



Este documento se puede traducir.

Para adquirir la versión traducida, por favor comuníquese al 312-935-2600

*If you need this document in a different language or **LARGER FONT** or if you need a reasonable accommodation (persons with disabilities), please call 312-935-2600 or TTY: 312-461-0079. Advance notice of seven days is required in order to arrange for interpreter services.*

Dear Applicant/Participant,

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is a federal law that protects victims (both men and women) of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking who apply for or live in private housing with a voucher. The law covers the head of household and family members living in the household. In Illinois, victims of domestic violence are also covered by the Safe Homes Act. This is a summary of your rights. Please refer to the CHA Administrative Plan for the full details of how VAWA is applied to applicants and participants.

#### **Protections for Victims Who Are Applicants or Participants:**

1. The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) may not deny admission to the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program if a victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking can show that the reason for the denial is connected to domestic violence, dating violence or stalking.
2. CHA may not terminate a Participant because he/she is a victim or threatened victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking.
3. CHA may not terminate a domestic violence, dating violence or stalking victim from the HCV Program because the abuser committed a crime. Additionally, if the victim committed a crime because he/she was being abused, CHA may not terminate the victim.
4. If a domestic violence victim leaves the unit because of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, CHA will not consider him/her in violation of the lease or HCV Program requirements.
5. CHA can 'split' the family by terminating the abuser from the HCV Program while protecting the victim and other household members. The abuser will NOT be issued a separate voucher.

#### **Limitations of VAWA Protections:**

1. CHA has the authority to terminate any Participant, including the victim, if it can demonstrate a threat to other tenants or to staff.
2. CHA can terminate a Participant for any violation of a lease that was not based on domestic violence, dating violence or stalking.

#### **Options Available to VAWA Victims:**

##### Bifurcate (Split) the Lease and Voucher

CHA may terminate the abuser and allow the victim to stay on the HCV Program. The Property Owner/Manager will also evict the abuser and allow the victim to stay in the unit. However, in order for this action to take place, the victim must provide proof of abuse to CHA and the Property Owner/Manager.

**Note:** When evicting the abuser from the household, the Property Owner/Manager must follow federal, state and local eviction procedures.

##### Request an Emergency Termination or Port Out

CHA may provide an emergency termination of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract and give a voucher to the victim. The abuser will be removed from the voucher and cannot be a part of the household.

---

#### **CHA HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM OFFICE LOCATIONS**

REV. 08/2015

##### **( ) Central Office**

60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605

##### **CHA Customer Call Center / TTY**

312-935-2600 / 312-461-0079

##### **( ) South Office**

10 W. 35th Street, Chicago, IL 60616

##### **Web**

[www.thecha.org/hcv](http://www.thecha.org/hcv)

##### **( ) West Office**

2750 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago, IL 60608

##### **Email**

[hcv@thecha.org](mailto:hcv@thecha.org)



Este documento se puede traducir.  
Para adquirir la versión traducida, por favor comuníquese al 312-935-2600

### Victim Documentation:

CHA may ask a Participant to verify that he or she is a victim or threatened victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. CHA will accept any of the following forms:

- A completed and signed HUD Form-50066 – Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking – or –
- A police or court record documenting the actual or threatened abuse – or –
- Documentation signed by a person who has assisted the victim in addressing domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence or stalking, or the effects of such abuse. This person may be an employee, agent or volunteer of a victim service provider; an attorney; or a medical or other knowledgeable professional. The person signing the documentation must attest under penalty of perjury to the person’s belief that the incidents in question are bona fide incidents of abuse.

***If a participant does not provide CHA with verification within 14 business days, the Participant will not be eligible for the VAWA protections. The Participant may ask for a time extension.***

### The Safe Homes Act:

- Victims may end a lease due to violence. If a Property Owner/Manager sues a tenant for rent, the tenant may not have to pay the rent after the date of leaving the unit if he/she (1) can show that the reason for leaving is due to an imminent threat of domestic or sexual violence and (2) gives written notice to the Property Owner/Manager within three days after leaving the property.
- Under the Illinois Safe Homes Act, victims may change the locks of their unit. Tenants may request a lock change from the Property Owner/Manager but must provide written notice along with evidence of the danger. Within 48 hours, either the Property Owner/Manager will change the lock or give the tenant permission to change it. If the Property Owner/Manager fails to change the lock within 48 hours, the tenant may change it without permission.

### Confidentiality

All domestic violence, dating violence or stalking documentation and information will be kept confidential by CHA. As such, CHA will **not**:

- Enter domestic violence information into any shared database;
- Allow all staff to see the documentation. Only trained domestic violence staff will handle domestic violence cases; and
- Disclose domestic violence information to anyone outside CHA unless:
  - The victim makes a request in writing;
  - The information is required for an eviction proceeding, or
  - Otherwise required by law

If you are a victim or threatened victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, please contact the CHA Customer Call Center immediately at 312-935-2600 (TTY: 312-461-0079) and inform the customer service representative of your situation. You do not need to give your name or voucher number to the customer service representative. You will be immediately transferred to a VAWA specialist.

Or, if you prefer, you can stop by your assigned HCV Program Regional Office to make a VAWA request or find out more information about protections under VAWA or the Safe Homes Act.

---

## CHA HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM OFFICE LOCATIONS

REV. 08/2015

( ) **Central Office**  
60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605  
**CHA Customer Call Center / TTY**  
312-935-2600 / 312-461-0079

( ) **South Office**  
10 W. 35th Street, Chicago, IL 60616  
**Web**  
[www.thecha.org/hcv](http://www.thecha.org/hcv)

( ) **West Office**  
2750 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago, IL 60608  
**Email**  
[hcv@thecha.org](mailto:hcv@thecha.org)