

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC STEPS TO AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHER FAIR HOUSING IN  
THE FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM  
AND  
THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM**

MaineHousing administers the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS Program) and the Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program (Voucher Homeownership Program) in accordance with MaineHousing's Section 8 Administrative Plan including the "Equal Access and Steps to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing" section.

**1. Recruiting Practices**

It is MaineHousing's goal and policy to employ a well-qualified, diverse employee population. MaineHousing actively recruits qualified persons who enhance the diversity of the applicant pool and strives to fully utilize women, minorities and persons with disabilities at all levels of employment. The following are continuing recruitment efforts MaineHousing is making, and will utilize in recruiting vacant coordinator positions in the FSS Program and Voucher Homeownership Program.

- MaineHousing subscribes to an internet recruitment site, [www.jobsinme.com](http://www.jobsinme.com). The site is visited by 550,000 people on a monthly basis.
- MaineHousing's website, [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org), lists position openings and application instructions.
- MaineHousing joined The Diversity Hiring Coalition of Maine, which is a partnership of private and public sector employers providing leadership and developing resources to help Maine employers increase, support and retain racial and ethnic diversity in the workplace.
- MaineHousing encourages current employees who are women, minorities and persons with disabilities to refer qualified applicants.

MaineHousing has an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Plan which establishes MaineHousing's policies, goals and objectives for ensuring a well-qualified and diverse workforce. The plan is updated periodically.

All employment advertisements and application materials contain "MaineHousing is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer."

**2. Program Marketing**

MaineHousing and its Agents actively market the FSS Program through distribution of information at initial meetings with applicants for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and during HQS inspections, and through the use of periodic community outreach efforts. The Agents include community action programs and other community-oriented nonprofit agencies whose mission is to provide appropriate services to individuals in need in the community, including without limitation persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. Periodic community outreach efforts are made to statewide and local service agencies, including without limitation agencies that serve persons with disabilities and the refugee populations and other persons with limited English proficiency in the State. MaineHousing has developed a program brochure for the FSS Program.

With respect to the Voucher Homeownership Program, MaineHousing performs outreach to statewide and local agencies that provide financial planning skills and homeownership education, and to lenders.

MaineHousing performs program-specific outreach to landlords by attending local landlord association meetings and through regular newsletters.

MaineHousing posts information about the FSS Program and the Voucher Homeownership Program on its website, [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org)

### **3. Accessible Facilities and Communications**

The offices of MaineHousing and its Agents are accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws. Staff of MaineHousing and its Agents will meet off-site with applicants and Participants in the programs if necessary to meet individual needs. MaineHousing and its Agents have teletypewriters for persons who are hearing impaired (TTY). MaineHousing's website, [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org), is accessible to persons with disabilities.

All informational and outreach events are held at places which are certified as accessible by the State. The meeting notices indicate the places are accessible and provide that, upon sufficient notice, MaineHousing will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services and written materials in alternative formats.

All advertising, brochures and program materials include the equal housing slogan or logo and, to the extent feasible, MaineHousing's equal access policy.

MaineHousing and its Agents display fair housing posters in areas in their offices that are visible to the public. MaineHousing displays its fair housing and equal access posters in the main lobby of its building where the public enters the building and on all floors of the building.

MaineHousing has a reasonable accommodations policy and procedure for employment and its programs and services.

MaineHousing has an Equal Access Handbook for employees, which is provided to all new employees upon hire and is readily available to all employees on MaineHousing's computer network. The Handbook includes MaineHousing's equal access policies and procedures and provides practical information and resources to employees to ensure MaineHousing's programs and services are accessible to all persons.

It is MaineHousing's policy to ensure equal access to its programs and services by removing communication barriers that prevent persons with hearing, visual, speaking and sensory impairments and persons with limited English proficiency from effectively participating in MaineHousing's programs and services. Auxiliary aids and services are available to persons with hearing, visual, speaking and sensory impairments upon request. Language assistance services, both oral and writing, are available to persons with limited English proficiency upon request.

MaineHousing requires all requests for auxiliary aids and language assistance services be addressed in a timely manner and at no cost to the individual making the request. To aid employees and its Agents to promptly respond to such requests, MaineHousing has developed a comprehensive communications resource guide. The guide includes information on available auxiliary aids and services, including without limitation, qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, telephone headset amplifiers, assistive listening devices, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, qualified readers, audio recordings, Braille materials and large print materials. The guide also includes information on state and national language interpreters and translation services.

MaineHousing, from time to time, has employees who can communicate in other languages fluently, including American Sign Language, and can provide assistance in some situations. MaineHousing also displays a list of most, if not all, of the languages known to be spoken in the State of Maine in its main lobby to assist persons with limited English proficiency to request such assistance and has entered into a contractual relationship with a national language interpreter and translation service to respond promptly to these requests.

MaineHousing annually reviews its facilities, programs, policies and procedures to ensure continued accessibility.

MaineHousing's Equal Access Coordinator is available to assist employees to ensure MaineHousing's facilities and programs are accessible.

#### **4. Referrals to Fair Housing Agencies**

MaineHousing makes referrals to appropriate fair housing and equal access agencies in the State, including without limitation, the Maine Human Rights Commission, the Maine Equal Justice Project, the Maine Disability Rights Center, Pine Tree Legal Assistance (a legal assistance agency for low-income persons), the Volunteer Lawyer's Project, and Legal Services for the Elderly.

#### **5. Recruiting Service Providers for Homeownership**

MaineHousing has only a small percentage of families that are eligible for the Homeownership Voucher Program because of the high cost of housing in the State and the extremely low income of families served by MaineHousing's programs. We continue to actively work with realtors, Rural Development and other partners to create affordable housing opportunities for these families.

**PROGRAM SPECIFIC STEPS TO AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHER FAIR HOUSING  
FOR  
THE FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM**

MaineHousing shall administer Vouchers awarded under the Family Unification Program (FUP) in accordance with MaineHousing's Section 8 Administrative Plan, including the "Equal Access and Steps to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing" section.

MaineHousing will take the following program specific steps:

1. Identify and ensure certification of FUP eligible Families and youth that are on the waiting list for Vouchers.
2. Ensure that the FUP eligible Families or youth maintain their original position on the waiting list after certification.
3. Appropriately place all FUP eligible families and youth referred from the State of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services (the Public Child Welfare Agency) on the FUP waiting list in order of first come, first served.

**PROGRAM SPECIFIC STEPS TO AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHER FAIR HOUSING  
FOR  
THE NON-ELDERLY DISABLED PROGRAM**

MaineHousing shall administer Vouchers awarded under the Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Program in accordance with MaineHousing's Section 8 Administrative Plan, including the "Equal Access and Steps to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing" section.

MaineHousing will take the following program specific steps:

1. Identify and ensure certification of Non-Elderly Disabled eligible Families and individuals that are on the waiting list for Vouchers.
2. Ensure that the eligible Families or individuals maintain their original position on the waiting list after certification.
3. Appropriately place all eligible families and individuals referred from the State of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services under any award under Category (2) on the waiting list in order of first come, first served.