

Metro West Housing Solutions

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

Emergency Transfers

Metro West Housing Solutions (MWHS) 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 MWHS 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 MWHS 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 MWHS 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 eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model

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.

emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal agency that oversees that the Housing Choice Voucher Program is in compliance with VAWA.

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 MWHS' management office and submit a written request for a transfer to the main office located at 575 Union Blvd Suite 100, Lakewood Colorado 80228. MWHS will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

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 MWHS' 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.

Confidentiality

MWHS will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives MWHS 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. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Tenants for more information about MWHS' responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

MWHS cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. MWHS will, however, act as quickly as possible to move 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. MWHS may be unable to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If MWHS has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency is eligible, MWHS 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, MWHS 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>.

Attachment: Local organizations and offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. See below:

Metro West Housing Solutions (MWHS) will continue to provide information and referrals to its clients as well as enforce policies to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking or enhance victim safety in assisted families. There are nine separate domestic violence programs and agencies in the vicinity that offer services for victims. Below is a brief

description of the domestic violence resources for children and adult victims of domestic violence:

Porchlight – A Family Justice Center:

Porchlight is a collaboration of over 70 partner agencies working together, many under one roof, to provide services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, crimes against children, elder and at-risk individual abuse, and human trafficking in Jefferson and Gilpin Counties.

Porchlight will provide an entryway into a network of services for victims of violence. Visitors to the center will have access to comprehensive legal, medical, law enforcement, emotional, and community support services to assist in their healing, all in one place.

Porchlight – A Family Justice Center

11100 W. 8th Avenue, Lakewood, CO 80215

303-271-6100

www.porchlightfjc.org

Family Tree Domestic Violence Services:

Serving adult and child victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking; families who have experienced break-up of their homes through divorce or separation; and children who have witnessed family violence and/or experienced abuse in their homes. All services are available in Spanish. Programs include:

- Women in Crisis – Domestic Violence Emergency Residential Services
- Parenting Time program
- Domestic Violence Outreach program
- Legal Advocacy program
- Domestic Violence Trainings and Workshops

Family Tree Domestic Violence Outreach program

3805 Marshall St. Wheat Ridge, CO 80033

303-463-6321

www.thefamilytree.org

Domestic Violence Initiative for Women with Disabilities:

Support services to crime victims with disabilities, assistance with additional services, and education about legal rights.

303-839-5510

www.dviforwomen.org

DOVE – Services for Abused Deaf Women and Children:

Provides support for victims in the Colorado Deaf Community.

303-831-7932

www.deafdove.org

Gateway Domestic Violence Services, (Arapahoe County):

Provides emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis line, safety planning, support groups, court advocacy, and counseling.

303-343-1851

www.gateway2.org

Project Safeguard (Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver Counties):

Works with victims of domestic violence who need assistance with the legal system (protective orders, divorce, custody)

303-637-7761 (Adams County)

303-799-3977 (Arapahoe County)

720-887-2179 (Broomfield County)

720-865-9159 (Denver County)

www.psghelps.org

Safehouse Denver (Denver County):

Provides emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis line, safety planning, advocacy, community resources, counseling, children's programs and support groups. Offers LGBTQ+ services.

303-318-9989

www.safehouse-denver.org

Servicios De La Raza (VISTAS):

Provides culturally and linguistically responsive services (including legal and immigration advocacy) for English and Spanish-speaking victims of domestic violence, dating abuse, sexual assault, and stalking.

303-953-5930

www.serviciusdelaraza.org/vistas

The Crisis Center (Douglas County):

Provides emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis line, safety planning, advocacy, community resources, legal advocacy, therapy.

303-688-8484

www.thecrisiscenter.org

Additional Victim Assistance and Legal Resources:**Asian Pacific Development Center (Denver, Aurora, Westminster)**

Assistance applying for financial services, emergency housing, victim compensation funds, crisis counseling, and legal advocacy.

303-393-0304

www.apdc.org

Colorado Legal Services:

Possible legal representation based on income.

303-837-1313

www.coloradolegalservices.org

The Center for Trauma and Resilience:

Responsive services to victims of crime (food, clothing, shelter, and financial aid) counseling and support groups.

303-894-8000

www.traumahealth.org

Jefferson County Crime Victim Compensation (Jefferson County):

Provides financial assistance to victims of crime.

303-271-6846

www.jeffco.us/district-attorney/victim-and-witness-assistance/

(See VAWA Protection Section 8 Administration Plan Section 17.1)