

The Housing Authority of the Town of Bethel

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TENANT SELECTION PLAN E 166

Project Name: Reynolds Ridge E 166 (E 166)
Project Address: 25 Reynolds Ridge , Bethel, Connecticut 06801
Project Owner: The Housing Authority of the Town of Bethel (BHA)
Project Units: Units 42-82, Inclusive of Community Room #58

OVERVIEW

The Housing Authority of the Town of Bethel or Owner (BHA) built E 166 in 1986 in cooperation with the Town of Bethel, State of Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH) and Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) as their interests may appear. The State Sponsored housing complexes are obligated to follow the applicable state statutes and regulations for each program. The State Sponsored portfolio was transferred to Connecticut Housing Finance Authority/Agency (CHFA) in 2003. E 166 consists of 40 units #42 through #82, inclusive of Community Room #58. There are 36 studio units and 4 are one bedroom units for families and individuals 62 years or older or those with disabilities.

The Elderly Housing Program is subject to Sections 8-114 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Every Elderly Housing complex is subject to the provisions of the Assistance Agreement executed between the Owner and the original authorizing state agency (Dept. of Community Affairs, Department of Housing or DECD).

The Moderate Rental Housing Program is subject to Sections 8-39 and 8-69 through 8-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes "Regulations for the Moderate Rental Housing Program".

Additionally, the owner entered into a cooperative agreement with the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury (HACD) ,in which HACD , through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provide project-based vouchers (PBV) for thirty three (33) units for the project-based rental assistance. BHA and HACD work cooperatively to provide required program guidelines to assist the residents of E166 who are offered the PBV. The funding of these certificates are subject to funding HUD and HACD.

This Tenant Selection Plan (TSP) describes the policies for initial admission and eligibility requirements for admission to developments operated by The BHA and the procedures to be followed in selecting tenants for the dwelling units in the Property

E 166 will follow a rent stratification plan with set asides for resides of low, very low and extremely low incomes.

FAIR HOUSING

The BHA will operate its programs within the Fair Housing regulations under Section 8-37ee-1 through Section 8-37ee-17 and Section 8-37ee-300 through Section 8- 37ee-314 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and in compliance with the state and federal fair housing laws found at 42 U.S.C. §3604ff and C.G.S. 46a.-64c.

The BHA shall not on account of age, ancestry, color, sex, race, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, lawful source of income, familial status, learning disability, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or veteran's status. In addition the Authority/Agency will not:

- Deny to any family the opportunity to apply for housing, nor deny to any qualified applicant the opportunity to lease housing suitable to its needs
- Provide housing which is different from that provided others;
- Subject a person to segregation or disparate treatment

- Restrict a person's access to any benefit enjoyed by others in connection with the housing program;
- Treat a person differently in determining eligibility or other requirements for admission
- Deny a person access to the same level of services;
- Deny a family a reasonable accommodation/modification.

The BHA will identify and eliminate situations or procedures that create a barrier to equal housing opportunity for all.

In making reasonable accommodations or modifications to an otherwise qualified person with a disability, the BHA is not required to:

- Take any action that would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program;
- Take any action that would result in an undue financial and administrative burden on the BHA or its management agent. The BHA office, community rooms, common laundry rooms, meeting rooms and all common areas must be accessible and available for use by residents with a full range of disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

INCOME LIMITS

An applicant must qualify for admission as a low-income household. A low income household is an applicant whose annual income is at or below 80% of Area Median Income, as determined by HUD for the metropolitan statistical area. Applicants who do not meet this requirement will be notified that their application was rejected for that reason. A review of each applicant's eligibility will be performed when HUD publishes the final version of the annual income limits each year.

Reynolds Ridge E 166 will have a minimum base rent set annually by the BHA.

