

Muskegon Housing Commission Muskegon, Michigan

Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy

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Muskegon Housing Commission

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Glossary

ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY

This Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy defines the Muskegon Housing Commission's policies of operation for the Public Housing Program, incorporating Federal, State and local law. If there is any conflict between this policy and laws or regulations, the laws and regulations will prevail.

1.0 FAIR HOUSING

It is the policy of the Muskegon Housing Commission to fully comply with all Federal, State and local nondiscrimination laws; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations governing Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, familial status, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the Muskegon Housing Commission's programs.

To further its commitment to fulfill compliance with applicable Civil Rights laws, the Muskegon Housing Commission will provide Federal/State/local information to applicants/tenants of the Public Housing Program regarding discrimination and any recourse available to them if they believe they may be victims of discrimination. Such information will be made available with the application, and all applicable Fair Housing Information and Discrimination Complaint Forms will be made available at the Muskegon Housing Commission Office. In addition, all written information and advertisements will contain the appropriate Equal Opportunity language and logo.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will assist any family that believe they have suffered illegal discrimination by providing them with copies of the appropriate housing discrimination forms. The Muskegon Housing Commission will also assist them in completing the forms if requested and will provide them with the address of the nearest HUD Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

2.0 REASONABLE ACCOMODATION

Occasionally people with disabilities may need a reasonable accommodation in order to take full advantage of the Muskegon Housing Commission housing programs and related services. When such accommodations are granted, they do not confer special treatment or advantage for the person with a disability; rather, they make the program accessible to them in a way that would otherwise not be possible due to their disability. This policy clarifies how people can request accommodations and the guidelines the Muskegon Housing Commission will

follow in determining whether it is reasonable to provide a requested accommodation. Because disabilities are not always apparent, the Muskegon Housing Commission will ensure that all applicants/tenants are aware of the opportunity to request reasonable accommodations.

2.1 COMMUNICATION

Anyone requesting an application may also receive a Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form.

Notifications of re-examination, inspection, appointment, or eviction will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation. Any notification requesting action by the tenant will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation.

All decisions granting or denying requests for reasonable accommodations will be in writing.

2.9 QUESTIONS TO ASK IN GRANTING THE ACCOMMODATION

- A. Is the requestor a person with disabilities? For this purpose the definition of person with disabilities is different than the definition used for admission. The Fair Housing definition used for this purpose is:

A person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. (The disability may not be apparent to others, i.e., a heart condition).

If the disability is apparent or already documented, the answer to this question is yes. It is possible that the disability for which the accommodation is being requested is a disability other than the apparent disability. If the disability is not apparent or documented, the Muskegon Housing Commission will obtain verification that the person is a person with a disability.

- B. Is the requested accommodation related to the disability? If it is apparent that the request is related to the apparent or documented disability, the answer to this question is yes. If it is not apparent, the Muskegon Housing Commission will obtain documentation that the requested accommodation is needed due to the disability. The Muskegon Housing Commission will not inquire as to the nature of the disability.
- C. Is the requested accommodation reasonable? In order to be determined reasonable, the accommodation must meet two criteria:

1. Would the accommodation constitute a fundamental alteration? The Muskegon Housing Commission's business is housing. If the request would alter the fundamental business that the Muskegon Housing Commission conducts, that would not be reasonable. For instance, the Muskegon Housing Commission would deny a request to have the Muskegon Housing Commission do grocery shopping for a person with disabilities.
 2. Would the requested accommodation create an undue financial hardship or administrative burden? Frequently the requested accommodation costs little or nothing. If the cost would be an undue burden, the Muskegon Housing Commission may request a meeting with the individual to investigate and consider equally effective alternatives.
- D. Generally the individual knows best what it is they need; however, the Muskegon Housing Commission retains the right to be shown how the requested accommodation enables the individual to access or use the Muskegon Housing Commission's programs or services.

If more than one accommodation is equally effective in providing access to the Muskegon Housing Commission's programs and services, the Muskegon Housing Commission retains the right to select the most efficient or economic choice.

The cost necessary to carry out approved requests, including requests for physical modifications, will be borne by the Muskegon Housing Commission if there is no one else willing to pay for the modifications. If another party pays for the modification, the Muskegon Housing Commission will seek to have the same entity pay for any restoration costs.

If the tenant requests, as a reasonable accommodation, that they be permitted to make physical modifications at their own expense, the Muskegon Housing Commission will generally approve such request if it does not violate codes or affect the structural integrity of the unit.

Any requests for an accommodation that would enable a tenant to materially violate essential lease terms will not be approved, i.e. allowing nonpayment of rent, destruction of property, disturbing the peaceful enjoyment of others, etc.

3.0 SERVICES FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS

The Muskegon Housing Commission will endeavor to have access to people who speak languages other than English in order to assist non-English speaking families.

4.0 FAMILY OUTREACH

The Muskegon Housing Commission will publicize the availability and nature of the Public Housing Program for extremely low-income, very low and low-income families in a newspaper of general circulation, minority media, and by other suitable means.

To reach people who cannot or do not read the newspapers; the Muskegon Housing Commission may distribute fact sheets to the broadcasting media and initiate personal contacts with members of the news media and community service personnel. The Muskegon Housing Commission may also try to utilize public service announcements.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will communicate the status of housing availability to other service providers in the community and inform them of housing eligibility factors and guidelines so they can make proper referrals for the Public Housing Program.

5.0 RIGHT TO PRIVACY

All adult members of both applicant and tenant households are required to sign HUD Form 9886, Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice. The Authorization for Release of Information and Privacy Act Notice states how family information will be released and includes the Federal Privacy Act Statement.

Any request for applicant or tenant information will not be released unless there is a signed release of information request from the applicant or tenant.

6.0 REQUIRED POSTINGS

The Muskegon Housing Commission will post, in a conspicuous place and at a height easily read by all persons including persons with mobility disabilities, the following information:

- A. Statement of Policies and Procedures governing Admission and Continued Occupancy
- B. Notice of the status of the waiting list (opened or closed)
- C. A listing of all the developments by name, address, number of units, units designed with special accommodations, address of all project offices, office hours, telephone numbers, TDD numbers, and Resident Facilities and operation hours
- D. Income Limits for Admission
- E. Excess Utility Charges
- F. Utility Allowance Schedule
- G. Current Schedule of Routine Maintenance Charges
- H. Dwelling Lease
- I. Grievance Procedure
- J. Fair Housing Poster
- K. Equal Opportunity in Employment Poster
- L. Any current Muskegon Housing Commission Notices

7.0 TAKING APPLICATIONS

Families wishing to apply for the Public Housing Program will be required to complete an application for housing assistance. Applications will be accepted at a specified time at:

Muskegon Housing Commission
1080 Terrace Street
Muskegon, MI 49442

Applications are taken to compile a waiting list. Due to the demand for housing in the Muskegon Housing Commission jurisdiction, the Muskegon Housing Commission may take applications on an open enrollment basis, depending on the length of the waiting list.

Completed applications will be accepted for all applicants and the Muskegon Housing Commission will verify the information.

Applications may be made in person at the Muskegon Housing Commission. Pre-applications may also be mailed to the Muskegon Housing Commission.

The completed application will be dated and time stamped upon its submittal to the Muskegon Housing Commission.

Persons with disabilities who require a reasonable accommodation in completing an application may call the Muskegon Housing Commission to make special arrangements. A Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) is available for the deaf. The TDD telephone number is 231-722-0400.

The application process will involve two phases. The first phase is the initial application for housing assistance or the pre-application. The pre-application requires the family to provide limited basic information establishing any preferences to which they may be entitled. This first phase results in the family's placement on the waiting list.

Upon receipt of the family's pre-application, the Muskegon Housing Commission will make a preliminary determination of eligibility. The Muskegon Housing Commission will notify the family in writing of the date and time of placement on the waiting list, and the approximate wait before housing may be offered. If the Muskegon Housing Commission determines the family to be ineligible, the notice will state the reasons therefore and will offer the family the opportunity of an informal review of the determination.

The applicant may at any time report changes in writing, regarding their applicant status including changes in family composition, income, or preference factors. The Muskegon Housing Commission will annotate the applicant's file and will update their place on the waiting list accordingly. Confirmation of the changes will be confirmed with the family in writing.

The second phase is the final determination of eligibility, referred to as the full application. The full application takes place when the family nears the top of the waiting list. The Muskegon Housing Commission will ensure that verification of all preferences, eligibility, suitability and selection factors are current in order to determine the family's final eligibility for admission into the Public Housing Program.

7.1 APPLICATION REQUIREMENT

All Primary Applications received for consideration for housing (Public Housing and Family Public Housing) must be completed with signatures and include all required documentation (Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards, etc.) before processing will begin. Incomplete applications (missing documentation, incomplete information, etc.) that are received will be returned to the Applicant for completion and will require resubmittal.

8.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

There are five eligibility requirements for admission to public housing (except homeownership): qualify as a family, have an income within the income limits, meet citizenship/eligible immigrant criteria, provide documentation of Social Security numbers, and sign consent authorization documents. In addition to the eligibility criteria, families must also meet the Muskegon Housing Commission screening criteria in order to be admitted to public housing.

8.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A. Family status.

1. **A family with or without children.** Such a family is defined as a group of people related by blood, marriage, adoption or affinity that live together in a stable family relationship.
 - a. Children temporarily absent from the home due to placement in foster care are considered family members.
 - b. Unborn children and children in the process of being adopted are considered family members for the purpose of determining bedroom size but are not considered family members for determining income limit.
 - c. Two or more persons who intend to share residency whose income and resources are available to meet the family's needs and who have at least a one-year history as a family unit or show evidence of a stable family relationship.
2. **An elderly family** consists of:
 - a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age;
 - b. Two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or
 - c. One or more individuals who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides.
3. **A near-elderly family** consists of:
 - a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62;
 - b. Two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living together; or

One or more individuals who are at least 50 years of age, but below the age of 62, living with one or more live-in aides.

4. A **disabled family** consists of:
 - a. A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities;
 - b. Two or more persons with disabilities living together; or
 - c. One or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides.
5. A **displaced family** consists of a family in which each member, or whose sole member, has been displaced by governmental action, or whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws.
6. A **remaining member of a tenant family**.
 - a. A **single person** who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family.

B. Income eligibility

1. To be eligible for admission to developments or scattered-site units, the family's annual income must be within the low-income limit set by HUD. This means the family income cannot exceed 80 percent of the median income for the area.
2. To be eligible for admission to developments or scattered-site units, the family's annual income must be within the very low-income limit set by HUD, unless HUD grants an exception. This means that without a HUD exception, the family income cannot exceed 50 percent of the median income for the area.
3. Income limits apply only at admission and are not applicable for continued occupancy.
4. A family may not be admitted to the public housing program from another assisted housing program (e.g., Tenant-Based Section 8) or from a public housing program operated by another housing commission without meeting the income requirements of the Muskegon Housing Commission.
6. If the Muskegon Housing Commission acquires a property for federal public housing purposes, the families living there must have incomes within the low-income limit in order to be eligible to remain as public

housing tenants. Income limit restrictions do not apply to families transferring within our Public Housing Program.

7. If there are no eligible families on the waiting list and the Muskegon Housing Commission has published a 30-day notice of available units in at least one newspaper of general circulation, families above the applicable income limit may be housed (except homeownership). However, they must vacate the unit if an eligible family applies.

C. Citizenship/Eligibility Status

1. To be eligible, each member of the family must be a citizen, national, or a non-citizen who has eligible immigration status under one of the categories set forth in Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (see 42 U.S.C. 1436a(a)).
2. Family eligibility for assistance.
 - a. A family shall not be eligible for assistance unless every member of the family residing in the unit is determined to have eligible status, with the exception noted below.
 - b. Despite the ineligibility of one or more family members, a mixed family may be eligible for one of three types of assistance. (See Section 13.6 for calculating rents under the non-citizen rule)
 - c. A family without any eligible members and receiving assistance on June 19, 1995 may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance.

D. Social Security Number Documentation

To be eligible, all family members two years of age and older must provide a Social Security number or certify that they do not have one.

