

Burlington County PHA Plan

Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 5 Year Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 - 2014



Prepared for the Burlington County
Board of Social Services

By:

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PHA 5-Year and Annual Plan	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Public and Indian Housing	OMB No. 2577-0226 Expires 4/30/2011
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Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2010

5 Year Plan for Fiscal Year 2010 - 2014

- 1.0 **PHA Name:** Burlington County Board of Social Services **PHA Code:** NJ215
PHA Fiscal Year Beginning: 01/01/2010
- 2.0 Inventory:
Number of HCV units: 627
- 3.0 **Submission Type**
✓ 5-Year and Annual Plan
- 4.0 PHA Consortia: (N/A)

5.1 – Mission

The mission of the PHA remains the same as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The PHA will promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity, and a suitable living environment free from discrimination.

The Burlington County Board of Social Services, acting in their capacity as a Public Housing Agency, administers a tenant-based Rental Assistance Program, known as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, to serve low income renters throughout Burlington County. The Program is supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is operated in accordance with Federal laws and regulations. Tenant-based Rental Assistance Programs provide rent subsidies for income eligible households to make the cost of renting units in the open market affordable.

The purpose of this Plan is to provide a clear identifiable source by which Participants in the Rental Assistance Program and other members of the Public may locate basic Housing Agency policies, rules, and requirements concerning its operation, programs, and services.

The PHA will work in unison with human service agencies to identify housing needs and expand the supply of assisted housing through the solicitation of Landlord participation through outreach and other agencies. The PHA will work to improve Section 8 Management Assessment score and continue to strive to more efficiently meet the needs of Program Participants.

5.2 – Goals and Objectives

The PHA will support affordable housing initiatives, provide free advertising for affordable units, make an affordable unit list available to Participants, continue to provide Program information to other agencies, counsel Participants on Portability options, and supply lead based paint seminar information to landlords.

The PHA has maintained its objective to service extremely-low income families through the taking of applications for the Program from extremely-low income families whose income level is at or below the extremely-low MFI based on HUD Income Limits. Over 2,000 applications were submitted to the PHA during a five day application acceptance period. The PHA deconcentration efforts have enabled Participants to locate housing in areas of low poverty as identified by the U.S Census Bureau. Utilizing the option of reducing or increasing the HUD Published Fair Market Rents (FMR) by 10% the PHA has opted to utilize the Published FMRs for high poverty areas and increase them by 10% for areas of low poverty concentration.

The PHA has reduced the number of Program Local Preferences from 11 to four. Reducing the number of Preferences has enabled the PHA to better service the needs of the community.

6.0 – PHA Plan Update

(a) Identify all PHA elements that have been revised by the PHA since its last Annual Plan submission:

No PHA elements have been revised since last Annual Plan submission.

(b) Identify the specific location(s) where the public may obtain copies of the 5-Year and Annual PHA Plan.

The public can obtain copies of the 5-Year and Annual PHA Plan at the main administrative office of County government, Public library, main administrative office of the PHA, and PHA website.

9.0 – Housing Needs

Information regarding housing needs in Burlington County is covered in detail in the Burlington County Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan (commonly referred to as the C-Plan) and additional information on needs can be found in the County's Fair Housing Plan. The C-Plan derives much of its information from the 2000 Census reports and covers conditions affecting rental occupancy as well as owner occupancy. The following Housing Needs Table summarizes information from the C-Plan and the Fair Housing Plan pertaining to the needs of renters, especially those with very low and extremely low incomes, and the Rental Assistance Waiting List. The Needs range from 5 (High Need) to 1 (Low Need).

Housing Needs of Families in the Jurisdiction by Family Type							
Family Type	Overall	Affordability	Supply	Quality	Accessibility	Size	Location
Income <= 30% of AMI	4,808	5	5	5	1		
Income >30% but <=50% of AMI	4,992	5	5	5	1		
Income >50% but <80% of AMI	8,255	3	3	3	1		
Elderly*	7,751	5	3	5	2		
Families with Disabilities**	60,198	3	5	N/A	5		
Race/Ethnicity	N/A	(See Note)	(See Note)	N/A	N/A		
Race/Ethnicity	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Race/Ethnicity	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Race/Ethnicity	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

* All Income Levels

** Based upon most recent Census data – all income levels, owners and renters

Addressing the Needs – The PHA plans to address housing needs by; increasing Rental Assistance Program enrollment; educating rental property owners to reduce discriminatory resistance to participation in the Program; assuring that all units in the Program meet Housing Quality Standards and are decent, safe, and sanitary; identifying handicap accessible units for participation in the Program; and assisting families to move out of high poverty areas.

