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Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council
Committees on Housing and Human Services
November 13, 2025

Joint Public Oversight Roundtable:
Housing Without the Holdup: Fixing the District's Voucher Bottleneck

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Introduction

Good morning, Chairpersons White and Frumin, and members of the Committees. My name is Makenna Osborn. I am a Senior Policy Attorney at Children's Law Center and a resident of the District. Children's Law Center believes every child should grow up with a strong foundation of family, health and education and live in a world free from poverty, trauma, racism and other forms of oppression. Our more than 100 staff – together with DC children and families, community partners and pro bono attorneys – use the law to solve children's urgent problems today and improve the systems that will affect their lives tomorrow. Since our founding in 1996, we have reached more than 50,000 children and families directly and multiplied our impact by advocating for city-wide solutions that benefit hundreds of thousands more.

Each year Children's Law Center works with hundreds of families who are trying to provide their children with a stable place to call home.¹ We see firsthand the profound impact housing insecurity can have on a child's health, development, and ability to learn.² For our clients and the nearly 30% of families in the District — an estimated 18,907 families — who are housing insecure, the main barrier to long-term stability is the unaffordability of rent.³ Evidence shows that deep, ongoing rental subsidies, like those provided through the District's long-term voucher program (Local Rent Supplement Program (LRSP)), are a particularly effective tool for helping these families maintain housing.⁴ Local vouchers are an especially important resource for young heads of household who have never even been able to apply for a federally-funded Housing Choice Voucher because DCHA's waitlist for the program has been closed since 2013.⁵ While the Council has recognized the value of long-term vouchers, investing in thousands of new LRSP vouchers in recent years,⁶ administrative delays and inadequate communication throughout the

voucher utilization process force eligible District families to remain in insecure and unsafe housing situations for lengthy periods of time, undermining the efficacy of local vouchers.⁷

Therefore, Children’s Law Center is grateful to the Committees on Housing and Human Services for convening this joint roundtable to discuss persistent barriers to the timely utilization of District-funded housing vouchers. This kind of focused collaboration between the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) and Department of Human Services (DHS), informed by the needs and experiences of the DC families, service providers, and landlords impacted by delays in the voucher utilization process, is necessary to identify “concrete solutions” that will ensure eligible families can successfully and efficiently use vouchers to access stable housing.⁸

To contribute to that work, my testimony today will first provide examples of how the pervasive communication failures and delays in the local voucher administration process are harming District families. Next, I will highlight a few key areas within the voucher administration process that Children’s Law Center recommends the Committees and agencies focus on over the next year to meaningfully improve the experiences and outcomes of households applying for and trying to use local vouchers. Specifically, Children’s Law Center recommends that the Committee establish clear standards and expectations that it will hold DHS and DCHA accountable to for: 1) timely and responsive communication with voucher applicants, voucher recipients, landlords and relevant service providers and 2) comprehensive data collection and reporting to strategically target improvement efforts.

Pervasive Delays and Communication Failures in DHS And DCHA's Voucher Administration Processes are Preventing Eligible Families from Using District Resources to Access Safe and Stable Housing

Children's Law Center regularly works with families who have received —or are eligible to receive— one of the District's locally-funded long-term housing vouchers. LRSP operates in a similar manner to the federal Housing Choice Voucher program by providing ongoing rental subsidies to extremely low-income families via tenant-, project-, and sponsor-based vouchers to cover the difference between what a family can afford (30% of their income) and monthly rent.⁹ Some LRSP vouchers, Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), are also paired with case management and wraparound services to support households.¹⁰ Like the rest of DHS's homelessness prevention programs, LRSP vouchers are separated by those for individuals and families and are commonly referred to as TAH-I and PSH-I for individuals and TAH-F and PSH-F for families. As Children's Law Center primarily serves families with children, our testimony focuses on those specific vouchers, but we recognize that many of the same problems occur in the individual space.

