



Saint Paul Public Housing Agency's Project Based Voucher Rental Assistance Program Guide

The PHA is offering up to 100 Project Based Vouchers through Minnesota Housing's 2024 Multifamily Consolidated Request For Proposals, with an additional 50 Project Based Vouchers specifically for special **populations and circumstances** noted below:

- Homeless families as defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Veterans, as defined by the PHA
- Units that offer supportive housing to persons with disabilities or elderly persons, as defined by the PHA
- Units that are located in a census tract with a poverty rate of 20 percent or less

The PBV **application** includes materials for the following categories:

- Mixed Income Affordable Housing
- Affordable Housing for the Elderly
- Supportive Housing for the Homeless
- Family Unification Program
- Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)

Developers interested in applying for vouchers specifically for special populations or circumstances should note these clearly in their application materials.

Program Overview

The Saint Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA) is offering federal rent subsidies under its Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 Project Based Voucher (PBV) Rental Assistance Program. As in years past, the PHA is offering these through Minnesota Housing's Consolidated Request for Proposals.

Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) are vouchers from the regular tenant-based Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, which the PHA dedicates to specific units in a project. Eligible families receive rental assistance by agreeing to live in the existing, newly constructed, or rehabilitated units, and they continue to receive assistance if they reside in the specific project based dwelling unit. The PBV remains with the original unit, and the PHA administers these PBVs for any project that is within the City of Saint Paul.

The goals and objectives of the program are to contribute to the upgrading and long-term viability of the city's housing stock; increase the supply of affordable housing and locational choice for very low income households; integrate housing and supportive services to help families and individuals achieve stability and self-reliance; promote the coordination and leveraging of resources of public, semi-public, or non-profit agencies with compatible missions; support the City of Saint Paul's affordable housing goals; and assist the State of Minnesota, Ramsey County, and City of Saint Paul with their plans to end homelessness by providing rental subsidies to supportive housing and other projects designed to house persons experiencing homelessness.

Almost any type of newly constructed or existing structure may be used for PBV, though new construction projects could be eligible for more points, as explained lower. Up to 25 percent of the units in a building, or 25 units in a building (whichever is greater) can be assisted under the PBV program, except for buildings for elderly households or those households where supportive services are available, which can be up to 100% PBV assisted. Additionally, units in projects that are in a census tract with a poverty rate of 20 percent or less are subject to a higher (40%) cap. Each project must apply for a minimum of ten (10) project based vouchers per project. The minimum of ten (10) project based vouchers per project can be a mix of different project based voucher programs. Extra points are awarded for projects that use the PBV to create non-PBV affordable housing within the project. Owners must be willing to enter a *Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract* with the PHA for up to twenty years.

Application Process

The PHA is accepting all applications through the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing). Visit [Minnesota Housing](#) to find the 2024 Multifamily Consolidated RFP information and how to apply through the Multifamily Customer Portal. Select the "2024 Saint Paul PHA PBV

Application” to create the application checklist. For information on Project Based Vouchers, contact Corina Serrano, PHA HCV Programs Director, at corina.serrano@stpha.org. For information or technical assistance regarding Minnesota Housing’s website or the Multifamily Customer Portal, email mhfa.app@state.mn.us. Applications are due **July 11, 2024**, at which time the Portal will be closed for submissions.

Project Criteria

Eligible Projects

Almost any type of newly constructed or existing structures, including single family housing and multifamily structures may be used for PBV. For the proposed project to qualify as rehabilitation under PBV program, existing structures must require a minimum expenditure of \$3,000 per assisted unit, including the unit’s prorated share of work to be accomplished on common areas or systems. Units must meet Housing Quality Standards as specified in *24 CFR Section 982.401*. Please note, that as of October 1, 2024 the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) will replace HQS. Units must meet NSIPRE guidelines after October 1, 2024 as explained in PIH Notice 2023-28. Both new construction and rehabilitation sites must meet site and neighborhood standards as specified in *24 CFR Section 983.57*, and the Environmental Review requirements in *24 CFR Section 983.58*. Construction work is subject to Section 3 requirements in *24 CFR Section 135*. Additionally, projects are subject to pre-inspections as referenced in *24 CFR Section 983.103* and units must also comply with housing accessibility for persons with disabilities as noted in *24 CFR Section 983.102*.

Up to 25 percent of the units in a building, or 25 units in a building (whichever is greater) can be assisted under the PBV program, except for buildings for elderly, disabled households, or those households where supportive services are available, which can be up to 100% PBV assisted. Typically, this will mean that mixed-income projects, as defined by below, will have the required cap. Projects meeting the criteria for elderly, disabled, supportive services, and VASH will typically not be operating under this cap if they meet the criteria noted below.

Vacancies

Vacancies in PBV units must be filled by eligible families currently on the PHA Housing Choice Voucher waiting list. For supportive housing PBV units, the PHA may accept applicant referrals from the supportive housing manager or administrator, who must be working with Coordinated Entry to refer units to eligible homeless families. If the referred applicant meets Housing Choice Voucher eligibility requirements, the PHA will approve the person or family to live in the PBV unit. VASH PBV units will be filled by veterans experiencing homelessness, in partnership with the local Veteran Affairs Medical Center.

Selection Criteria

Proposals for PBVs will be reviewed in accordance with the selection policy requirements as set forth under *24 CFR Part 983 Section 8 Project-Based Voucher Program*, and in accordance with the PHA Board-approved proposal review criteria below. The financial feasibility of a proposal will be determined by the Minnesota Housing review process but cannot include consideration that the project will get PBV assistance. After Minnesota Housing has completed their review, the PHA will rank the projects according to the criteria below. If a project applies for PBV only (with no separate review needed by Minnesota Housing), that application will be passed along to the PHA for review along with any other applications. Any recommendations will then go to the PHA Board of Commissioners for approval to project base the Section 8 assistance in the development. Contingent upon formal PHA Board and HUD approval, and compliance with all project based regulations, PHA will offer the owner or developer the opportunity for an *Agreement to Enter into a Housing Assistance Contract (or Housing Assistance Payments Contract)* and subsequently issue authorization to proceed with construction or rehabilitation project.