Burlington County Board of Social Services Section 8 Waiting List			
	# of families	% of total families	Annual Turnover
Waiting list total	2,518		200
Extremely low income <=30% AMI	2140	85%	
Very low income (>30% but <=50% AMI)	252	10%	
Low income (>50% but <80% AMI)	126	5%	
Families with children	1339	53%	
Elderly families	83	.03%	
Families with Disabilities	14	.01%	
Black	1463	58%	
White	484	19%	
Other	540	.21%	
Indian Pacific	17	.01%	
Asian	13	.01%	
Hispanic	143	.06%	

The waiting list is currently closed. It has been closed to date for 2 Years. The PHA does not expect to reopen the list in the PHA Plan year. The PHA does not permit specific categories of families onto the waiting list even if generally closed.

9.1 – Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs

- Build enrollment in the Program to achieve 100% utilization;
- Exceed HUD's policy that 75% of new enrollments be at income level of 30% MFI or less;
- Identify high poverty concentration areas and assist families to locate units outside of high poverty areas;
- Participate in educational programs to landlords to encourage their participation in the program;
- Participate with the Human Relations Commission in providing Fair Housing Education Programs in an effort to reduce discriminatory attitudes toward rental assistance recipients, minority groups, persons with disabilities and families with children;
- Coordinate with disability advocacy organizations to develop a means of identifying accessible rental units;
- Maintain full enrollment in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program;
- Assure that all units occupied by children under the age of six in the program are free of lead paint hazards; and
- Promote program participation with owners of units that have three or more bedrooms to house large families.

10.0 – Additional Information

(a) Progress in Meeting Mission and Goals

The PHA has assisted 617 families move during the course of the five year plan. By increasing the Published FMR by 10% 542 families were able to move to areas with low poverty concentration.

The PHA has fully implemented a Family Self-Sufficiency Program that currently has 41 Participants enrolled (21 of the 41 have escrow accounts). A total of 22 Participants graduated from the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, with eight of the graduates purchasing a home.

The PHA has established protocol with all appropriate TANF units regarding the exchange of information and coordination of services.

The PHA works closely with human service agencies to expand linkages with agencies that provide services to persons with special needs. PHA Staff works closely with Case and Social Workers to ensure the needs of the Participant are recognized and met.

The PHA completed service for the previous Waiting List and accepted applications from extremely-low income families for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. The

PHA received 2,000+ applications. Local Preferences were reduced from 11 to four which enables the Program to better serve the housing needs of the community.

The PHA accepted applications from families whose income was at or below 30% of MFI making their household income extremely-low.

The PHA conducts Criminal Background Check on all Applicants before they are admitted to the Program.

(b) Significant Amendment and Substantial Deviation Modification

The PHA's definition of a "significant amendment" is an amendment that changes the meaning of the Mission Statement; or changes the planned goals or objectives of the PHA. A significant amendment would include a change in the financial resources in excess of \$100,000; a change in the nature of the policies or procedures stated in the following components: Waiting List Organization, Search Time for a unit, Admission Preferences, Payment Standards, Minimum Rent; a Reorganization of the Management Structure; or the addition of a new Program; or the deletion of an existing Program to or from the current Plan. Changes to the Annual Plan may be made without undertaking a comment process if such change is made in response to a change in governing regulations. If such a change should occur it will be presented in the next Annual Plan.

The PHA defines a "Substantial Deviation" as a course of action that is not consistent with the Mission Statement; or a course of action that is inconsistent with the planned goals and objectives of the PHA.

Attachment A

5.1: Mission

The mission of the PHA remains the same as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The PHA will promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity, and a suitable living environment free from discrimination. The PHA will work in unison with human service agencies to identify housing needs and expand the supply of assisted housing through the solicitation of Landlord participation through outreach and other agencies. The PHA will work to improve Section 8 Management Assessment score and continue to strive to more efficiently meet the needs of Program Participants.