E. Signing Consent Forms

1. In order to be eligible, each member of the family who is at least 18 years of age, and each family head and spouse regardless of age, shall sign one or more consent forms.
2. The consent form must contain, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. A provision authorizing HUD or the Muskegon Housing Commission to obtain from State Wage Information Collection Agencies (SWICAs), Collection Agencies (SWICAs) any

information or materials necessary to complete or verify the application for participation or for eligibility for continued occupancy; and

- b. A provision authorizing HUD or the Muskegon Housing Commission to verify with previous or current employers income information pertinent to the family's eligibility for or level of assistance;
- c. A provision authorizing HUD to request income information from the IRS and the SSA for the sole purpose of verifying income and information pertinent to the family's eligibility or level of benefits; and
- d. A statement that the authorization to release the information requested by the Consent Form expires 15 months after the date the consent form is signed.

8.3 SUITABILITY

- A. Applicant families will be evaluated to determine whether, based on their recent behavior, such behavior could reasonably be expected to result in noncompliance with the public housing lease. The Muskegon Housing Commission will look at past conduct as an indicator of future conduct. Emphasis will be placed on whether a family's admission could reasonably be expected to have a detrimental effect on the development environment, other tenants, Muskegon Housing Commission employees, or other people residing in the immediate vicinity of the property. Otherwise eligible families will be denied admission if they fail to meet the suitability criteria.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will consider objective and reasonable aspects of the family's background, including the following:

- 1. History of meeting financial obligations, especially rent;
- 2. Ability to maintain (or with assistance would have the ability to maintain) their housing in a decent and safe condition based on living or housekeeping habits and whether such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants;
- 3. History of criminal activity by any household member involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property;

4. History of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property;
 5. Having committed fraud in connection with any Federal housing assistance program, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived there from; and
 6. History of abusing alcohol in a way that may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment by others.
- C. The Muskegon Housing Commission will ask applicants to provide information demonstrating their ability to comply with the essential elements of the lease. The Muskegon Housing Commission will verify the information provided. Such verification may include but may not be limited to the following:
1. A credit check of the head, spouse and co-head;
A rental history check of all adult family members;
 3. A criminal background check on all adult household members, including live-in aides. This check will be made through State or local law enforcement or court records in those cases where the household member has lived in the local jurisdiction for the last three years. Where the individual has lived outside the local area, the Muskegon Housing Commission may contact law enforcement agencies where the individual has lived or request a check through the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC);
 4. A home visit that provides the opportunity for the family to demonstrate their ability to maintain their home in a safe and sanitary manner. This inspection considers cleanliness and care of rooms, appliances, and appurtenances. The inspection may also consider any evidence of criminal activity; and
 5. A check of the State's lifetime sex offender registration program for each adult household member, including live-in aides. No individual registered with this program will be admitted to public housing.

8.4 GROUNDS FOR DENIAL

The Muskegon Housing Commission is not required or obligated to assist applicants who:

- A. Do not meet any one or more of the eligibility criteria;

- B. Do not supply information or documentation required by the application process;
- C. Have failed to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program;
- D. Have a history of not meeting financial obligations, especially rent;
- E. Do not have the ability to maintain (with assistance) their housing in a decent and safe condition where such habits could adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other tenants;
- F. Have a history of criminal activity by any household member involving crimes of physical violence against persons or property and any other criminal activity including drug-related criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of other tenants or staff or cause damage to the property;
- G. Have a history of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property;
- H. Currently owes rent or other amounts to any housing commission in connection with their public housing or Section 8 program's;
- I. Have committed fraud, bribery or any other corruption in connection with any Federal housing assistance programs, including the intentional misrepresentation of information related to their housing application or benefits derived therefrom;
- J. Was evicted from assisted housing within five years of the projected date of admission because of drug-related criminal activity involving the personal use or possession for personal use;
- K. Was evicted from assisted housing within five years of the projected date of admission because of drug-related criminal activity involving the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or possession with the intent to manufacture, sell, distribute a controlled substance as defined in Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. 802;
- L. Are illegally using a controlled substance or are abusing alcohol in a way that may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. The Muskegon Housing Commission may waive this requirement if:
 - 1. The person demonstrates to the Muskegon Housing Commission's satisfaction that the person is no longer engaging in drug-related criminal activity or abuse of alcohol;

2. Has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program;
 3. Has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully; or
 4. Is participating in a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program.
- M. Has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior towards any Muskegon Housing Commission staff or residents;
- N. Has a household member who has ever been evicted from public housing;
- O. Has a family household member who has been terminated under the certificate or voucher program;
- P. Denied for Life: *If any family member has been convicted of manufacture or producing methamphetamine (speed) in a public housing development or in a Section 8 assisted property;*
- Q. Denied for Life: *Has a lifetime registration under a State sex offender registration program.*

8.5 INFORMAL REVIEW

- A. If the Muskegon Housing Commission determines that an applicant does not meet the criteria for receiving public housing assistance, the Muskegon Housing Commission will promptly provide the applicant with written notice of the determination. The notice must contain a brief statement of the reason(s) for the decision and state that the applicant may request an informational review of the decision within 10 business days of the denial. The Muskegon Housing Commission will describe how to obtain the informal review.

The informal review may be conducted by any person designated by the Muskegon Housing Commission, other than a person who made or approved the decision under review or subordinate of this person. The applicant must be given the opportunity to present written or oral objections to the Muskegon Housing Commission's decision. The Muskegon Housing Commission must notify the applicant of the final decision within 14 calendar days after the informal review, including a brief statement of the reasons for the formal decision.

- B. The participant family may request that the Muskegon Housing Commission provide for an Informal Hearing after the family has notification of an INS decision on their citizenship status on appeal, or in

lieu of request of appeal to the INS. The participant family must make this request within 30 days of receipt of the Notice of Denial or Termination of Assistance, or within 30 days of receipt of the INS appeal decision.

9.0 MANAGING THE WAITING LIST

9.1 OPENING AND CLOSING THE WAITING LIST

A joint notification of opening & closing of the waiting list may be utilized.

Opening of the waiting list will be announced with a public notice stating that applications for public housing will again be accepted. The public notice will state where, when, and how to apply. The notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media. The public notice will state any limitations to who may apply.

Applicants already on waiting lists for other housing programs must apply separately for this program and such applicants will not lose their place on other waiting lists when they apply for public housing. The notice will include the Fair Housing logo and slogan and will be in compliance with Fair Housing requirements.

Closing of the waiting list will also be announced with a public notice. The public notice will state the date the waiting list will be closed and for what bedroom size. The public notice will be published in a local newspaper of general circulation and also by any available minority media.

9.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE WAITING LIST

The waiting list will be maintained in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. The application will be a permanent file;
- B. All applications will be maintained in order of bedroom size and in order of date and time of application; and
- C. Any contact between the Muskegon Housing Commission and the applicant will be documented in the electronic version of the applicant file.

9.3 FAMILIES NEARING THE TOP OF THE WAITING LIST

When a family appears to be within the top ten (10) applicants in line on the waiting list, the family will be invited to an interview and the verification process will begin. It is at this point the family's waiting list preference will be verified. If the family no longer qualifies to be near the top ten (10) on the list, the family's name will be returned to the appropriate spot on the waiting list. The Muskegon Housing

Commission must notify the family in writing of this determination and give the family the opportunity to have an informal review. Once the preference has been verified, the family's suitability will be processed by means of Section 8.3.

9.4 PURGING THE WAITING LIST

The Muskegon Housing commission will update and purge its waiting list every two (2) years to assure that the pool of applicants reasonably represents the interested families for whom the Muskegon Housing Commission has current information; i.e., applicant's address, family composition, income category, and preferences.

9.5 REMOVAL OF APPLICANTS FROM THE WAITING LIST

The Muskegon Housing Commission will not remove an applicant's name from the waiting list unless:

- A. The applicant requests in writing that the name be removed;
- B. The applicant fails to respond to a written request for information or a request to declare their continued interest in the program; or
- C. The applicant does not meet either the eligibility or suitability criteria for the program.
- D. After two (2) pre move-in inspection disapprovals

9.6 MISSED APPOINTMENTS

All applicants who fail to keep a scheduled appointment with the Muskegon Housing Commission will be sent a notice of termination of the process for eligibility.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will allow the family to reschedule for good cause. Generally, no more than one opportunity will be given to reschedule without good cause, and no more than two opportunities will be given for good cause. When good cause exists for missing an appointment, the Muskegon Housing Commission will work closely with the family to find a more suitable time. Applicants will be offered the right to an informal review before being removed from the waiting list.

9.7 NOTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE ACTIONS

Any applicant whose name is being removed from the waiting list will be notified by the Muskegon Housing Commission, in writing, that they have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the written correspondence to present mitigating circumstances or request an

informal review. The letter will also indicate that their name will be removed from the waiting list if they fail to respond within the timeframe specified. The Muskegon Housing Commission system of removing applicant names from the waiting list will not violate the rights of persons with disabilities. If an applicant claims that their failure to respond to a request for information or updates was caused by a disability, the Muskegon Housing Commission will verify that there is in fact a disability and the disability caused the failure to respond, and provide a reasonable accommodation. An example of a reasonable accommodation would be to reinstate the applicant on the waiting list based on the date and time of the original application.

10.0 TENANT SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT PLAN

Family: A person or group of persons, as determined by the PHA consistent with 24 CFR 5.403, approved to reside in a unit with assistance under the program.

10.1 PREFERENCES

The Muskegon Housing Commission will select families based on the following preferences within each bedroom size category:

- A. Date and Time of Application
- B. Families who are elderly, near-elderly or disabled will be offered housing before other single individuals.

Buildings Designed for the Elderly and Disabled: Preference will be given to elderly and disabled families. If there are no elderly or disabled families on the list, preference will then be given to near-elderly families. If there are no near-elderly families on the waiting list, units will be offered to families who qualify for the appropriate bedroom size using these priorities. All such families will be selected from the waiting list using the preferences as outlined above.

Accessible Units: Accessible units will be first offered to families who may benefit from the accessible features. Applicants for these units will be selected utilizing the same preference system as outlined above. If there are no applicants who would benefit from the accessible features, the units will be offered to other applicants. However, applicants must sign a release form stating they will accept a transfer with the understanding that, in the future, they may be required to transfer if a family requiring an accessible feature applies and the transfer would be at their own expense.

10.2 ASSIGNMENT OF BEDROOM SIZES

The following guidelines will determine each family's unit size without over-crowding or over-housing (except homeownership):

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Persons	
	Minimum	Maximum
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8

These standards are based on the assumption that each bedroom will accommodate no more than two (2) persons. Zero bedroom units will only be assigned to one-person families. Two adults will share a bedroom unless related by blood.

In determining bedroom size, the Muskegon Housing Commission will include the presence of children to be born to a pregnant woman, children who are in the process of being adopted, children whose custody is being obtained, children who are temporarily away at school, or children who are temporarily in foster-care.

In addition, the following considerations may be taken in determining bedroom size:

- A. Children of the same sex **will** share a bedroom.
- B. Children of opposite sex will **not** be required to share a bedroom.
- C. Adults and children will **not** be required to share a bedroom.
- D. Foster-adults and/or foster-children will **not** be required to share a bedroom with family members; however, foster-children will share a bedroom with their own siblings as stated in A and B above.
- E. Live-in aides will get a separate bedroom.

Exceptions to normal bedroom size standards include the following:

- A. Units smaller than assigned through the above guidelines — A family may request a smaller unit size than the guidelines allow. The Muskegon Housing Commission will allow the smaller size unit as long as generally no more than two (2) people per bedroom are assigned. In such situations, the family will sign a certification stating they understand they will be ineligible for a larger size unit unless the family size changes after initial move-in.

- B. Units larger than assigned through the above guidelines — A family may request a larger unit size than the guidelines allow. The Muskegon Housing Commission will allow the larger size unit if the family provides a verified medical need that the family be housed in a larger unit (except homeownership).
- C. If there are no families on the waiting list for a larger size, smaller families may be housed if they sign a release form stating they will transfer (at the family's own expense) to the appropriate size unit when an eligible family needing the larger unit applies. The family transferring will be given a 30-day notice before being required to move (except homeownership).
- D. Larger units may be offered in order to improve the marketing of a development suffering a high vacancy rate.