DHS and DCHA share responsibility for administering the District's LRSP vouchers. DHS is responsible for identifying families that are eligible for a local voucher (a process called "matching"), connecting them with appropriate case management services, and overseeing case management providers.¹¹ Before a family can officially receive their voucher and use it to secure a rental unit, DCHA must also approve their eligibility for the voucher based on an application prepared by their case management provider and/or DHS and submitted to DCHA. Once DCHA approves the family's eligibility, they receive their voucher at a briefing with DCHA and can use the voucher to lease a private rental unit with the help of their case manager and approval from

DHS and DCHA.¹² The voucher utilization process ends when a voucher holder and DCHA officially execute a lease and payment contract with the private landlord – known as “lease up” – and the voucher holder moves into the unit.¹³

DHS and DCHA Are Not Meeting the District’s Goals for Timely Voucher Utilization

The District’s current goal is for the local voucher utilization process, measured from assignment to a case manager to lease up, to take no longer than 120 days for any household.¹⁴ While DHS and DCHA have recently made some notable progress decreasing voucher administration timelines,¹⁵ lengthy delays persist and most families are still far from entering stable housing within 120 days of assignment. For families that leased up with a TAH or PSH voucher in Fiscal Year 2024, the average utilization time was 316 days — 10 months and over twice as long as the District’s goal.¹⁶ While DHS and DCHA cannot control every factor that contributes to the time it takes a family to successfully use their voucher, some of the steps squarely within their remit are significant sources of delays. For example, 204 families that were matched to local vouchers funded in Fiscal Years 2022 – 2025, have not even had their voucher application submitted to DCHA yet.¹⁷ That suggests it has taken over a year for DHS and/or their case management providers to help them collect all the required documentation for their application. Also, even though DCHA has stated that their voucher eligibility reviews should be completed within 30 days (a step that should be especially simple for local vouchers as DHS has already done their own eligibility screening) in Fiscal Year 2024, families waited an average of 83 days, almost three months, after submitting their application to receive an eligibility determination.¹⁸

DHS and DCHA Regularly Fail to Maintain Timely, Responsive Communication About Vouchers

Regardless of what is causing delays in the voucher administration process and whether it is within the agencies' control, DHS and DCHA should, at a minimum, provide timely, responsive updates to families and landlords about the status of voucher and Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) applications. Unfortunately, that is often not the case. Children's Law Center regularly works with families who have done their part to collect all the documentation needed for their voucher application as quickly as possible or worked diligently with a landlord to submit an RFTA application only to go weeks without hearing anything from the agencies, even when they or one of our attorneys reach out and request an update. Not only is this poor customer service, but it also compounds the anxious uncertainty many of these families regarding if and when they will be able to move to a better housing situation for their children.

While this problem occurs with both agencies, the lack of responsiveness from DCHA has been particularly frustrating for Children's Law Center staff and clients. In our client representation and housing advocacy work, we have heard similar complaints about DCHA's communication from landlords and understand it is not financially tenable for a private market landlord to hold a unit vacant for over a month while DCHA completes its RFTA process, especially when they cannot get a reliable status update or firm timeline from DCHA.

District Families are Harmed by Delays and Poor Communication in Voucher Administration

In the District, most families are matched to a local voucher from shelter or Rapid Re-Housing (also known as the Family Re-Housing Stabilization Program (FRSP)).¹⁹ That means they have recently experienced or been at risk of homelessness and, for those in Rapid Re-Housing, are likely living in unsafe and unhealthy conditions.²⁰ Every month that these families wait to be

approved for a voucher and utilize it to lease a unit, is a month they are acutely grappling with housing insecurity.

For example, over the past year Children’s Law Center worked with a family that lived in a unit with water damage from an unaddressed leak and a severe rodent infestation that exacerbated their young children’s asthma —as well as a refrigerator and air conditioning that were broken for months without repair— while they waited for over a year to be matched to a local voucher from Rapid Re-Housing and then for another ten months before they successfully utilized that voucher to move. Another family we worked with recently has been leasing a unit with the assistance of a TAH voucher and was approved for an emergency transfer to a new unit under the Violence Against Women Act. After months and multiple RFTA packet submissions, largely because units failed rent reasonableness or a landlord decided they could not continue holding a unit because the RFTA approval process was taking so long, the family still has not moved into a new home. The family believes their latest RFTA submission is close to approval and hopes they will be able to lease up soon, but in the meantime, they continue to live in a place where they do not feel safe and where pervasive mold is causing frequent ear infections and respiratory issues for the children.

