



Housing Authority of the County of Monterey
Annual PHA Plan FY July 2024

Executive Director/ Chief Executive Officer:

Zulieka Boykin

Board of Commissioners:

Hans Buder-Chair
Kathleen Ballesteros-Vice Chair
Kevin Healey-Commissioner
Yuri Anderson-Commissioner
Maria Orozco-Commissioner
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Streamlined Annual PHA Plan (HCV Only PHAs)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Public and Indian Housing	OMB No. 2577-0226 Expires 03/31/2024
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Purpose. The 5-Year and Annual PHA Plans provide a ready source for interested parties to locate basic PHA policies, rules, and requirements concerning the PHA's operations, programs, and services, including changes to these policies, and informs HUD, families served by the PHA, and members of the public of the PHA's mission, goals and objectives for serving the needs of low- income, very low- income, and extremely low- income families

Applicability. The Form HUD-50075-HCV is to be completed annually by **HCV-Only PHAs**. PHAs that meet the definition of a Standard PHA, Troubled PHA, High Performer PHA, Small PHA, or Qualified PHA do not need to submit this form. Where applicable, separate Annual PHA Plan forms are available for each of these types of PHAs.

Definitions.

- (1) **High-Performer PHA** – A PHA that owns or manages more than 550 combined public housing units and housing choice vouchers, and was designated as a high performer on both the most recent Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) and Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) assessments if administering both programs, or PHAS if only administering public housing.
- (2) **Small PHA** - A PHA that is not designated as PHAS or SEMAP troubled, that owns or manages less than 250 public housing units and any number of vouchers where the total combined units exceed 550.
- (3) **Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Only PHA** - A PHA that administers more than 550 HCVs, was not designated as troubled in its most recent SEMAP assessment and does not own or manage public housing.
- (4) **Standard PHA** - A PHA that owns or manages 250 or more public housing units and any number of vouchers where the total combined units exceed 550, and that was designated as a standard performer in the most recent PHAS and SEMAP assessments.
- (5) **Troubled PHA** - A PHA that achieves an overall PHAS or SEMAP score of less than 60 percent.
- (6) **Qualified PHA** - A PHA with 550 or fewer public housing dwelling units and/or housing choice vouchers combined and is not PHAS or SEMAP troubled.

A.	PHA Information.
A.1	<p>PHA Name: <u>Housing Authority of the County of Monterey</u> PHA Code: <u>CA033</u> PHA Plan for Fiscal Year Beginning: (MM/YYYY): <u>07/2024</u> PHA Inventory (Based on Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) units at time of FY beginning, above) Number of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) <u>5,117</u> PHA Plan Submission Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual Submission <input type="checkbox"/> Revised Annual Submission</p> <p>Availability of Information. In addition to the items listed in this form, PHAs must have the elements listed below readily available to the public. A PHA must identify the specific location(s) where the proposed PHA Plan, PHA Plan Elements, and all information relevant to the public hearing and proposed PHA Plan are available for inspection by the public. Additionally, the PHA must provide information on how the public may reasonably obtain additional information of the PHA policies contained in the standard Annual Plan but excluded from their streamlined submissions. At a minimum, PHAs must post PHA Plans, including updates, at the main office or central office of the PHA. PHAs are strongly encouraged to post complete PHA Plans on their official website.</p> <p><i>The PHA Annual Plan, along with its supporting documents, and the agency's Administrative Plan, can be accessed for review at the Housing Authority of the County of Monterey, located at 123 Rico Street, Salinas, CA 93907, or on our website at www.hamonterey.org. Additionally, we have published a public notice detailing the process for requesting copies of the plan via mail or email.</i></p>

PHA Consortia: (Check box if submitting a joint Plan and complete table below)

Participating PHAs	PHA Code	Program(s) in the Consortia	Program(s) not in the Consortia	No. of Units in Each Program
Lead HA:				

B. Plan Elements.

B.1

Revision of Existing PHA Plan Elements.

a) Have the following PHA Plan elements been revised by the PHA since its last Annual Plan submission?

Y N

- Statement of Housing Needs and Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs.
- Deconcentration and Other Policies that Govern Eligibility, Selection, and Admissions.
- Financial Resources.
- Rent Determination.
- Operation and Management.
- Informal Review and Hearing Procedures.
- Homeownership Programs.
- Self Sufficiency Programs and Treatment of Income Changes Resulting from Welfare Program Requirements.
- Substantial Deviation.
- Significant Amendment/Modification.