10.3 SELECTION FROM THE WAITING LIST

The Muskegon Housing Commission shall follow the statutory requirement that at least 40% of newly admitted families in any fiscal year be families whose annual income is at or below 30% of the area median income. To insure this requirement is met, we shall quarterly monitor the incomes of newly admitted families and the incomes of the families on the waiting list. If it appears that the requirement to house extremely low-income families will not be met, we will skip higher income families on the waiting list to reach extremely low-income families.

If there are not enough extremely low-income families on the waiting list, we will conduct outreach on a non-discriminatory basis to attract extremely low-income families to reach the statutory requirement.

10.4 DECONCENTRATION POLICY

It is Muskegon Housing Commission's policy to provide for deconcentration of poverty and encourage income mixing by bringing higher income families into lower income developments and lower income families into higher income developments. Toward this end, we will skip families on the waiting list to reach other families with a lower or higher income. We will accomplish this in a uniform and non-discriminating manner.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will affirmatively market our housing to all eligible income groups: Lower income residents will not be steered toward lower income developments and higher income people will not be steered toward higher income developments.

Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, we will analyze the income levels of families residing in each of our developments, the income levels of census tracts in which our developments are located, and the income levels of the

families on the waiting list. Based on this analysis, we will determine the level of marketing strategies and de-concentration incentives to implement.

DECONCENTRATION INCENTIVES

The Muskegon Housing Commission may offer one or more incentives to encourage applicant families whose income classification would help to meet the de-concentration goals of the Commission.

Various incentives may be used at different times, or under different conditions, but will always be provided in a consistent and nondiscriminatory manner.

10.5 OFFER OF A UNIT

When the Muskegon Housing Commission discovers that a unit will become available, we will contact the first family on the waiting list who has the highest priority for this type of unit or development and whose income category would help to meet the de-concentration goal and/or the income-targeting goal.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will contact the family first by first-class mail or telephone to make the unit offer. The family will be given five (5) business days from the date the letter was mailed to contact the Muskegon Housing Commission regarding the offer.

The family will be offered the opportunity to view the unit. After the opportunity to view the unit, the family will have two (2) business days to accept or reject the unit. This verbal offer and the family's decision must be documented in the tenant file. If the family rejects the offer of the unit, the Muskegon Housing Commission will send the family a letter documenting the offer and the rejection.

10.6 REJECTION OF UNIT

If in making the offer to the family the Muskegon Housing Commission skipped over other families on the waiting list in order to meet their de-concentration goal or offered the family any other de-concentration incentive and the family rejects the unit, the family will not lose their place on the waiting list and will not be otherwise penalized.

If the Muskegon Housing Commission did not skip over other families on the waiting list to reach this family, did not offer any other de-concentration incentive, and the family rejects the unit without good cause, the family will forfeit their application's date and time. The family will keep their preferences, but the date and time of application will be changed to the date and time the unit was rejected.

If the family rejects with good cause any unit offered, they would not lose their place on the waiting list. Good cause includes reasons related to health, proximity to work, school, and childcare (for those working or going to school). The family

will be offered the right to an informal review of the decision to alter their application status.

10.7 ACCEPTANCE OF UNIT

The family will be required to sign a lease that will become effective no later than three (3) business days after the date of acceptance or the business day after the day the unit becomes available, whichever is later.

Prior to signing the lease, all families (head of household) and other adult family members will be required to attend the Lease and Occupancy Orientation when they are initially accepted for occupancy. The family will not be housed if they have not attended the orientation. Applicants who provide prior notice of an inability to attend the orientation will be rescheduled. Failure of an applicant to attend the orientation, without good cause, may result in the cancellation of the occupancy process.

The applicant will be provided a copy of the lease, the grievance procedure, utility allowances, utility charges, the current schedule of routine maintenance charges, and a Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form. These documents will be explained in detail. The applicant will sign a certification that they have received these documents and that they have reviewed them with Housing Commission personnel. The certification will be filed in the tenant's file.

The signing of the lease and the review of financial information are to be privately handled. The head of household and all adult family members will be required to execute the lease prior to admission. One executed copy of the lease will be furnished to the head of household and the Muskegon Housing Commission will retain the original executed lease in the tenant's file.

The family will pay a security deposit at the time of lease signing. The security deposit will be equal to:

- A. One and one-half Total Tenant Payment,
- B. Two Total Tenant Payments for families with a member(s) who smoke.

In exceptional situations, the Muskegon Housing Commission reserves the right to allow a new resident to pay their security deposit in up to three (3) payments. One third shall be paid in advance, one-third with their second rent payment, and one-third with their third rent payment. This shall be at the sole discretion of the Housing Commission.

In the case of a move (transfer) within public housing, the security deposit for the initial unit will be transferred to the second unit. Additionally, if the security deposit for the second unit is greater than that for the first, the difference will be collected from the family. Conversely, if the security deposit is less, the difference will be refunded to the family.

In the event there are costs attributable to the family for bringing the first unit into condition for re-renting, the family shall be billed for these charges.

11.0 INCOME, EXCLUSIONS FROM INCOME, AND DEDUCTIONS FROM INCOME

To determine annual income, the Muskegon Housing Commission counts the income of all family members, excluding the types and sources of income that are specifically excluded. Once the annual income is determined, the Muskegon Housing Commission subtracts all allowable deductions (allowances) to determine the Total Tenant Payment.

11.1 INCOME

- A. Annual income means all amounts, monetary or not, that:
 - 1. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or
 - 2. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or the annual reexamination effective date; and
 - 3. Are not specifically excluded from annual income.
- B. Annual income includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services.
 - 2. The net income from the operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is a reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family
 - 3. Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness are not used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or

profession may be deducted, based on straight-line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment is included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000.00, annual income includes the greater of the actual income derived from all net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD.

4. The full amount of periodic amounts received from Social Security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum amount or prospective monthly amounts for the delayed start of a periodic amount. (However; deferred periodic amounts from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts are excluded.)
5. Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment and disability compensation, worker's compensation, and severance pay. (However; lump sum additions such as insurance payments from worker's compensation are excluded.)

C. TANF ASSISTANCE

1. If the TANF assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustment by the TANF assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of TANF assistance income to be included as income consists of:
 - a. The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive, of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus
 - b. The maximum amounts that the TANF assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's Welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this requirement is the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.
2. If the amount of welfare is reduced due to an act of fraud by a family member or because of any family member's failure to comply with requirements to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or work activity, the amount of rent required to be paid by the family will not be decreased. In such cases, the amount of income attributable to

The family will include what the family would have received had they complied with the welfare requirements and/or had not committed an act of fraud.

3. If the amount of welfare assistance is reduced as a result of a lifetime time limit, the reduced amount is the amount that shall be counted as income.
- D. Periodic and determinable allowances such as alimony, child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling.
- E. All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces. (Special pay to a member exposed to hostile fire is excluded.)

11.2 ANNUAL INCOME

Annual income does not include the following:

- A. Income from employment of children (including foster children) under the age of 18 years;
- B. Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually persons with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone);
- C. Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains, and settlement for personal or property losses;
- D. Amounts received by the family that is specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member;
- E. Income of a live-in aide;
- F. The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution;
- G. The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire;
- H. The amounts received from the following programs:
 1. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD;
 2. Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income

eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS);

3. Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for or in reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, childcare, transportation, etc.) and that are made solely to allow participation in a specific program;
4. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the Housing Commission, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, and resident initiatives coordination. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time;
5. Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying State or local employment training programs (including training programs not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program;
6. Temporary, non-recurring or sporadic income (including gifts);
7. Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era;
8. Earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household and spouse);
9. Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 per adopted child;
10. For family members who enrolled in certain training programs prior to 10/1/99, the earnings and benefits resulting from the participation if the program provides employment training and supportive services in accordance with the Family Support Act of 1988, Section 22 of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437t), or any comparable Federal, State, or local law during the exclusion period. For purposes of this exclusion the following definitions apply:

- a. Comparable Federal, State or local law means a program providing employment training and supportive services that:
 - i. Is authorized by a Federal, State or local law;
 - ii. Is funded by the Federal, State or local government;
 - iii. Is operated or administered by a public agency; and
 - iv. Has as its objective, to assist participants in acquiring employment skills.
 - b. Exclusion period means the period during which the family member participates in a program described in this section, plus 18 months from the date the family member begins the first job acquired by the family member after completion of such program that is not funded by public housing assistance under the 1937 Act. If the family member is terminated from employment with good cause, the exclusion period shall end.
 - c. Earnings and benefits mean the incremental earnings and benefits resulting from a qualifying employment training program or subsequent job.
11. The incremental earnings due to employment during the 12-month period following date of hire shall be excluded. This exclusion (paragraph 11) will not apply for any family who concurrently is eligible for exclusion #10. Additionally, this exclusion is only available to the following families:
- a. Families whose income increases as a result of employment of a family member who was previously unemployed for one or more years.
 - b. Families whose income increases during the participation of a family member in any family self-sufficiency program.
 - c. Families who are or were, within 6 months, assisted under a State TANF program.

(While HUD regulations allow for the housing commission to offer an escrow account in lieu of having a portion of their income excluded under this paragraph, it is the policy of this housing commission to provide the exclusion in all cases.)

12. Deferred periodic amounts from Supplemental Security Income and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts;
13. Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under State or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit;
14. Amounts paid by a State agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep the developmentally disabled family member at home; or
15. Amounts specifically excluded by any other Federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits. These exclusions include:
 - a. The value of the allotment of food stamps,
 - b. Payments to volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973,
 - c. Payments received under the Alaska • Native Claims Settlement Act,
 - d. Income from sub marginal land of the 'U.S. that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes,
 - e. Payments made under HHS's Low-Income Energy Assistance Program,
 - f. Payments received under the Job Training Partnership Act,
 - g. Income from the disposition of funds of the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians,
 - h. The first \$2000 per capita received from judgment funds awarded for certain Indian claims,
 - i. Amount of scholarships awarded under Title IV including Work Study,
 - j. Payments received under the Older Americans Act of 1965,
 - k. Payments from Agent Orange Settlement,
 - l. Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Act,

- m. The value of child care under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990,
 - n. Earned income tax credit refund payments,
 - o. Payments for living expenses under the AmeriCorps Program,
 - p. Additional income exclusions provided by and funded by the Muskegon Housing Commission.
16. The Muskegon Housing Commission will not provide exclusions from income in addition to those already provided for by HUD.

11.3 DEDUCTIONS FROM ANNUAL INCOME

The following deductions will be made from annual income:

- A. \$480 for each dependent;
- B. \$400 for any elderly family or disabled family;
- C. For any family that is not an elderly or disabled family but has a member (other than the head or spouse) who is a person with a disability, disability assistance expenses in excess of 3% of annual income. This allowance may not exceed the employment income received by family members who are 18 years of age or older as a result of the assistance to the person with disabilities.
- D. For any elderly or disabled family:
 - 1. That has no disability assistance expenses, an allowance for medical expenses equal to the amount by which the medical expenses exceed 3% of annual income;
 - 2. That has disability expenses greater than or equal to 3% of annual income, an allowance for disability assistance expenses computed in accordance with paragraph C, plus an allowance for medical expenses that equal the family's medical expenses;
 - 3. That has disability assistance expenses that are less than 3% of annual income, an allowance for combined disability assistance expenses and medical expenses that are equal to the total of these expenses less 3% of annual income.
- E. Childcare expenses.

12.0 VERIFICATION

The Muskegon Housing Commission will verify information related to waiting list preferences, eligibility, admission, and level of benefits prior to admission. Periodically during occupancy, items related to eligibility and rent determination shall also be reviewed and verified. Income, assets, and expenses will be verified, as well as disability status, need for a live-in aide and other reasonable accommodations; full time student status of family members 18 years of age and older; Social Security numbers; and citizenship/eligible non-citizen status. Age and relationship will only be verified in those instances where needed to make a determination of level of assistance.

