

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
2001 Assisted Housing Survey**

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Prepared by



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I. INTRODUCTION

The Assisted Housing Survey was developed at the request of members of the Regional Housing Choice Voucher Directors Committee. Data collected through the survey, and from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Resident Characteristic Reports, have been compiled in this report and present an overall picture of the Housing Choice Voucher Program in the Washington metropolitan region. This report is not intended as an analysis of the Assisted Housing Survey data, but is simply a presentation of regional program activity.

The Assisted Housing Survey was distributed to 10 housing agencies in the Washington metropolitan area. This report contains information collected from three housing agencies in suburban Maryland (Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, Prince George's County Housing Authority, and Rockville Housing Enterprises), six agencies in Virginia (Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Arlington County Department of Human Services, Fairfax County Department of Housing, Loudoun County Housing Services, City of Manassas, and the Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development) and the District of Columbia Housing Authority.

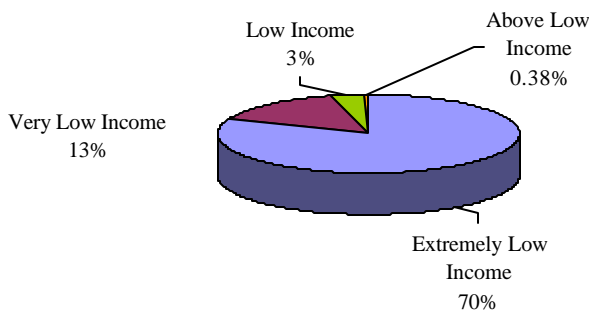
Unless otherwise noted, all information contained within this report is current as of December 31, 2001 and represents Housing Choice Voucher activity for calendar year 2001.

II. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The following data was collected from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Resident Characteristics Report (RCR)¹. The RCR summarizes demographic and income information about households receiving federal housing assistance. A sampling of this data is presented below. Information is current as of September 30, 2002.

Distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers by Income Level

Regional Distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers by Income Level (%)



Housing Choice Voucher Programs primarily provide housing assistance for extremely low-income households. Overall, 70 percent of voucher recipients have household incomes below 30 percent of area median family income (MFI), which is \$91,500² for the Washington metropolitan region. The remaining vouchers are distributed among moderate-income households with 13 percent of vouchers assisting very low-income households (50 percent of MFI), three percent helping low-income families (80 percent of MFI), and less than one percent (0.38 percent) being issued to above low-income households. Voucher distribution rates among individual jurisdictions reflect regional averages, with the majority of housing choice vouchers assisting extremely low-income and very low-income households.

Distribution by Annual Income as of September 30, 2002

Jurisdiction	Distribution by Annual Avg Income (%)			
	Extremely Low Income (>30% Med)	Very Low Income (50% Med)	Low Income (80% Med)	Above Low Income
Alexandria	73%	7%	7%	0%
Arlington County	81%	14%	3%	0%
District of Columbia	81%	10%	1%	0%
Fairfax County	66%	21%	6%	1%
Loudoun County	72%	19%	5%	0%
Manassas*				
Montgomery County	75%	14%	1%	1%
Prince George's County	33%	6%	1%	0%
Prince William County*				
Rockville	82%	10%	1%	1%
Total	70%	13%	3%	0.38%

* The Virginia Housing Development Authority oversees the City of Manassas Housing Choice Voucher Program; separate RCR data is not available for the City of Manassas. Prince William County became a Public Housing Agency on July 1, 2002. RCR data for Prince William County will be available for future reports.

Average Annual Income of Housing Choice Voucher Recipients

Average annual household incomes for Housing Choice Voucher recipients range from \$10,749 in the District of Columbia to \$15,490 in Loudoun County. Overall, the average annual household income for voucher recipients in the Washington metropolitan area is \$13,540, approximately 15 percent of area MFI.

Average Annual Income as of September 30, 2002

Jurisdiction	Avg. Annual Income (\$)
Alexandria	\$14,125
Arlington County	\$14,048
District of Columbia	\$10,749
Fairfax County	\$15,381
Loudoun County	\$15,490
Manassas*	
Montgomery County	\$12,662
Prince George's County	\$13,583
Prince William County*	
Rockville	\$12,278
Total	\$13,540

Average Total Tenant Payments

Average total tenant payments range from a low of \$246 in the District of Columbia to \$350 in Fairfax County for an overall average monthly payment of \$307. This amount is 27.2 percent of the average annual household income of voucher recipients cited above.

