

* Effective Immediately
4/24/2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: MICHAEL J. JOHNSTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FROM: ZACHARY GORDON, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER
SUBJECT: TEMPORARY AMENDMENT TO CAMBRIDGE EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE FOR WAITLIST APPLICANTS
DATE: APRIL 24, 2020
CC: BRENDA DOWNING, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
HANNAH BOLCOME, DIRECTOR OF LEASED HOUSING
KEVIN BRAGA, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

This memorandum recommends a temporary amendment to CHA's interpretation of the local preference given to waitlist applicants working in Cambridge. The amendment would allow CHA to accept verification that residents were working in Cambridge as of February 2020 to maintain local preference. This memo applies to both Operations and Leased Housing applicants and would be in effect from 3/1/2020 – 9/30/2020.

BACKGROUND

CHA waitlists, with the exception of the SRO waitlist, currently have the following local preferences in place:

a. Resident of Cambridge: An applicant that is permanently living in Cambridge on the date that he/she submitted a preliminary application, the date of screening, and the date of final certification. Although there is no requirement that an applicant live in Cambridge for a specified period of time before becoming eligible as a household, the applicant's housing arrangements must have been intended to be permanent and not temporary in nature.

However, if an applicant is temporarily living with relatives in Cambridge or is living in a shelter in or outside of Cambridge and, in either case, the applicant's last permanent residence and domicile was in Cambridge, then he/she shall still be considered a resident of Cambridge. Residents also include families living in Congregate Housing or Single Room Occupancy arrangements in Cambridge.

b. Residency Transitional Households: An applicant that is currently living in a Cambridge shelter or transitional facility OR was living in a Cambridge shelter or transitional facility but was later relocated by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and/or service provider to a facility outside of Cambridge.

c. Employed or about to be employed: Any non-resident applicant employed or about to be employed in Cambridge on the date of application, the date of screening, and the date of final certification. This includes self-employed persons who can demonstrate specific arrangements

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, there is the potential for incoming applicants to have lost employment from the economic fallout of the crisis. This would typically cause these applicants to lose

their local employment preference. The recommendation below seeks to remedy the potential impact to applicants.

RECOMMENDATION

From 3/1/2020 – 9/30/2020, CHA, will allow Leased Housing and Operations waitlist applicants, who lost employment due to the Covid-19 pandemic, to show verification of employment in Cambridge from February 2020. Acceptable forms of verification will include paystubs, letter from employer on official letterhead, or other verifiable documentation. This will allow these applicants to keep their preference for screening. The policy should be reviewed again in September 2020 to determine if there is need for an extension of the amendment.

PROPOSED MOTION

MOTION: That the Board of Commissioners of the Cambridge Housing Authority approve the recommended temporary policy change outlined in the memorandum from Zachary Gordon, Senior Program Manager, to Michael Johnston, Executive Director.

* At CHA's meeting of the Board of Commissioners on April 8, 2020, the Board granted authority to the ED to issue revisions to policies without first seeking Board Approval. This item will go to next meeting on 5/13.