- 7 Units will be set-aside for households with incomes 60% - 80% of the area median income;
- 30 Units will be set-aside for households with incomes 40% - 59% of the area median income
- 3 Units will be set-aside for households with incomes 25% - 39% of the area median income

OPENING AND CLOSING WAITING LISTS

Opening the waiting list

The BHA shall review the waiting list no less than annually to ensure an adequate pool of applicants exist, typically three applicants per bedroom type as well as a sufficient number of persons/families that are "least likely to apply" as determined in the affirmative fair marketing analysis. NOTE: "least likely to apply" means those persons who do not live in the area of the development because of racial or ethnic patterns, perceived community attitudes, price or other factor, and thus need additional outreach to inform them of their opportunity to live in the development

Upon the determination that there is an insufficient pool of applicants, the BHA will publish a notice of intent to accept applications. The notice will be posted on the website of the state designated agency, listed on CTsearch (211 website), In general circulation, minority media. The notice will also be widely distributed to human and social service agencies, including those with a primary mission of serving populations identified in the affirmative fair marketing plan as "least likely to apply"

The notice shall state:

- The time frame for submission of applications and where they should be mailed or delivered.
- The any limitations to who may apply such as maximum income as well as the methodology of rent determination- (base/minimum rent or 30% of adjusted gross income, whichever is higher)
- Unit sizes for which applications are being taken.
- Must have the demonstrated ability to pay the base rent if below the income level at which the base rent is set.
- The waiting list may be closed when a maximum number of applications are received. applications received until the notice is published will be taken even if the maximum number is achieved.
- Persons with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation to ensure that they can be put on the waiting list.

- State who at the BHA applicants can contact if they need a reasonable accommodation to apply for the housing opportunity.

Closing the waiting list

The BHA, at its discretion and in accordance with the fair housing laws and the statutes and regulations governing the applicable housing program, may restrict application intake, suspend application intake, and close waiting lists in whole or in part. A decision to close the waiting lists will be publicly announced using the same affirmative fair housing marketing plan used for opening the waiting list. If the BHA waiting lists have sufficient applicants, have racial and economic diversity and that there are sufficient families who are “least likely to apply” based on the targets in the affirmative fair marketing, or it would be more than 24 months before an applicant may be housed the BHA may elect to with 30 day notice:

- Close the waiting list completely.
- Close the list during certain times of the year.
- Restrict intake by type of project or by size and type of dwelling unit.

Insufficient Number of Least Likely to Apply Applicants (Sec. 8-37ee-306)

The BHA shall evaluate its waiting list for each development to determine whether or not the waiting list provides for racial and economic diversity. If the BHA finds it has an insufficient number of least likely to apply applicants:

- The BHA will use its Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan to market its units.
- The BHA will amend or enhance the marketing approach when found deficient; and document any particular local, regional, and/or market reasons for the failure of the Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan to attract a sufficient pool of applicants who are least likely to apply.
- The BHA shall develop and maintain adequate documentation in a manner prescribed by DOH of its good faith efforts.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is governed by the fair housing laws and particularly the requirement that all housing providers provide reasonable accommodations to applicants to ensure that they qualify for housing to the greatest extent possible. The application process is outlined below and is consistent with State regulations Sec. 8-37ee-303. In the event there is a conflict, applicable state regulations shall govern the process. An applicant whose application indicates a total household income exceeding income limits will be considered ineligible. A letter will be sent to the applicant explaining the income ineligibility.

When Reynolds Ridge is “Accepting Applications” families may obtain pre-application forms by request :

- by telephone - 203-797-9909
- email - office@bethelhousingauthority.org
- by fax - 203-797-0068
- by mail - Management Office - Reynolds Ridge, 25 Reynolds Ridge Bethel, Connecticut 06801
- At the management office.
- A printable version of the pre-application form will also be available on the BHA's web site at www.bethelhousingauthority.org.

All applications will be reviewed for completeness. To be complete, an application must:

- Name each household member, including any live-in aides, when applicable.
- Include a social security number, relationship, date of birth, and income information for each household member over the age of 18.
- Provide asset information for each household member over the age of 18
- Include a signed release of information and consent forms.
- Employment verification, when applicable
- Certify that no household member disposed of any assets at less than fair market value during the two years preceding the certification.
- Provide clear and complete housing history for the past five (5) years, with the landlord names, addresses, and dates of occupancy. If the household combines individuals who have not lived together before the application; then a five (5) year history must be completed for each household member.

If an application is incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by phone or in writing with a request to provide the missing information. No applicant will be placed on the waiting list until the application is completed. Applications must be signed and dated by the applicant wherever required, or they will be considered incomplete.

Once the application is completed and placed on the waitlist a letter of receipt will be mailed, it will include, but not limited to:

- The Control number that was assigned.
- Advise families that it is their responsibility to notify the BHA when a mailing address or phone number change.
- Details of required updates to application.

