

PRINCIPLES FOR THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION:
SUPPLEMENTAL RESIDENT RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS UNDER RAD CONVERSION

*Prepared by the New York City (NYC) Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Roundtable on
Resident Rights and Protections*

The RAD Principles are intended as supplemental to rights and protections already provided by federal and state statute, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, and HUD notices. The HUD notice related to resident protections is included as an appendix.

These Guiding Principles were developed by the RAD Roundtable in partnership with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in order to ensure that the rights of tenants are protected as NYCHA preserves properties through RAD. The RAD Roundtable included participants who are residents of NYCHA public housing and who represent community-based organizations, including:

Bernadette McNear, President, Ralph J. Rangel Houses Tenant Association, Manhattan
Lolita Miller, Treasurer, Ocean Bay (Bayside) Tenant Association, Queens
Ann Cotton Morris, President, Woodside Houses Tenant Association, Queens, and Chair, NYCHA City-Wide Council of Presidents (CCOP)
Charlene Nimmons, Resident, Wyckoff Gardens, Brooklyn, and Founder & Executive Director of Public Housing Communities, Inc.
Diana Blackwell, President, Fred Samuels Houses Tenant Association, Manhattan
Community Service Society
Community Voices Heard
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
FUREE
Good Ole Lower East Side
Local Initiative Support Corporation
New York Housing Conference
The Legal Aid Society
Urban Upbound

The RAD Principles have been endorsed by Roundtable participants: Bernadette McNear, President, Ralph J. Rangel Houses Tenant Association, Manhattan, Lolita Miller, Treasurer, Ocean Bay (Bayside) Tenant Association, Queens, Charlene Nimmons, Resident, Wyckoff Gardens, Brooklyn, and Founder & Executive Director of Public Housing Communities, Inc., Diana Blackwell, President, Fred Samuels Houses Tenant Association, Manhattan, Community Service Society, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., FUREE, Good Ole Lower East Side, Local Initiative Support Corporation, New York Housing Conference, The Legal Aid Society, and Urban Upbound

PRINCIPLES FOR THE RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION

Residents:

- ***Notice of RAD Candidacy***
Residents and Resident Associations (RAs) will have notice that their development is under NYCHA consideration for RAD conversion. NYCHA will begin outreach and education with residents while HUD considers NYCHA applications to ensure residents have the opportunity to learn about RAD in advance of HUD approval of developments.
- ***Resident Education***
A RAD handbook shall be distributed to all affected residents, providing comprehensive information about RAD conversion, including how RAD will differ from public housing and the potential impacts for residents and the community.
- ***Right to Organize***
Residents have the right to form a resident organization (RO) to represent all residents in the development, which the developer/property manager (PM) must recognize. If there is a RA (964-compliant and NYCHA-certified) that exists prior to RAD conversion, the RA will be recognized as the RO after conversion. If only part of the development with an RA will convert, the RA will continue to exist and the converted portion may form an RO. If no RA exists, NYCHA shall encourage the residents to form one prior to RAD conversion. If, upon conversion, there is no RO, the PM should encourage residents to form one and support them in doing so.
- ***Resident Participation Funding***
The RO will decide on how to use the RO portion of Resident Participation Funds, within the uses permitted under RAD including discretion over engaging community organizations for technical assistance and education. If the RA exists, funding should be allocated prior to conversion and transferred to the RO after conversion. If only part of a development is converting, the amount of funding to be transferred to a new RO will be prorated based on the number of units.
- ***Communications Among ROs***
In order to promote communication among ROs once a number of RAD conversions take place, NYCHA will provide ROs with contact information for other RAD property managers to enable organizations to communicate.
- ***Grievances and Lease Terminations***
NYCHA will develop a set of procedures for resident grievances and lease termination proceedings that will take effect upon conversion. The procedures will be uniform for each converted development and must be implemented by each PM. The PM must provide ongoing orientation to the procedures for residents.
- ***Succession Rights***
Households of a unit prior to conversion shall continue to have the same succession rights after conversion as NYCHA public housing residents. Persons who become residents of a unit after conversion shall have succession rights according to Section 8 rules.
- ***Resident Businesses***
Residents may engage in legal profit-making activities, including the operation of a home-based business, in their dwelling unit, provided that such activities are incidental to the primary use of the dwelling unit as a residence

RAD Developer/Property Manager (PM):

- ***RO Recognition and Meetings***
The PM must recognize a legitimate RO as the residents' representative. The PM must invite the RO to all resident engagements. The PM must meet regularly with ROs to discuss emerging property-wide issues, particularly during the construction/rehabilitation process. The PM and RA/RO should agree on

the frequency of these meetings. If there is no RA to become an RO after conversion, the PM should support residents in forming one.

