



VAWA

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Emergency Transfer Plan

APPROVED BY RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Pending Approval

EFFECTIVE: Pending Approval

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Lake County Housing Authority

Model Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

Lake County Housing Authority (LCHA) is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**,¹ LCHA allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The ability of LCHA to honor such request for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether LCHA has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are:

1. eligible for an emergency transfers,
2. the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer,
3. confidentiality protections,
4. how an emergency transfer may occur, and
5. guidance to tenants on safety and security.

This plan is based on a model emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal agency that oversees that Lake County Housing Authority is in compliance with VAWA.

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if: the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

- A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.
- Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify LCHA and submit a written request for a transfer to their LCHA caseworker. LCHA will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under LCHA's program; **OR**
2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer; **AND**
3. If currently under a written lease, a copy of the written notification to their landlord of their intent to transfer from the unit under the VAWA.

Confidentiality

LCHA will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives LCHA written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

LCHA cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. LCHA will, however, act as quickly as possible to move³ a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. LCHA may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If LCHA has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency is eligible, LCHA will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, LCHA will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

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>.

Additional Information

You may view a copy of HUD's final VAWA rule at:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-11-16/pdf/2016-25888.pdf>

Additionally, **Lake County Housing Authority** must make a copy of HUD's VAWA regulations available to you if you ask to see them.

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the participant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe. Participants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Participants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/> . Participants 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> .

Please see additional organizations below that can provide services to those who are victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking.

- A Safe Place – 847-249-4450 www.asafeplaceforhelp.org
- Catholic Charities (847) 782-4000 <https://catholiccharities.net/default.aspx>
- Salvation Army 847-336-1880 www.sawaukegan.org
- Lake County Coalition for the Homeless www.lakecountyhomeless.org/
- Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline 877-863-6338
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=30275>
- Fleet and Family Support Center 847-688-3603
- Most Blessed Trinity– 224-430-4977 <http://www.mostblessedtrinityparish.org/>