



July/August 2016

## BREAKING NEWS

### New TRACS Communication Protocol

Effective August 1, 2016, TRACS' iMAX system began using the WSDL (Web Services Description Language) protocol for sending and receiving TRACS files.

**If your software is not updated to use this same WSDL protocol, your TRACS transmissions (tenant and voucher files) after July 31, 2016 WILL NOT BE SUCCESSFUL!** You will not be able to send or receive TRACS files from/to HUD or your CA.

You should have already received information from your software vendor regarding this critical software update. If you haven't, you should contact them **immediately** to avoid any disruption with your voucher payments.

Although this new protocol has been in testing for several months, you should be diligent in verifying (by logging directly into the TRACS system) that your files are being successfully accepted and processed in TRACS.

### RHIIP Listserv #358 – Homelessness Assistance Resources

HUD is encouraging owners and agents to help end homelessness. The [Homeless Assistance Resources website](#) has been released by HUD, via [RHIIP Listserv #358](#) to provide tools to owners and agents to help combat this epidemic.

The Homeless Assistance Resources website provides links to useful information regarding homelessness and includes guidance on how to request a homeless preference. An owner-adopted homeless preference would allow homeless applicant households to move to the top of the waiting list (assuming no other preferences exist at the property. If so, the preferences would have to be weighted in the Tenant Selection Plan and priorities assigned). Remember that preferences only affect the order of applicants on the waiting list – they do not make otherwise ineligible individuals eligible and does not indicate that applicants **must** meet the preference to move in (HUD Handbook 4350.3, Rev-1, Change 4, 4-6 A.1.) Also, all owner adopted preferences **must** be approved by HUD prior to implementation. Once the preference is approved, the property's Tenant Selection Plan **must** be updated to reflect the preference and the waiting list handled accordingly.

For questions, please email HUD at [mfhfp@hud.gov](mailto:mfhfp@hud.gov). Be sure to include your city and state in your email message.

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### Quick Tip for Creating an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan Submission

As more Owners gear up for upcoming PBCA–conducted Management and Occupancy Reviews (MORs), many are discovering a common submission challenge as they attempt to update their property’s Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan. Specifically, when completing Worksheet 1 of the HUD AFHMP Form- 935.2A, the instructions require the owner to tabulate and document the race and ethnic breakout of the applicants on the property’s waiting list. Depending on the number of pending applicants, this can be a laborious task if such information is not already being gathered as part of the application process. The following is a summary of HUD’s regulatory guidance and PMCS’ best practice to consider to facilitate statistical gathering in an efficient manner at your property:

#### Regulatory Guidance

1. The application for housing **should** include the race/ethnicity of the head of household (HUD Handbook 4350.3, Rev-1, Change 4, 4-14 B.1.a.)
2. While additional information, such as race/ethnicity is collected on applications and retained in property files, it is a good practice to avoid including these types of data on the waiting list. This information is not directly relevant to tenant selection and might result in discrimination against some applicants. (HUD Handbook 4350.3, Rev-1, Change 4, 4-16 D.4.)

#### PMCS Best Practice

To accomplish the statistical gathering needed to complete Worksheet 1 for your property, PMCS recommends owners include the Form HUD- 27061- H, *Race and Ethnic Data Reporting Form*, as part of the application packet. When applicants complete the application, ask them to return with that application, the HUD 27061-H. **Note:** Applicants still have the option to not identify their race/ethnic categories, but each adult member of the household **must** sign and date the form. Upon receipt of these forms from applicant households, the owner can more easily tabulate this information to record on the appropriate column of Worksheet 1 of the AFHMP.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*PMCS answers questions based solely on the details provided within the scenario. Readers are advised to consider any impact omitted information may have on guidance provided.*

### Question

When I’m checking to see if an applicant household qualifies based on income limits, do I look at the household’s annual income or adjusted annual income?

- The very low income limit for this household size is \$30,400. Since my property’s original HAP contract was effective after October 1, 1981, I know I can only let in households up to the very low income limit.
- The household’s annual income is \$31,047.
- They have a dependent deduction for \$480 and \$9600 in child care expenses which makes their adjusted annual income \$20,967.

Can I move them in?

### Answer:

No. They don’t qualify based on the income limits. The family’s annual income **must not** exceed program income limits. You don’t take into account any deductions or expenses when determining if households qualify based on income limits (Per HUD Handbook 4350.3, Rev-1, Change 4, 3-5.)

### Question:

I have a tenant that works for the U.S. Postal Service. Do I list his income as ‘Federal Wage’ on his 50059? I’ve never had any wages other than Non-Federal before.

### Answer:

Yes. This is considered Federal wage since he is a Federal employee.