- ***Right to Stay: Keeping Current Residents***
The PM shall not rescreen current households upon conversion for the purpose of maintaining tenancy including for income eligibility, income targeting provisions, criminal background, or credit history. Pets registered with NYCHA prior to conversion must also be allowed to stay.
- ***Keeping Residents Informed***
The PM must provide clear and accessible information to residents (in accord with HUD RAD guidance) regarding income recertification, eligible uses of Resident Participation Funds, rehabilitation and unit work schedules, and other PM expectations of residents. The PM should also create a system for responding to resident concerns or complaints and communicate how that process will work to residents.
- ***Language Access***
The PM will provide language assistance to residents who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) to ensure that they have meaningful access to RAD resident notifications and meetings, per RAD guidelines and HUD regulations.
- ***Plan for Resident Services***
The PM must provide a plan for assessing and responding to resident social service needs, including employment training and job opportunities. The PM must maintain community centers and the provision of services when the community center is part of the converting development. PM must consult with residents and the RO about their preferences in the choice of service providers and activities.
- ***Training and Employment Opportunities***
The PM must provide training and employment opportunities to residents both during and after construction and collaborate with NYCHA to finalize a plan. The PM must ensure that employees at the development are able to apply for positions with the new property management company.
- ***Rehabilitation Needs***
The PM should keep a record of rehabilitation needs, concerns about the structure and quality of buildings, which are raised by residents in the engagement process.
- ***Coordinated Income Reviews***
In order not to subject households to multiple income reviews—such as for HUD recertification and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)—the PM and NYCHA must work to combine them into a single process where feasible.
- ***Temporary Relocation***
If any relocation is necessary, NYCHA and the PM must provide residents with the written relocation plans and inform them of their right to return and protections from relocation costs.
- ***Procedures for Handling Grievances and Lease Terminations***
NYCHA will develop a set of procedures for resident grievances and lease termination proceedings that will take effect upon conversion. The procedures will be uniform for each converted development and must be implemented by each PM. The PM must provide ongoing orientation to the procedures for residents.
- ***Language Access***
The PM will provide language assistance to residents of the project who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) to ensure that they have meaningful access to RAD resident notifications and meetings, per RAD guidelines.
- ***Enforcement of Principles***
NYCHA will implement these principles, including all items related to resident protections, services, and ongoing tenancy rights into appropriate transactional documents in consultation with the RAD Roundtable members. Tenant rights as described in these principles will be appropriately delineated in a required rider to resident leases with the PM. These rights will be part of the lease by incorporation.

NYCHA:

- ***Notice of RAD Candidacy***
NYCHA will provide residents and RAs with notice that a development is under consideration for RAD conversion. NYCHA will begin outreach and education with residents while HUD considers NYCHA applications to ensure residents have the opportunity to learn about RAD in advance of HUD approval of developments.
- ***Recognition of the RA Role***
If there is an RA prior to RAD conversion, NYCHA must involve the RA in all resident engagements. If no RA exists, prior to RAD conversion, NYCHA shall encourage the residents to form one prior to conversion.
- ***Resident Participation Funding***
RA funding should be allocated prior to conversion and transferred to the RO after conversion. If only part of a development is converting, the amount of funding to be transferred to a new RO will be prorated based on the number of units.
- ***Communications Among ROs***
In order to promote communication among ROs once a number of RAD conversions take place, NYCHA will provide ROs with contact information for other RAD property managers to enable organizations to communicate.
- ***Training and Employment Opportunities***
NYCHA will collaborate with the PM on a plan to provide training and employment opportunities to residents, both during and after construction.
- ***Coordinated Income Reviews***
In order not to subject households to multiple income reviews—such as for HUD recertification and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)—the PM and NYCHA must work to combine them into a single process where feasible.
- ***Rehabilitation Needs***
NYCHA should keep a record of rehabilitation needs, concerns about the structure and quality of buildings, which are raised by residents in the engagement process or in the unit-by-unit Physical Needs Assessment.
- ***Temporary Relocation***
If any relocation is necessary, NYCHA and the PM must provide residents with the written relocation plan and inform them of their right to return and protections from relocation costs.
- ***Waiting List Responsibility***
NYCHA will administer site-based Section 8 Voucher waiting lists, which will be used to fill all vacancies in RAD-converted developments. NYCHA will notify applicants on the public housing waiting list about how to be placed on the Section 8 waiting list in accordance with HUD guidelines.
- ***Pet Policy***
NYCHA will recommend that all PMs adopt NYCHA's pet policy as a minimum standard. Residents with pets registered with NYCHA prior to conversion will be allowed to stay.
- ***Resident Selection Criteria***
NYCHA will require PMs to comply with a resident selection plan provided by NYCHA to ensure that all PMs in RAD-converted developments use standard resident selection criteria, pertaining to criminal background checks and rent payment and credit history.
- ***Processing Applications Pre-Conversion***
NYCHA will process requests for adding household members to a lease and interim re-certifications by an established deadline related to the anticipated date of conversion. NYCHA will approve requests that are eligible according to NYCHA's policy. NYCHA will announce the date in advance to RAs and residents. NYCHA will process requests for transfers in accordance with its established policies at the time.

