

Lake County, CA Emergency Housing Voucher Program (Housing and Urban Development)

The Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV's), are part of a nationwide push being made under the American Rescue Plan as part of continued COVID-19 response efforts by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, fleeing or attempting to flee violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, or were recently homeless and have a high risk of housing instability.

The EHV Program is a rental subsidy program for people who need permanent housing assistance. The program **does not** provide funding for motels or other temporary or interim forms of assistance. Housing vouchers are subsidies, paid directly to the landlord on behalf of participating households. Households then pay the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program.

The Lake County Continuum of Care, also known as the CoC, is a local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless individuals and families within a defined region. The Lake County CoC serves the entire Lake County area.

CoC participating agencies will be conducting eligibility determinations through it's Coordinated Entry System and rely on an approved prioritization process to pass referrals forwards based on the four categories of HUD program eligibility, household's vulnerability, and income level/capabilities in order to meet the tenant's rental payment responsibility on an ongoing basis.

The Coordinated Entry System is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access to services and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.

How the Emergency Housing Vouchers work

To receive an EHV, an individual or household must be (1) eligible for this particular resource; (2) prioritized by the Lake County CoC's Coordinated Entry process and further referred to the Housing Authority; and (3) accepted by the Housing Authority.

1. Eligibility

Households (which are defined as either single persons and/or households of more than one) in Lake County will be eligible to apply for the EHV program under four categories including:

- Households determined to be Homeless per the HUD definition of Homelessness
- [HUD Homeless Definition](#)
- Households determined to be 'At-Risk' of Homeless as determined by the HUD definition of At-Risk of Homelessness
- [HUD At-Risk of Homeless Definition](#)
- Households fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking
- [HUD Domestic Violence and Homelessness](#)
- Households who have recently been homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent a high risk of housing instability and/or will prevent their return to homelessness. This category applies to households currently residing in and receiving assistance through funded Rapid ReHousing or Permanent Supportive Housing programs

2. Disqualification:

Households who fall under any of the above eligibility categories will nevertheless be ineligible for an EHV if:

- Any household member has been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of a federally assisted housing unit **OR**
- Any family member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program

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3. Voucher Prioritization and Referral

The EHV program operates differently than the standard Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program in that Households will be referred to the Public Housing Authority through the Lake County, CA Coordinated Entry System. [The Housing Authority will maintain no waitlist for the EHV program.](#)

The Lake County CoC will partner with the Housing Authority to provide referred households housing navigation and pre-inspection services, as well as ongoing supports for the voucher program. The CoC will be conducting a set of Coordinated Entry System processes and rely on an approved prioritization process and matching to make referrals of eligible households based on need, vulnerability, and client preferences.

To be considered for prioritization and referral to the Housing Authority, individuals (Households) will complete a series of assessments at regional Coordinated Entry Access Points located in Lake County, CA. Applicants who meet core eligibility requirements but may be unable to present at a CES Access Point will have a referral appointment conducted by staff at Lake County Behavioral Health Services at this number 707 274-9101, x 26227, Monday through Friday between 9 am and 4 pm.

Interviews and Assessments will take approximately one hour to assure the household qualifies and gather information necessary to prioritize referral applicants. Lake County, CA is in receipt of 40 EHV's, so prioritization and unit matching will be conducted in phases. Eligibility determinations and referrals to the CoC, Coordinated Entry System will be conducted by Access Point members of the Lake County Continuum of Care and each referral must be accompanied by a certified Housing Navigator Agency offering those services within Lake County.

3. Application Process:

Households that are referred to the Housing Authority by the CoC's Coordinated Entry process will then complete the Housing Authority's application process and will receive a voucher after their application is approved.

Housing Documentation: Two forms of ID for each household member. Birth certificate, social security card, CA identification or driver license are acceptable forms. Assistance to retrieve these documents is available at the [Lake County Department of Social Services](#) if the referral applicant has a case.

FAQ's:

How long will it be before I know anything?

The local rollout of the EHV program has been designed to provide timely communication at various stages of the referral process. In general, if your household does not meet basic eligibility requirements, you will be notified at the Access Point. Once the EHV Referral Assessment has been completed, you can expect to be contacted by Lake County Behavioral Health to complete a Coordinated Entry Assessment within five business days of your referral request.

The Continuum of Care will be making first round prioritization decisions in mid-October and your assigned Housing Navigator will notify you in or around that time if your referral has been prioritized for further consideration via the Lake County Housing Authority. At that point, a representative of the Housing Authority will be in contact with the referred Household if the referral has been forwarded.

What is the HMIS?

The HMIS is a secure cloud-based information technology system used to collect client-level information on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. The platform is HIPAA compliant and all Lake County HMIS Users are fully certified with Client Security and Privacy Training prior to obtaining login credentials. The EHV Prioritization list is maintained within the CoC's HMIS and based on information Referral Clients provide during the assessment process.

Other Additional:

The Emergency Housing Voucher program has publicized a set of more in depth FAQ's you may access here: [EHV FAQ's](#)
[Difference between EHV and Housing Choice Vouchers](#)