Average Monthly Total Tenant Payment as of September 30, 2001

Jurisdiction	Avg. Monthly Total Tenant Payment (\$)
Alexandria	\$340
Arlington County	\$325
District of Columbia	\$246
Fairfax County	\$350
Loudoun County	\$334
Manassas*	
Montgomery County	\$285
Prince George's County	\$310
Prince William County*	
Rockville	\$262
Total	\$307

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Race and Ethnicity of Housing Choice Voucher Program Participants

Head of Household Race & Ethnicity (% of Voucher Recipients) as of September 30, 2002

Jurisdiction	Head of Household Race (%)				Head of Household Ethnicity (%)	
	White	African/ American	Asian	Other	Hispanic	Non- Hispanic
Alexandria	33%	67%	0%	0%	27%	73%
Arlington County	37%	50%	12%	0%	18%	82%
District of Columbia	2%	97%	0%	0%	2%	98%
Fairfax County	38%	50%	4%	7%	7%	93%
Loudoun County	50%	49%	2%	0%	15%	85%
Manassas*						
Montgomery County	19%	76%	3%	1%	6%	94%
Prince George's County	4%	96%	0%	0%	6%	94%
Prince William County*						
Rockville	46%	47%	6%	0%	11%	89%
Total	29%	67%	3%	1%	11%	89%

African-American households account for 67 percent of voucher program participants, followed by White households (29 percent). Asian families receive another three percent of the total housing choice vouchers issued in the region with one percent being distributed to households of other races. Voucher distribution by ethnicity shows that the majority of vouchers (89 percent) are issued to non-Hispanic families with the remaining vouchers (11 percent) being assigned to Hispanic households.

Average Size of Housing Choice Voucher Program Households

Average Household Size as of September 30, 2002

Jurisdiction	Avg. Household Size
Alexandria	3.1
Arlington County	2.2
District of Columbia	2.8
Fairfax County	3.0
Loudoun County	2.7
Manassas*	
Montgomery County	3.2
Prince George's County	3.0
Prince William County*	
Rockville	2.8
Total	2.9

The average size of Housing Choice Voucher program households is 2.9 persons. Household size of voucher recipients in Arlington County averages 2.2 persons (the smallest average size) while households in Montgomery County average 3.2 persons per unit (the largest average household size in the region).

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Distribution by Bedroom Size

Distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers by Bedroom Size as of September 30, 2002

Jurisdiction	Distribution by Number of Bedrooms (%)					
	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Alexandria	0%	20%	33%	40%	0%	7%
Arlington County	1%	45%	34%	19%	1%	0%
District of Columbia	1%	20%	39%	29%	9%	2%
Fairfax County	0%	17%	37%	36%	7%	3%
Loudoun County	1%	11%	48%	35%	5%	1%
Manassas*						
Montgomery County	0%	18%	40%	30%	7%	2%
Prince George's County	0%	17%	34%	39%	9%	2%
Prince William County*						
Rockville	11%	22%	23%	30%	11%	5%
Total	2%	21%	69%	33%	6%	3%

Sixty-nine percent of Housing Choice Voucher program households reside in two- and three-bedroom units. Another 21 percent occupy one-bedroom units. Only nine percent of area voucher recipients live in larger, four- and five-bedroom units.

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III. 2001 ASSISTED HOUSING SURVEY DATA

The following section contains information collected from local housing agencies via the 2001 Assisted Housing Survey³. The data reflect housing choice voucher activity for the period January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001. The survey was distributed to 10 housing agencies in the Washington metropolitan area. Survey questions were designed to collect general information about local Housing Choice Voucher programs (such as the number of authorized vouchers, waiting list lengths, and program success rates) that may be of interest to Housing Choice Voucher program directors and others interested in assisted housing programs. Following is a summary of survey responses.

Number of Housing Choice Vouchers Authorized vs. Number Leased

Number of Housing Choice Vouchers Authorized as of December 2001

Jurisdiction	Total Vouchers Authorized	# Proj.-Based	# Tenant-Based
Alexandria	1,618	25	1,593
Arlington County	1,155	40	1,115
District of Columbia	8,134	127	8,007
Fairfax County	3,095	278	2,817
Loudoun County	687	0	687
Manassas	152	0	152
Montgomery County	5,575	0	5,575
Prince George's County	4,490	104	4,386
Prince William County	1,630	0	1,630
Rockville	344	0	344
Total	26,880	574	26,306

Between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2001 the Department of Housing and Urban Development authorized a total of 26,880 housing choice vouchers for use by local jurisdictions. Tenant-based vouchers accounted for 97.8 percent (26,306) of the total number of vouchers authorized with the remaining 2.2 percent (574) designated for project-based assistance.