- ***Post-Conversion Development-Wide Problems***
NYCHA will provide a contact person, with whom ROs can register development-wide, systemic problems that may emerge.
- ***Language Access***
NYCHA will provide language assistance to residents who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) to ensure that they have meaningful access to RAD resident notifications and meetings, per RAD guidelines.
- ***Security Deposits***
NYCHA will transfer the security deposits paid by residents for their public housing unit to the PM upon conversion.
- ***Utility Payments***
Utility allowances will be provided to residents where applicable in accordance with Section 8 program rules.
- ***Enforcement of Principles***
NYCHA will implement these principles, including all items related to resident protections, services, and ongoing tenancy rights into appropriate transactional documents in consultation with the RAD Roundtable members. Tenant rights as described in these principles will be appropriately delineated in a required rider to resident leases with the PM. These rights will be part of the lease by incorporation.

Attachment 1B – Resident Provisions in Conversions of Assistance from Public Housing to PBRA and PBV

This Attachment contains two sections, describing:

- 1B.1 Summary of Resident Provisions
 - 1B.2 Resident Participation and Funding
-

1B.1 Summary of Resident Provisions

The following is a summary of special provisions and alternative requirements related to tenants of public housing projects converting under RAD:

- Conversion will be considered a significant amendment to a PHA Plan (see Section 1.5(E) of this Notice);
- Notification of proposed conversion, meetings during the conversion process, written response to residents comments on conversion, and notification of conversion approval and impact (see Section 1.8 of this Notice);
- No rescreening at conversion (see Section 1.6(C)(1) of this Notice for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(B)(1) for conversions to PBRA);
- Right to return after temporary relocation to facilitate rehabilitation or construction (see Section 1.6(C)(2) of this Notice for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(B)(2) for conversions to PBRA);
- Phase-in of tenant rent increases (see Section 1.6(C)(4) of this Notice for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(B)(3) for conversions to PBRA);
- Continued participation in the ROSS-SC and FSS programs (see Section 1.6(C)(5) of this Notice, for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(B)(4) for conversions to PBRA);
- Continued Earned Income Disregard (see Section 1.6(C)(8) of this Notice, for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7.(B)(7) for conversions to PBRA);
- Continued recognition of and funding for legitimate residents organizations (see Section 1.6(C)(6) of this Notice for conversions to PBV, Section 1.7(B)(5) of this Notice for conversions to PBRA, and below in Attachment 1B.2 for additional requirements for both programs);
- Procedural rights consistent with section 6 of the Act (see Section 1.6(C)(7) of this Notice for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(B)(6) of this Notice for conversions to PBRA); and
- Choice-mobility option allowing a resident to move with a tenant-based voucher after tenancy in the Covered Project (see 24 CFR § 983.260 for conversions to PBV and Section 1.7(C)(5) of this Notice for conversions to PBRA).

Attachment 1B: Resident Provisions in Conversions of Assistance from Public Housing

- For additional information, refer to Notice H2014-09; PIH 2014-17 for additional information on relocation requirements under RAD.

1B.2 Resident Participation and Funding⁷³

The following provisions contain the resident participation and funding requirements for public housing conversions to PBRA and PBV, respectively.

A. PBRA: Resident Participation and Funding

Residents of Covered Projects converting assistance to PBRA will have the right to establish and operate a resident organization in accordance with 24 CFR Part 245 (Tenant Participation in Multifamily Housing Projects). In addition, a Project Owner must provide \$25 per occupied unit annually for resident participation, of which at least \$15 per occupied unit shall be provided to the legitimate tenant organization at the covered property. These funds must be used for resident education, organizing around tenancy issues, and training activities.

In the absence of a legitimate resident organization at a Covered Project:

1. HUD encourages the Project Owner and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster a constructive working relationship, including supporting the formation of a legitimate residents organization. Residents are encouraged to contact the Project Owner directly with questions or concerns regarding issues related to their tenancy. Project Owners are also encouraged to actively engage residents in the absence of a resident organization; and
2. Project Owners must make resident participation funds available to residents for organizing activities in accordance with this Notice. Residents must make requests for these funds in writing to the Project Owner. These requests will be subject to approval by the Project Owner.

B. PBV: Resident Participation and Funding

To support resident participation following conversion of assistance, residents of Covered Projects converting assistance to the PBV program will have the right to establish and operate a resident organization for the purpose of addressing issues related to their living environment, which includes the terms and conditions of their tenancy as well as activities related to housing and community development.

