

The Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale
Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual
Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

The Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale (HACFL) is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),¹ the HACFL allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The ability of the HACFL to honor such request for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether the HACFL has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal agency that oversees that the **Housing Choice Voucher Program** is in compliance with VAWA.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if: the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify the HACFL's management office and submit a written request for a transfer to **the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale, 500 West Sunrise Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311**. The HACFL will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under the HACFLs program; OR

2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

The HACFL will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives the HACFL written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Tenants for more information about The HACFL's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

The HACFL cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. The HACFL will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. The HACFL may be unable to

transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If the HACFL has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency is eligible, The HACFL will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, the HACFL will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

Tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

Attachment: Local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

VAWA Organizations In Broward County

Women in Distress

Of Broward County, INC.
 Jim & Jan Moran Family Center
 P.O. Box 50187
 Lighthouse Point, FL 33074

Email: info@womenindistress.org
 Phone: [954-760-9800](tel:954-760-9800)
 Fax: [954-832-9487](tel:954-832-9487)
 TTY/TDD: [954-527-5385](tel:954-527-5385)

The only nationally accredited, state-certified, full service domestic violence center serving Broward County. They offer 24-hour crisis intervention through their 24-Hour Crisis Hotline and emergency shelter, as well as counseling and support for victims and their children. They also provide education and professional trainings on domestic violence and related topics in Broward County schools and in the community.

Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV)

Website: www.fcadv.org
Phone: [1-800-500-1119](tel:1-800-500-1119) / 24 hours a day

FCADV serves as the professional association for Florida's 42 domestic violence centers. The mission of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence is to work towards ending violence through public awareness, policy development, and support for Florida's domestic violence centers. FCADV operates Florida's toll-free domestic violence hotline (1-800-500-1119), linking callers to the nearest domestic violence center and provides translation assistance when needed.

Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida

Website: www.coasttocoastlegalaid.org
Phone: [954-736-2400](tel:954-736-2400) / 9:00am - 5:00 pm

Coast-to-Coast Legal Aid of South Florida is a non-profit law firm established in 2003 and funded in part, by the Legal Services Corporation. Their Mission is to improve the lives of low-income persons in our community through advocacy, education, representation, and empowerment.

General Help:

- 24-Hour Women in Distress of Broward (Shelter) (954) 761-1133
- 24-Hour Crisis Line: Information and Referral (954) 537-0211 or 211
- Abuse Registry (Elderly and Children) (800) 96-ABUSE
- Broward County Legal Aid Service (954) 765-8950
- Broward County Victim / Witness Liaison Office (954) 831-6200
- Bureau of Victim Services (Tallahassee) (800) 226-6667
- Family Court Services (Injunction for Protection) (954) 831-7693
- Gay Lesbian Community Center of South Florida (954) 463-9005

Internal Emergency Transfer

The HACFL will offer to transfer tenants who are or have been a victim of domestic violence to available units within their current site. Should an alternative be required, the HACFL will offer to transfer the tenant to a different site that has available units that meet their needs. This includes tenants of Public Housing, RAD as well as Project Based Housing. If the HACFL is unable to accommodate a unit transfer, the tenant will be given the option of an External Emergency Transfer.

External Emergency Transfer

The HACFL will offer to relocate tenants who are or have been a victim of domestic violence to a unit located in different vicinity. The HACFL will also offer the tenant the option to use the portability feature of the Housing Choice Voucher by submitting their documents to a Housing Authority in the jurisdiction of their choice. In cases where the HACFL does not have a unit to offer under the Internal Emergency Plan, and the tenant cannot wait for the next available unit, the HACFL will allow the tenant to request a Housing Choice Voucher to seek safe subsidy in a different vicinity.

Priority of VAWA Emergency Transfers

The HACFL will view all VAWA emergency transfers as a high priority. Tenants that have requested a transfer under VAWA will be contacted within 24 - 48 hours from the date of their initial request to validate the request and begin the transfer process. Tenants requesting a voucher under VAWA emergency transfer status will be given priority after a tenant requesting a voucher from Project Based subsidy.

Reasonable Efforts of the HACFL

The HACFL will provide any tenant requesting an emergency external transfer with a list of Available Units, Housing Agencies and Resources to aid in their search for safe suitable housing.

To expedite the tenants request the HACFL may:

- Contact PHA's to find out their portability wait time and to see if exceptions are available for expeditious portability moves.
- Encourage the PHA to absorb the tenant into their Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Locate resources in the area the tenant wishes to move into (i.e. Victim Advocates, Counselors, etc.).

HACFL VAWA Log Maintenance

The HACFL will maintain a log of all requested VAWA Emergency Transfers; the log will be accessible to HACFL supervisor personnel only and will be password protected to preserve the anonymity of the tenants listed.