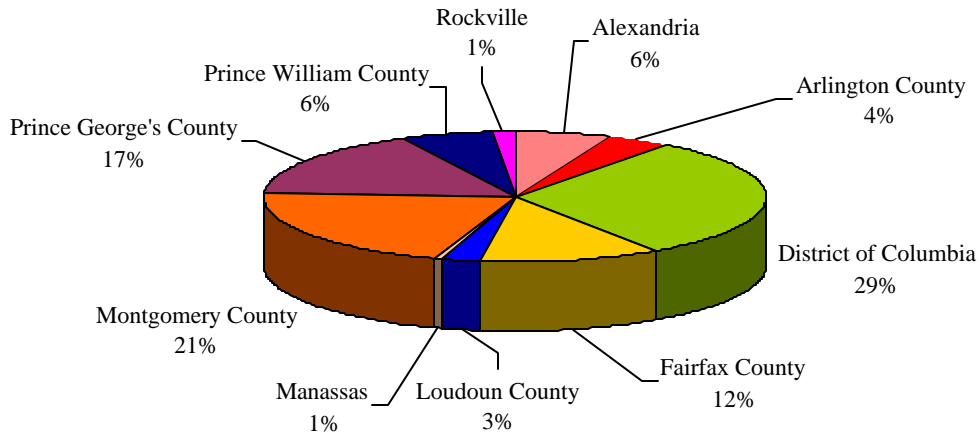
Number of Housing Choice Vouchers Leased as of December 2001

Jurisdiction	Total Vouchers Leased	# Proj.-Based Leased	# Tenant-Based Leased
Alexandria	1,223	20	1,203
Arlington County	883	0	883
District of Columbia	7,891	88	7,803
Fairfax County	2,983	0	2,983
Loudoun County	597	0	597
Manassas	186	0	186
Montgomery County	4,005	0	4,005
Prince George's County	4,042	93	3,949
Prince William County	1,865	0	1,865
Rockville	302	0	302
Total	23,977	201	23,776

By year's end, a total of 23,977 (or 89.2 percent of total authorized) housing choice vouchers had been leased. Of the total number of tenant-based vouchers authorized for use during this period, 23,776 (90.4 percent) had been leased by December 2001. Thirty-five percent (201) of the project-based vouchers authorized for use were leased during this period.

The chart on the following page shows the distribution of authorized vouchers among local jurisdictions.

Distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers (% of Total)



Program Success Rates

Success Rates as of December 2001

Jurisdiction	Total Issued Jan-Dec 2001	Total Leased Jan-Dec 2001	Success Rate
Alexandria	300	75	25.0%
Arlington County	501	155	30.9%
District of Columbia	2,681	1,354	50.5%
Fairfax County	851	415	48.8%
Loudoun County	907	648	71.4%
Manassas	15	12	80.0%
Montgomery County	750	425	56.7%
Prince George's County	660	640	97.0%
Prince William County	1,300	634	48.8%
Rockville	198	72	36.4%
Region	8,163	4,430	54.3%

During 2001, local jurisdictions issued 8,163 vouchers: 4,430 of the vouchers were leased for an overall success rate 54.3 percent. Prince George's County and the City of Manassas had the highest success rates (97 percent and 80 percent respectively). The City of Alexandria shows the lowest success rate (25 percent).