Compliance with Limited English Proficiency Guidance

Anyone needing help in filling out the forms shall be assisted and all announcements of the opening of waiting lists or notices that applications are being taken shall state that assistance shall be given to anyone needing help. The notice shall state that assistance can be provided in languages other than English. The owner will provide the language services via staff or a language translation line or other available translation services.

Reasonable Accommodation

Sometimes people with disabilities may need a reasonable accommodation in order to take full advantage of the BHA housing programs and related services. When such accommodations are granted, they do not confer special treatment or advantage for the person with a disability; rather, they make the program accessible to them in a way that would otherwise not be possible due to their disability. This policy clarifies how people can request accommodations and the guidelines the BHA will follow in determining whether it is reasonable to provide a requested accommodation. Because disabilities are not always apparent, the BHA will ensure that all applicants/tenants are aware of the opportunity to request a reasonable accommodations.

Applications for admission will include information about requesting a reasonable accommodation. All decisions granting or denying requests for reasonable accommodations will be in writing. The BHA will obtain verification that the person is a person with a disability. The BHA will seek verification that the requested accommodation is related to the disability. The BHA will not inquire as to the nature of the disability. The BHA shall not request copies of medical records or require that the information be from a doctor as it can come from any treating medical provider. The Doctor or treating medical provider may submit a Reasonable Accommodation form. In order to be determined reasonable, the accommodation must meet two criteria:

- Would the accommodation constitute a fundamental alteration of the housing program? The BHA's business is housing. If the request would alter the fundamental business that the BHA conducts, that would not be reasonable.
- Would the requested accommodation create an undue financial hardship or administrative burden? Frequently the requested accommodation costs little or nothing. If the cost would be an undue burden, BHA may request a meeting with the individual to investigate and consider equally effective alternatives.

Generally the individual knows best what it is they need; however, the BHA retains the right to be shown how the requested accommodation enables the individual to access or use the BHA programs or services.

If more than one accommodation is equally effective in providing access to the BHA programs, the BHA retains the right to select the most efficient or economic choice.

Live In Aides

The BHA requires Live In Aides to follow a similar process as applicants to reside on the property. To determine eligibility the BHA will complete, but not limited to, a credit/criminal check, landlord and employment references. Neither the income or medical expenses or any other deductions of the aide will be used in rent calculation.

Organization of the waiting list

The waiting list must be organized in such a manner to allow the BHA to accurately identify and select families in the proper order. Completed applications for eligible households will be placed on the waiting list based upon appropriate bedroom size for the household, including a live-in aide. Completed applications will be listed in order of date and time received. The waiting list contains the following minimum information for each applicant listed:

- Control Number
- Family unit size
- Qualification for any disability or reasonable accommodation
- Annual income and assets

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION

In determining eligibility for admission, owners must not adopt any admission criteria which discriminates or has the effect of discriminating against any family based upon age, ancestry, color, sex, race, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, lawful source of income, familial status, learning disability, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or veteran status. In addition, the owner has an obligation to make reasonable accommodations in its screening criteria to ensure that people with disabilities are able to use and access the housing.

Legal screening criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Income eligibility, income to debt ratio, Demonstrated ability to pay rent on time.
- Number of people in the family that conforms to the occupancy standards which are appropriate to the vacant unit
- References from former landlords.
- Credit checks Satisfactory housekeeping habits based on visits to the applicant's current residence if located within 30 miles or landlord references.
- For State Sponsored Elderly properties applicants must be a person who is sixty-two years of age or older at time of move in, or a person who has been certified by the Social Security Board as being totally disabled under the Federal Social Security Act or certified by any other federal board or agency as being totally disabled. [CGS sec. 8-113a]

Grounds for disqualification

In addition to the above screening criteria, applicants can be denied for:

- Ineligibility because of a conviction of a current household member of drug-related criminal activity for the production or manufacture of illegal drugs.
- Ineligibility because a current household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a federal or state sex offender registration program.
- Ineligibility because a current household member has engaged in criminal activity that is a threat to the health or safety of other tenants is determined on a case by case basis, taking into account all factors. Additional guidance for owners regarding the use of criminal records can be found at HUD.gov and chfa.org and by providing an opportunity for clarification if needed prior to the determination.
- Ineligibility because the family has a pattern of late payments within the last twelve months (see 8-37ee- 305E-(1)(b) without reasonable justification (justification may be loss of job, substandard housing) or eviction from housing or termination from residential programs within the past five years (considering all relevant circumstances).
- Applicant knowingly falsifies information on the application or during the process.
- Applicant or any member of household has a history of disturbing neighbors, destroying property living/housekeeping habits which would substantially interfere with the health safety or peaceful enjoyment of other residents.

