



PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER VACANCY CLAIM INSTRUCTIONS

If an assisted family moves out of a contract unit, the owner may keep the housing assistance payment for the calendar month when the family moves out provided the vacancy is not the owner's fault. At the discretion of the PHA, the HAP contract may provide for vacancy payments to the owner when the tenant moves out. If vacancy payments are permitted in the HAP contract, the PHA may provide vacancy payments to the owner for the vacancy period extending from the beginning of the first calendar month after the move-out month for a period not to exceed two full months following the move-out month (it may be less).

1. **VACANCY LOSS**

- a. When the unit is vacated an owner is entitled to submit a vacancy claim. The owner must take every reasonable action to fill the vacancy as quickly as possible. Documentation verifying that an owner has attempted to fill the vacant unit and collect any amounts due from the tenant is required. Unit transfers are not eligible for vacancy loss except for those approved as a Reasonable Accommodation or due to special circumstances and approved by Housing Services Director.
- b. To be eligible for a vacancy loss payment, the owner must:
 - i. give prompt written notice to PHA upon learning of the prospective vacancy, certifying the date that the family moved out to the best of the owner's knowledge; and
 - ii. certify that the vacancy is not the fault of the owner and that the unit was vacant during the period for which payment is claimed;
 - iii. certify that they have taken every reasonable action to minimize the likelihood and length of the vacancy; and
 - iv. submit the following documentation to verify that the owner is entitled to vacancy payment:
 1. Completed Vacancy Claim Form;
 2. Copy of letter or e-mail sent notifying the housing authority of the vacancy;
 3. Copy of the documented wait list with the outcome of applicants contacted and reason for rejecting any applicant;
 4. Any additional information requested by the PHA to support the vacancy claim.

2. **VACANCY PAYMENT**

The vacancy payment will be determined by PHA and cannot exceed 80% of the contract rent minus any portion of the rental payments received by the owner (including amounts available from the tenant's security deposit). Vacancy payments may only cover the period the unit remains vacant and only for the period agreed to in the HAP contract.

3. **CLAIM DEADLINE**

The completed vacancy claim and supporting documentation must be submitted within 10 business days of the end of the vacancy period for which the owner is requesting payment regardless if the unit has been re-rented.

Late claims will not be accepted.

Mail Vacancy Claim to: **Portland Housing Authority**
Attn: Linda Ballew
14 Baxter Blvd.
Portland, ME 04101-1822
E-mail: lballew@porthouse.org

4. **FUTURE PAYMENTS**

If an owner receives payments from the family after the housing authority has paid the vacancy claim, they must reimburse the housing authority to prevent double payment. Failure to do so would constitute fraud.

5. **REDUCTION OF CONTRACT UNITS**

If any contract unit has been vacant for a period of 120 days or more since the owner notice of vacancy (and notwithstanding the reasonable good faith efforts of the PHA to fill such vacancy), the PHA may give notice to the

owner amending the HAP contract to reduce the number of contract units by subtracting the number of contract units that have been vacant for such period.