5.2: Goals and Objectives

The PHA will support affordable housing initiatives, provide free advertising for affordable units and make affordable unit list available to Participants, continue to provide Program information to other agencies counsel Participants on Portability options, supply lead based paint seminar information to landlords.

The PHA has maintained its objective to service extremely-low income families through the taking of applications for the Program from extremely-low income families whose income level is at or below the extremely-low AMI based on HUD Income Limits. Over 2,000 applications were submitted to the PHA during a five day application accepting period. The PHA deconcentration efforts have enabled Participants to locate housing in areas of low poverty as identified by the U.S Census Bureau. Utilizing the option of reducing or increasing the HUD Published FMRs by 10% the PHA has opted to utilize the Published FMRs for high poverty areas and has increased them by 10% for areas of low poverty areas.

The PHA has reduced the number of Program Local Preferences from 11 to four. Reducing the number of Preferences has enabled the PHA to better service the needs of the community.

6.0 (b) PHA Plan Elements:

1A. Eligibility: The PHA requests criminal records from State law enforcement agencies for screening purposes. This screening is to detect Criminal or drug-related activity only to the extent required by law or regulation. The PHA will access FBI records if State law enforcement agency indicates there is a possible out of State record through an NCIC authorized source. The PHA shares the following information to prospective landlords; criminal or drug related activity, family's current address, name and address of the landlord at the family's current and prior address, tenancy history relevant to payment of rent, utility bills, family care of unit, family respect for the rights of others to the peaceful enjoyment of their housing, and family compliance with other essential conditions of tenancy.

1b. Deconcentration: The PHA maintains two (2) Payment Standards to promote deconcentration. The HUD published FMRs are used for those areas determined by the Census Tract to be high poverty concentration areas. The HUD published FMRs have been increased by 10% for areas identified by the Census Tract as having a low concentration of poverty.

1c. Selection and Admission Policies: The PHA maintains one waiting list for Section 8 tenant based assistance. A merged waiting list does not exist. Applications are accepted by mail. Applications are made available during limited time periods; when applications are taken; the Announcement/Application is published in the local newspaper and circulated to county human service agencies for distribution. Applications are made available at the PHA main administrative office, the PHA web-site, and at many other sites. The PHA has four HUD approved local admission preferences; Burlington County Resident who is a Homeless U.S. Veteran, Burlington County Resident who is a Homeless non U.S. Veteran or a Domestic Violence Victim, Burlington County Resident who has a disability as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, and Burlington County Resident who is 62 years of age or older. The Waiting List is currently closed and is not projected to open for application taking during 2010.

2. Financial Resources: Projected Annual Contributions for Section 8 Tenant-Based Assistance is \$5,307,760.00. The requested 2010 Administrative Fee for the PHA Family Self-Sufficiency Program is \$68,000.

3. Rent Determination: The PHA does not employ discretionary rent-setting policies. Rent determination is based on total household income which results in 30% of adjusted monthly income and no more than 40% of adjusted income for new lease-ups. The minimum rent is set at \$25.00.

5. Grievance Procedures: The PHA informal review procedures for Applicants to the Section 8 HCV Program and the informal hearing procedures for families assisted by the HCV Program are in accordance with 24 CFR 982 federal requirements. The PHA has not established procedures in addition to the federal requirements.

11. Fiscal Year Audit: The PHA most recently completed Audit resulted in no findings.

13. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Please see Attachment

13. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Statement Of Victim Services

The Burlington County Board of Social Services PHA has revised the Administrative Plan changing the Program Preferences. Burlington County Resident who is a Domestic Violence Victim is now included in the Preference 1 Category. Preference 1 is a Priority Preference. The Program continues to work with area agencies.

Burlington County has various agencies that assist victims of domestic violence. One such agency concentrates on the shelter of the family member(s) with the location of the shelter being one of confidentiality. The mission of the shelter is to “end the cycle of domestic violence through education, empowerment, and advocacy while providing a safe haven from abuse at an emergency shelter with a confidential location”.