12.1 ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF VERIFICATION

Age, relationship, U.S. citizenship, and Social Security numbers will generally be verified with documentation provided by the family. For citizenship, the family's certification will be accepted. (Or for citizenship documentation such as listed below will be required.) Verification of these items will include photocopies of the Social Security cards and other documents presented by the family, the INS SAVE approval code, and forms signed by the family.

Other information will be verified by third party verification. This type of verification includes written documentation with forms sent directly to and received directly by a source, not passed through the hands of the family. This verification may also be direct contact with the source, in person, or by phone. It may also be a report generated by a request from the Muskegon Housing Commission or automatically by another government agency, i.e. the Social Security Administration. Verification forms and reports received will be contained in the applicant/tenant file. Oral third party documentation will include the same information as if the documentation had been written, i.e. name, date of contact, amount received, etc.

When third party verification cannot be obtained, the Muskegon Housing Commission will accept documentation received from the applicant/tenant. Hand-carried documentation will be accepted if the Muskegon Housing Commission has been unable to obtain third party verification in a four (4) week period of time. Photocopies of the documents provided by the family will be maintained in the file,

When neither third party verification nor hand-carried verification can be obtained, the Muskegon Housing Commission will accept a notarized statement signed by the head, spouse, or co-head. Such documents will be maintained in the file.

12.2 TYPES OF VERIFICATION

The chart below outlines the factors that may be verified and gives common examples of the verification that will be sought. To obtain written third party verification, the Muskegon Housing Commission will send a request form to the source along with a release form signed by the applicant/tenant via first class mail.

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Items To Be Verified	3rd Party Verification	Hand-carried Verification
General Eligibility Items		
Social Security Number	Letter from Social Security, electronic reports	Social Security card
Citizenship	N/A	Signed certification, voter's registration card, birth certificate, etc.
Eligible immigration status	INS SAVE confirmation. #	INS card
Disability	Letter from medical professional, SSI, etc.	Proof of SSI or Social Security disability payments
Full time student status (if > 18)	Letter from school	For high school students, any document evidencing enrollment
Need for a live-in aide	Letter from doctor or other professional knowledgeable of condition	N/A
Child care costs	Letter from care provider	Bills and receipts
Disability assistance expenses	Letters from suppliers, care givers, etc.	Bills and records of payment
Medical expenses	Letters from providers, prescription record from pharmacy, medical professional's letter stating assistance or a companion animal is needed	Bills, receipts, records of payments, dates of trips, mileage log, receipts for fares and tolls
Value of and Income from		
Savings, checking accounts	Letter from institution	Passbook, most current statements
CD's, bonds, etc.	Letter from institution	Tax return, information brochure from institution, the CD, the bond
Stocks	Letter from broker or holding company	Stock or most current statement, price in newspaper or through Internet
Real property	Letter from tax office, assessment, etc.	Property tax statement (for current value), assessment, records, or income and expenses, tax return

Verification Requirements for Individual Items		
Items To Be Verified	3rd Party Verification	Hand-Carried Verification
Personal property	Assessment, bluebook, etc.	Receipt for purchase, other evidence of worth
Cash value of life insurance policies	Letter from insurance company	Current statement
Assets disposed of for less than fair market value	N/A	Original receipt and receipt at disposition, other evidence of worth
Income		
Earned income	Letter from employer	Multiple pay stubs
Self-employed	N/A	Tax return from prior year, books of accounts
Regular gifts and contributions	Letter from source, letter from organization receiving gift (i.e., if grandmother pays day care provider, the day care provider could so state)	Bank deposits, other similar evidence
Alimony/child support	Court order, letter from source, letter from Human Services	Record of deposits, divorce decree
Periodic payments (i.e., social security, welfare, pensions, workers compensation, unemployment)	Letter or electronic reports from the source	Award letter, letter announcing change in amount of future payments
Training program participation	<p>Letter from provider indicating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether enrolled or completed - whether training is UND-funded - whether Federal, State, local govt., or local program - whether it is employment training - whether it has clearly defined goals and objectives whether program has supportive services - whether payments are for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in a program date of first job after program completion 	<p>N/A</p> <p>Evidence of job start</p>

12.3 VERIFICATION OF CITIZENSHIP OR ELIGIBLE NONCITIZEN STATUS

1. The citizenship/eligible non-citizen status of each family member regardless of age must be determined.
2. Prior to being admitted, or at the first reexamination, all citizens and nationals will be required to sign a declaration under penalty of perjury. They will be required to show proof of their status by such means as a Social Security card, birth certificate, military ID, or military DD 214 Form.
3. Prior to being admitted or at the first reexamination, all eligible noncitizens who are 62 years of age or older will be required to sign a declaration under penalty of perjury. They will also be required to show proof of age.
4. Prior to being admitted or at the first reexamination, all eligible noncitizens must sign a declaration of their status and a verification consent form and provide their original INS documentation. The Muskegon Housing Commission will make a copy of the individual's INS documentation and place the copy in the file. The Muskegon Housing Commission will also verify their status through the INS SAVE system. If the INS SAVE system cannot confirm eligibility, the Muskegon Housing Commission will mail information to the INS in order that a manual check can be made of INS records.
5. Family members who do not claim to be citizens, nationals, or eligible non-citizens must be listed on a statement of non-eligible members and the head of the household must sign the list.
6. Non-citizen students on student visas, though in the country legally, are not eligible to be admitted to public housing.
7. Any family member who does not choose to declare their status must be listed on the statement of non-eligible members.
8. If no family member is determined to be eligible under this section, the family's eligibility will be denied.
9. The family's assistance will not be denied, delayed, reduced, or terminated because of a delay in the process of determining eligible status under this section, except to the extent that the family causes the delay.
10. If the Muskegon Housing Commission determines that a family member has knowingly permitted an ineligible non-citizen (other than any ineligible non-citizens listed on the lease) to permanently reside in their public housing unit, the family will be evicted. Such family will not be

eligible to be readmitted to public housing for a period of 24 months from the date of eviction or termination.

12.4 VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

1. Prior to admission, each family member who has a Social Security number and who is at least two (2) years of age, must provide verification of his or her Social Security number. New family members at least two (2) years of age must provide this verification prior to being added to the lease. Children in assisted households must provide this verification at the first regular reexamination after turning six (6).
2. The best verification of the Social Security number is the original Social Security card. If the card is not available, the Muskegon Housing Commission will accept letters from the Social Security Agency that establishes and states the number. Documentation from other governmental agencies will also be accepted that establishes and states the number. Driver's licenses, military IDs, passports, or other official documents that establish and state the number are also acceptable.
3. If a member of an applicant's family indicates they have a Social Security number but cannot readily verify it, the family cannot be housed until verification is provided.
4. If a member of a tenant family indicates they have a Social Security number, but cannot readily verify it, they shall be asked to certify to this fact and shall have up to 60 days to provide the verification. If the individual is at least 62 years of age, they will be given 120 days to provide the verification. If the individual fails to provide the verification within the time allowed, the family will be evicted.

12.5 TIMING OF VERIFICATION

Verification information must be dated within 90 days of certification or reexamination. If the verification is older than this, the source will be contacted and asked to provide information regarding any changes.

When an interim reexamination is conducted, the Housing Commission will verify and update all information related to family circumstances and level of assistance (Or, the Housing Commission will only verify and update those elements reported to have changed).

12.6 FREQUENCY OF OBTAINING VERIFICATION

For each family member, citizenship/eligible non-citizen status will be verified only once. This verification will be obtained prior to admission. If the status

of any family member was not determined prior to admission, verification of their status will be obtained at the next regular reexamination. Prior to a new member joining the family, their citizenship/eligible non-citizen status will be verified.

For each family member age two (2) and above, verification of their Social Security number will be obtained only once. This verification will be accomplished prior to admission. When a family member who did not have a Social Security number at admission receives a Social Security number, that number will be verified at the next regular reexamination. Likewise, when a child turns two (2), their verification will be obtained at the next regular reexamination.

13.0 DETERMINATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT AND TENANT RENT

13.1 FAMILY CHOICE

At admission and each year in preparation for their annual reexamination, each family is given the choice of having their rent determined under the formula method or having their rent set at the flat rent amount.

- A. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income reexamination process every three (3) years, rather than the annual review they would otherwise undergo.
- B. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a reexamination and return to the formula based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. The family's income has decreased.
 - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for childcare, medical care, etc.
 - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the formula method would be more financially feasible for the family.

13.2 THE FORMULA METHOD

- A. The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:
 - 1. 10% of monthly income;
 - 2. 30% of adjusted monthly income; or

3. The TANF rent.
- B. The family will pay the greater of the total tenant payment or the minimum rent of \$50.00, but never more than the ceiling rent.
- C. In the case of a family who has qualified for the income exclusion at Section 11.2(H)(11), and upon the expiration of the 12-month period described in that section, an additional rent benefit accrues to the family. If the family member's employment continues, then for the 12-month period following the 12-month period of disallowance, the resulting rent increase will be capped at 50 percent of the rent increase the family would have otherwise received.

13.3 MINIMUM RENT

The Muskegon Housing Commission has set the minimum rent at \$50.00. However; if the family requests a hardship exemption, the Muskegon Housing Commission will immediately suspend the minimum rent for the family until the Housing Commission can determine whether the hardship exists and whether the hardship is of a temporary or long-term nature.

- A. A hardship exists in the following circumstances:
 1. When the family has lost eligibility for, or is waiting an eligibility determination for a Federal, State, or local assistance program;
 2. When the family would be evicted as a result of the imposition of the minimum rent requirement;
 3. When the income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including loss of employment;
 4. When the family has an increase in expenses because of changed circumstances, for medical costs, childcare, transportation, education, or similar items;
 5. When a death has occurred in the family.
- B. No hardship. If the Housing Commission determines there is no qualifying hardship, the minimum rent will be reinstated, including requiring back payment of the minimum rent for the time of suspension.
- C. Temporary hardship. If the Housing Commission reasonably determines that there is a qualifying hardship but that it is of a temporary nature, the minimum rent will be not be imposed for a period of 90 days from the date of the family's request. At the end of the 90-day period, the minimum rent will be imposed retroactively to the time of suspension.

- D. Long-term hardship. If the Housing Commission determines that there is a long-term hardship, the family will be exempt from the minimum rent requirement until the hardship no longer exists.
- E. Appeals. The family may use the grievance procedure to appeal the Housing Commission's determination regarding the hardship. No escrow deposit will be required in order to access the grievance procedure.

13.4 FLAT RENT

The Muskegon Housing Commission may set a flat rent for each public housing unit. In doing so, it will consider the size and type of the unit, as well as its condition, amenities, services, and neighborhood. The Muskegon Housing Commission determines the market value of the unit and sets the rent at the market value. The amount of the flat rent will be reevaluated annually and adjustments applied. Affected families will be given a 30-day notice of any rent change. Adjustments are applied on the anniversary date for each affected family (for more information on flat rents, see Section 15.3).

The Muskegon Housing Commission will post the flat rents at each of the developments and at the central office and incorporation of this policy upon approval by the Board of Commissioners.

13.5 CEILING RENT

The Muskegon Housing Commission does not have a policy of establishing ceiling rents for each public housing unit.

13.6 RENT FOR FAMILIES UNDER THE NONCITIZEN RULE

A mixed family will receive full continuation of assistance if all of the following conditions are met:

- A. The family was receiving assistance on June 19, 1995;
- B. The family was granted continuation of assistance before November 29, 1996;
- C. The family's head or spouse has eligible immigration status; and
- D. The family does not include any person who does not have eligible status other than the head of household, the spouse of the head of household, any parent of the head or spouse, or any child (under the age of 18) of the head or spouse.

If a mixed family qualifies for prorated assistance but decides not to accept it, or if the family has no eligible members, the family may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance to permit the family additional time for the

orderly transition of some or all of its members to locate other affordable housing. Under this provision, the family receives full assistance. If assistance is granted under this provision prior to November 29, 1996; it may last no longer than three (3) years. If granted after that date, the maximum period of time for assistance under the provision is 18 months. The Muskegon Housing Commission will grant each family a period of six (6) months to find suitable affordable housing. If the family cannot find suitable affordable housing, the Muskegon Housing Commission will provide additional search periods up to the maximum time allowable.

