



City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division

Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

To all Tenants and Applicants

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protections are not only available to women, but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the Federal agency that oversees that **public housing and housing choice voucher** is in compliance with VAWA. This notice explains your rights under VAWA. A HUD-approved certification form is attached to this notice. You can fill out this form to show that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and that you wish to use your rights under VAWA."

Protections for Applicants

If you otherwise qualify for assistance under **public housing or housing choice voucher**, you cannot be denied admission or denied assistance because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Protections for Tenants

If you are receiving assistance under **public housing or housing choice voucher**, you may not be denied assistance, terminated from participation, or be evicted from your rental housing because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Also, if you or an affiliated individual of yours is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking by a member of your household or any guest, you may not be denied rental assistance or occupancy rights under **public housing or housing choice voucher** solely on the basis of criminal activity directly relating to that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Affiliated individual means your spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child, or a person to whom you stand in the place of a parent or guardian (for example, the affiliated individual is in your care, custody, or control); or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in your household.

Removing the Abuser or Perpetrator from the Household

The City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division (COCHRD) may divide (bifurcate) your lease in order to evict the individual or terminate the assistance of the individual who has engaged in criminal activity (the abuser or perpetrator) directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If the COCHRD chooses to remove the abuser or perpetrator, COCHRD may not take away the rights of eligible tenants to the unit or otherwise punish the remaining tenants. If the evicted abuser or perpetrator was the sole tenant to have established eligibility for assistance under the program, COCHRD must allow the tenant who is or has been a victim and other household members to remain in the unit for a period of time, in order to establish

eligibility under the program or under another HUD housing program covered by VAWA, or, find alternative housing.

In removing the abuser or perpetrator from the household, COCHRD must follow Federal, State, and local eviction procedures. In order to divide a lease, COCHRD may, but is not required to, ask you for documentation or certification of the incidences of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Moving to Another Unit

Upon your request, COCHRD may permit you to move to another unit, subject to the availability of other units, and still keep your assistance. In order to approve a request, COCHRD may ask you to provide documentation that you are requesting to move because of an incidence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the request is a request for emergency transfer, the housing provider may ask you to submit a written request or fill out a form where you certify that you meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA. The criteria are:

- 1. You are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.** If COCHRD does not already have documentation that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, COCHRD may ask you for such documentation, as described in the documentation section below.
- 2. You expressly request the emergency transfer.** COCHRD may choose to require that you submit a form, or may accept another written or oral request.
- 3. You reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your current unit.** This means you have a reason to fear that if you do not receive a transfer you would suffer violence in the very near future.

OR

You are a victim of sexual assault and the assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period before you request a transfer. If you are a victim of sexual assault, then in addition to qualifying for an emergency transfer because you reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your unit, you may qualify for an emergency transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises of the property from which you are seeking your transfer, and that assault happened within the 90-calendar-day period before you expressly request the transfer.

COCHRD will keep confidential requests for emergency transfers by victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and the location of any move by such victims and their families.

COCHRD's emergency transfer plan provides further information on emergency transfers, and COCHRD must make a copy of its emergency transfer plan available to you if you ask to see it.

Documenting You Are or Have Been a Victim of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

COCHRD can, but is not required to, ask you to provide documentation to "certify" that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Such request from COCHRD must be in writing, and COCHRD must give you at least 14 business days (Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays do not count) from the day you receive the request to provide the documentation. COCHRD may, but does not have to, extend the deadline for the submission of documentation upon your request.

You can provide one of the following to COCHRD as documentation. It is your choice which of the following to submit if the COCHRD asks you to provide documentation that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- A complete HUD-approved certification form given to you by COCHRD with this notice, that documents an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The form will ask for your name, the date, time, and location of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and a description of the incident. The certification form provides for including the name of the abuser or perpetrator if the name of the abuser or perpetrator is known and is safe to provide.
- A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial, or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency that documents the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Examples of such records include police reports, protective orders, and restraining orders, among others.
- A statement, which you must sign, along with the signature of an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, a medical professional or a mental health professional (collectively, "professional") from whom you sought assistance in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse, and with the professional selected by you attesting under penalty of perjury that he or she believes that the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking are grounds for protection.
- Any other statement or evidence that the COCHRD has agreed to accept.

