

PHA Plan Elements (24 CFR 903.7)

For the Agency Plan submitted in 2024

1. Statement of Housing Needs and Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs.

Our strategy and goals for addressing our housing needs include expanding the supply of assisted housing by increasing the PHA’s inventory of locally owned properties, and increasing the number of Housing Choice Voucher families served, improving the quality of assisted housing by maintaining a score of 80 or better on SEMAP, increase assisted housing choices by attracting potential voucher landlords, working with HCV residents to secure more homeownership opportunities, improve community quality of life and economic vitality through above baseline security protection and building improvements that provide more security to residents, promote self-sufficiency through educational programs and partnering with local agencies, and ensuring equal opportunity and affirmatively furthering fair housing by performing outreach efforts to attract applicants of all classes for housing assistance.

2. Eligibility, Selection and Admission Policies, including Deconcentration and Wait List Procedures:

The PHA verifies eligibility for admission to Housing Choice Voucher when a voucher is pending. To determine eligibility, the housing authority uses several non-income screening factors including the applicant’s criminal or drug-related activity, and HCV housing record for outstanding balances owed to the program. For HCV applicants the housing authority does NOT check rental history, housekeeping history, or credit history since that is the responsibility of the HCV landlord to determine if the applicant meets their own screening eligibility. The housing authority requests criminal records from local law enforcement agencies or a third-party vendor with a custom housing software and accesses FBI criminal records as needed.

For the HCV program the housing authority maintains the waiting list based on all applicants for HCV with no merging with any other lists. Interested people in HCV assistance can apply at the main office of the housing authority or on-line.

Under the HCV program applicants are given preferences if they have been displaced by governmental action or a natural disaster. With all other factors being equal, applicant families will be selected based on the date and time of their application.

3. Homeownership Programs. The PHA does have a homeownership program through the HCV program, and we currently have one family participating now.

4. Financial Resources:

Estimated as of

Financial Resources Planned Sources and Uses

Sources	Planned \$	Planned Uses
1. Federal Grants current year		
a) Public Housing Operating Fund	N/A	
b) Public Housing Capital Fund	N/A	
c) Annual Contributions for Section 8-HCV Program	\$4,137,253	Section 8 HAP & UAP-Proration of 96%
d) Public Housing Operating Fund	N/A	
2. Prior Year Federal Grants		
3. Public Housing Dwelling Rent	N/A	
4. Other Income		
a) Interest Income	\$19,355	HCV Interest Income

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b) Other Income	\$14,934	
5. Non-federal sources	\$0	
Total Resources	\$4,171,542	

5. Rent Determinations:

The housing authority has adopted a minimum rent of \$50 for the HCV programs. The housing authority has also adopted a discretionary minimum rent hardship exemption Policy. The exemptions to the minimum rent requirement include the following: (1) If the family has lost eligibility or is awaiting an eligibility determination for a federal, state, or local assistance program, (2) the family would be evicted as a result of the imposition of the minimum rent requirement, (3) the income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including loss of employment, (4) a death in the family has occurred, or (5) other circumstances determined by the PHA or HUD. An exemption may not be provided if the hardship is determined temporary. The PHA can request reasonable documentation of the hardship circumstances.

Under the HCV program the housing authority's payment standard is set between 90% and 110% of the FMR. Payment standards are reevaluated annually. In determining the adequacy of our payment standard, the PHA will consider the success rates of assisted families and the rent burdens of assisted families.

The HCV admin plan contains detailed information about this area and these policies are available for copying and review.

6. Operation and Management:

The housing authority has a complete organization chart that shows all employees and their asset management project assignments or the programs to which they are assigned. That chart is available upon request.

