

Attachment M

Violence Against Women Act Statement

Per the requirements of the 2005 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) is required to include a statement concerning VAWA as an attachment to its five-year and annual plans, effective with the FY 2009 plan submission. This statement is submitted in response to that requirement.

The FCRHA notified current Public Housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) participants of their rights under VAWA and HCV landlords of their responsibilities under this law, in January 2007. The notifications to the residents/participants contained:

- A description of what the law states and what protections it offers them;
- Instructions for what to do if they or their family are being victimized;
- Domestic violence services provided by Fairfax County, along with phone numbers for each service;
- What the FCRHA requires to certify the abuse took place and that the victim(s) took action against the abuser;
- How reports will be kept confidential; and
- What the FCRHA will do once a report is filed and how to file a report.

The notifications sent to HCV landlords contain a description of what the law states and how it applies to them; what landlords should do if violence is occurring in their units; what protections they can offer to their residents; and what actions the landlord can take if the abuser re-enters the unit.

All residents/participants receive a VAWA acknowledgement form at recertification that explains their rights. All household members over 18 are required to sign this form, indicating that they understand these rights. Landlords receive a letter stating what their responsibilities are in regards to VAWA.

The FCRHA has an ongoing relationship with Fairfax County's Domestic Violence Coordinator and staff refers clients to her when a need for services has been established.

It is the FCRHA's policy that no applicant who has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking shall be denied admission into the program if he/she is otherwise qualified. An incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking will not be construed as a serious or repeated violation of the lease by the victim or threatened victim of that violence, and shall not be good cause for terminating the assistance, tenancy, or occupancy rights of the victim of such violence. The FCRHA may terminate assistance and remove a lawful occupant or tenant who engages in criminal acts or threatened acts of violence or stalking against family members or others without terminating the assistance or evicting victimized lawful

occupants. The FCRHA will honor court orders regarding the rights of access to or control of the property, including civil protection orders, emergency protective orders, and other orders issued to protect the victim and to address the distribution or possession of property among household members in cases where the family breaks up.

There is no limitation on the ability of the FCRHA to terminate assistance for other good cause unrelated to the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, other than the victim may not be subject to a “more demanding standard” than non-victims. There is no prohibition on the FCRHA terminating assistance if it “can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing service to the property if that tenant’s (victim’s) assistance is not terminated.” Any protections provided by law which give greater protection to the victim are not superseded by these provisions. The FCRHA may require certification by the victim of victim status on such forms as the FCRHA and/or HUD shall prescribe and approve.