Housing Choice Voucher Program Waiting Lists

Housing Choice Voucher Waiting Lists

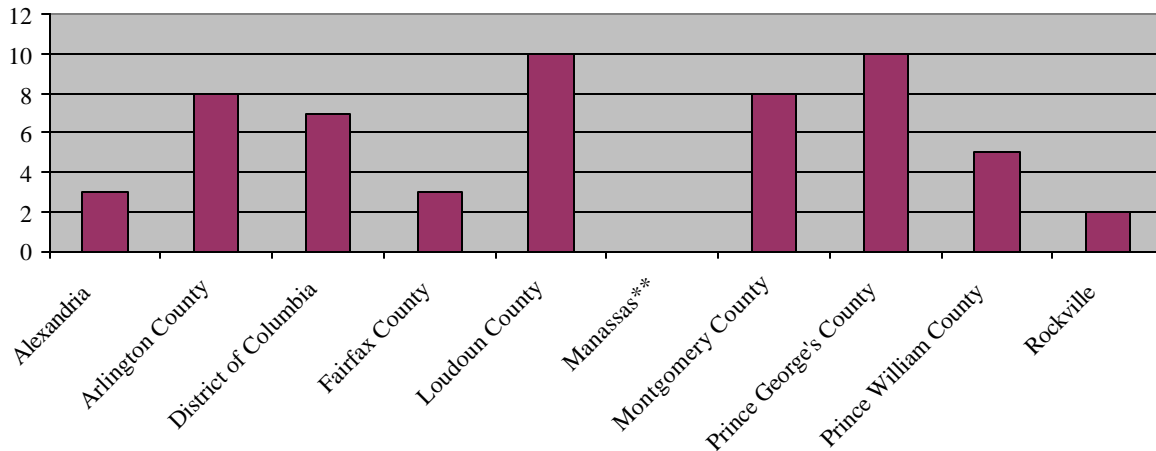
Jurisdiction	# Apps Waiting List	Avg. Wait (days)
Alexandria	1,000	365
Arlington County	1,233	240
District of Columbia	31,423	1,038
Fairfax County	5,075	1,095
Loudoun County	948	730
Manassas**	173	
Montgomery County	9,250	365
Prince George's County	1,082	195
Prince William County	2,313	540
Rockville	642	1,825
Region	53,139	799

As of December 2001, local jurisdictions reported a total of 53,139 applicants waiting to receive housing choice voucher assistance. The District of Columbia has the highest number of applicants waiting for assistance (31,423) followed by Montgomery County (9,250) and Fairfax County (5,075). Overall, applicants must wait an average of 799 days (approximately 26 months) until a housing choice voucher is issued.

**No data available.

Unit Inspections

Average Number of Days from "Request for Tenancy Approval" Until Inspection Completion



**No data available.

Local housing agencies complete unit inspections within six days (average) from the receipt of "Request for Tenancy Approval". All jurisdictions report inspection completion time of 10 days or less.

Housing Search Assistance

Housing search assistance is available for housing choice voucher clients in most jurisdictions. Rental guides and property listings are the most common form of assistance offered.

Housing Search Assistance

Alexandria	Arlington County	District of Columbia
Advertisements to landlords Landlord listings Phone calls	Listing of available units Rental Guide Landlord listings/Apartment referrals	Listing of available units Landlord Advisory Committee Radio and newspaper ads Annual Housing Fair Housing counselors
Fairfax County	Loudoun County	Manassas
Listing of available units	Rental guide LCHS rental housing listing	Landlord listings ROC MLS access
Prince George's County	Prince William County	Rockville
Available unit listing ROC	Owner referrals Apartment referrals	Property listing City Apartment Guide

Foreign Language Interpretation

Foreign Language Assistance

Jurisdiction	Interpreters	Materials
Alexandria	Spanish; others as needed	
Arlington County	Spanish; Vietnamese; Laotian; Urdu; others as needed	Spanish, Vietnamese
District of Columbia	Spanish; others as needed	Spanish
Fairfax County	Any requested	Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese
Loudoun County	Spanish	Spanish
Manassas	Spanish	
Montgomery County	Spanish; Korean; Vietnamese; Russian	Spanish
Prince George's County	Any requested	Spanish
Prince William County	Spanish	
Rockville	Spanish	Spanish

Each jurisdiction provides foreign language interpretation services for program participants. Spanish is the language most often provided but other languages, such as Korean, Russian, Vietnamese and Urdu are readily available. Several housing agencies also translate written program materials into foreign languages.

Barriers to Housing Choice Voucher Client Success

Barriers to Client Success

Barrier	# of Housing Agencies Identifying Barrier
Credit/Rental History	2
Source of Income	5
Security Deposit	5
Payment Standard Low	2
Lack of Large Units	4
Tenant Payment Low	3

Local housing agencies have identified several barriers to successful leasing by housing choice voucher clients. Source of income discrimination and client difficulties procuring security deposit funds are considered the biggest obstacles to voucher client success. Jurisdictions also feel hampered by payment standards (tenant and housing agency payments) set too far below local average rents. A lack of large, family-sized units and poor client rental or credit histories, as well as a lack of affordable rental units also are detrimental to successful client lease-up.

¹ Housing agencies submit information electronically to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). RCR reports can be created and viewed from HUD's website at www.hud.gov. Information is updated regularly, but inaccuracies may occur.

² Median family income for the Washington DC MSA, effective January 31, 2002.

³ Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 2002.