The shelter receives funding through our Community Development Block Grant Program. As stated in our Annual Plans and Five Year Plans (Section 3 “PHA Policies Governing Eligibility, Selection, and Admissions, Item (4) Admission Preferences) Victims of Domestic Violence are categorized as a Preference One and receive priority over all other Preferences, with the exception of “Homeless” Families”.

Waiting List Families who are experiencing domestic violence are moved to the top of the Waiting List and are serviced according to their registration number. Families are immediately referred to the shelter for domestic violence and their location and status are kept confidential.

Program Participants experiencing domestic violence are also referred to the shelter. While providing referrals to the shelter, the Staff reviews move options with the Family, to include Portability as an option.

While vacating a unit without proper notice to the Landlord or the Program is grounds for termination based on violation of “Family Obligations”, Families vacating units to escape violence are not penalized for leaving the unit. If the Family authorizes the Program Staff to negotiate early release from their lease with the Landlord, the Staff will negotiate an early release from a Lease.

Individuals do not have to be Participants or Applicants of the Burlington County Rental Assistance Program. Any individual seeking shelter from domestic violence through our office is referred to the Agency(s) that can assist them.

Attachment D

9.0 Housing Needs

The Consolidated Plan for the PHA County has identified an overall 4,487 families with housing needs at or below 30% of the Average Median Income, 5,045 greater than 30% of AMI but less than 50% of AMI families with housing needs. In addition AMI families at 50% but less than 80% of AMI are in need of housing. The Plan identified 6,109 elderly families of all income levels with housing needs and 20,088 families with disabilities with housing needs based on most recent Census data. That number includes all income levels, owners and renters. The PHA source of information is the Consolidated Plan of the jurisdiction, the US. Census data and the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data set.

10.0(a) Additional Information

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Attachment E

Burlington County Board of Social Services/NJ215
PHA 2010-2014 Five Year and 2010 Annual Plan Comments

The Resident Advisory Board Meeting was scheduled for August 12, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. at the Human Services Facility, Lecture Hall A, 795 Woodlane Road, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060. There were no attendees. A Packet containing the Draft 5 year and annual Plan was forwarded to the Board Members for their opinions and suggestions. No comments were received.

An Information Workshop was held August 13, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. at the Human Services Facility, Lecture Hall A, 795 Woodlane Road, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060. In attendance were eight Program Participants. The following information was reviewed and discussed:

- **Program Funding – Reviewed no Comments**

- Program Size Funding Authorization – Reviewed no Comments
- Program Eligibility/Preferences

Comments - Attending Participants were pleased that the Program's Preferences were changed to afford county residents priority when applying for the Program.

- Program Waiting List – Reviewed no Comments
- Subsidy Standards – Reviewed no Comments

- **Payment Standards/Deconcentration Efforts**

Comments - Those in attendance were curious about the Program's policy of extending higher payment standards to those areas in the county that have a low concentration of poverty. The Program's Deconcentration Effort was discussed that by doing this it is the Program's intent to afford Participants a broader area in which they can search for an approvable unit. During the discussion of deconcentration, the subject of Portability surfaced and everyone was very enthusiastic about the ability to move not only to neighboring counties but to have the opportunity to move to a different State.

- Program Housing Quality Standards
Comments – Attendees were in support of the Annual Inspections and appeared to clearly understand that the Inspections were conducted to ensure that units participating in the Program met the required standards.
- Family Obligations – Reviewed no Comments
- Denial & Termination Appeal Process
Comments – Attending Participants were aware of the process that takes place when a Participant is terminated or an Applicant is denied assistance. Everyone was in agreement that there must be guidelines to follow.

There were not many comments. Those in attendance appeared to be most interested in the ability to transfer their assistance to any State in the United States as long as they were in good standing. While they were familiar with the process, they took the meeting as an opportunity to ask more questions.

Those areas that were commented on were areas of interest to those in attendance and did not warrant any changes, inclusions, or exclusions to the Burlington County Board of Social Services PHA 2010 – 2014 Five Year and 2010 Annual Plan were suggested.

A Public Hearing was held on August 20, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. in Lecture Hall B of the Human Services Facility, 795 Woodlane Road, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060. No one attended the Public Hearing.

The Comment Period closed September 30, 2009, no additional comments were submitted.