It is imperative that the District find ways to improve how DHS and DCHA administer local vouchers so families like Children’s Law Center’s clients are not left in an uncertain limbo, with their children living in unsafe and unhealthy conditions, while they wait to be connected with and use the resources the Council funded to help them access long-term housing stability.

DHS and DCHA Should Ensure There is a Foundation of Timely Communication and Transparency Throughout the Local Voucher Administration Process

Children's Law Center hopes that today's roundtable will serve as a starting point for regular collaboration between the Committees, agencies, and stakeholders to implement recommended changes to decrease delays and maximize efficiency at each individual step of voucher utilization and we would be happy to support the Committees on that detailed work. For today's hearing, Children's Law Center would like to focus on recommendations for how the Committees can work with DHS and DCHA over the next year to improve communication and transparency throughout the voucher administration process. We believe these changes are foundational to achieving our shared goal of ensuring eligible DC families can access and utilize a local voucher within 120 days.

DHS and DCHA Need to Implement Practices for Timely, Responsive Communication During the Voucher Process

First, as detailed above, in Children's Law Center's experience one of the most problematic features of DHS and DCHA's current voucher administration process is the uncertainty and unpredictability engendered by a lack of consistent communication. Children's Law Center encourages the Committees to ask DHS and DCHA for up-to-date and publicly shareable documentation of:

- the contact information for the team and/or staff members who should be contacted with questions on each step of the voucher process;
- a timeframe the agency commits to having its staff respond to any initial questions about a local voucher within (for example, two business days); and

- instructions and contact information for how to escalate a question that does not receive a response within the established response standard.

The agencies should be required to review and update the information periodically to maintain accuracy. Making this information publicly available will help ensure families who do not have the support of a legal services attorney or housing advocate still have detailed instructions on where to direct questions and escalations. It will also empower the Committees to conduct more detailed oversight on whether the agencies are meeting the response standards they agreed to and what, if any, additional resources they need to do so.

Increased Transparency for Applicants, Voucher Holders, and Landlords Will Help Improve Efficiency Across the Voucher Process

Additionally, DHS and DCHA should maximize opportunities for transparency to proactively empower voucher applicants, voucher holders, and landlords with information throughout the voucher administration process. This will help control for differences in responsiveness between individual agency staff members and decrease the overall administrative burdens on staff due to emails and calls requesting status updates on vouchers and RFTA packets.

For example, it would be very helpful for families to have access to a portal where they can track their voucher and RFTA applications, submit materials, and communicate with the agencies.²¹ It is Children's Law Center's understanding that the Rent Café platform from Yardi, the real estate software DCHA utilizes to manage much of its work, includes the capability for a web-based portal that:

- allows voucher applicants to easily upload eligibility documentation themselves;²²
- can automatically check whether a voucher application is complete;²³

- empowers voucher applicants to “see where they are in the application [eligibility determination] process at any time, reducing stress and uncertainty;”²⁴ and
- helps public housing authority staff to “keep[] [voucher applicants] informed via [automatic] email, cutting down on follow-up calls and letters.”²⁵

DCHA has been working for years to adopt the use of Rent Café in its public housing and voucher programs and Children’s Law Center was happy to hear from an agency update to housing advocates that as of August 2025, Rent Café is “up and running” for all *federal* vouchers administered by DCHA.²⁶

We understand that there are concerns about DCHA’s ability to implement Rent Café for local vouchers because it is designed for federal applications and eligibility standards and not sufficiently customizable to reflect the differences in the District’s LRSP program. The Committee should get clarity on what those concerns are and how DCHA could potentially overcome them to utilize Rent Café for local vouchers. If Rent Café is not a viable option for local vouchers, DHS and DCHA should explore other options to enable voucher applicants and recipients to track the status of their application and RFTA packet.

