Priorities & Update (30 mins)
- iv. Announcements & Reminders (as needed)**
- v. Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)**
  - a) Next Meeting: Date & Time – **\*Proposal to cancel December meeting\***

# Intro & Call for Announcements



## ❖ Intros:

- Chat intros for attendees: name, pronouns, org, title/role
- Quick round of hellos from Co-Chairs and ICH staff with formal roles leading or supporting meeting

## ❖ Callers:

- Use \*3 to raise your hands so we can see you
- Use \*6 to unmute and introduce yourself
- Allows us to check that your audio works and that you can hear us!

## ❖ Call for Partner Announcements/Reminders:

- Please “chat” any significant partner announcements, especially those changes/updates that impact the system
- We will make time on the agenda, as appropriate, or include in the notes

# Adopting Notes & Managing the Listserv



## ❖ Adopting Prior Meeting Notes:

- Automatically adopted unless meeting attendees flag issues
- Generally, ICH team sends out meeting notes within a week
  - ✓ **Outstanding NTS: 09/18**
  - ✓ **Flag Re Delay: Prioritized Winter Plan & Full Council**
  - ✓ **Flag Re Constraints: Pivoting to Annual Update**
- Please review as soon as possible and flag any errors/issues
- If we don't hear back within a week, assuming good to adopt

## ❖ Managing the Listserv:

- Meeting materials are only distributed to listserv members
- If you are not on the listserv, you will not receive materials
- To join the listserv, email [ich.info@dc.gov](mailto:ich.info@dc.gov)

# FDBK on Agenda, Icebreaker or Housekeeping



## Introductions:

- ❖ **ICH Lead:**
- ❖ **Co-chairs:**
- ❖ **Callers:** \*95 Dr. Mayaalla, \*18 Keith Pettigrew (DCHA Director), \*86 Ms. Umi, \*42

## Agenda Review:

- ❖ **Feedback: ...**

## Other Comments/Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from Ms. Umi:** Who is point on sanitary concerns?
  - **A:** Hammere will advise on best POC.

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# DHS Updates

- Rent Reasonableness for non DCHA programs:
  - Adopting use of affordable housing.com for FRSP, Career MAP, RRH-I
  - Working on contract updates, etc. for providers affected



# FDBK on DHS Updates



## Feedback:

❖ ...

## Q&A:

❖ Q:

❖ A:

# Participation in PRO Housing application through the COG

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The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has made funds available through a national competition to support communities that are actively taking steps to remove barriers to affordable housing, such as:

- Barriers caused by outdated zoning, land use policies, or regulations;
- Inefficient procedures;
- Gaps in available resources for development;
- Deteriorating or inadequate infrastructure;
- Lack of neighborhood amenities; or
- Challenges to preserving existing housing stock such as increasing threats from natural hazards, redevelopment pressures, or expiration of affordability requirements.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has submitted an application on behalf of all jurisdictions in the region:

- Public hearing on the draft application was held on October 23.
- Application was submitted by the November 6 deadline.



# Participation in PRO Housing application through the COG

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## The application:

- Builds on the regional fair housing plan on which all jurisdictions collaborated.
- Addresses the most persistent barrier to fair housing: the supply of affordable housing.

## Key areas of work that grant funds will support if the application is successful:

- Increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to low-to-moderate income families, especially in communities that have lacked it in the past
- Working across jurisdictions to establish more uniform zoning standards and to increase the overall supply of housing.
- Preserving affordable housing and preventing displacement.