(b) If the PHA answered yes for any element, describe the revisions for each element(s):

B.2 New Activities.

The Housing Authority of the County of Monterey is dedicated to promoting project-based partnerships with community housing developers to increase the availability of affordable housing. By allocating Project-Based Vouchers (PBV's) to new housing developments, the agency aims to extend affordable housing opportunities to individuals and families residing in Monterey County. This effort emphasizes our ongoing commitment to expanding the affordable housing inventory and ensures wider access to high-quality living spaces for families and individuals in our community. Active Project-Based Voucher allocations are as follows:

Project-Based Voucher Allocation			
Property	# of Units	Location	Status*
Step Up/Salinas Homekey	85	Salinas, CA	AHAP
Greenfield Commons I	27	Greenfield, CA	AHAP
Greenfield Commons II	27	Greenfield, CA	AHAP
VTC-Lightfighter Village	17	Marina, CA	AHAP
Magnolia Place/ Senior Phase II	32	Greenfield, CA	HAP
Alfredo Diaz Apartments (Chispa-East Garrison)	15	Marina, CA	HAP

**AHAP: Agreement to Housing Assistance Payment (Preliminary Agreement/Contract)*

HAP: Housing Agreement Payment (Executed Contract)

The Housing Agreement Payment (HAP) contract is in place for East Garrison Apartments. The agency continues to work through the preliminary contract stages for Step Up/Salinas Homekey, Greenfield Commons I & II, VTC-Lightfighter Village and Magnolia Senior Apartments.

The agency is firm on its proactive approach in identifying opportunities to widen the availability of affordable housing throughout Monterey County by strategically utilizing PBV's. The agency is determined to utilize PBV's as a crucial instrument in its goal to fulfill the housing needs of the community by providing a solid foundation for stability and development within the area of Monterey County. This objective is aimed at encouraging the creation and enhancement of accessible and affordable housing projects, guaranteeing that residents enjoy improved access to quality living environments in the community.

B.3

Progress Report.

Provide a description of the PHA's progress in meeting its Mission and Goals described in its 5-Year PHA Plan.

The Housing Authority of the County of Monterey has achieved significant goals towards fulfilling the objectives outlined in its 5-Year plan, demonstrating a strong commitment to enhancing affordable housing within the community as follows:

- The agency remains actively engaged in identifying and pursuing competitive funding opportunities as they arise, with the primary goal of expanding access to affordable housing for Monterey County residents. This ongoing effort involves staying informed about and responsive to various funding sources, grants, and financial opportunities and partnerships that can support the agency's mission to increase the availability of affordable housing. By using these opportunities and sustaining partnerships with community organizations that align with its objectives and same common goals, the agency continues to further its commitment to addressing the housing needs of the community, ensuring more individuals and families can secure stable, affordable homes in Monterey County.
- The agency continues to further strengthen its collaboration with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program by allocating 324 housing vouchers to support the voucher program. This initiative is focused on assisting homeless veterans and their families within Monterey County to secure and maintain permanent housing. Through a cooperative partnership, the HUD-VASH program provides long-term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing support to veterans and their families.
- The agency remains actively engaged in a collaborative partnership with Monterey County Department of Social Services; Family and Children Services, by administering 65 housing vouchers through the Foster Youth to Independence Initiative Program. This collaboration highlights the agency's dedication to offering essential supportive services to foster youth in Monterey County, aiming to assist them in finding and maintaining stable, permanent housing.
- The agency, in partnership with designated community service providers, has successfully allocated a total of 269 Emergency Housing Vouchers to families experiencing homelessness or that were at risk of becoming homeless within Monterey and San Benito Counties. In its ongoing effort to support this vulnerable demographic, the agency actively pursues opportunities presented by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and community organizations, to continue providing support to these individuals and families so they continue to secure permanent affordable housing.
- The agency ensures the provision of reasonable accommodations, affirming equal opportunities and accessibility for applicant and participant individuals and families with disabilities. Agency staff annually participate in Fair Housing Training, hosted by HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. Furthermore, the agency ensures compliance with the agency's administrative policies and guidelines set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, specifically concerning the rights and support of disabled individuals and families.
- The agency is diligently taking steps to align with the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) changes mandated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This effort is focused on ensuring full compliance with HOTMA's updates, which are designed to modernize and streamline housing policies and practices. By adapting to these changes, the agency will enhance its operational efficiency and effectiveness in managing housing assistance programs, by benefiting the communities it serves through improved service delivery and compliance.