Additionally, in its 2025 Performance Oversight responses, DCHA indicated that it was working to implement an AffordableHousing.com pre-check tool that would allow landlords to run rent reasonableness themselves before they and a tenant submit an RFTA packet.²⁷ Rent reasonableness procedures remain a sticking point in the lease up process for our clients. We have had multiple clients have to submit numerous RFTA packets before one is approved, which is expensive for tenants who end up having to submit application fees to multiple apartments and for landlords who end up holding a unit vacant for a voucher holder only to learn they cannot

lease it to them. If landlords could run a preliminary rent reasonableness determination, they could have more predictability about whether a particular unit will be rent reasonable for an applicant, allowing the landlord and voucher holder can make a more informed decision about whether it makes sense to submit an RFTA packet for that unit. DCHA previously stated that it expected this pre-check tool to be available to landlords by the end of 2025.²⁸ The Committees should ask DCHA for an update on the status of this tool and what if any additional resources are needed to ensure its timely implementation.

Timely communications and proactive transparency through the changes suggested above can empower families and landlords to address any issues with their application or RFTA packet in a speedy manner and advocate for themselves when they see their application is stuck at a step beyond the expected timeline.

DHS and DCHA Need to Track and Share Comprehensive Voucher Utilization Data to Strategically Target Improvement Efforts

Children’s Law Center greatly appreciates that DHS maintains a public-facing webpage tracking local voucher utilization, titled “A Path to Ending Chronic Homelessness in DC.”²⁹ It is an important tool for accountability and understanding how valuable District housing resources are being used. However, the data provided is sometimes out of date and is not comprehensive or detailed enough to inform meaningful implementation assessments. For example, the webpage breaks the voucher utilization process into five steps and reports on how many households are at each step but does not provide comprehensive data on how long each of those steps takes — currently or in previous fiscal years.³⁰ The page also has displays data for the average utilization timeline from case management assignment for all local vouchers for each year from Fiscal Year

2022 through Fiscal Year 2025 , but that data is not broken down by voucher type or step.³¹ The data DHS does provide on the webpage suggests that the process can vary greatly for different populations and voucher types. For example, the average number of days it takes families to lease up has consistently been higher than that of individuals.³² Further, the data supplied by DHS in its 2025 Performance Oversight responses to the Committee on Human Services, shows that in Fiscal Year 2024 families with PSH vouchers had a significantly higher number of average days from case manager assignment to application submission than families with TAH vouchers while the average number of days from application submission to DCHA eligibility determination was almost as long for families with TAH vouchers as those with PSH vouchers.³³

DHS has made some general observations about why differences exist between timelines for individual and family vouchers, but it would be helpful to have detailed information broken down by step and voucher type to fully assess the situation and tailor solutions accordingly. For example, if families looking for two and three bedroom units move from briefing to lease up at the same average pace as individuals looking for studios and one bedrooms but families looking for four-plus bedroom units take significantly longer, that suggests that DCHA should be proactively putting in effort to help larger families locate a unit and consider things like a specialized housing locator and Meet and Lease events dedicated to larger units. Children’s Law Center believes it would help the Committees, agencies, and stakeholders to identify the most effective strategies for decreasing delays in voucher utilization to break the process down by the average length of time to complete each stage for each type of voucher. We encourage the Committees to ask DHS and DCHA to collaborate to regularly collect and publish the average length of time for each of the following, broken down by PSH-I, PSH-F, TAH-I, TAH-F, and any

other local voucher subtype, either on DHS's existing voucher utilization tracking page or another format:

- From when a household is first deemed eligible for a local voucher to when they are matched to one;
- From when a household is matched to a local voucher to when they are assigned to a case manager;
- From when a household is assigned to a case manager to when their voucher application compilation is submitted to DCHA;
- From when DCHA receives a household's voucher application to when the household receives an eligibility determination;
 - The agencies should also track the number of applications returned to DHS for being incomplete or out of date;
- From when a household receives an eligibility determination to when their voucher briefing is held;
- From when a household's voucher briefing is held to when they first submit an RFTA packet to DCHA;
- From when DCHA receives an RFTA packet to when DCHA determines whether the RFTA is complete;³⁴
- From when DCHA receives an RFTA packet to when DCHA makes an eligibility determination about the unit for that resident —meaning DCHA verifies the unit's owner and determines whether the unit meets DCHA's rent reasonableness and affordability standards;³⁵

- From when DCHA determines an RFTA is complete and eligible to when DCHA schedules an inspection – meaning DCHA contacts the owner or agent to notify them of the inspection date and time;
 - The number of times DCHA rescheduled a first inspection to a later date.