1. **Legitimate Resident Organization.** A Project Owner must recognize legitimate resident organizations and give reasonable consideration to concerns raised by legitimate resident

⁷³ For the purposes of this Attachment, HUD uses the term “Project Owner” to refer to the owner of a converting or Covered Project. In some instances the owner of a project could be a public, non-profit, or for-profit, e.g., mixed-finance projects).

organizations. A resident organization is legitimate if it has been established by the residents of a Covered Project, meets regularly, operates democratically, is representative of all residents in the project, and is completely independent of the Project Owner, management, and their representatives.

In the absence of a legitimate resident organization at a Covered Project, HUD encourages the Project Owner and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster a constructive working relationship, including supporting the formation of a legitimate residents organization. Residents are encouraged to contact the Project Owner directly with questions or concerns regarding issues related to their tenancy. Project Owners are also encouraged to actively engage residents in the absence of a resident organization; and

- 2. Protected Activities.** Project Owners must allow residents and resident organizers to conduct the following activities related to the establishment or operation of a resident organization:
 - a. Distributing leaflets in lobby areas;
 - b. Placing leaflets at or under residents' doors;
 - c. Distributing leaflets in common areas;
 - d. Initiating contact with residents;
 - e. Conducting door-to-door surveys of residents to ascertain interest in establishing a resident organization and to offer information about resident organizations;
 - f. Posting information on bulletin boards;
 - g. Assisting resident to participate in resident organization activities;
 - h. Convening regularly scheduled resident organization meetings in a space on site and accessible to residents, in a manner that is fully independent of management representatives. In order to preserve the independence of resident organizations, management representatives may not attend such meetings unless invited by the resident organization to specific meetings to discuss a specific issue or issues; and
 - i. Formulating responses to Project Owner's requests for:
 - i. Rent increases;
 - ii. Partial payment of claims;
 - iii. The conversion from project-based paid utilities to resident-paid utilities;
 - iv. A reduction in resident utility allowances;
 - v. Converting residential units to non-residential use, cooperative housing, or condominiums;
 - vi. Major capital additions; and
 - vii. Prepayment of loans.

In addition to these activities, Project Owners must allow residents and resident organizers to conduct other reasonable activities related to the establishment or operation of a resident organization.

Project Owners shall not require residents and resident organizers to obtain prior permission before engaging in the activities permitted in this section.

- 3. Meeting Space.** Project Owners must reasonably make available the use of any community room or other available space appropriate for meetings that is part of the multifamily housing project when requested by:
 - a.** Residents or a resident organization and used for activities related to the operation of the resident organization; or
 - b.** Residents seeking to establish a resident organization or collectively address issues related to their living environment.

Resident and resident organization meetings must be accessible to persons with disabilities, unless this is impractical for reasons beyond the organization's control. If the project has an accessible common area or areas, it will not be impractical to make organizational meetings accessible to persons with disabilities.

Project Owners may charge a reasonable, customary and usual fee, approved by the Secretary as may normally be imposed for the use of such facilities in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary, for the use of meeting space. A PHA may waive this fee.

- 4. Resident Organizers.** A resident organizer is a resident or non-resident who assists residents in establishing and operating a resident organization, and who is not an employee or representative of current or prospective Project Owners, managers, or their agents.

Project Owners must allow resident organizers to assist residents in establishing and operating resident organizations.

- 5. Canvassing.** If a Covered Project has a consistently enforced, written policy against canvassing, then a non-resident resident organizer must be accompanied by a resident while on the property of the project.

If a project has a written policy favoring canvassing, any non-resident resident organizer must be afforded the same privileges and rights of access as other uninvited outside parties in the normal course of operations. If the project does not have a consistently

enforced, written policy against canvassing, the project shall be treated as if it has a policy favoring canvassing.

A resident has the right not to be re-canvassed against his or her wishes regarding participation in a resident organization.

- 6. Funding.** Project Owners must provide \$25 per occupied unit annually for resident participation, of which at least \$15 per occupied unit shall be provided to the legitimate resident organization at the covered property. These funds must be used for resident education, organizing around tenancy issues, and training activities.

In the absence of a legitimate resident organization at a Covered Project:

- a.** HUD encourages the Project Owner s and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster a constructive working relationship, including supporting the formation of a legitimate residents organization. Residents are encouraged to contact the Project Owner directly with questions or concerns regarding issues related to their tenancy. Project Owner are also encouraged to actively engage residents in the absence of a resident organization; and
- b.** Project Owner s must make resident participation funds available to residents for organizing activities in accordance with this Notice. Residents must make requests for these funds in writing to the Project Owner. These requests will be subject to approval by the Project Owner.