

**Greene County Women's Center**

724-852-2463

Domestic Violence, Dating Violence

**Care Center**

724-627-6108

Sexual Assault

# Violence Against Women Act Policy

## OVERVIEW

HUD regulations pertaining to The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005 (P.L. 109-162) are contained in HUD Notice PIH 2006-23 and the HUD Federal Register Notice dated March 16, 2007 (Docket No. FR 5056-N-01). HUD Notice PIH 2006-23 requires Housing Authorities to include in their 5-Year Plans 'a statement of the goals, objectives, policies, or programs that will enable the housing authority to serve the needs of child and adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking'. The HUD Federal Register Notice requires PHA's to include in their Annual Plans: (1) Any activities, services, or programs provided or offered by any agency, either directly or in partnership with other service providers, to child or adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (2) Any activities, service, or programs provided or offered that helps child or adult victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to obtain or maintain housing; and (3) any activities, services, or programs provided or offered to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or to enhance victim safety in assisted families.

Toward meeting this requirement the Housing Authority of the County of Greene has taken the following policy actions:

- The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan has been amended to include language supporting the VAWA.
- The Public Housing Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy has been updated and revised to include language supporting the VAWA.

These policy changes assure the following:

1. Public Housing and Section 8 applicants/residents will be provided information explaining the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2005 and the protections offered assisted housing residents.
2. The Housing Authority will not deny admission to any applicant on the basis that the applicant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking if the applicant otherwise qualifies for admission or housing assistance.
3. Public Housing and Section 8 applicants/residents who are victims of domestic violence will receive intake and referral services to the local Women's Shelter or other social agencies equipped to deal with short term housing needs.
4. The Housing Authority through the Public Housing program will provide an admission preference to victims of domestic violence.
5. The Housing Authority will consider as high priority a transfer request to another unit by a public housing family member who is the actual or potential victim of a criminal

attack, retaliation for testimony, a hate crime, or domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

6. Families may move to another jurisdiction if they hold a Section 8 housing voucher after leaving a unit in violation of the lease if the family moved to protect the safety of a domestic violence victim.
7. A household cannot be evicted from assisted housing for acts of domestic violence of which a member of the household is the victim even if the acts of domestic violence were committed by the household member's guest, another member of the household or other persons under the tenant's control. The Housing Authority has retained the right to terminate the tenancy of any tenant if it can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants. The Housing Authority may evict only the wrongdoer and not the entire family in cases of domestic violence.
8. At the request of a tenant or owner (Section 8), the Housing Authority will provide form HUD-50066 Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or Stalking. On the form the individual certifies that he/she is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, and that the incident or incidences in question are bona fide incidences of such actual or threatened abuse. These forms must be signed and submitted within 14 business days of their request unless an extension is requested and granted and are necessary in determining whether the protections afforded to such individuals under VAWA are applicable. On the certification form, the individual must provide the name of the perpetrator. (Tenants are reminded that the provisions of sections 606 and 607 of the VAWA will not pertain if the 14 business day requirement is not met).

Notwithstanding its title VAWA, all Housing Authority policies in this area are gender neutral, and its protections are available to males who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking as well as female victims of such violence.