Illegal screening criteria include but are not limited to:

- Residency requirements
- Proof of U.S. citizenship
- Employment of individuals or families

- Limits on sources of income that will be considered so long as the income is legal
- Ability to live independently

Exception for Elderly Housing

CHFA may, for periods of up to one year, authorize an owner to admit persons who are less than sixty-two years of age but not less than fifty-five years of age (near elderly) provided that the owner submits an application approved by the chief executive officer of the municipality in which the owner is located demonstrating that:

- the owner is not able to attract an adequate number of elderly persons to occupy the project who are also diverse racially and economically and,
- the owner has (1) published a notice, at least once each week during the thirty days preceding the submission of its application, in one or more newspapers having a substantial circulation in the municipality, indicating that the units are available and, (2) sent such notice, at least thirty days preceding submission of its application, to each housing Authority/Agency, municipal developer or non-profit corporation operating an elderly housing project of fifty or more units pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes. [CGS Sec. 8-115a] and (3) the owner has used its Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan to notify all interested persons of the change in eligibility; (4) the owner has used its Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan to attract an adequate number of elderly persons who are least likely to apply to the project.
- No person admitted to such project pursuant to these provisions shall be evicted from or denied continued occupancy of such project solely because such person is less than sixty-two years of age but not less than 55 years of age.

VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

All information from each applicant must be verified in writing. Any information relative to the acceptance or rejection of an applicant must be documented and placed in the applicant's file. This may include reports of interviews, letters or telephone conversations by BHA and be a reliable source. These reports must minimally include the name and title of the individual contacted, date of contact and a summary of the information received.

- Sources of information may include, but are not limited to, the applicant (by means of an interview or home visit), landlords, employers, family social workers, parole officers, credit bureaus, court records, drug treatment centers, clinics, physicians, police department or agencies that provide such information, where necessary. Appropriate releases will be obtained from the applicant. An owner is not entitled to obtain medical records of any kind.
- If an applicant must be disabled to qualify for a property, the owner may obtain proof of disability such as a letter awarding disability benefits.
- If the owner elects to use a credit bureau or any agency whose business is considered that of a credit bureau, denial notices must conform to the requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

The number bedrooms required to accommodate each family shall be determined by the square footage requirements as stated in the state building code as applicable.

Number of Bedroom	Minimum Number of Persons	Maximum Number of Persons
Studio	1	2
One	1	2

TENANT SELECTION METHODOLOGY

Completed Pre Applications will be placed on the waitlist base on date and time received.

Being placed on the waiting list in no way guarantees housing. Upon a unit opening a more detailed verification of information and eligibility will be performed.

The BHA, within the program statutory income limits has targeted set-asides (Rent Stratification) for low, very low and extremely low income individuals and families. When a housing opportunity (vacant unit) becomes available the opportunity will be offered to the applicants on the wait list within the targeted set asides, stating the base rent and income eligibility for the unit. Applicants on the waiting list who can afford units in the low income category will be afforded opportunities for units in the low income category. Likewise, applicants in the very low income category will be afforded opportunities for units within the very low income category. Only applicants meeting the criteria for extremely low income will be housed in units reserved for extremely low income. Applicants in lower income categories, who demonstrate the ability to pay the base rent in a higher income unit will not be denied, provided they meet other screening criteria. However, higher income applicants (meeting the program maximum income guidelines) will not be placed into units targeted specifically for very low and extremely low, unless there are no applicants on the waiting list. The agency will market the set-aside income category units using its Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan to maintain a waiting list of eligible applicants.

Low, very low and extremely low incomes are defined annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the purposes of this plan.

The BHA will set forth in the budget, for approval by CHFA, the targeted set asides in each income category, bearing in mind the population to be served in the local community and the statutory requirements to generate sufficient income from rents to cover all operating expenses, any applicable debt service and create a provision for replacement reserve to cover capital needs.