If possible, DCHA should break this down by reason for rescheduling such as, owner or agent requested, owner or agent not present, or DCHA initiated reschedule.
- From when DCHA determines an RFTA is complete and eligible to when DCHA conducts the first inspection of a unit;
 - For units that required reinspection, the average length of time, in days, from when a unit fails its first inspection to when a second inspection is conducted;
- From when a unit passes inspection to when DCHA requests an executed lease agreement and signed Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract from the owner;
- From when DCHA and the landlord sign the HAP contract to when the household moves into their unit.

With this information, DHS, DCHA, and any other relevant stakeholders, like PSH service providers, can strategically collaborate on identifying and implementing targeted solutions for particular populations and vouchers. For example, Children’s Law Center has recently been involved in productive engagement between DCHA and the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) supported by the Committee on Housing to discuss barriers to the efficient utilization of Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers by youth aging out of foster care. We believe this

process has shown promise for reaching meaningful improvements for youth who are eligible for FUP vouchers, and a similar approach could help with other vouchers.

Conclusion

Finally, there has been a recent example of DHS and DCHA collaborating to administer vouchers —from match to lease up— in a comparatively efficient manner. In 2024, DCHA made a one-time dedication of 1,300 HCVP vouchers available to families exiting the Family Re-Housing and Stabilization Program (FRSP, more commonly known as Rapid Re-Housing).³⁶ DHS and DCHA collaborated to streamline the application and lease up process for these vouchers and between July and February 2025 (approximately 180 days) over 740 voucher applications had been reviewed and issued and 109 families had successfully leased up with a federal voucher.³⁷ During this effort, DHS and DCHA sent each other weekly updates and implemented new strategies to move families through the process as quickly as possible, including in person application fairs, improved internal quality assurance checks of applications at DHS before submission to DCHA, and DHS taking an active role in supporting families to locate and apply for housing once they received a voucher.³⁸ The Committees should work the with agencies to assess the efficacy of these efforts and determine if any of these strategies could and should be expanded to all local vouchers on which DHS and DCHA collaborate moving forward.

Children’s Law Center commends the Committees for convening this solutions-oriented, joint public oversight roundtable local voucher utilization. We welcome any questions and look forward to continuing to partner with the agencies and Committees on implementing some of the solutions identified today.

¹ Children’s Law Center’s innovative medical legal partnership, Healthy Together, places attorneys at primary care pediatric clinics throughout the city with Children’s National, Unity Health Care, and Mary’s Center to receive referrals from pediatric providers for assistance with non-medical barriers to a child’s health and well-being. See Children’s Law Center, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/ourimpact/health/>.

² See Sonya Acosta, “Stable Housing is Foundational to Children’s Well-Being,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Feb. 15 2022), available at: <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/stable-housing-is-foundational-to-childrens-well-being>; Megan Sandel et al., “Housing as a Healthcare Investment,” Children’s Health Watch (Mar. 2016), available at: <https://childrenshealthwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/Housing-as-a-Health-Care-Investment.pdf>.

³ This calculation is based on estimates from Urban Institute that 21% of households in DC are households with children and 28% of those households are housing insecure and data from the American Community Survey (ACS) that there are 321,556 households in DC (21% of 321,556 is 67,527 households with children and 28% of that is 18,907 households with children who are housing insecure). It is important to note that Urban Institute’s figures do **not** include families in shelter. See *Housing Insecurity in the District of Columbia: Results from a Representative Survey*, Claudia D. Solari et al., Urban Institute, p. 72-73 and Table D.8-9 (November 2023), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/Housing%20Insecurity%20in%20the%20District%20of%20Columbia_0.pdf; QuickFacts: Washington city, District of Columbia, People: Families & Living Arrangements: Households, 2019-2023, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/washingtoncitydistrictofcolumbia/HSD410223> (accessed March 10, 2025) (summarizing data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023).

