



State of Louisiana
Division of Administration
Office of Community Development
Disaster Recovery Unit

March 2, 2010

Cheryl J. Williams
Office of Public Housing
US Department of Housing and Urban Development
Hale Boggs Federal Building
500 Poydras Street, 9th Floor
New Orleans, LA 70130

Re: Louisiana Housing Authority (LHA) Request for Waiver regarding
Assistance Applicant Submission of Social Security Number (SSN) Prior
to Determination of Admission

Dear Ms. Williams:

This letter requests a waiver so that applicants for LHA's permanent supportive housing (PSH) project-based voucher (PBV) program can be housed where necessary, prior to production of an SSN for each household member otherwise required by 24 CFR 5.216(b). Instead, LHA requests that applicants to its PBV program be subject to the same requirements as applicants to the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy (SRO) program for Homeless Individuals, as provided by 24 CFR 5.216(h)(2) (i.e., that the SSN must be provided to LHA within 90 calendar days from the date of admission into the program, and that LHA shall grant an extension of one additional 90-day period if in its discretion, LHA determines that the applicant's failure to comply was due to circumstances that could not have reasonably been foreseen and are outside the control of the applicant).

Chapter Six of Public Law 110-252, the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2008, appropriated 2,000 PSH PBV units for LHA to use as contemplated by the State of Louisiana's Road Home Program for recovery from the devastation of the 2005 hurricanes. Under this program, LHA is serving the homeless, those at risk of homelessness and persons with severe and long-term disabilities in the areas of Louisiana affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The program is in the lease-up stage; in view of the persons to be served, prompt lease-opt is critical.

The vital records of many of the individuals to be served, such as social security cards and birth certificates, were destroyed by the storms. In some instances, the offices where this information was maintained were destroyed. The target urban population served by the PSH PBV program in many cases has yet to obtain new documentation of social security cards. The average length of time to obtain a social security card in Louisiana is eight weeks. This is

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greatly slowing down the time it takes to house individuals. In all instances, participants have case workers who are working with them to obtain all needed documentation. Thus, LHA could accept individuals into the program with great confidence that the documentation of their social security cards will be obtained.

Elimination of this barrier from admission into the PBV program will enable LHA to move homeless individuals off of the streets and otherwise to provide much-needed housing for disabled storm victims more expeditiously. Please let me know if you have questions or need more information, so that HUD may consider and grant this waiver as promptly as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas Brennan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas Brennan
Executive Director
Louisiana Housing Authority