View the application at: <https://www.mwcog.org/community/planning-areas/housing-and-homelessness/hud-pro-housing-draft-application/>



# FDBK on DHCD Updates



## Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from RB:** Did they specify what is low-income range in this application?
  - **A from DHCD:** Believe following HUDs definition which is 80%, but hear need to get to deeper levels of affordability.
- ❖ **Q from RB:** Did MWCOCG submit the application directly or by individual jurisdictions?
  - A from DHCD: MWCOCG applied on behalf of the region. Submitted by MWCOCG before 11/06.
- ❖ **Q from RB:** How do jurisdictions secure the funds from the regional application if approved?
  - A from DHCD: It is not a lot of money for a national competition, so highly competitive.
  - FDBK from RB: If awarded, recommend focusing in on certain income range even within 80% which is still a lot of people.
- ❖ **FDBK from RB:**
  - not true build baby build has not and will not reduce price jurisdictions have to legislate price reductions
  - <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/poverty-journal/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2019/12/27-1-Zhang.pdf>
  - here is a link that highlights how just iz hasn't address the housing issues will find more as we go along
  - <https://savedcpublicland.org/the1617project/2023/06/27/inclusionary-zoning-fail/>
  - from 2014 [https://www.washlaw.org/pdf/wlc\\_affordable\\_housing\\_report.PDF](https://www.washlaw.org/pdf/wlc_affordable_housing_report.PDF)

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  - a) **Rent Reasonableness (30 mins)**
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- v. Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)

# Purpose & Background



## Purpose:

- ❖ Brief recap of feedback from 09/18 breakout rooms on rent reasonableness
- ❖ Hear DCHA updates on efforts to streamline

## Background:

- ❖ New process for new and existing leases as of 07/01.
- ❖ Tracking feedback across forums on impact and challenges of rent reasonableness changes.
- ❖ The 09/18 Housing Solns CMTE held breakout rooms to solicit feedback on three questions:
  - What is the specific challenge you have encountered?
  - How is it impacting you?
  - Do you have a recommendation/solution to share?

# Feedback on Rent Reasonableness



Discussion Question	Feedback 09/18
<p><b>Challenges</b> What is the specific challenge you are encountering?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not being able to check rent reasonableness at client/provider level and earlier in process.</li> <li>• Thresholds change daily based on more data to inform calculation – also a good thing to have more data!</li> <li>• Working with landlords to submit correctly completed packets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact</b> How is it impacting you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of losing application fees and/or paying multiple fees for multiple units.</li> <li>• Having to start process over if LL will not adjust rent even by small amounts.</li> <li>• Impact on relationships:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client rapport and engagement with multiple unit denials, etc.</li> <li>• landlords</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations/Potential Solutions</b> Do you have a recommendation/solution to share?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to portal and/or ability to simulate rent reasonableness calculation up front.</li> <li>• Forms: include “wifi included” and space to include additional amenities on amenity form.</li> <li>• Supportive Materials: More info/reference material to understand rent reasonableness for providers, clients, landlords – i.e. what can household afford based on configuration, what is reasonable for selected units, template for submitting comps.</li> <li>• Client Communication: request for transparency and client inclusion on emails about rent reasonableness.</li> <li>• Pipeline units should all meet rent reasonableness.</li> <li>• Learn from peer communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parking Lot</b> Other Related Concerns/Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feels like pricing people out of certain neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Confusion on difference between Payment Standard and client 30% of income (max allowable rental payment).</li> <li>• What does enforcement and accountability in this process look like? i.e. grievance process, discrimination</li> </ul>

# FDBK on Rent Reasonableness



## Feedback/Q&A

- ❖ **RE:** My portal does not allow my apt building to collect the month's rent until the end of month even though pathways processes it on the 2nd and 3rd of the month what can be done about this. I don't receive utility assistance and I pay electric, water, trash , sewer and pest control fee besides my rent and parking wow.
- ❖ **Q from RB:** does the tool have a verification system for what landlords are reporting vs what is found on site of the buildings units are located in?
  - **A from DCHA:**
- ❖ **Q from RB:** How will worth be determined? Similar situation during process of rent increase and finding building is overpriced for current conditions and inconsistent report of amenities. What rights do tenants have in this process?
  - **A from DCHA:** If moved in before 07/01, use regular transfer voucher process do not need to wait for DCHA.
  - **FDBK from RB:** Have already put in for a new unit. What I am hearing is waiting on DCHA.