- The Housing Authority continues to maintain Payment Standards that accurately reflect the prevailing rental market conditions of the area. With the continuation of an exception payment standard waiver, the agency adopts the higher limit between 120% of the Small Area Fair Market Rent and 110% of the Department of Housing and Urban Development 50th Percentile Fair Market Success Rate Payment Standards, specifically for Monterey County. This increase in Payment Standards enhances the Housing Choice Voucher program by enabling participants to access housing in higher opportunity areas. It further facilitates equitable access to essential services and resources, supporting the well-being and advancement of families in Monterey County.
- During informational briefings, the agency provides comprehensive details to participants about the opportunities available within the Housing Choice Voucher program. This includes information about agency partnerships that offer supportive services, updates on current rental opportunities, supportive services for disabled individuals, veterans, homeless individuals and families, information about the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, and rights under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These efforts are aimed at broadening information and the range of opportunities, support, and services accessible to all program participants.
- To further increase accessibility, the agency has received approval to conduct briefings remotely. This innovative approach is designed to enhance convenience and ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities and all participants that benefit from this alternative. The adoption of remote briefings is a strategic move to ensure that there are no barriers to the continued processing and issuance of vouchers and maintains the flow of support and services for the families and individuals the agency serves.
- The agency is actively expanding the range of opportunities available to participants in the Housing Choice Voucher program by enhancing access to the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, now supported by two dedicated coordinators. This effort is aimed at increasing the level of opportunity, participation and assistance provided to Housing Choice Voucher participants who express interest in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. The agency's continued goal is to encourage enrollment in this program to equip participants with the tools and resources necessary for achieving economic independence and self-sufficiency.
- In August of 2023, the agency hosted a hybrid landlord symposium that proved to be a significant success. The event received a high level of interest from landlords, resulting in increased participation. The agency is now in the process of organizing its next annual landlord symposium scheduled for April of 2024. This forthcoming annual event aims to further engage and educate landlords about the benefits and importance of participating in the Housing Choice Voucher program and their vital role in addressing community housing needs. Through these symposiums, the agency seeks to establish a collaborative environment where landlords can learn more about the program, understand its impact on the community, and explore ways to contribute effectively to meeting local housing needs.
- The agency currently holds a SEMAP (Section Eight Management Assessment Program) score of 74%, which places it within the standard status category for the Housing Choice Voucher program. This score reflects a decline that is largely attributed to the impact of HUD-COVID-19 waivers. These waivers permitted the deferment of certain activities and processes that are integral to the SEMAP scoring framework, directly affecting the agency's overall performance evaluation. In response to this challenge, the agency is actively managing and implementing proactive strategies aimed at enhancing its operational efficiency to elevate the agency's standing to a superior status in future evaluations.