Suitable housing means housing that is not substandard and is of appropriate size for the family. Affordable housing means that it can be rented for an amount not exceeding the amount the family pays for rent, plus utilities, plus 25%.

The family's assistance is prorated in the following manner:

- A. Determine the 95th percentile of gross rents (tenant rent plus utility allowance) for the Muskegon Housing Commission. The 95th percentile is called the maximum rent.
- B. Subtract the family's total tenant payment from the maximum rent. The resulting number is called the maximum subsidy.
- C. Divide the maximum subsidy by the number of family members and multiply the result times the number of eligible family members. This yields the prorated subsidy.
- D. Subtract the prorated subsidy from the maximum rent to find the prorated total tenant payment. From this amount, subtract the full utility allowance to obtain the prorated tenant rent.

13.7 UTILITY ALLOWANCE

The Muskegon Housing Commission *shall annually establish* a utility allowance for all check-metered utilities and for all tenant-paid utilities. The allowance will be based on a reasonable consumption of utilities by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful environment.

The utility allowance will be subtracted from the family's formula or flat rent to determine the amount of the Tenant Rent. The Tenant Rent is the amount the family owes each month to the Muskegon Housing Commission. The amount of the utility allowance is then still available to the family to pay the cost of their utilities. Any utility costs above the allowance are the responsibility of the tenant. Any savings resulting from utility costs below the amount of the allowance belongs to the tenant.

Utility allowance revisions shall become effective at each family's next annual or *interim* reexamination.

13.8 PAYING RENT

Rent and other charges are due and payable in accordance with the Rent Collection Policy.

14.0 CONTINUED OCCUPANCY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

14.1 GENERAL

In order to be eligible for continued occupancy, each adult family member must either (1) contribute eight hours per month of community service (not including political activities) within the community in which the public housing development is located, or (2) participate in an economic self-sufficiency program unless they are exempt from this requirement

14.2 EXEMPTIONS

- A. The following adult family members of tenant families are exempt from this requirement.
 - 1. Family members who are 62 or older,
 - 2. Family members who are blind or disabled,
 - 3. Family members who are the primary care giver for someone who is blind or disabled,
 - 4. Engaged in work activities as defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act
 - 5. (42 U.S.C. 607(d)), specified below: Family members who are exempt from work activity under part "A" Title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other State welfare program, including the welfare-to-work program
 - 6. Family members receiving assistance under a State program funded under part "A" Title IV of the Social Security Act or under any other State welfare program, including welfare-to-work and who are in compliance with that program

14.3 NOTIFICATION OF THE REQUIREMENT

- A. The Muskegon Housing Commission shall identify all adult family members who are apparently not exempt from the community service requirement.

- B. The Muskegon Housing Commission shall notify all such family members of the community service requirement and of the categories of individuals who are exempt from the requirement. The notification will provide the opportunity for family members to claim and explain an exempt status. The Muskegon Housing Commission shall verify such claims.
- C. The notification will advise families that their community service obligation will begin upon the effective date of their first annual reexamination on or after 10/1/99. For family's paying a flat rent, the obligation begins on the date their annual reexamination would have been effective had an annual reexamination taken place. It will also advise them that failure to comply with the community service requirement will result in ineligibility for continued occupancy at the time of any subsequent annual reexamination.

14.4 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Community Service is defined as “the performance of voluntary work or duties that are a public benefit, and that serve to improve the quality of life, enhance resident self-sufficiency, or increase resident self-responsibility in the community.” Community Service is not employment and may not include political activities (24 CFR 960.601).

An economic self-sufficiency program is one that is designed to encourage, assist, train or facilitate the economic independence of participants and their families or to provide work for participants. These programs may include programs for job training, work placement, basic skills training, education, English proficiency, work fare, financial or household management, apprenticeship, and any program necessary to ready a participant to work (such as substance abuse or mental health treatment).

The Muskegon Housing Commission will coordinate with social service agencies, local schools, and local human resources offices in identifying a list of volunteer community service positions.

14.5 THE PROCESS

At the first annual reexamination on or after October 1, 1999, and each annual reexamination thereafter, the Muskegon Housing Commission will do the following:

- A. Provide a list of volunteer opportunities to the family members.
- B. Provide information about obtaining suitable volunteer positions.
- C. Provide a volunteer time sheet to the family member. Instructions for the time sheet, require the individual to complete the form, and have a supervisor date and sign for each period of work.

- D. Thirty (30) days before the family's next lease anniversary date, the family will provide the Muskegon Housing Commission with the completed volunteer time sheet. The Muskegon Housing Commission will determine if each applicable adult family member is in compliance with the community service requirement.

14.6 NOTIFICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

The Muskegon Housing Commission will notify any family found to be in noncompliance of the following:

- A. The family member(s) has been determined to be in noncompliance;
- B. That the determination is subject to the grievance procedure; and
- C. That, unless the family member(s) enter into an agreement to comply, the lease will not be renewed or will be terminated;

14.7 OPPORTUNITY FOR CURE

- A. The Muskegon Housing Commission will offer the family member(s) the opportunity to enter into an agreement prior to the anniversary of the lease. The agreement shall state that the family member(s) agrees to enter into an economic self-sufficiency program or agrees to contribute to community service for as many hours as needed to comply with the requirement over the past 12-month period. The cure shall occur over the 12-month period beginning with the date of the agreement and the resident shall at the same time stay current with that year's community service requirement. The first hours a resident earns goes toward the current commitment until the current year's commitment is made.
- B. If any applicable family member does not accept the terms of the agreement, does not fulfill their obligation to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program, or falls behind in their obligation under the agreement to perform community service by more than three (3) hours after three (3) months, the Muskegon Housing Commission shall take action to terminate the lease.

15.0 RECERTIFICATIONS

Annually, the Muskegon Housing Commission will conduct a reexamination where the family is required to provide accurate and current information on the following, as stipulated in the lease (24 CFR 966.4):

- Family composition
- Age of family members
- Annual income and sources of income of all family members
- Deductions for computing adjusted income
- Assets

- Community Service and economic self-sufficiency activities and exempt status of all family members over the age of 18;
- Social security numbers for any new family members
- Citizenship or eligible immigrant status of any new family members

The following components are essential to the reexamination process and should be conducted by the Muskegon Housing Commission to provide an adequate reexamination:

- Employment, income, allowances, Social Security numbers, and such other data appropriate for the family's circumstances must be verified and all verified findings must be documented and filed in the family's folder.
- Eligibility of the resident as a family or as the remaining member of a family.
- Income-based rent the family would pay (although all residents will be given the choice of paying income-based or flat rent).
- Residents with a history of employment whose regular reexamination takes place at a time when they are not employed must have their income calculated based on their past and anticipated employment. Residents with seasonal or part-time employment of a cyclical nature must be asked for third party documentation of the circumstances of their employment including starting and ending dates.
- Income shall be computed in accordance with the definitions and procedures set forth in HUD regulations (24 CFR Part 5).
- Third party verifications (EIV being the highest mandatory method) must be obtained and documented for annual income, net family assets, deductions from annual income and any other factor that could affect the adjusted income or income based rent of the family undergoing reexamination.
- Criminal background checks must be conducted for all household members age 18 and over.

All necessary documentation and forms required by HUD are to be placed in the tenant's file for appropriate filing and retrieval of tenant information.

15.1 GENERAL

- A. The Muskegon Housing Commission will send a notification letter to the family letting them know that it is time for their annual reexamination, giving them the option of selecting either the flat rent or formula method, and scheduling an appointment if they are currently paying a formula rent. If the family thinks they may want to switch from a flat rent to a formula rent, they should request an appointment. At the appointment, the family can make their final decision regarding which rent method they will choose. The letter also includes, for those families paying the formula method, forms for the family to complete in preparation for the interview. The letter includes instructions permitting the family to reschedule the interview if necessary. The letter tells families who may need to make alternate arrangements due to a disability, that they may contact staff to request an accommodation of their needs.
- B. During the appointment, the Muskegon Housing Commission will determine whether family composition may require a transfer to a different bedroom size unit and, if so, the family's name will be placed on the transfer list.

15.2 MISSED APPOINTMENTS

If the family fails to respond to the initial reexamination letter and fails to attend the interview, a second letter will be mailed. The second letter will advise of a new time and date for the interview, allowing for the same considerations for rescheduling and accommodation as above. The letter will also advise that failure by the family to attend the second scheduled interview will result in the Muskegon Housing Commission taking eviction actions against the family. Failure to comply must result in termination of the lease (24 CFR 966.4(c) (2)).

15.3 FLAT RENTS

The annual letter to flat rent payers regarding the reexamination process will state the following:

- A. Each year at the time of the annual reexamination, the family has the option of selecting a flat rent amount in lieu of completing the reexamination process and having their rent based on the formula amount.
- B. The amount of the flat rent.
- C. A fact sheet about formula rents that explains the types of income counted, the most common types of income excluded, and the categories allowances that can be deducted from income.
- D. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income reexamination process every three (3) years, rather than the annual review they otherwise would undergo.
- E. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a reexamination and return to the formula-based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
 - 1. The family's income has decreased.
 - 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for childcare, medical care, etc.
 - 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the formula method would be more financially feasible for the family.
- F. The dates upon which the Muskegon Housing Commission expects to review the amount of the flat rent, the approximate rent increase the family could expect, and the approximate date upon which a future rent increase could become effective.
- G. The name and phone number of an individual to call to get additional information or counseling concerning flat rents.
- H. A certification for the family to sign accepting or declining the flat rent.

- I. Each year prior to their anniversary date, Muskegon Housing Commission will send a reexamination letter to the family offering the choice between a flat or a formula rent. The opportunity to select the flat rent is available only at this time. At the appointment, the Muskegon Housing Commission may assist the family in identifying the rent method that would be most advantageous for the family. If the family wishes to select the flat rent method without meeting with the Muskegon Housing Commission representative, they may make the selection on the form and return the form to the Muskegon Housing Commission. In such case, the Muskegon Housing Commission will cancel the appointment.

15.4 THE FORMULA METHOD

- A. During the interview, the family will provide all information regarding income, assets, expenses, and other information necessary to determine the family's share of rent. The family will sign the HUD consent form and other consent forms that later will be mailed to the sources that will verify the family circumstances.
- B. Upon receipt of verification, the Muskegon Housing Commission will determine the family's annual income and will calculate their rent as follows:
The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:
 1. 10% of monthly income;
 2. 30% of adjusted monthly income; orThe TANF rent.
The family will pay the greater of the total tenant payment or the minimum rent of \$50.00.

15.5 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES FOR ANNUAL REEXMINATIONS

- A. The new rent will generally be effective upon the anniversary date with thirty (30) days' notice of any rent increase to the family.
- B. If the rent determination is delayed due to a reason beyond the control of the family, then any rent increase will be effective the first of the month after the month in which the family receives a 30-day notice of the amount. If the new rent is a reduction and the delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective as scheduled on the anniversary date.
- C. If the family caused the delay, then any increase will be effective on the anniversary date. Any reduction will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

15.6 INTERIM REEXAMINATIONS

During an interim reexamination, only the information affected by the changes being reported will be reviewed and verified.

Families are required to report the following changes to the Muskegon Housing Commission between regular reexaminations. If the family's rent is being

determined under the formula method, these changes will trigger an interim reexamination. The family shall report these changes within ten (10) days of their occurrence.

- A. A member has been added to the family through birth or adoption or court awarded custody.
- B. A household member is leaving or has left the family unit.
- C. Any increase in income or decrease in allowable expenses of \$75.00 per month or more.