# FDBK on Rent Reasonableness



## Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from Ms. Umi:** How does this go for people already leased up? Are they grandfathered in? How does this impact buildings or residents affected – i.e. not able to use certain amenities?
  - **A from DCHA:** Can follow up on this specific case offline. Rent reasonableness is only rent when someone is moving into a unit or rent increases.
- ❖ **Q from JC:** Are there any additional funding supports for those families in need of handicapped (wheelchair accessible) housing for new voucher holders? Units end up being more expensive because of accessibility needs.
  - **A from DCHA:** Can look at difference between what is asked and what shows up in the market to see
- ❖ **Q from RE:** I moved Sept 1st and it wasn't as painful but wasn't as fast as DCHA stated it would be. Has the time gotten faster?
  - **A from DCHA re: escalation:** Common causes for delays are likely that LL packet is incomplete and need to request addtl info, or rent reasonableness result is lower than what was asked so need to negotiate.

**DCHA Updates:** Now doing security deposits for federal and local participants! ➤

DELIBERATIVE PURPOSES ONLY | SEND COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO [ICH.INFO@DC.GOV](mailto:ICH.INFO@DC.GOV)

# FDBK on Rent Reasonableness



## Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from Dr. Mayaalla:** DCHA is doing a good job! Thanks for answering questions. Feedback for new units and search - ask lots of questions, definitions and terms may be different!
- ❖ **Q from RW:** Continue to have high number of vacant units in the District. Concern on how defining and talking about affordability. Until start addressing policy infrastructure, will continue to see discrimination. Units should be mandated as rent reasonable.
- ❖ **Q from RE:** Security deposit assistance is great. People get discouraged when denied and having to go through the process again.
  - A from DCHA:
- ❖ **Q from QEA:** Clarification on federal vouchers.
  - A from DCHA:

# FDBK on Rent Reasonableness



## Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from RE:** Follow up on plan for moving on vouchers.
  - ❖ **A from DCHA:** HUD does not have a policy on local vouchers.
- ❖ **Q BR:** Can you share the point of contact for who should be contacted regarding securing security deposits for LRSP. A month ago, my office inquired about funds for security deposits and were told that no funds were available.
  - ❖ **A from DCHA:** The security deposit update was for federal vouchers. Local security deposit assistance is dependent on funding availability by DHS and DCHA. It may have been that at the end of the FY
  - ❖ **A from DHS:** If you want to follow up with me on specific cases, I'm happy to follow up, Ms. Ruffin. [anna.fogel@dc.gov](mailto:anna.fogel@dc.gov)
- ❖ **Dr. Mayaalla:** Ask LL to put application fee later in the lease signing or include it with the security deposit. Advice to gather all info before select one to move forward on.

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# Purpose & Background



## Purpose:

- ❖ Review themes from 09/18 breakout rooms for clarifications and confirmation

## Background:

- ❖ As part of the annual update, we need to identify 3 to 5 things we can reasonably advance over the next year or two.
- ❖ Housing Solution is the forum for advancing housing that is dedicated to homeless services
- ❖ The 09/18 Housing Solns CMTE held breakout rooms to solicit feedback on priority areas: demand, supply, access, and quality.