As of this annual plan filing the housing authority has 721 Housing Choice Vouchers. Depending upon full funding and limited to that funding amount. We also have a number of management and maintenance policies. They include the following: Blood Borne Disease Policy, Capitalization Policy, Check signing Policy, Facilities use Policy, COVID-19 Vaccination, Criminal Records Management Policy, Disposition Policy, Drug Free Policy, Equal Housing Opportunity Policy, Ethics Policy, Fraud Policy, Fund Transfer Policy, Hazardous Material Policy, Investment Policy, Maintenance Policy (Including Pest Control/Extermination), Natural Disaster Policy, Natural Disaster Management Policy, Procurement Policy, Personnel Policy, Policy on Drugs and Alcohol, Security Operation Plan Policy, Uniform Travel Policy, VAWA Policy, An emergency transfer plan under VAWA, Grievance Procedures, and an HCV Administrative Policy. Any of these policies are available for copying or review.

7. Grievance Procedures:

The housing authority has established written grievance procedures in accordance with federal requirements which require an informal hearing procedure for families assisted by HCV in accordance with 24 CFR 982.

These grievance procedures are available for review and copying at the PHA main administrative offices located at 825 Mayo St., Americus, GA.

8. Designated Housing for Elderly and Disabled Families:

The housing authority has not designated or plans to designate any elderly or disabled families above or beyond those designations that we made when the units were originally built.

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9. Self-Sufficiency:

The self-sufficiency program operated is the HCV family self-sufficiency program. We currently have been awarded an FSS Grant to administer during FY 2024. It is our plan to hire an FSS Coordinator to administer all activities of the program.

10. Safety and Crime Prevention:

The housing authority has a Security Operations Plan which includes a Housing Authority Police Patrol program, cooperation with local law enforcement for the purpose of exchange of information about crime associated with HCV Participants. We do this to help assure people on our waiting lists that the crime levels are not necessarily as perceived. We also maintain data of actual levels of violent and/or drug-related crime in order to step up the presence of law enforcement when needed to reduce the amount of crime in an area. In FY 2023, we surveyed our properties to ensure that we have sufficient lighting in all of our properties. As a result of this survey, we installed additional lighting in all of our properties. Furthermore, we have worked in conjunction with the Americus Police Department to install Security Camera at all of our properties.

11. Pets:

The participating landlord's lease agreement with the voucher holder will determine whether pets are allowed.

12. Civil Rights Certification:

The housing authority regularly examines its programs and proposed programs to identify any impediments to fair housing choice within those programs. We make every effort to address any impediments in a reasonable fashion in view of the available resources and work with the local jurisdiction to implement any of the jurisdiction's initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing. The housing authority makes every effort possible to assure that the annual plan is consistent with any applicable Consolidated Plan for our jurisdiction.

13. Fiscal Year Audit:

Our fiscal year audit for FYE 9/30/2023 has been completed and is available for review. The audit did not contain any findings.

14. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA):

The Housing Authority has adopted a VAWA Policy that covers RAD and HCV Programs. All residents of RAD, participants of HCV and HCV landlords have been notified of the VAWA provisions and the PHAs Policy. Lease addendums have been completed for all RAD Residents. The Housing Authority will continue to work with local law enforcement to identify residents that are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and direct them to assistance centers. We plan to also work with the Southwestern Judicial Circuit Family Violence Council to better combat domestic violence. We have also adopted an emergency transfer policy under the VAWA.

15. Substantial Deviation and Significant Amendment/Modification definitions.

- (a) A change to a development account number on the capital fund program in excess of the greater of 10% of the total grant amount or \$100,000, whichever is greater.
- (b) A change in the selection preferences for admission to the HCV program.

As part of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), the Housing Authority of the City of Americus is redefining the definition of a substantial deviation from the PHA Plan to exclude the following RAD-Specific items.

- a. The decision to convert to either Project Based Rental Assistance or Project Based Voucher Assistance.
- b. Changes to the Capital Fund Budget produced as a result of each approved RAD Conversion, regardless of whether the proposed conversion will include use of additional Capital Funds.

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c. Changes to the construction and rehabilitation plan for each approved RAD conversion; and
Changes to the financing structure for each approved RAD conversion

16. HOTMA compliance related to the HVC Program will be effective no later than January 1, 2025.

General Comment: The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Americus have reviewed the CEO's salary and determined that it is reasonable and no employee's salary from Section 8 or Section 9 Funds exceeds the limit as established by Congress.