If you fail or refuse to provide one of these documents within the 14 business days, the COCHRD does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

If the COCHRD receives conflicting evidence that an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has been committed (such as certification forms from two or more members of a household each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the abuser or perpetrator), COCHRD has the right to request that you provide third-party documentation within thirty 30 calendar days in order to resolve the conflict. If you fail or refuse to provide third-party documentation where there is conflicting evidence, COCHRD does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

Immigration Status/Self-Petitioner (PIH Notice 2017-02)

A "Self-Petitioner" is a category of battered noncitizens seeking legal permanent resident status without the cooperation or knowledge of their abusive relative. A "VAWA Self-Petitioner" is a category of battered noncitizens seeking VAWA-related relief and other VAWA-related petitions or applications for lawful permanent resident status.

PIH Notice 2017-02 explains the procedures that COCHRD must follow when an applicant or resident/tenant requests admission or continued residency as a result of being a VAWA self-petitioner

- A. In accordance with Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980, HUD may not allow financial assistance to ineligible non-citizens, but assistance must not be denied while verifying immigration status or appeal of a determination as to satisfactory immigration status is pending.
- B. HUD has determined that self-petitioners can indicate that they are in "satisfactory immigration status" when applying for assistance or continued assistance from Section 214 covered housing providers. "Satisfactory immigration status" means an immigration status which does not make the individual ineligible for financial assistance. After verifying such immigration status in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) System, the COCHRD will make a final determination as to the self-petitioner's eligibility for assistance.

- C. COCHRD will not deny, reduce, or terminate the assistance of a VAWA Self-Petitioner who claims “satisfactory immigration status”. COCHRD will verify that the applicant or participant is a self-petitioner by utilizing the SAVE system to verify immigration status.
- D. All protections afforded under VAWA apply to the self-petitioner throughout the verification process.
- E. Not every noncitizen victim who has been subjected to battery or extreme cruelty will qualify under these procedures. In order to qualify, the noncitizen victim must have been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty by their spouse or parent, who is a U.S. citizen or LPR. COCHRD may receive a petition at any time, but submissions will most likely be related to a request for VAWA protections pursuant to 24 CFR Part 5 Subpart L (e.g. with a request for an emergency transfer or family breakup resulting from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking).
- F. COCHRD will follow the steps outlined in PIH Notice 2017-02 to complete verification.

Confidentiality

COCHRD must keep confidential any information you provide related to the exercise of your rights under VAWA, including the fact that you are exercising your rights under VAWA.

COCHRD must not allow any individual administering assistance or other services on behalf of COCHRD (for example, employees and contractors) to have access to confidential information unless for reasons that specifically call for these individuals to have access to this information under applicable Federal, State, or local law.

COCHRD must not enter your information into any shared database or disclose your information to any other entity or individual. COCHRD, however, may disclose the information provided if:

- You give written permission to COCHRD to release the information on a time limited basis.
- COCHRD needs to use the information in an eviction or termination proceeding, such as to evict your abuser or perpetrator or terminate your abuser or perpetrator from assistance under this program.
- A law requires COCHRD or your landlord to release the information.

VAWA does not limit COCHRD’s duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property. This includes orders issued to protect a victim and orders dividing property among household members in cases where a family breaks up.

Reasons a Tenant Eligible for Occupancy Rights under VAWA May Be Evicted or Assistance May Be Terminated

You can be evicted and your assistance can be terminated for serious or repeated lease violations that are not related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against you. However, COCHRD cannot hold tenants who have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to a more demanding set of rules than it applies to tenants who have not been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

The protections described in this notice might not apply, and you could be evicted and your assistance terminated, if COCHRD can demonstrate that not evicting you or terminating your assistance would present a real physical danger that:

1. Would occur within an immediate time frame, and
2. Could result in death or serious bodily harm to other tenants or those who work on the property.

If COCHRD can demonstrate the above, COCHRD should only terminate your assistance or evict you if there are no other actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat.