# Feedback on Annual Priorities



Area	Feedback 09/18
<p><b>Demand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and measuring demand especially for Cons RFP Pipeline</li> <li>i.e. Target populations, units, locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unit Availability and Locations:</b> ADA and other accessible units, larger units for families across all wards.</li> <li><b>Pop Needs:</b> Range of permanent housing from PSH Plus (collocated health services) to Deeply Affordable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supply</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing/expanding supply especially for Con RFP Pipeline</li> <li>E.g., Capacity building for mission-driven and black/brown developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Inventory:</b> Itemization of current resources dedicated to homeless services system.</li> <li><b>Continue Improvements in Con RFP:</b> More regular and frequent release, extra points for prioritizing PSH and affordable units in application.</li> <li><b>Funding:</b> explore policy options to increase funding particularly for small and BIPOC led-developers. I.e. leverage Tax Revision Commission.</li> <li><b>Creative Program Design:</b> Revisiting master leasing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Access</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expediting access to housing especially for Con RFP Pipeline</li> <li>E.g., Metrics on time from voucher approval to lease-up, Metrics on Occupancy/Utilization and Turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Tracking:</b> Portal for accessing application information for clients and providers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Attendees likely ran out of time on this section!</i></p>
<p><b>Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining and improving quality especially for Con RFP Pipeline</li> <li>E.g., Inspection standards and outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Safety:</b> Relocation requests and request for preventative versus reactive response.</li> <li><b>General recommendations:</b> Rental insurance included with voucher, square footage for family units, assistance meeting building code for small developers</li> <li><b>Knowledge Infrastructure:</b> job aides and training for case management staff to adequately support housing process.</li> </ul>

# FDBK on Annual Update & Priorities



## Feedback/Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from Ms. Umi:** Know of larger family size units in other wards because voucher can be inherited. Concern about families who have large units but do not have the HH size. What is process for DCHA at recertification?
  - **A from DCHA:** Affordability is done up front at initial move in. As long as person willing to pay other portion may still have a larger unit even if voucher only cover up to a certain portion/1 bedroom.
- ❖ **Q:** How often are recertifications?
  - **A from DCHA:** recertify bi and tri-annually. Elderly and fixed income.
- ❖ **Q:** What do we mean by Deeply Affordable?
  - **A from ICH:** in relation to rents under 30% Area Median Income (AMI) set by HUD.
- ❖ **Q from CC:** Had one year voucher to move in to housing quickly “encampment voucher”. There is confusion with CMs about the voucher. Question on ability to expedite housing for encampment residents compared to individuals who are long stayers/District residents on the street.

# ICH Annual Update



## Background/Context:

- ❖ Legislated mandate to cover changes in the landscape, subpopulation needs, and system priorities.
- ❖ Informed by readily available data (e.g. FY22 KPIs) and community feedback on priorities by forum and population.

## Status: Underway!

- ❖ Draft to be shared in advance of 11/28 ICH Strategic Planning CMTE Meeting with additional review at 12/12 ICH Executive CMTE Meeting.
- ❖ Email [ich.info@dc.gov](mailto:ich.info@dc.gov) to join the listserv



# Meeting Agenda



- i. Welcome & Agenda Review (5 mins)
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- iv. Announcements & Reminders (as needed)**
  - a) HCS: RELiEF Program
  - b) HCS: Veteran Flex Funds **\*NEW\***
  - c) PFFC: 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial & Vigil
- v. Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)

# HCS: RELiEF Program

## Background:

- ❖ Housing Counseling Services (HCS) financial education and rental incentive program
- ❖ Recommending as resource for households exiting RRH and/or otherwise independently leasing
- ❖ Program can serve up to 80 households, only 18 are enrolled so far!

## Referral Process

- ❖ Referral form will be sent with ICH meeting materials,
- ❖ You can also email [relief@housingetc.org](mailto:relief@housingetc.org) for more info and to submit referrals

**Timeline:** Program ends 12/31 so aiming to enroll households quickly so that can receive full 3 months of assistance.

**Housing Counseling Services:** Participants must be willing to engage in one counseling session which will include a credit pull (soft pull and no cost to the client).

## The RELiEF Program

RELiEF (Rental Emergency Lifeline/ Eviction Fund) is a financial education program to help tenants in DC to stabilize their housing and develop savings habits. **The program will award participants who make on time rental payments \$600 per month up to a total of \$1,800 over a three month period.** This money can be used to start an emergency savings fund to prepare for unexpected expenses and minimize their impact on your housing.

### How it works:

Once enrolled, RELiEF will award participants \$600/month (up to a total of \$1,800) for each month during the 3 month period of enrollment for which proof of an on-time rental payment is provided. Participants must work with a certified housing counselor on budgeting, saving, banking, and credit repair. Housing counselors will assist participants in the creation of an individualized savings plan with concrete next steps, with the goal of using the incentive payments to start an emergency savings fund.