Proposal Review Criteria

100 Points Total (per category)

Selection Criteria

All applicants must apply for Project Based Vouchers through Minnesota Housing's Consolidated RFP. If a project has applied for separate funding through Minnesota Housing, they must receive a portion of that funding to be considered for Project-Based-Vouchers.

All remaining projects will then be evaluated under the General Criteria for All Projects (30 Points). The applicant will select which of the remaining four categories they wish to be evaluated under (70 Points), depending on what has been made available in the Consolidated RFP (Mixed Income, Affordable Housing for the Elderly, Supportive Housing for Persons Experiencing Homeless, Family Unification Program (FUP), VASH).

- a. **General Criteria for All Projects (30 Points Maximum):** All projects submitted for consideration will be evaluated under these three criteria.
 - i. Prior extensive experience of the applicant in developing and managing similar residential housing with project-based voucher subsidies and demonstrated ability and capacity of the applicant to proceed expeditiously with the proposal. Prior experience with the PHA's PBV program will also be considered, including occupancy rates and compliance with PHA policies and procedures. 15 Points.
 - ii. Leveraging: Extent to which PBV voucher proposal is created in a project that has additional affordable housing beyond what is provided by the PBV units. 15 Points.
 - iii. Minimum Size: In order to be considered eligible for Project-Based Vouchers, any project must apply for at least ten (10) units for Project-Based assistance, or all units in the project, whichever is less.
- b. **Mixed-Income Affordable Housing:** Projects that are applying for Project-Based Vouchers with the intent of creating mixed-income or mixed-finance projects will be selected in accordance with the following additional criteria. (70 Point Maximum.)
 - i. A project that is New Construction at the time of application. 35 points
 - ii. A project that is in a low-poverty census tract, which is defined as "one where the poverty rate is 20% or less, as defined by the most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. (A project that qualifies for this exception at the time of the HAP Contract Execution continues to qualify for the exception for the length of the contract, regardless of future changes in the poverty rate.) 35 points.

- c. **Affordable Housing for the Elderly:** Projects that are applying for Project-Based Vouchers with the intent of creating affordable housing units specifically designed to house elderly families. (70 Point Maximum.)
- i. A project that is New Construction at the time of application. 30 points
 - ii. A project that is in a low-poverty census tract, which is defined as “one where the poverty rate is 20% or less, as defined by the most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. (A project that qualifies for this exception at the time of the HAP Contract Execution continues to qualify for the exception for the length of the contract, regardless of future changes in the poverty rate.) 30 points.
 - iii. Provide (or contract for) supportive services appropriate for the population served. 10 points.
- d. **Supportive Housing for the Homeless:** Projects that are applying for Project Based Vouchers with the intent of creating affordable housing options with supportive services on-site to assist homeless clients will be selected in accordance with the following additional criteria. (70 Point Maximum.)
- i. Requirement for all of the following (45 points):
 1. Serve homeless individuals and families, as defined in Minnesota Housing’s Consolidated RFP. 15 points.
 2. Provide (or contract for) on-site supportive services appropriate for population served. 15 points.
 3. Process referrals from Ramsey County’s Coordinated Entry, in accordance with their processes. 15 points.
 - ii. Extra points for the following (25 Point Maximum):
 1. Projects where the PBV units will serve individuals and families who meet the definition of homeless under section (103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act). 15 points.
 2. A project that is New Construction at the time of application. 5 points.
 3. A project that is located in a low-poverty census tract, which is defined as “one where the poverty rate is 20% or less, as defined by the most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. (A project that qualifies for this exception at the time of the HAP Contract Execution continues to qualify for the exception for the length of the contract, regardless of future changes in the poverty rate.) 5 points.

e. **Family Unification Program (FUP):** Projects that are applying for PBV with the intent of creating affordable housing units specifically designed to house families referred by partnering agencies for Family Unification Program vouchers will be selected in accordance with the following additional criteria. (70 Point Maximum.)

i. Requirement for all of the following (45 points):

1. Accept referrals from Ramsey County Child Protection to fill all PBV vacancies. 15 points.
2. Obtain letter of support from Ramsey County Health and Human Services (partner/referring agency for Family FUP vouchers). 15 points.
3. Provide (or contract for) on-site supportive services appropriate for population served. 15 points.

ii. Extra points for the following (25 Point Maximum):

1. PBV units are all 3BR or larger. 15 points.
2. A project that is New Construction at the time of application. 5 points.
3. A project that is located in a low-poverty census tract, as defined in this policy. 5 points.

f. **HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH):** Projects that are applying for PBV with the intent of creating affordable housing units specifically designed to house veterans referred and served by the local VA Office will be selected in accordance with the following additional criteria. (70 Point Maximum.)

i. Requirement for all of the following (40 Points):

1. Obtain letter of support from local VA. 20 points.
2. Accept referrals from VA to fill all vacancies. 10 points.
3. Have supportive services available on-site, as approved and accepted by VA. 10 points.

ii. Extra points for the following (30 Point Maximum):

1. A project that is New Construction at the time of application, as it is defined in the federal regulations. 15 points.
2. A project that is located in a low-poverty census tract, which is defined as "one where the poverty rate is 20% or less, as defined by the most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. (A project that

qualifies for this exception at the time of the HAP Contract Execution continues to qualify for the exception for the length of the contract, regardless of future changes in the poverty rate.) 15 points.