In order to add a household member other than through birth or adoption (including a live-in aide), the family must request that the new member be added to the lease. Before adding the new member to the lease, the individual must complete an application form stating their income, assets, and all other information required of an applicant. The individual must provide their Social Security number if they have one and they must verify their citizenship/eligible immigrant status (Their housing will not be delayed due to delays in verifying eligible immigrant status other than delays caused by the family). The new family member will go through the screening process similar to the process for applicants. The Muskegon Housing Commission will determine the eligibility of the individual before adding them to the lease. If the individual is found to be ineligible or does not pass the screening criteria, they will be advised in writing and given the opportunity for an informal review. If they are found to be eligible and do pass the screening criteria, their name will be added to the lease. At the same time, if the family's rent is being determined under the formula method, the family's annual income will be recalculated taking into account the circumstances of the new family member. The effective date of the new rent will be in accordance with paragraph below 15.8.

Families are not required to, but may at any time, request an interim reexamination based on a decrease in income or an increase in allowable expenses of \$75.00 per month or more, or other changes in family circumstances. Interim reexaminations changes that are reported after the 15th day of the month will not be processed until the 1st of the following month.

15.7 SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS

If a family's income is too unstable to project for twelve (12) months, including families that temporarily have no income (0 renters) or have a temporary decrease in income, the Muskegon Housing Commission may schedule special reexaminations every sixty (60) days until the income stabilizes and an annual income can be determined.

15.8 EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENT CHANGES DUE TO INTERIM OR SPECIAL REEXAMINATIONS

Unless there is a delay in reexamination processing caused by the family, any rent increase will be effective the first of the second month after the month in which the family receives notice of the new rent amount. If the family causes a delay, then the rent increases will be effective on the date it would have been effective had the process not been delayed (even if this means a retroactive increase).

- A. If the new rent is a reduction and any delay is beyond the control of the family, the reduction will be effective the first of the month after the interim reexamination should have been completed.
- B. If the new rent is a reduction and the family caused the delay or did not report the change in the time specified, the change will be effective the first of the month after the rent amount is determined.

16.0 UNIT TRANSFERS

Definition: Unit Transfer is classified as a reassignment of a family outlined in Section 16.1, below and allocates all terms, household members, conditions, funds (including Security Deposits) and debts owed of said family to an alternate unit. In the event, any household member requests a separate alternate housing unit, with the exception of VAWA, and does not intend on allocating all terms, household members, conditions, funds (including Security Deposits) and debts owed, etc. would be considered a new admission to public housing and placed on the appropriate Waiting List according to preference (Section 10.1).

16.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSFER POLICY

The objectives of the Transfer Policy include the following:

- A. To address emergency situations.
- B. To fully utilize available housing resources while avoiding overcrowding by insuring that each family occupies the appropriate size unit.
- C. To facilitate relocation when required for modernization or other management purposes.
- D. To facilitate relocation of families with inadequate housing accommodations.
- E. To provide an incentive for families to assist in meeting the Muskegon Housing Commission's de-concentration goal.
- F. To eliminate vacancy loss and other expenses due to unnecessary transfers.

16.2 CATEGORIES OF TRANSFERS

Category I: Emergency transfers. These transfers are necessary when conditions pose an immediate threat to the life, health, or safety of a family or one of its members. Such situations may involve defects of the unit or the building in which it is located, the health condition of a family member, a hate crime, the safety of witnesses to a crime, or a law enforcement matter particular to the neighborhood.

Category 2: Immediate administrative transfers. These transfers are necessary in order to permit a family needing accessible feature(s) to move to a unit with such a feature(s) or to enable modernization work to proceed.

Category 3: Regular administrative transfers. These transfers are made to offer incentives to families willing to help meet certain Muskegon Housing Commission occupancy goals, to correct occupancy standards where the unit size is inappropriate for the size and composition of the family, to allow for non-emergency but medically advisable transfers, and other transfers approved by the Muskegon Housing Commission when a transfer is the only or best way of solving a serious problem.

16.3 DOCUMENTATION

When the transfer is at the request of the family, the family may be required to provide third party verification of the need for the transfer.

16.4 INCENTIVE TRANSFERS

Transfer requests will be encouraged and approved for families who live in a development where their income category (below or above 30% of area median) predominates and wish to move to a development where their income category does not predominate.

Families approved for such transfers will meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A. Have been a tenant for three (3) years;
- B. For a minimum of one (1) year, at least one (1) adult family member is enrolled in an economic self-sufficiency program or is working at least thirty-five (35) hours per week. The adult family members are 62 years of age or older, or are disabled, or are the primary care givers to others with disabilities;
- C. Adult members who are required to perform community service have been current in these responsibilities since the inception of the requirement or for one (1) year whichever is less;
- D. The family is current in the payment of all charges owed the Muskegon Housing Commission and has not paid rent late for at least one (1) year;
- E. The family passed the current housekeeping inspection and does not have any record of housekeeping problems during the last year;
- F. The family has not materially violated the lease over the past two (2) years by disturbing the peaceful enjoyment of their neighbors, by engaging in criminal or drug-related activity, or by threatening the health or safety of Tenants or Housing Commission Staff.
- G. Participates in a series of classes conducted by the Muskegon Housing Commission on basic home and yard care, when requested to.

16.5 PROCESSING TRANSFERS

- A. Transfers on the Transfer Waiting List will be sorted by the above categories (outlined in Section 16.1, above) and within each category by date and time.

- B. Transfers in category A and B will be housed ahead of any other families, including those on the applicant waiting list. Transfers in category A will be housed ahead of transfers in category B.
- D. Transfers in category C through F will be housed along with applicants for admission at a ratio of one (1) transfer for every seven (7) admissions.
- E. The family will be given a 30 day advance notice that their transfer will take place next. Upon offer and acceptance of a unit, the family will execute all lease-up documents and pay any rent and/or security deposits within two (2) days of being informed the unit is ready to rent. The family will be allowed seven (7) days to complete a transfer. The family will be responsible for paying rent at the old unit as well as the new unit for any period of time they have possession of both. The prorated rent and other charges (key deposit and any additional security deposits owing) must be paid at the time of lease execution.
- F. The following is the policy for the rejection of an offer to transfer:
 - I. If the family rejects, with good cause, any unit offered, they will not lose their place on the transfer waiting list (Major medical emergencies, fatalities to immediate family, fire and other catastrophic incidents).
 - 2. If the transfer is being made at the request of the Muskegon Housing Commission and the family rejects two (2) offers without good cause, the Muskegon Housing Commission will take action to terminate their tenancy. If the reason for the transfer is that the current unit is too small to meet the Muskegon Housing Commission's optimum occupancy standards, the family may request in writing to stay in the unit without being transferred so long as their occupancy will not exceed two (2) people per living/sleeping room.
 - 3. If the transfer is being made at the family's request and the rejected offer provides de-concentration incentives, the family will maintain their place on the transfer list and will not otherwise be penalized.
 - 4. If the transfer is being made at the family's request, the family may, without good cause and without penalty, turn down one (1) offer that does not include de-concentration incentives. After turning down a second such offer without good cause, the family's name will be removed from the transfer list.

16.6 COST OF THE FAMILY'S MOVE

The cost of the transfer generally will be borne by the family in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is made at the request of the family or by others on behalf of the family (i.e. by the police);

- C. When the transfer is needed to move the family to an appropriately sized unit, either larger or smaller;
- D. When the transfer is necessitated because a family with disabilities needs the accessible unit into which the transferring family moved (The family without disabilities signed a statement to this effect prior to accepting the accessible unit); or
- E. When the transfer is needed because action or inaction by the family caused the unit to be unsafe or uninhabitable.

The cost of the transfer will be borne by the Muskegon Housing Commission in the following circumstances:

- A. When the transfer is needed in order to carry out rehabilitation activities; or
- B. When action or inaction by the Muskegon Housing Commission has caused the unit to be unsafe or inhabitable.

The responsibility for moving costs in other circumstances will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

16.7 TENANTS IN GOOD STANDING

When the transfer is at the request of the family, it will not be approved unless the family is in good standing with the Muskegon Housing Commission. This means the family must be in compliance with their lease, current in all payments to the Housing Commission, and must pass a housekeeping inspection.

16.8 TRANSFER REQUESTS

A tenant may request a transfer at any time by completing a Transfer Request Form. In considering the request, the Muskegon Housing Commission may request a meeting with the tenant to better understand the need for transfer and to explore possible alternatives. The Muskegon Housing Commission will review the request in a timely manner and if a meeting is desired, it shall contact the tenant within ten (10) business days of receipt of the request to schedule a meeting.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will grant or deny the transfer request in writing within ten (10) business days of receiving the request or holding the meeting, whichever is later.

If the transfer is approved, the family's name will be added to the Transfer Waiting List.

If the transfer is denied, the denial letter will advise the family of their right to utilize the grievance procedure.

16.9 RIGHTS OF THE MUSKEGON HOUSING COMMISSION IN TRANSFER POLICY

The provisions listed above are to be used as a guide to ensure fair and impartial means of assigning units for transfers. It is not intended that this policy will create a property right or any other type of right for a tenant to transfer or refuse to transfer.

17.0 INSPECTIONS

An authorized representative of the Muskegon Housing Commission and an adult family member will inspect the premises at the time the family moves into the dwelling unit. A written statement of the condition of the premises will be made, all equipment will be provided, and the statement will be signed by both parties with a copy retained in the Muskegon Housing Commission's file and a copy given to the family member. An authorized Muskegon Housing Commission representative will inspect the premises at the time the resident vacates and will furnish a statement of any charges to be made provided the resident turns in the proper notice under State law. The resident's security deposit can be used to offset charges made against any Muskegon Housing Commission's unit that incurs damages.

17.1 PRE MOVE-IN INSPECTION AND PROCEDURE

The Muskegon Housing Commission and the head of household of the pre-approved family will inspect the next available unit for lease that would be offered to the family prior to the execution of the rental lease agreement. The family will certify that they agree to accept the offered unit, by completing the pre move-in inspection form. If the family does not accept the offered unit, they must certify on the pre move-in inspection form the same, and acknowledge they will be placed at the bottom of the pre-approved waiting list. After two (2) pre move-in inspection disapprovals the family will be removed from the waiting list. Disapprovals are limited to unusually excessive carpet damage and/or extensive cleaning neglect. The family may elect to decline a pre move-in inspection. If a family declines a pre-move in inspection they must certify that they have declined said inspection prior to execution of the rental lease agreement.

17.2 MOVE-IN INSPECTIONS

The Muskegon Housing Commission and an adult member of the family will inspect the unit at an agreed upon scheduled time during the signing of the lease. Both parties will sign a written statement of the condition of the unit. A copy of the signed inspection will be given to the family and the original will be placed in the tenant's file.

17.3 ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

The Muskegon Housing Commission will inspect each public housing unit annually to ensure that each unit meets the Muskegon Housing Commission's

housing standards. Work orders will be submitted and completed to correct any deficiencies.

17.4 PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS

This is generally conducted along with the annual inspection but may be performed at other times if deemed necessary by the Housing Commission. This inspection is intended to keep items in good repair. It checks weatherization; checks the condition of the smoke detectors, water heaters, furnaces, automatic thermostats and water temperatures; check for leaks; and provides an opportunity to change furnace filters and provide other minor servicing that extends the life of the unit and its equipment.

17.5 SPECIAL INSPECTIONS

A special inspection may be scheduled to enable HUD or others to inspect a sample of the housing stock maintained by the Muskegon Housing Commission or to inspect work performed by an outside contractor.

17.6 HOUSEKEEPING INSPECTIONS

Generally at the time of annual reexamination, or at other times as necessary, the Muskegon Housing Commission will conduct a housekeeping inspection to ensure the family is maintaining the unit in a safe and sanitary condition. If a resident is determined to be a high risk of poor housekeeping (through prior inspections or staff entry of the dwelling unit), the Housing Commission may perform inspections more frequently to monitor the housekeeping efforts of the resident.

17.7 NOTICE OF INSPECTION

For inspections defined as annual inspections, preventative maintenance inspections, special inspections, and housekeeping inspections, the Muskegon Housing Commission will give the tenant at least two (2) days written notice.

17.8 EMERGENCY INSPECTIONS

If any employee and/or agent of the Muskegon Housing Commission has reason to believe that an emergency exists within the housing unit, the unit can be entered without notice. The person(s) that enters the unit will leave a written notice to the resident that indicates the date and time the unit was entered and the reason why it was necessary to enter the unit.