### Program requirements:

To be eligible to participate in the RELiEF program, you must meet the following:

- Live in DC and have lived in your current unit for a minimum of 6 months
- Demonstrate ability to make on- time rental payments going forward
- Commitment to work with a housing counselor to develop a housing plan, credit report evaluation, individualized budget and savings plan
- Commitment to share rental payment history for 12 months after the program ends
- Document housing instability at some point within the last 12 months
- Currently at or near a \$0 rental balance
- Household income no greater than 60% area median income
- Have rent that is no more than 50% of your monthly income
- You may not participate in the program if you pay income based rent

\*Enrollment into the RELiEF program is extremely limited, HCS will evaluate applications on a rolling basis until all spots are filled. Application submission does not guarantee enrollment.

### Contact us to find out more today!

✉ Email us at [relief@housingetc.org](mailto:relief@housingetc.org)

☎ Call us at 202-900-9461

This program is generously supported by the Wells Fargo Foundation and National Housing Trust



Housing Counseling Services, Inc.

Est. 1973 2410 17th St., N.W. • Suite 100 • Adams Alley • Washington, D.C. 20009  
Serving DC, MD and VA 202-667-7006 • [www.housingetc.org](http://www.housingetc.org)

# HCS: Veteran Flex Funds \*NEW\*



## Financial assistance for Veterans:

- ❖ At risk of experiencing homelessness and in need of prevention
- ❖ Experiencing homelessness to reduce barriers to housing

Information and referral forms are available on the HCS website:

<https://housingetc.org/flex-fund-program/>



Housing Counseling Services, Inc.

### VETERAN FLEX FUND PROGRAM

Housing Counseling Services' (HCS) Veteran Flex Fund Program offers financial assistance to quickly help homeless Veterans and Veterans at risk for homelessness in the District of Columbia stabilize their housing.

**The Flex Fund Program can help at-risk Veterans with:**

- Delinquent Rent
- Delinquent Utilities/Utility Deposit
- Security Deposit/First Month's Rent
- Transportation Related Cost
- Rental Application and Related Fees
- Child Care Costs
- Delinquent Mortgage
- Other Costs That Support Housing Stability

**For more information about the Flex Fund Program or to access the Flex Fund application visit:**

<https://housingetc.org/flex-fund-program/>

**If you have questions about the Flex Fund Program contact HCS at (202) 667-7736 or for email at [flexfund@housingetc.org](mailto:flexfund@housingetc.org)**

The Veterans Flex Fund Program is funded by Community Solutions International and administered by Housing Counseling Services.

# PFFC: 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial & Vigil \*NEW\*



**Background:** People for Fairness Coalition (PFFC) is hosting the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial & Vigil in honor of the people who passed away while experiencing homelessness.

## Details:

- ❖ Wednesday, 12/20 at 4 pm
- ❖ Luther Place Memorial Church – 1226 Vermont Ave NW

The poster features a central photograph of a group of people gathered at night in front of a church, some holding candles. Above the photo is a logo of a scale of justice. The text on the poster provides details about the event, including the date, time, location, and contact information.

People for Fairness Coalition  
Invites you to the  
11th Annual Memorial & Vigil  
In honor of our neighbors  
who passed away without the dignity of a home.

Opening Service and Candlelight Procession  
4:00 pm Luther Place Memorial Church  
Wednesday December 20th, 2023.  
1226 Vermont Ave NW

Lunch and Memorial Service  
Remembering our brothers & sisters  
who died without the dignity of a home.  
Church of The Epiphany  
12:45 Thursday December 21st, 2023.  
1317 G Street NW

Questions?  
Contact:  
Rachelle Ellison  
Email: rachelle Ellison74@gmail.com  
Phone: (202) 597-3236

To donate  
[www.Cnhed.org/donate/pffc](http://www.Cnhed.org/donate/pffc)

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