



PHA GUIDE TO USING SPONSOR-BASED VOUCHERS TO DEVELOP PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Background

Generally, rental assistance administered by PHAs is assigned either to the tenant (“tenant-based”) or to a specific housing unit or building (“project-based”).

In a “sponsor-based” program, an organization that works with people in the community (the “sponsor”) holds the housing voucher and is able to lease a unit from the landlord on behalf of the tenant in order to help facilitate access to housing. The organization holding the voucher also delivers or facilitates access to supportive services that help the household achieve stability.

Some PHAs are “sponsor-basing” Housing Choice Vouchers, though [Moving to Work \(MTW\)](#) status is currently required to do so.

PHAs may administer HUD Homeless Assistance Grant funding through the Continuum of Care for sponsor-based rental assistance in permanent supportive housing. Some PHAs administer state funding or other types of rental assistance programs (other than Housing Choice Vouchers), which can be used to provide sponsor-based rental assistance.

Implementation Tips

A sponsor-basing strategy can be a useful tool to provide access to housing linked to supportive services for people who have been identified as “hard to house” because of a criminal background, poor rental history, and/or very high needs for ongoing support services.

When a service provider is the sponsor holding the voucher, this may mitigate the landlord’s concerns or perceived risks. Landlords may be more willing to rent units to people who are perceived as risky tenants if the service provider has a strong reputation, a track record of success

in providing support for housing stability for people with disabilities and histories of homelessness, and established relationships with other owners and managers of rental properties.

Where Can PHAs Do This?

Currently only [MTW PHAs](#) can sponsor-base HCVs. Some PHAs administer other funding for rental assistance programs that allow sponsor-basing rental assistance in permanent supportive housing.

Suggested for:

- PHAs that have strong relationships with service providers
- Communities with tight rental markets

Who Can PHAs Assist?

Highly vulnerable individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, including those who are experiencing chronic homelessness.

Additional Resources

The Corporation for Supportive Housing has created a PHA Toolkit that contains information about programs that use [sponsor-based vouchers in permanent supportive housing](#). The toolkit contains more information including, profiles of PHAs that have sponsor-based HCVs to create successful permanent supportive housing programs.

Example

- The [Oakland PATH Rehousing Initiative \(OPRI\)](#) is a sponsor-based rental assistance program developed through a partnership involving the **Oakland Housing Authority**, City of Oakland CA, Alameda County, and multiple non-profit agencies. OPRI provides housing placement and ongoing housing subsidies and supportive services for people living on the street, in encampments or emergency shelters, and vulnerable people who are at high risk of experiencing homelessness when they exit foster care or the criminal justice system. Since March 2010, OPRI has placed more than 200 people into permanent housing, using a [Housing First](#) approach.