17.9 PRE MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS

When a tenant gives notice that they intend to move, the Muskegon Housing Commission will offer to schedule a pre move-out inspection with the family. The inspection allows the Muskegon Housing Commission an opportunity to help the family identify any problems which, if left uncorrected, could lead to vacate charges. This inspection is a courtesy to the family and has been found to be helpful both in reducing costs to the family and in enabling the Muskegon Housing Commission to more quickly ready units for the future occupants.

17.10 MOVE-OUT INSPECTIONS

The Muskegon Housing Commission conducts the move-out inspection after the tenant vacates to assess the condition of the unit and determine responsibility for any needed repairs. When possible, the tenant is notified of the inspection and is encouraged to be present. This inspection becomes the basis for any claims that may be assessed against the security deposit.

18.0 PET POLICY

18.1 EXCLUSIONS

The ownership of pets in Commission-owned projects or buildings will be in accordance with the approved Pet Policy.

The policy does not apply to animals that are used to assist persons with disabilities. Assisting animals are allowed in all public housing facilities with no restrictions other than those imposed on all tenants to maintain their units and associated facilities in a decent, safe, and sanitary manner and to refrain from disturbing their neighbors (24 CFR Part 960).

Definition

For the purpose of these pet rules, "PET" is defined as domesticated small animals traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for utility or commercial purposes.

To have or keep common household pets, such as a dog (excluding pit bulls or other dangerous breeds), a cat, a bird, a rodent (defined as only a gerbil, hamster, guinea pig and rabbit), a reptile (defined as only a turtle), and/or a fish.

Except where otherwise indicated, these rules apply principally to dogs and cats.

At no time will the Muskegon Housing Commission approve exotic pets such as snakes, monkeys, game pets, etc.

Animals assisting the handicapped are exempt from these rules. Certification of the pet's training to assist the handicapped must be provided to management prior to admission.

Pet Restrictions

Only one (1) cat or dog per unit is allowed.

No pet over twenty (20) pounds or twenty (20) inches high.

There may be no more than two (2) birds or small caged animals per unit.

No limit is placed on the number of fish; however, the size of the fish tank may not exceed twenty (20) gallons.

Residents will not be allowed to house a pet which is not their own.

Dogs and cats shall not be permitted to excrete anywhere in the building or common areas (other than cats using a litter box in resident units). Pet owners

shall be responsible for immediately removing feces dropped anywhere in the building or on the grounds.

1. Waste must be placed in a plastic bag, tied securely and deposited in the trashcan. Poorly disposed of waste will not be tolerated.
2. Tenants owning a cat must provide a litter box for their cat and it should and must be cleaned on a daily basis, disposing of feces in the proper manner.

No pet shall be tied up or left unattended on the outside of a building(s) at any time on Housing Commission property.

At no time will pets be allowed in lobbies except when leaving or entering the building.

All units with pets must be kept free of pet odors and maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. Resident's unit may be subject to inspection once a month.

If the pet poses a nuisance, such as excessive noise, barking or whining which disrupts the peace of the complex; the owner will remove the pet from the premises immediately upon management's request.

Location of Pets in the Building

Pets shall not be brought into dining areas or other public gathering spaces. When dogs or cats are moved through the building, they must be moved from the resident's unit to the nearest convenient exit.

All pets must be leashed and under the control of a responsible individual while on the Commission's common areas.

All birds must be caged.

Registration

Every dog and cat must be registered with management upon admission and thereafter annually on the anniversary date of admission. Registration of dogs and cats require proof of current or change in the names, addresses or telephone numbers of persons designated as alternate caretakers. Any expenses relating to alternate caretakers are the responsibility of the pet owner.

The pet's owner/resident absolves management and /or its agents of any and all liability, financial or otherwise, for actions taken on behalf of the pet owner, or the well-being of the pet, if management is unable to reach the alternate caretaker(s) in an emergency.

Resident shall pay Muskegon Housing Commission a one-time pet privilege permit fee of \$150.00. It is expressly understood and agreed by the resident that the pet privilege fee does not constitute a security deposit and is not refundable.

Sick or Injured Animals

No sick or injured pet will be accepted for occupancy. Admitted pets which suffer illness or injury must be immediately taken for veterinarian care at the resident pet owner's expense.

Rule Enforcement

Any resident who receives two (2) letters for violation of pet rules and a letter of intent describing these violations from the management of the Muskegon Housing Commission may be required, after private conference, to remove the pet from the premises and provide management with a signed affidavit stating that the dog or cat is no longer on the premises and will not return in the future. Misrepresentation of this affidavit will be grounds for eviction of the resident

Management exercises the right to act immediately in insisting an offending pet be removed forthwith in situations deemed to be of an emergency nature. In such instances, management will act as specified in the section on "alternate caretaker" in removing a sick, or diseased, injured and/or aggressive animal.

19.0 REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS

When a resident with a flat rent agreement owes the Muskegon Housing Commission back charges and is unable to pay the balance by the due date, the resident may request that the Muskegon Housing Commission allow them to enter into a Repayment Agreement. The Muskegon Housing Commission, on a case-by-case basis, has the sole discretion of whether to accept such an agreement. All Repayment Agreements must assure that the full payment is made within a period not to exceed twelve (12) months. All Repayment Agreements must be in writing and signed by both parties. Failure to comply with the Repayment Agreement terms may subject the Resident to eviction procedures.

Note: If the Housing Commission has a minimum rent greater than \$0, they must allow for repayment agreements for those tenants whose rental amount is the minimum rent and who have had their rent abated for a temporary period.

20.0 TERMINATION

20.1 TERMINATION BY TENANT

The tenant may terminate the lease at any time upon submitting a 30-day written notice. If the tenant vacates prior to the end of the thirty (30) days, they will be responsible for rent through the end of the notice period or until the unit is re-rented, whichever occurs first.

20.2 TERMINATION BY THE HOUSING COMMISSION

The Muskegon Housing Commission, after 10/01/2000, will not renew the lease of any family that is not in compliance with the community service requirement

or an approved Agreement to Cure. If they do not voluntarily leave the property, eviction proceedings will begin.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will terminate the lease for serious or repeated violations of material lease terms. Such violations include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Nonpayment of rent or other charges;
- B. A history of late rental payments (three (3) or more late rental payments);
- C. Failure to provide timely and accurate information regarding family composition, income circumstances, or other information related to eligibility or rent;
- D. Failure to allow inspection of the unit;
- E. Failure to maintain the unit in a safe and sanitary manner (poor housekeeping will apply);
- F. Assignment or subletting of the premises, this includes providing accommodations to boarders and lodgers (i.e., staying with someone while trying to find and/or apply for a place to live, moving clothes into one's dwelling unit).
- G. Use of the premises for purposes other than as a dwelling unit (other than for Housing Commission approved resident businesses);
- H. Destruction of property;
- I. Acts of destruction, defacement, or removal of any part of the premises or failure to cause guests to refrain from such acts;
- J. Any criminal activity on the property or drug-related criminal activity on or off the premises. This includes but is not limited to the manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of the Muskegon Housing Commission;
- K. Non-compliance with Non-Citizen Rule requirements;
- L. Permitting persons not on the lease to reside in the unit for fourteen (14) consecutive days within a calendar year without the prior written approval of the Housing Commission;
- M. Three (3) or more accumulated lease violations ; and
- N. Other good cause.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will take immediate action to evict any household that includes an individual who is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a State sex offender registration program.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will consider a unit to be abandoned when a resident has both fallen behind in rent AND has clearly indicated by words or actions an intention of not living in the unit.

When a unit has been abandoned, a Muskegon Housing Commission representative may enter the unit and remove any abandoned property. Storage and disposal of abandoned property will be done in accordance with State of Michigan law.

20.4 RETURN OF SECURITY DEPOSIT

Providing that the family supplies the Housing Commission with a forwarding address within four (4) calendar days after vacating the unit, the Muskegon Housing Commission will return the security deposit within **30 calendar days** or give the family a written statement of why all or part of the security deposit is being kept after the family moves out. The rental unit must be restored to the same condition as when the family moved in; except for normal wear and tear. Deposits will not be used to cover normal wear and tear or damage that existed when the family moved in.

The Muskegon Housing Commission will be considered in compliance with the above if the required payment, statement, or both are deposited in the U.S. mail with first class postage paid within thirty (3) calendar days.

21.0 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

(VAWA) reserves restrictions to the law placed on admission, occupancy and termination of VAWA situations and circumstances. The Muskegon Housing Commission may not consider incidents of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking as serious or repeated violations of the lease or other “good cause” for termination of assistance, tenancy or occupancy rights of the victim of abuse. The Muskegon Housing Commission may not consider criminal activity directly relating to abuse, engaged in by a member of a tenant’s household or any guest or other person under the tenant’s control, cause for termination of assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights if the tenant or an immediate member of the tenant’s family is the victim or threatened victim of that abuse. The Muskegon Housing Commission may request in writing that the victim, or a family member on the victim’s behalf, certify that the individual is a victim of abuse and that the Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or Stalking, Form HUD-91066, or other documentation as noted on the certification form, be completed and submitted within 14 business days, or an agreed upon extension date, to receive protection under the VAWA. Failure to provide the certification or other supporting documentation within the specified timeframe may result in eviction.

GLOSSARY

50058 Form: The HUD form that housing authorities are required to complete for each assisted household in public housing to record information used in the certification and re-certification process and, at the option of the housing commission, for interim reexaminations.

1937 Housing Act: The United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.) (24 CFR 5.100)

Adjusted Annual Income: The amount of household income, after deductions for specified allowances, on which tenant rent is based. (24 CFR 5.611)

Adult: A household member who is 18 years or older or who is the head of the household, or spouse, or co-head.

Allowances: Amounts deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income (the income amount used in the rent calculation). Allowances are given for elderly families, dependents, medical expenses for elderly families, disability expenses, and childcare expenses for children less than 13 years of age. Other allowance can be given at the discretion of the housing commission.

Annual Contributions Contract (ACC): The written contract between HIJD and a housing commission under which HUD agrees to provide funding for a program under the 1937 Act, and the housing commission agrees to comply with HUD requirements for the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

Annual Income: All amounts, monetary or not, that:

A. Go to (or on behalf of) the family head or spouse (even if temporarily absent) or to any other family member; or

B. Are anticipated to be received from a source outside the family during the 12-month period following admission or annual reexamination effective date; and

C. Are not specifically excluded from annual income. Annual Income also includes amounts derived (during the 12-month period) from assets to which any member of the family has access. (1937 Housing Act; 24 CFR 5.609)

Applicant (applicant family): A person or family that has applied for admission to a program but is not yet a participant in the program. (24 CFR 5.403)

As-Paid States: States where the welfare agency adjusts the shelter and utility component of the welfare grant in accordance with actual housing costs. Currently, the four as-paid States are New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, and Vermont.

Assets: The value of equity in savings, checking, IRA and Keogh accounts, real property, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles are not counted as assets. (Also see "net family assets.")

Asset Income: Income received from assets held by family members. If assets total more than \$5,000, income from the assets is "imputed" and the greater of actual asset income and imputed asset income is counted in annual income. (See "imputed asset income" below.)

Ceiling Rent: Maximum rent allowed for some units in public housing projects.

Certification: The examination of a household's income, expenses, and family composition to determine the family's eligibility for program participation and to calculate the family's share of rent.

Child: For purposes of citizenship regulations, a member of the family other than the family head or spouse who is under 18 years of age. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Child Care Expenses: Amounts anticipated to be paid by the family for the care of children under 13 years of age during the period for which annual income is computed, but only where such care is necessary to enable a family member to actively seek employment, be gainfully employed, or to further his or her education and only to the extent such amounts are not reimbursed. The amount deducted shall reflect reasonable charges for childcare. In the case of childcare necessary to permit employment, the amount deducted shall not exceed the amount of employment income that is included in annual income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Citizen: A citizen or national of the United States. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Consent Form: Any consent form approved by HUD to be signed by assistance applicants and participants for the purpose of obtaining income information from employers and SWICAs, return information from the Social Security Administration, and return information for unearned income from the Internal Revenue Service. The consent forms may authorize the collection of other information from assistance applicants or participant to determine eligibility or level of benefits. (24 CFR 5.214)

Decent, Safe, and Sanitary: Housing is decent, safe, and sanitary if it satisfies the applicable housing quality standards.

