

Security Policy

A. Background and Purpose

The Public Housing Agency (PHA) is responsible for the provision of decent, safe and sanitary housing in good repair. It also has a major responsibility to see that residents are provided with a safe and secure living environment. In addition to the physical safety and security measures implemented by the PHA, this Security Policy outlines security measures required of PHA management.

The PHA's security is assessed through the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) which measures the performance of Public Housing Authorities through four Indicators – Physical Condition, Financial Condition, Management Operations, and Resident Services and Satisfaction. The Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) replaced the former evaluation tool used by HUD known as the Public Housing Management Assessment Program (PHMAP). PHAS Regulations are contained in the Code of Federal Regulations (24 CFR) Section 900, Part 902, which covers Low-Income Public Housing programs.

The PHA is evaluated on four (4) components under PHAS relating to security:

- Tracking and Reporting Crime Related Problems
- Screening of Applicants
- Lease Enforcement
- Grant Program Goals

The Security Sub-Indicator of PHAS evaluates the PHA's performance in tracking crime-related problems in developments, reporting the incidence of crime, the adoption and implementation of effective screening and eviction procedures and management of HUD funded programs. The intent is to increase safety and security through coordination with law enforcement agencies, to conduct closer screening of applicants to eliminate those who are a threat to health, safety and security, and to enforce strict adherence to the terms of the lease.

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (hereinafter referred to as HACSM) takes a proactive approach to minimize and potentially eliminate criminal activity that occurs at its Public Housing developments – El Camino Village (Colma) and Midway Village (Daly City). In order to address the requirements under PHAS and to implement a strong security program, the HACSM hereby adopts the following security policies.

A. Tracking and Reporting Crime Related Problems

The HACSM will track crime and crime-related problems in its developments, document the reporting of incidents of crime to local police authorities, and assist local police authorities to improve law enforcement and crime prevention in the public housing communities.

This policy is designed to ensure that all HACSM staff members are aware of their responsibilities in assuring a safe living environment through reporting any suspicious activity that is observed or brought to their attention. Reminders will be conveyed through memos and staff meetings periodically throughout the year.

The HACSM will track crime and crime-related activities by development number and site. The tracking system utilized will, at a minimum, include the following:

- Name of person reporting, anonymous reporting is also acceptable;
- Date of the incident;
- Location of the incident: development, unit number, common areas, etc.;
- Persons involved, if known;
- Description of the incident;
- Date of report to law enforcement agencies;
- Eviction action, if warranted;

The HACSM will be responsible for maintaining the tracking system and providing reports on incident activity as needed. The HACSM may request copies of police reports from the police department and maintain records of police case numbers if a report is not available, in case further information is needed. The HACSM reviews local crime statistics generated by the Broadmoor and Daly City Police Departments and identifies incidents which occurred on the property and the nature and severity of such incidents.

The HACSM has established open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies for the purpose of sharing information on incidents occurring in and around the HACSM developments. Sharing of information on crime statistics, police presence, and strategies to reduce crime and delinquency in areas where developments are located will be the focus during these communications. To ensure the safety of those reporting criminal activity and to avoid jeopardizing any investigations, all personal information discussed shall be maintained in confidence by the HACSM and the local law enforcement agency.

Local police department personnel occasionally attend the HACSM resident meetings and interact with the residents. This process helps facilitate a sense of trust between the police and the community and encourages residents to report disturbances and any illegal activity at the complexes. The HACSM meets with police officials periodically to offer assistance and to request additional police presence at the complexes. The HACSM collaborates with the local police

departments as well as the County of San Mateo Narcotics Task Force. If needed and when available, HACSM will allow use of a unit and parking within the development for the use of the police department or County Narcotics Task Force to assist in investigations and improve response time.

The HACSM trims, cuts and/or removes shrubbery that may help perpetrators hide from police. The HACSM immediately replaces any non-working outdoor lights and installs additional lighting, if needed, to illuminate particularly dark areas. In addition, the HACSM immediately removes or paints over areas that have been vandalized by graffiti.

Under the Management Operations Indicator of PHAS, the HACSM will certify to:

- The date the HACSM adopted current policies to track crime and crime-related problems;
- The date the HACSM implemented the current procedures to track crime and crime-related problems;
- The date the HACSM implemented a current cooperative system for tracking and reporting crime to local police authorities;
- The number of crimes the HACSM reported to local police authorities; and
- The percentage of developments where the HACSM can document it tracks crime and crime-related problems.

B. Screening of Applicants

The HACSM will document that it successfully screens out and denies admission to a public housing applicant:

- Who has a recent history of criminal activity, involving crime to persons or property and/or other criminal acts that would adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of other residents or HACSM personnel;
- Who has been evicted because of drug-related activity from any assisted housing program, for a minimum of three (3) years, beginning with the eviction date, unless the applicant has successfully completed a rehabilitation program acceptable to the HACSM;

- Who the HACSM has reasonable cause to believe is illegally using a controlled substance, or engaging in any drug-related activity *on or off* HACSM property; or
- Who the HACSM has reasonable cause to believe is abusing alcohol, which interferes with the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises of other residents or HACSM personnel.

The HACSM will be responsible for ensuring that all applicants are appropriately screened for eligibility, including the review of criminal background checks, verifying, to the maximum extent possible, that the applicant has not been previously evicted from another assisted housing program, and determining that there is no reason to believe there is illegal use or distribution of drugs or illegal use of alcohol.

Each HACSM staff person responsible for processing and/or screening Public Housing applicants will be provided a copy of the HACSM's Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP). Each HACSM staff person responsible for screening and eviction will receive appropriate training on the use and applicability of those policies.