WHEN A UNIT BECOMES AVAILABLE

The BHA will first review internal transfer requests before pulling from the waitlist. Eligible households will be assigned to the next available unit appropriate for the size of the family, including any live-in aide, or reasonable accommodation

Current residents with a reasonable accommodation for mobility or sensory impairments will be offered units at the property that offer the accommodation first. If no current resident has a need for the accessible unit, it will be offered to the next qualified applicant on the waiting list who needs the special features. If there are no applicants on the waiting list who require such a unit, the unit will be offered to the next qualified applicant. In such cases, the lease for the unit will require the household to promptly move to another comparable unit at the property if an applicant needed the accessibility of the unit.

Each applicant determined to be eligible shall be promptly notified by the BHA of such determination and of the approximate date of occupancy, insofar as that date can be reasonably determined.

Internal Transfer

A resident must submit a written request to the BHA for an internal transfer stating the reasons for the request. The proper documentation for BHA review and possibly consultation with the Resident Service Coordinator or Social Service Professional. If the resident is denied the move, they will be sent a letter stating the reason for the denial and an option to have an informal hearing. An internal transfer will be approved if the family meets the eligibility criteria for a transfer and:

- The current unit is inspected by the Management Agent and found to be clean and free of damage.
- The current resident has had a change in income that permanently and substantially affects the ability to pay the current rent requirement, a written request may be made to transfer to a unit with rental assistance or a lower income requirement. Upon management review, if the next unit that becomes available would protect the resident from being rent burdened, that resident may relocate to the unit available. If the resident is denied the move, they will be sent a letter stating the reason for the denial and an option to have an informal hearing.
- if the household includes a family member who needs the features of an accessible and an accessible unit of appropriate size is available and their unit cannot be modified.
- A household that is under-housed may transfer to larger unit based on a change in household composition if the transfer is consistent with the property occupancy policies.
- Other extraordinary circumstances are present in the household that justify a transfer, including, but not limited to, medical reasons.
- The current unit is inspected by the BHA and found to be clean and free of damage.

- For the 12 month period prior to the request for the transfer, all members of the household were compliant with the lease and all other resident obligations.
- Each move to a new unit may be considered a new admission. The resident household must complete all required applications, submit all necessary verifications and establish eligibility for occupancy prior to the transfer to the new unit.
- They will only be moved if the current unit cannot be modified to satisfy those needs.

Denial of an Internal Transfer

A current resident may be denied an internal transfer if they do not meet the internal transfer criteria. The denial will be sent in a written letter stating the reason for denial with an option for an informal hearing.

Pulling from the waitlist

The next 5-10 applicants that qualify for the income requirement of the unit according to the application or application updates will be notified that a unit is available. The applicant will be mailed a notice of a unit opening, by first class mail, sent to the last address that the BHA has on record. The notice will include a questionnaire, a release of information form and certification of disposed assets. The notice will provide a deadline of a minimum of 10 business days by which the family must respond and will state that failure to respond will result in the applicant's name being removed from the wait list. If the notice is returned by the post office with no forwarding address, the applicant will be removed from the waiting list without further notice. If the notice is returned by the post office with a forwarding address, the notice will be re-sent to the address indicated. The family will have 14 business days to respond from the date the letter was re-sent. If a family is removed from the waiting list for failure to respond, the BHA may reinstate the family if they determine that the lack of response was due to the BHA's error, or to circumstances beyond the family's control.

Once the completed paperwork is received the BHA will conduct a final screening of household eligibility in accordance with Sec. 8-37ee-305 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Determining eligibility of an applicant shall include but not limited to:

- Credit/Criminal records
- Income eligibility of all applicants.
- Pre-screening/interviewing for credit worthiness
- Verification of applicant information.
- Interview or home visit
- Landlord references
- Income to debt ratio
- Third party verifications.

Once the review of information has been satisfied, the applicant highest on the waitlist would be offered the unit. If the applicant does not satisfy the requirements or has derogatory credit/criminal check and/or landlord references, etc. a denial letter will be sent stating the reason with an option to request an informal hearing.

An applicant may be "passed over" if another applicant requires an ADA equipped or wheelchair accessible unit and one could be made available. If there are no applicants on the waiting list who require such a unit, the unit will be offered to the next qualified applicant. In such cases, the lease for the unit will require the household to promptly move to another comparable unit at the property if an applicant needed the accessibility of the unit.

