



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
THE SECRETARY**

November 25, 2025

Dear Public Housing Authorities and Owners:

The Trump administration is taking bold, critical steps to restore law and order in our communities and usher in a golden age for American prosperity. For America to prosper, our citizens must be safe and not in constant fear of being a victim of crime. President Trump is utilizing all available authorities and resources across the Federal government to reduce crime and keep our citizens safe. Here at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), we are taking inventory of our programs to ensure we are doing our part.

HUD, along with Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and private owners of project-based rental assistance, has an obligation to ensure that we are providing decent, safe, and affordable housing to the millions of American families we serve. PHAs and owners must take all steps necessary to meet that obligation, including:

1. Screening for criminal history prior to admission into HUD-assisted housing;
2. Monitoring of assisted households to remove individuals that pose a threat to the safety and peaceful enjoyment of their units; and
3. Deploying resources to ensure the ongoing safety of such properties through physical security features and/or contracted safety services.

Unfortunately, past HUD guidance has created confusion about this obligation and has outright discouraged the use of such tools cited above to ensure the safety of HUD-assisted households.

To correct this, reduce confusion, and help our partners meet their obligations, HUD has rescinded: (1) Notice 2015-19, “Guidance for Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) and Owners of Federally-Assisted Housing on Excluding the Use of Arrest Records in Housing Decisions”; (2) a 2016 memo from HUD’s Office of General Counsel on “Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions”; and (3) a 2022 memo from HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity on “Implementation of the Office of General Counsel’s Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions” on background screening. Together these guidance documents had a chilling effect on the use of some information to screen for suitability for and termination of tenancy. That will no longer be the case.

PHAs and owners are reminded of the mandatory screening requirements and optional screening policies available to them to meet their obligation to provide safe housing. These include:

Mandatory Denial of Admission:

HUD regulations require that prospective individuals must not be admitted to HUD programs if an individual:

- a. has been previously evicted from Federally-assisted housing within the past three years for drug-related criminal activity (24 CFR 960.204(a)(1), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(1)(i));¹
- b. is currently engaged in the illegal use of drugs or if such drug use reasonably would cause a threat to the safety of the individuals living in a property (24 CFR 960.204(a)(2), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(1)(ii)(A)-(B));
- c. has been convicted of producing methamphetamine in Federally-assisted housing (24 CFR 960.204(a)(3), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(1)(ii)(C));
- d. is subject to a lifetime sex offender list (24 CFR 960.204(a)(4), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(2)(i)); or
- e. has a history of alcohol abuse that a responsible entity reasonably believes threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the property (24 CFR 960.204(b), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(2)(ii)(C)(3)).

Permissive Screening for Denial of Assistance

PHAs and owners have broad discretion to screen for suitability of tenancy or program participation for all relevant circumstances, including a history of criminal activity which would adversely affect the health, safety, and peaceful enjoyment of the property (24 CFR 960.203(c), 24 CFR 982.307(a), 24 CFR 982.553(a)(2)(ii)(A)).

Termination of Assistance for Criminal Behavior

PHAs must proactively ensure the safety of the families they serve. This means PHAs should continuously monitor for criminal activity and take steps to immediately act if information is found that could result in a termination of tenancy. PHAs and owners must also establish standards that allow for the termination of assistance for households if individuals within the households:

- a. engage in illegal drug use or have a pattern of drug use that threatens the health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of the property (24 CFR 966.4(l)(5)(i)(B), 24 CFR 982.553(b)(1)(i));
- b. have been convicted of production of methamphetamine in Federally-assisted housing (24 CFR 966.4(l)(5)(i)(A), 24 CFR 982.553(b)(1)(ii));²
- c. are engaging in drug-related criminal activity (24 CFR 966.4(l)(5)(i)(B), 24 CFR 982.553(b)(1)(iii);
- d. are engaged in violent criminal behavior (24 CFR 966.4(l)(5)(ii)(A), 24 CFR 982.553(b)(2)); or
- e. are abusing alcohol (24 CFR 966.4(l)(5)(vi), 24 CFR 982.553(b)(3)).

¹ PHAs and owners have the authority to admit such individuals if the individual has completed a drug rehabilitation program approved by the PHA or the circumstances that caused the eviction no longer exist.

² PHAs must immediately terminate tenancy or assistance for a family if the PHA determines that any member of the household has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.

As noted in Notice PIH 1996-16, "One Strike and You're Out' Screening and Eviction Guidelines for Public Housing Agencies," an essential element of a "One Strike" policy is to strictly enforce these lease provisions against all violators in a fair, uniform manner.

The safety of the families we serve is paramount to establish Federally-assisted housing as a platform for self-sufficiency and economic independence. I strongly recommend that local PHAs review existing policies and take advantage of all available tools to improve safety for communities and residents.

In addition to reviewing and revising your existing policies, all housing authorities and owners should publicly display and advertise for use the HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline: 1-800-347-3735. The Hotline is the primary means to submit allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, illegal aliens, crime, or Whistleblower related matters within HUD and HUD funded programs to the OIG. All residents, staff, and management should also be directed to call 911 or local law enforcement if they are experiencing or have knowledge of health and safety emergency or witnessing an active crime involving gang, drug activity, sex trafficking, illegal aliens, or other violent crimes at HUD properties.

We at HUD stand ready to work and partner with you to make America safe again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Scott Turner", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

E. Scott Turner
Secretary