- The agency completed a collaborative Project-Based Voucher partnership with Magnolia Place Senior Phase II and Alfredo Diaz Apartments (Chispa-East Garrison). The projects completed development stages and collectively have 47 project-based vouchers in place. The culmination of these developments and partnership delivers affordable housing options to senior citizens and families within the Monterey County community.
- The Housing Authority will offer a distinct preference and selection from the waiting list for applicants with qualifying agricultural income, for affordable housing opportunities at the Alfred Diaz Apartment Complex, commonly referred to as East Garrison. This complex has been granted fifteen project-based vouchers, consisting of two one-bedroom units that have been explicitly assigned for applicants meeting the agricultural income preference criteria. Our policy guarantees that selection from the project-based waiting list will proceed without discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, familial status, or sexual orientation.
- The Housing Authority has undergone a recent adjustment in its Renewal Funding Inflation Factor (RFIF), which has now been adjusted to 9% and is not anticipated to have a significant increase. This adjustment aligns with the latest guidelines and determination set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development specifically for Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) operating within California. This update reflects an effort to accurately match funding parameters with the prevailing economic conditions and fluctuating rates, ensuring that the Housing Authority is equipped with the necessary financial resources to continue providing critical housing services in an effective and sustainable manner within its budget authority.
- The agency is in the process of enhancing its internal software systems to maximize technological support, benefiting not only the agency but also applicants, participants, and landlords through expedited services and improved operational efficiencies. Among the notable upgrades is the implementation of Rent Café, which introduces several key features: applicants will have the capability to apply and check their application status online; participants can easily access information and complete their annual recertifications; and landlords gain access to their account details and payment information. This initiative is aimed at streamlining interactions and facilitating a more efficient and user-friendly experience for all parties involved.
- The agency has formed a partnership with the Monterey County Behavioral Health Department to offer supportive housing for 110 homeless or nearly homeless families at Pueblo del Mar in Marina, CA. This initiative is supported by a Behavioral Health Bridge Housing grant from the state of California. Key aspects of this project encompass collaboration with local service providers and the provision of transitional housing support, designed to aid families in securing permanent housing.
- The agency is actively engaged in evaluating the property requirements of Rippling River Apartments in Carmel Valley, CA, aiming to address the needs of its established housing community. Through this assessment, the agency seeks to identify and implement necessary changes that will ensure the housing community provides a welcoming, safe, and supportive living environment for all its residents.
- The agency is preparing the implementation of the NSPIRE model from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to modernize its Housing Quality Standards (HQS) compliance procedures. This initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance the quality and efficiency of housing unit inspections, ensuring they meet the necessary safety and health standards. By integrating NSPIRE's innovative approaches and criteria, the agency aims to provide a more effective and streamlined process for assessing the condition of housing units, ultimately improving living conditions for residents, and ensuring compliance with HUD's updated regulatory framework.

• The agency is consistently working to establish and maintain partnerships with community organizations and local city jurisdictions to enhance affordable housing opportunities within Monterey County. In addition to creating new alliances, the agency places high importance on sustaining its existing partnerships with community agencies. These collaborations are essential for providing supportive services to homeless individuals and families, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Such collaborative efforts are essential in advancing the agency's objectives as described in its 5-Year PHA Plan and mission statement, ensuring a comprehensive approach to meeting the diverse housing needs of the community.

B.4

Capital Improvements. – *Not Applicable*

B.5

Most Recent Fiscal Year Audit.

(a) Were there any findings in the most recent FY Audit?

Y N N/A

(b) If yes, please describe:

Financial Statement findings are as follows:

- *The Housing Authority had unclaimed property in the form of checks:*

The Housing Authority accepted the recommendation of the auditor and has made arrangements to comply with regulations from the California State Controller's Office.

Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs are as follows:

- *The Housing Authority lacks internal controls related to eligibility compliance, particularly in the maintenance of tenant files. The agency has not effectively developed, implemented, or maintained a control system that ensures the program is in compliance:*

The Housing Authority agrees with the auditor's recommendation. The issue pertains to long-standing clients whose extensive files have been archived over time. To provide correction, a directive was issued to staff, mandating the inclusion of the original application in the active working file during archiving processes moving forward.

- *The Housing Authority has identified deficiencies in its internal controls concerning compliance with Housing Quality Standards (HQS) enforcement, specifically within the realm of special tests and provisions. There has been a shortfall in effectively developing, implementing, maintaining, and overseeing an internal control system to ensure adherence to Notice PIH 2021-14(HA):*

Management inadvertently overlooked the requirement to obtain owner certifications during the audit period, as mandated by Notice PIH 2021-14(HA). The Housing Authority has acknowledged this oversight within the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Mainstream Voucher Programs and has continued commitment in establishing and enforcing internal control measures to guarantee adherence to federal regulations and PIH notices.

- *The Housing Authority is deficient in the internal controls over compliance with special tests and provisions related to Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections. The agency has not effectively designed or implemented, maintained, or monitored a system of internal controls to ensure the program is in compliance:*

The Housing Authority has recognized deficiencies in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Mainstream Voucher Programs and has implemented internal control procedures that ensure compliance with federal regulations.