⁴ Solari, Claudia D., et. al., *Housing Insecurity in the District of Columbia*, Urban Institute, November 2023, p. 28, available at: https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/Housing%20Insecurity%20in%20the%20District%20of%20Columbia_0.pdf. See Solari, Claudia D., Douglas Walton, and Jill Khadduri. 2021. “How Well Do Housing Vouchers Work for Black Families Experiencing Homelessness? Evidence from the Family Options Study.” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 693(1): 193-208; Gubits, Daniel, Marybeth Shinn, Michelle Wood, Stephen Bill, Samuel Dastrup, Claudia D. Solari, Scott R. Brown, Debi McInnis, Tom McCall, and Utsav Kattel. 2015. *Family Options Study: 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families*. Washington DC: US Department of Housing and Urban Development; Fischer, Will. October 2015. “Research Shows Housing Vouchers Reduce Hardship and Provide Platform for Long-Term Gains Among Children.” Washington DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; and Wood, Michelle, Jennifer Turnham, and Gregory Mills. 2008. “Housing Affordability and Family Wellbeing: Results from the Housing Voucher Evaluation.” *Housing Policy Debate* 19 (2): 367–412.

⁵ See Meagan Flynn, They Waited Decades for Housing Aid. Will Changes Finally Bring Relief?, *The Washington Post* (April 26, 2023), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/04/26/dcha-housing-waiting-list/>.

⁶ FY24 DHS Budget, District’s Approved Budget, Enhance, p. E-76; FY23 DHS Budget, District’s Approved Budget, Enhance, p. E-82 and E-83. See also Marlene Berlin, *From zero to 7,000+: One DC agency charts voucher renters in its programs since 2016*, *Forest Hills CONNECTIONS*, June 13, 2023, available at: <https://www.foresthillsconnection.com/home-front/from-0-to-7000-one-dc-agency-charts-voucher-renters-in-its-programs-since-2016/>; FY2022 Department of Human Services Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q80, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pre-Hearing-Question-Responses-DHS-2.20.2023.pdf>.

⁷ Makenna Osborn, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee on Housing (February 29, 2024), p. 6-8, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/2023-24-oversight-testimony-department-of-human-services/>.

⁸ District of Columbia Council Committees on Housing and Human Services Notice of Joint Public Oversight Roundtable, Housing Without the Holdup: Fixing the District's Voucher Bottleneck, p. 1, available at: <https://lims.dccouncil.gov/Hearings/hearings/1965>.

⁹ FY26 District of Columbia Proposed Budget, Housing Authority Payment, *Program Description: Local Rent Supplement*, https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/hy0_hap_chapter_2026m.pdf; see also DC Fiscal Policy Institute, *The Local Rent Supplement Program*, (Apr. 11, 2016), available at: <https://www.dcfpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/16-04-LRSP-Brief.pdf>.

¹⁰ For an explanation of the funding sources for TAH and PSH vouchers, see A Path to Ending Chronic Homelessness in DC, DC Department of Human Services, Overview, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/993e532a43bd4af3a2bf1b69d54dc704> [Hereinafter *DHS Voucher Tracker*]; *The Local Rent Supplement Program*, DC Fiscal Policy Institute (April 11, 2016), <https://www.dcfpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/16-04-LRSP-Brief.pdf>.

¹¹ *DHS Voucher Tracker*, *supra* note 10, Voucher Process.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ For a description of the “lease-up process,” see District of Columbia Housing Authority, Request for Tenancy Approval Packet, Revised September 26, 2023, <https://www.dchousing.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/rfta.pdf>.

¹⁴ *DHS Voucher Tracker*, *supra* note 10, Voucher Process (“Our goal is for every individual and family to lease up within 120 days of being assigned a case management provider.”).

¹⁵ The average length of time it took recipients to lease up with almost all types of locally funded vouchers decreased markedly between FY22 and FY24. See *id.* (Average days to lease up for all PSH and TAH vouchers was 495 in FY22 and 385 in FY24). Between February 2023 and October 2023, most FY22-funded vouchers went from unutilized to leased up. Compare DHS FY22 & FY23 Pre-Hearing Performance Oversight Responses, response to Q76, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pre-Hearing-Question-Responses-DHS-2.20.2023.pdf> with *DHS Voucher Tracker*, *supra* note 10, Tracking Progress.

¹⁶ *DHS Voucher Tracker*, *supra* note 10, Voucher Process.

¹⁷ *Id.* at Tracking Progress, *Tracking Progress of FY22-FY25 Voucher Utilization graph* (accessed November 12, 2025).