Since the confidentiality of criminal background or drug treatment center information is critical, each employee will be required to sign a statement acknowledging there are severe penalties for unauthorized use or disclosure of any information obtained through these channels up until and including termination.

A Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff will assure that results of the criminal background check and drug treatment center check, if applicable, are separately filed and maintained confidentially, and destroyed no more than seven (7) days after the expiration of the period for filing a challenge to the HACSM action without institution of a challenge or final disposition of any such litigation.

A Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff will be assigned to track and record the results of screening for each applicant family taken from the waiting list to assure that the HACSM has adequate documentation to support its count of the number of applicants denied assistance due to adverse finding resulting from criminal and/or drug treatment center background checks. At a minimum, such tracking records must include:

- An applicant identifier: this may be a name, number or other identifier used to maintain confidentiality, but allow for verification under an internal or external audit. This identifier should be recorded for every applicant family that is screened, not just for those denied assistance.

- The results of the criminal background check. Was information received that requires HACSM action under its policy or the 'Screening and Eviction for Drugs and Criminal Activity' regulations?
- Results, if applicable, of the drug treatment center check. Was there a problem or not?
- Recording of whether the applicant was determined eligible or denied.
- Date the decision to admit or deny was mailed to the applicant.
- Reason for denial, if denied.
- Date a hearing was requested.
- Final result of hearing.
- Date housed, if admitted to housing.

These records are to be kept confidential and are only to be used by management for HUD reporting purposes and internal monitoring of staff compliance with HACSM policies and procedures for applicant screening.

Under the Management Operations Indicator of PHAS, the HACSM will certify to:

- The date the HACSM adopted current screening policies, including screening and eviction for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The date the HACSM implemented current screening procedures that reflect screening and eviction for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The HACSM can document that current screening procedures result in successfully denying admission to applicants who meet the criteria for denial based on drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The total number of applicants denied who met the screening criteria for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*

* Screening and Eviction for Drug Abuse and Other Criminal Activity – Final Regulation was published on May 24, 2001 and is found at 24 CFR Parts 5 et al. This regulation replaced the former "One Strike, You're Out" Mandate.

C. Lease Enforcement

If a crime occurs that constitutes a violation of the lease agreement, the Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff will meet with the resident involved to inform him/her that the HACSM is aware of the crime and issue a lease violation notice, if appropriate.

The HACSM will implement procedures to evict residents who the HACSM has reasonable cause to believe:

- Engage in criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or HACSM personnel;
- Engage in any drug-related criminal activity on or off of HACSM property; or
- Abuse alcohol in a way that interferes with the health, safety, and peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or HACSM personnel.

The Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff is responsible for ensuring that all current screening procedures result in the eviction of residents who meet the criteria of Screening and Eviction for Drug Abuse and Other Criminal Activity as adopted in the HACSM's Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy.

The Housing Programs Supervisor or designee is responsible for the accurate tracking and documentation of the total number of evictions as a result of violation of the HACSM's policy on Screening and Eviction for Drug Abuse and Other Criminal Activity.

The HACSM appropriately evicts any public housing resident who:

- The HACSM has reasonable cause to believe engages in any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or HACSM personnel;
- The HACSM has reasonable cause to believe engages in any drug-related criminal activity on or off the HACSM property; or
- The HACSM has reasonable cause to believe abuses alcohol in such a way that his/her behavior would interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents or HACSM personnel.

The HACSM management will be responsible for assuring all appropriate staff has copies of the termination and eviction policies and the Lease Agreement which outline the terms of occupancy and contain the specific provision which apply to termination for violations under the criteria of drug abuse or criminal activity as defined in the HACSM policy and dwelling lease. Staff will receive

training on these documents as well as the procedures necessary to document violations, give notices of termination, refer to attorneys for court action, etc. All HACSM public housing staff will report suspected violations to management.

The Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff person will track evictions due to drug abuse or other criminal activity and maintain documentation to support the HACSM's actions. Information logged shall include:

- The name of the family member(s) identified as being in violation;
- The Lease provision(s) violated;
- Date of violation;
- Documentation of verbal counseling and notices or warnings sent;
- Date(s) of police contact, if applicable;
- Date of Notice to Evict;
- Date referred to the attorney, if applicable;
- Date of court decision;
- Date of vacate;
- Copy of the court judgment resulting from the eviction hearing.

As evictions resulting from drug abuse or other criminal activity require strong evidence of wrongdoing and may be heavily reliant on police action or information, the HACSM designee will endeavor to create a strong working relationship with local law enforcement.

HACSM will confer with counsel and follow all California eviction laws.

The Housing Programs Supervisor or designated staff person will be responsible for maintaining the tracking system.

Under the Management Operations Indicator of PHAS, the HACSM will certify to:

- The date the HACSM adopted current eviction policies, including screening and eviction for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The date the HACSM implemented current eviction procedures that reflect screening and eviction for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The HACSM can document that current eviction procedures result in successfully denying admission to applicants who meet the criteria for denial based on drug abuse and other criminal activity.*
- The total number of applicants denied who met the eviction criteria for drug abuse and other criminal activity.*

* Screening and Eviction for Drug Abuse and Other Criminal Activity – Final Regulation was published on May 24, 2001 and is found at 24 CFR Parts 5 et al. This regulation replaced the former “One Strike, You’re Out” Mandate.

E. Grant Program Goals

Grant Program Goals are measured under PHAS for all HUD-funded programs. Goals for each HUD-funded grant are identified separately in each grant.

The HACSM does not have any HUD-funded grants in this area and is not required to report information for this PHAS component.