C.	Other Document and/or Certification Requirements.
C.1	<p>Resident Advisory Board (RAB) Comments.</p> <p>(a) Did the RAB(s) have comments to the PHA Plan?</p> <p>Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(b) If yes, comments must be submitted by the PHA as an attachment to the PHA Plan. PHAs must also include a narrative describing their analysis of the RAB recommendations and the decisions made on these recommendations.</p> <p><i>*See Attachment</i></p>
C.2	<p>Certification by State or Local Officials.</p> <p>Form HUD 50077-SL, <i>Certification by State or Local Officials of PHA Plans Consistency with the Consolidated Plan</i>, must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan.</p> <p><i>*See Attachment</i></p>
C.3	<p>Civil Rights Certification/ Certification Listing Policies and Programs that the PHA has Revised since Submission of its Last Annual Plan.</p> <p>Form HUD-50077-ST-HCV-HP, <i>PHA Certifications of Compliance with PHA Plan, Civil Rights, and Related Laws and Regulations Including PHA Plan Elements that Have Changed</i>, must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan.</p> <p><i>*See Attachment</i></p>
C.4	<p>Challenged Elements. If any element of the PHA Plan is challenged, a PHA must include such information as an attachment with a description of any challenges to Plan elements, the source of the challenge, and the PHA’s response to the public.</p> <p>(a) Did the public challenge any elements of the Plan?</p> <p>Y N <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, include Challenged Elements.</p>

D. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).

D.1 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).

Provide a statement of the PHA’s strategies and actions to achieve fair housing goals outlined in an accepted Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) consistent with 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(5). Use the chart provided below. (PHAs should add as many goals as necessary to overcome fair housing issues and contributing factors.) Until such time as the PHA is required to submit an AFH, the PHA is not obligated to complete this chart. The PHA will fulfill, nevertheless, the requirements at 24 CFR § 903.7(o) enacted prior to August 17, 2015. See Instructions for further detail on completing this item.

Fair Housing Goal: Ensuring Fair Housing
Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal:

The Housing Authority of the County of Monterey has established and ensured equal opportunity in housing for residents of Monterey County as a strategic goal. To achieve this goal, the Housing Authority continues to affirmatively market its housing programs ensuring they are accessible to families with special needs or disabilities. The Housing Authority remains strongly committed to meeting reasonable accommodation or modification requests that support and promote affordable housing opportunities to disabled families or individuals.

Fair Housing Goal: Furthering Fair Housing Opportunities
Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal:

The Housing Authority collaborates with entitlement jurisdictions to integrate outreach and fair housing training opportunities into the plans each jurisdiction develops. By participating in community forums and events, the Housing Authority actively promotes the Housing Choice Voucher Program and aims to broaden fair housing opportunities for families. This collaborative effort ensures that fair housing practices are integrated into community planning and that information about housing options reaches a wider audience.

Fair Housing Goal: Improving Equitable Housing Opportunities for Participants

Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal:

Housing Program Specialists work with families to encourage portability and relocation to neighborhoods that offer enhanced opportunities. In briefings, they inform applicants about the availability and locations of units, with a focus on those in underutilized communities. This allows voucher holders to make informed housing decisions that could offer better social amenities, as well as improved educational and economic opportunities for their families. Furthermore, participants are provided information about fair housing and anti-discrimination laws, and guidance on how to file complaints, ensuring families are well-informed about their rights and the resources available to them.

Fair Housing Goal: Ensuring Access to Safe and Sanitary Affordable Housing

Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal:

The Housing Authority's annual and long-term objectives aim to expand housing options for families, enabling them to obtain housing that is appropriately sized and reduces overcrowding. All potential rental units are required to meet Housing Quality Standards, undergoing inspections before move-in and annual reviews to ensure ongoing compliance. Participants receive support in finding housing that suits their family's needs and in negotiating leases with landlords. By excluding blighted properties from federal housing subsidies, these measures enhance fair housing choices and contribute to the overall wellbeing of the community and its members.

Fair Housing Goal: Furthering Opportunities for Participants in Higher Opportunity Areas

Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal:

The Housing Authority conducts an analysis of local fair market conditions in its jurisdiction to help eliminate barriers for applicants of the Housing Choice Voucher Program. With approval of the success rate Payment Standard amounts at the 50th percentile, the Housing Authority can increase the number of voucher holders who become participants. This adjustment also provides opportunities for participants to secure housing in neighborhoods and areas that offer higher opportunities, enhancing their access to better living conditions and resources.