An applicant has the right to refuse a suitable unit within the established tier. If they refuse a suitable unit, they will go to the bottom of the waitlist. If the applicant refuses a suitable unit the second time, they will be removed from the waitlist. They may reapply if BHA is accepting applications.

The BHA must maintain a clear record of all information required to verify that the family was selected from the waiting list according to the BHA's selection policies.

VERIFICATION AND SCREENING

Verification of Eligible Non-Citizen Status: The Management Agent will verify the validity of the documentation of eligible non-citizen status with DHS at the time of initial application.

Credit History: To determine the applicant's capacity to pay rent on a timely basis, The BHA will examine the applicant's credit history. The applicant will not be responsible for payment of the cost of a credit report. A poor credit history will not necessarily be a basis for rejection of the application. Instead, the BHA will consider such factors as whether the applicant's credit report and other verification indicates a consistent and repeated history of non-payment of housing related costs, the age, size and number of debts, whether the credit history resulted from disability or illness, or other factors that indicate the applicant is likely to pay rent in the future. (NOTE: lack of credit history, as opposed to a poor credit history, is not sufficient grounds to reject an applicant)

Rental History: Past record of destruction, consistent late or unpaid rental obligations, police activity, poor housekeeping habits resulting in health or safety hazards or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents is grounds for rejection. NOTE: Lack of rental history is not grounds for rejection.

Criminal History:

Applicants will be rejected if any of the following apply. NOTE: The same criteria regarding criminal history applies to live-in aides also.

- Any household member has been evicted from Federally-assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity, for five (5) years from the date of eviction. If the evicted household member who engaged in drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program or circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist (e.g., the household member no longer resides with the applicant household) the Owner may, but is not required to, admit the household.
- Any household member is currently engaging in illegal drug use.
- Any member of the household is subject to a lifetime registration requirement or is currently registered under a state sex offender registration program. During the admissions screening process, the Owner must perform the necessary criminal history background checks in the state where the housing is located and in other states where the household members are known to have resided.
- The Owner determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that a household member's illegal use or a pattern of illegal use of a drug or alcohol may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. (Screening standards must be based on behavior, not the condition of alcoholism.)
- Any member of the applicant's household has been convicted of the manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of federally subsidized housing (lifetime).
- Violent criminal activity which indicates a pattern of violence that may threaten the safety of residents or staff. Violent criminal activity includes sex crimes and crimes against children.
- Any criminal activity that would threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents, the owner or any employee who is involved in the housing operations.
- Unlawfully obtaining government assistance.

DENIAL OF ADMISSION

Applicants deemed ineligible, for whatever reason(s), shall be notified in writing of the reason(s) for rejection and their right to appeal. The BHA will inform applicants that an appeal must be made within 10 business days. This will also allow the applicant to return to the applicant pool if they prevail. NOTE: If the applicant did not respond to a BHA request for information or updates because of the family member's disability, the BHA must reinstate the applicant family to their former position on the waiting list.

Denial based on Credit Report

If an applicant is denied admission based on a credit report, the written notification of denial will include:

- A statement that the application was rejected because of the credit report
- The name, address and telephone number of the credit reporting agency
- A statement that the applicant is entitled to obtain a free copy of the credit report from the credit reporting agency within sixty days of the notice
- A statement that the applicant has the right to dispute the accuracy of the credit report with the credit-reporting agency
- The opportunity for an informal conference.

Other Grounds for Denial

Applicants may be denied from final selection upon documentary verification of any of the following but not limited to:

- The applicant or any member of the applicant's household has a history of disturbing neighbors, destroying property, or living/housekeeping habits which would substantially interfere with the health, safety, or peaceful enjoyment of other residents.
- The applicant has a history of rental non-payments within the past 12 months without reasonable justification (justification might be: substandard housing, loss of a job, etc.)
- The applicant has knowingly falsified information in the application process.
- The applicant cannot demonstrate an ability to pay the base rent.
- A demonstrated risk that the applicant may be unable or unwilling to pay rent, based on a persistent pattern of non-payment of rent and other obligations that indicates a reasonable likelihood that the applicant will not pay the rent on a timely basis.
- A reasonable risk that the applicant, or those under the applicant's control, may interfere with the health, safety, security, or rights of other residents to a safe home in the Property, based on a history of violent or destructive behavior.
- A reasonable risk of intentional damage or destruction to the apartment unit or the Property based on a history of violent or destructive behavior.
- The applicant knowingly misrepresented or falsified any information required as part of the application for admission.
- Fraud in any federal housing programs.
- Amounts owed to a public housing agency ("PHA") in connection with the Section 8 program or public housing;
- Failure to re-pay a PHA for amounts paid by the PHA to a landlord for unpaid rent.
- A reasonable likelihood that the applicant is likely to engage in the illegal use of drugs, drug-related criminal activity, violent criminal activity or substance abuse (including the abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs), other criminal activity, or other behavior that may threaten the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents, Authority/Agency or employees of the Management Agent.