¹⁸ Department of Human Services, 2025 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Responses, Response to Q112(b), available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/human-services-11/> (83 determined by averaging the mean days from application submission to decision for TAH-F (109) and PSH-F (56)).

¹⁹ According to The Community Partnership (the organization that manages the District's local voucher distribution), in FY25, 100% of matches to local TAH and PSH vouchers were made from FRSP and moving forward approximately 90% of matches will be made from FRSP and 10% will be made from family shelter and transitional housing. See Interagency Council on Family Homelessness, Family System Workgroup Meeting (October 8, 2025), presentation slides and meeting notes available on file with Children's Law Center.

²⁰ A core component of Children's Law Center's work is helping families secure repairs when poor rental housing conditions are harming their child's health and each year some of the worst conditions we see are in units rented by clients in the Rapid Re-Housing program. See Makenna Osborn, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee on Housing (February 29, 2024), p. 14-17, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/2023-24-oversight-testimony-department-of-human-services/>;

Makenna Osborn, Testimony Before the District of Columbia Council Committee on Human Services (March 5, 2025), p. 2-8, available at: <https://childrenslawcenter.org/resources/2024-25-performance-oversight-testimony-department-of-human-services/>.

²¹ This should be an option, not a requirement as some residents do not have reliable access to the internet and/or limited proficiency with technology.

²² PHA: Products: Rent Café PHA, Yardi.com, <https://www.yardi.com/product/rentcafe-pha/> (accessed November 12, 2025) (“Make it easy for applicants to submit eligibility documentation without filling out a stack of paperwork.”).

²³ *Id.* (“RentCafe PHA automatically checks for completion, reducing the need for staff to follow up.”).

²⁴ *How to Simplify Operations from Start to Finish with RentCafe PHA*, Yardi, p. 6, [how-to-simplify-operations-from-start-to-finish-with-rentcafe-pha.pdf](https://www.yardi.com/product/rentcafe-pha/how-to-simplify-operations-from-start-to-finish-with-rentcafe-pha.pdf).

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ This information was shared during the August 2025 bimonthly meeting between DCHA leadership and public housing advocates. DCHA Advocates Meeting, August 28, 2025, notes on file with Children’s Law Center.

²⁷ District of Columbia Housing Authority, 2025 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Responses, Response to Q67, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/housing-5/>.

²⁸ *Id.*

²⁹ *DHS Voucher Tracker*, *supra* note 10.

³⁰ *Id.*, Tracking Progress (accessed November 12, 2025).

³¹ *Id.*, Voucher Process (accessed November 12, 2025).

³² Currently the DHS Voucher Tracker site states that in FY24 the average number of days from match to lease up was 294 for individuals and 316 for families and includes the observation “[w]e see that this process often takes longer for families – who are generally already housed through rapid rehousing, need to get documentation for an entire family, and are often looking for larger apartments or homes which are challenging to find in the District’s housing market.” *Id.* (accessed November 12, 2025).

³³ See Department of Human Services, 2025 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Responses, Response to Q112, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/human-services-11/>.

³⁴ When DCHA receives an RFTA, it first reviews the package to determine whether it is complete – meaning it at least contains all the required information and materials. An inspection is not scheduled until after DCHA determines the RFTA package is complete. See District of Columbia Housing Authority, *How Do I...?*, available at: <https://www.dchousing.org/wordpress/customers/how-do-i/>.

³⁵ District of Columbia Housing Authority, Request for Tenancy Approval Packet, available at: <https://www.dchousing.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/rfta.pdf>.

³⁶ See Done Kirby, *DCHA Board Votes to Prioritize 1,300 Families Existing Rapid Rehousing for Vouchers*, Street Sense Media (July 17, 2024), <https://streetsensemedia.org/article/dcha-board-votes-to-prioritize-1300-families-existing-rapid-rehousing-for-vouchers-putting-them-ahead-of-thousands-on-the-waitlist/>.

³⁷ District of Columbia Housing Authority, 2025 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Responses, Response to Q61, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/housing-5/>.

³⁸ Department of Human Services, 2025 Performance Oversight Pre-Hearing Responses, Response to Q115, available at: <https://dccouncil.gov/human-services-11/>.