Department: The Department of Housing and Urban Development. (24 CFR. 5.100).60

Dependent: A member of the family (except foster children and foster adults), other than the family head or spouse, who is under 18 years of age or is a person with a disability or is a full-time student. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Dependent Allowance: An amount, equal to \$480 multiplied by the number of dependents, that is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

Disability Assistance Expenses: Reasonable expenses that are anticipated, during the period for which annual income is computed, for attendant care and auxiliary apparatus for a disabled family member and that are necessary to enable a family member (including the disabled member) to be employed, provided that the expenses are neither paid to a member of the family nor reimbursed by an outside source. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Disability Assistance Expense Allowance: In determining adjusted annual income, the amount of disability assistance expenses deducted from annual income for families with a disabled household member.

Disabled Family: A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities; two or more persons with disabilities living together; or one or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403(b)) (Also see "person with disabilities.")

Disabled Person: See "person with disabilities."

Displaced Family: A family in which each member, or whose sole member, is a person displaced by governmental action (such as urban renewal), or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

Displaced Person: A person displaced by governmental action or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws. [1937 Act]

Drug-Related Criminal Activity: Drug trafficking or the illegal use, or possession for personal use, of a controlled substance as defined in Section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802).

Elderly Family: A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 62 years of age; two or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living together; or one or more persons who are at least 62 years of age living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403)

Elderly Family Allowance: For elderly families, an allowance of \$400 is deducted from the household's annual income in determining adjusted annual income.

Elderly Person: A person who is at least 62 years of age. (1937 Housing Act).

Extremely low-income families: Those families whose incomes do not exceed 30% of the median income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

Fair Housing Act: Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.). (24 CFR 5.100)

Family includes but is not limited to the following, regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status (24 CFR 5.403):

- A. A family with or without children;
- B. An elderly family;
- C. A near-elderly family;
- D. A disabled family;
- E. A displaced family;
- F. The remaining member of a tenant family; and
- G. A single person who is not an elderly or displaced person, a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (24 CFR 5.403)

Family Members: All members of the household other than live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All family members permanently reside in the unit, though they may be temporarily absent. All family members are listed on the lease.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS Program): The program established by a housing commission to promote self-sufficiency among participating families, including the coordination of supportive services. (24 CFR 984.103(b))

Flat Rent: A rent amount the family may choose to pay in lieu of having their rent determined under the formula method. The flat rent is established by the housing commission set at the lesser of the market value for the unit or the cost to operate the unit. Families selecting the flat rent option have their income evaluated once every three years, rather than annually.

Formula Method: A means of calculating a family's rent based on 10% of their monthly income, 30% of their adjusted monthly income, the welfare rent, or the minimum rent. Under the formula method, rents may be capped by a ceiling rent. Under this method, the family's income is evaluated at least annually.

Full-Time Student: A person who is carrying a subject load that is considered full-time for day students under the standards and practices of the educational institution attended. An educational institution includes a vocational school with a diploma or certificate program, as well as an institution offering a college degree. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Guest: Means a person temporarily staying in the unit with the consent of a tenant or other member of the household who has express or implied authority to so consent on behalf of the tenant (24 CFR 5.100)

Head of Household: The adult member of the family who is the head of the household for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Household Members: All members of the household including members of the family, live-in aides, foster children, and foster adults. All household members are listed on the lease, and no one other than household members are listed on the lease.

Housing Assistance Plan: A housing plan that is submitted by a unit of general local Government and approved by HUD as being acceptable under the standards of 24 CFR 570.

Imputed Income: For households with net family assets of more than \$5,000, the Amount calculated by multiplying net family assets by a HUD-specified percentage. If imputed income is more than actual income from assets, the imputed amount is used as income from assets in determining annual income.

In-Kind Payments: Contributions other than cash made to the family or to a family member in exchange for services provided or for the general support of the family (e.g., groceries provided on a weekly basis, baby sitting provided on a regular basis).

Interim (examination): A reexamination of a family income, expenses, and household composition conducted between the regular annual recertifications when a change in a household's circumstances warrant such a reexamination.

Live-In Aide: A person who resides with one or more elderly persons, near-elderly persons, or persons with disabilities and who:

- A. Is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons;
- B. Is not obligated for the support of the persons; and
- C. Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

Low-Income Families: Those families whose incomes do not exceed 80% of the median income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 80% of the median for the area on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of prevailing levels of construction costs or unusually high or low family incomes. (1937Act).63

Medical Expenses: Medical expenses (of all family members of an elderly or disabled family), including medical insurance premiums, that are anticipated during the period for which annual income is computed and that are not covered by insurance. (24 CFR 5.603(d)). These expenses include, but are not limited to; prescription and non-prescription drugs, costs for doctors, dentists, therapists, medical facilities, care for a service animals, transportation for medical purposes.

Mixed Family: A family whose members include those with citizenship or eligible Immigration status and those without citizenship or eligible immigration status. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Monthly Adjusted Income: One twelfth of adjusted income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Monthly Income: One twelfth of annual income. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

National: A person who owes permanent allegiance to the United States, for example, as

a result of birth in a United States territory or possession. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Near-Elderly Family: A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62; two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of Age but below the age of 62, living together; or one or more persons who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62 living with one or more live-in aides. (24 CFR 5.403(b))

Net Family Assets:

A. Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and excluding equity accounts in HUD homeownership programs. The value of necessary items of personal property such as furniture and automobiles shall be excluded.

B. In cases where a trust fund has been established and the trust is not revocable by, or under the control of, any member of the family or household, the value of the trust fund will not be considered an asset so long as the fund continues to be held in trust. Any income distributed from the trust fund shall be counted when determining annual income.

C. In determining net family assets, housing authorities or owners, as applicable, shall include the value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value (including a disposition in trust, but not in a foreclosure or bankruptcy sale) during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or reexamination, as applicable, in excess of the consideration received therefor. In the case of a disposition as part of a separation or divorce settlement, the disposition will not be considered to be for less than fair market value if the applicant or tenant receives important consideration not measurable in dollar terms. (24 CFR 5.603(d)).64

Non-Citizen: A person who is neither a citizen nor national of the United States. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Occupancy Standards: The standards that a housing commission establishes for determining the appropriate number of bedrooms needed to house families of different sizes or composition.

Person with Disabilities: A person who:

A. Has a disability as defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act, which states: "Inability to engage in any substantial, gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months, or

In the case of an individual who attained the age of 55 and is blind and unable by reason of such blindness to engage in substantial, gainful activity requiring skills or ability comparable to those of any gainful activity in which he has previously engaged with some regularity and over a substantial period of time."

B. Is determined, pursuant to regulations issued by the Secretary, to have a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that:

1. Is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration;
2. Substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently; and

3. Is of such a nature that such ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions, or

C. Has a developmental disability as defined in Section 102(7) of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, which states:

"Severe chronic disability that:

1. Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments;
2. Is manifested before the person attains age 22;
3. Is likely to continue indefinitely;.65
4. Results in substantial functional limitation in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: (1) self care, (2) receptive and responsive language, (3) learning, (4) mobility, (e) self-direction, (6) capacity for independent living, and (7) economic self-sufficiency; and
5. Reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic care, treatment, or other services that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated."

This definition does not exclude persons who have the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any conditions arising from the etiologic agent for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. (1937 Act)

No individual shall be considered to be a person with disabilities for purposes of Eligibility solely based on any drug or alcohol dependence.

Proration of Assistance: The reduction in a family's housing assistance payment to reflect the proportion of family members in a mixed family who are eligible for assistance. (24 CFR5.520)

Public Housing Agency (PHA): Any State, county, municipality, or other governmental Entity or public body (or agency or instrumentality thereof), which is authorized to engage in or assist in the development or operation of low-income housing under the 1937 Housing Act. (24 CFR 5.100)

Recertification: The annual reexamination of a family's income, expenses, and composition to determine the family's rent.

Remaining Member of a Tenant Family: A member of the family listed on the lease Who continues to live in the public housing dwelling after all other family members have left. (Handbook 7565.1 REV-2, 3-5b.)

Self-Declaration: A type of verification statement by the tenant as to the amount and source of income, expenses, or family composition. Self-declaration is acceptable verification only when third-party verification or documentation cannot be obtained.

Shelter Allowance: That portion of a welfare benefit (e.g., TANF) that the welfare Agency designates to be used for rent and utilities.

Single Person: Someone living alone or intending to live alone who does not qualify as an elderly family, a person with disabilities, a displaced person, or the remaining member of a tenant family. (Public Housing: Handbook 7465.1 REV-2, 3-5).66

State Wage Information Collection Agency (SWICA): The State agency receiving

Quarterly wage reports from employers in the State or an alternative system that has been determined by the Secretary of Labor to be as effective and timely in providing employment-related income and eligibility information. (24 CFR 5.214)

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF): The program that replaced the Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) that provides financial assistance to needy families who meet program eligibility criteria. Benefits are limited to a specified time period.

Tenant: The person or family renting or occupying an assisted dwelling unit. (24 CFR 5.504(b))

Tenant Rent: The amount payable monthly by the family as rent to the housing Commission, where all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing commission or owner, tenant rent equals total tenant payment. Where some or all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the housing Commission and the cost thereof is not included in the amount paid as rent, tenant rent equals total tenant payment less the utility allowance. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Third-Party (verification): Written or oral confirmation of a family's income, expenses, Or household composition provided by a source outside the household.

Total Tenant Payment (TTP):

A. Total tenant payment for families whose initial lease is effective on or after August 1, 1982:

1. Total tenant payment is the amount calculated under Section 3(a)(1) of the 1937 Act, which is the higher of:

- a. 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income;
- b. 10% of the family's monthly income; or
- c. If the family is receiving payments for welfare assistance from a public agency and a part of such payments, adjusted in accordance with the family's actual housing costs, is specifically designated by such agency to meet the family's housing costs, the portion of such payments, which are so designated.

If the family's welfare assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under section 3(a)(1) shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage.

2. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing does not include charges for excess utility consumption or other miscellaneous charges.

B. Total tenant payment for families residing in public housing whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982: Paragraphs (b) and (c) of 24 CFR 913.107, as it existed immediately before November 18, 1996), will continue to govern the total tenant payment of families, under a public housing program, whose initial lease was effective before August 1, 1982.

Utility Allowance: If the cost of utilities (except telephone) and other housing services for an assisted unit is not included in the tenant rent but is the responsibility of the family occupying the unit, an amount equal to the estimate made by a housing commission of the monthly cost of a reasonable consumption of such utilities and other services for the unit by an energy-conservative household of modest circumstances consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment. (24 CFR 5.603)

Utility Reimbursement: The amount, if any, by which the utility allowance for the unit, if applicable, exceeds the total tenant payment for the 'family occupying the unit. (24 CFR 5.603)

Very Low-Income Families: Low-income families whose incomes do not exceed 50% of the median family income for the area, as determined by the Secretary with adjustments for smaller and larger families, except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 50% of the median for the areas on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes. Such ceilings shall be established in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture for any rural area, as defined in Section 520 of the Housing Act of 1949, taking into account the subsidy characteristics and types of programs to which such ceilings apply. (1937 Act)

Welfare Assistance: Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, that are made under programs funded by Federal, State or local governments. (24 CFR 5.603(d))

Welfare Rent: In "as-paid" welfare programs, the amount of the welfare benefit designated for shelter and utilities

ACRONYMS

ACC	Annual Contributions Contract
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FSS	Family Self Sufficiency (program)
HCDA	Housing and Community Development Act
HQS	Housing Quality Standards
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
INS	(U.S.) Immigration and Naturalization Service
NAHA	(Cranston-Gonzalez) National Affordable Housing Act
NOFA	Notice of Funding Availability
OMB	(U.S.) Office of Management and Budget
PHA	Public Housing Agency
QHWR	Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998
SSA	Social Security Administration
TTP	Total Tenant Payment