Mandatory Denial of Applications: The Owner is required to deny admission to:

- Applicants who are subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program, including but not limited to the registration program required by Connecticut General Statutes, Chapter 969
- Applicants who were convicted for the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises or federally assisted housing.
- Applicants whose federal housing assistance was terminated for drug-related criminal activity, illegal use of drugs, violent criminal activity at any time during the three years prior to admission to the Property. The Owner may, in its sole discretion, admit such an individual if the applicant is no longer engaged in drug-related criminal activity or illegal use of drugs, and successfully completed an approved supervised drug rehabilitation program.
- Any applicant who refuses to comply with the Social Security Number requirements of the Tenant Selection Plan.
- Any applicant that does not comply with the certification and verification requirements for citizenship or eligible non-citizen status.
- An applicant with an income in excess of 80% of Area Median Income.
- An applicant who is an ineligible student.

Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances

The purpose of screening is to determine the applicant's future ability to comply with the basic eligibility requirements of the property and the basic requirements of the lease, with or without supportive services, or a reasonable accommodation. In circumstances where the denial of admission is not required, the BHA may, in its sole discretion, consider all of the individual circumstances, including the seriousness and extent of the past history, the culpability of other household members, the need to make a reasonable modification in program screening standards for a person with disabilities, evidence of rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment, evidence of job loss, health problems, any factors outside the control of the applicant, and other mitigating circumstances

Informal Hearing

If an informal hearing is requested, an impartial hearing officer may be chosen by the BHA. A written opinion will be completed within five days of the hearing. All appeals are recommended to be heard within five days of the request.

At the hearing, the hearing officer consideration shall be given to:

- Any requests for a reasonable accommodation that would result in the owner waiving consideration of past behavior unless the behavior, if continued, would pose a threat to the health or safety of others;
- Any information that shows that the reason for the disqualification was the result of circumstances outside of the family's control including but not limited to late or non-payment of rent/mortgage because of loss or reduction in employment, medical or disability related issues which resulted in non-payment or late payment of bills, timing of receipt of public benefits which resulted in late payment of bills or rent;
- Any information which shows a change in circumstance that would ensure that the reason for disqualification would not recur including but not limited to the ouster or banning of the household member creating the reason for disqualification, drug or alcohol treatment, medical treatment of the condition causing the reason for the disqualification
- Any information which demonstrates that the reason for the disqualification was the result of domestic violence.
- Any other information which shows that the reason for the disqualification is not likely to recur.

The BHA shall keep the following materials on file for at least three years:

- application;
- initial rejection notice;
- any applicant reply;
- the recipient's final response; and
- all interview and verified information on which the rejection was based.

Applicants still aggrieved shall be informed of their right to appeal the decision of the hearing officer to the department's affirmative action office. Such appeal shall be made in writing, and brought within fourteen (14) days of the adverse decision.

The BHA will update the waiting list at least once per year by removing the names of those individuals/families that are no longer interested, no longer qualify for housing or cannot be reached by telephone or mail. This update request will be sent to the last address that the BHA has on record for the family. The notice will ask the following but not limited to;

- Confirmation of continued interest
- Update of assets/ability to pay
- If an applicant fails to respond to a mailing from the BHA within the time specified, they will be removed from the waiting list.
- That person with disabilities are subject to reasonable accommodation.

Removal from the waitlist

Applications will be removed from the waiting list in the following additional situations:

- The applicant household withdraws the application in writing.
- The applicant refuses an offer of a suitable unit at the development for a second time.
- Additional information indicates that the applicant is no longer eligible.
- Correspondence sent to the last address provided by the applicant is returned as undeliverable. If an application is removed from the waiting list in error, the applicant will be reinstated to the original position on the waiting list