Other Laws

VAWA does not replace any Federal, State, or local law that provides greater protection for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. You may be entitled to additional housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under other Federal laws, as well as under State and local laws.

Non-Compliance with The Requirements of This Notice

You may report a covered COCHRD's violations of these rights and seek additional assistance, if needed, by contacting or filing a complaint with Amy Jacobson, Housing and Redevelopment Manager or HUD's Phoenix field office.

For Additional Information

You may view a copy of HUD's final VAWA rule at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-11-16/pdf/2016-25888.pdf>. Additionally, COCHRD must make a copy of HUD's VAWA regulations available to you if you ask to see them. For questions regarding VAWA, please contact your housing specialist.

For help regarding an abusive relationship, you may call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or, for persons with hearing impairments, 1-800-787-3224 (TTY). You may also contact 2-1-1 within Arizona or at <https://211arizona.org/domestic-violence/>

For tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>. For help regarding sexual assault, you may contact 2-1-1 within Arizona or at <https://211arizona.org/domestic-violence/>.

Victims of stalking seeking help may contact 2-1-1 within Arizona or at <https://211arizona.org/domestic-violence/>.

I have received a copy of the Notice regarding Violence Against Women Act.

APPLICANT/TENANT PRINTED NAME: _____

APPLICANT/TENANT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

**CERTIFICATION OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,
DATING VIOLENCE,
SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING,
AND ALTERNATE DOCUMENTATION**

**U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development**

OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Exp. 06/30/2017

Purpose of Form: The Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA") protects applicants, tenants, and program participants in certain HUD programs from being evicted, denied housing assistance, or terminated from housing assistance based on acts of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against them. Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Use of This Optional Form: If you are seeking VAWA protections from your housing provider, your housing provider may give you a written request that asks you to submit documentation about the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

In response to this request, you or someone on your behalf may complete this optional form and submit it to your housing provider, or you may submit one of the following types of third-party documentation:

- (1) A document signed by you and an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, or medical professional, or a mental health professional (collectively, "professional") from whom you have sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse. The document must specify, under penalty of perjury, that the professional believes the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking occurred and meet the definition of "domestic violence," "dating violence," "sexual assault," or "stalking" in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR 5.2003.
- (2) A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency;
or
- (3) At the discretion of the housing provider, a statement or other evidence provided by the applicant or tenant.

Submission of Documentation: The time period to submit documentation is 14 business days from the date that you receive a written request from your housing provider asking that you provide documentation of the occurrence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Your housing provider may, but is not required to, extend the time period to submit the documentation, if you request an extension of the time period. If the requested information is not received within 14 business days of when you received the request for the documentation, or any extension of the date provided by your housing provider, your housing provider does not need to grant you any of the VAWA protections. Distribution or issuance of this form does not serve as a written request for certification.

Confidentiality: All information provided to your housing provider concerning the incident(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking shall be kept confidential and such details shall not be entered into any shared database. Employees of your housing provider are not to have access to these details unless to grant or deny VAWA protections to you, and such employees may not disclose this information to any other entity or individual, except to the extent that disclosure is: (i) consented to by you in writing in a time-limited release; (ii) required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance; or (iii) otherwise required by applicable law.

TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

1. Date the written request is received by victim: _____

2. Name of victim: _____

3. Your name (if different from victim's): _____

4. Name(s) of other family member(s) listed on the lease: _____

5. Residence of victim: _____

6. Name of the accused perpetrator (if known and can be safely disclosed): _____

7. Relationship of the accused perpetrator to the victim: _____

8. Date(s) and times(s) of incident(s) (if known): _____

10. Location of incident(s): _____

In your own words, briefly describe the incident(s):

This is to certify that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that the individual named above in Item 2 is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. I acknowledge that submission of false information could jeopardize program eligibility and could be the basis for denial of admission, termination of assistance, or eviction.

Signature _____ Signed on (Date) _____

Public Reporting Burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting the data. The information provided is to be used by the housing provider to request certification that the applicant or tenant is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The information is subject to the confidentiality requirements of VAWA. This agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.