



Westchester Neighborhood Choice Program

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Introduction

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Who is CVR?

- ▶ A management consulting firm providing a comprehensive range of services to the affordable housing industry.
- ▶ A 100% MBE firm, founded in 1995 by housing professionals with accomplished backgrounds in providing quality services.
- ▶ Its principals and associates have decades of affordable housing experience in senior and project management positions. CVR employs approximately 200 team members in offices across the country, including Tampa, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Newark, Gary, and Miami.
- ▶ Local Administrator of NYSHCR's Westchester County Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- ▶ TA Provider for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- ▶ CVR is also recognized as an industry leader in the private management of public housing programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

What is the Westchester Neighborhood Choice Program (WNCP)?

- ▶ The Westchester Neighborhood Choice Program is a mobility counseling program that seeks to help eligible families receiving Housing Choice Vouchers administered by CVR New York relocate from neighborhoods with high poverty rates, segregated minority populations and inferior schools to diverse neighborhoods with quality schools, also known as 'opportunity areas'.

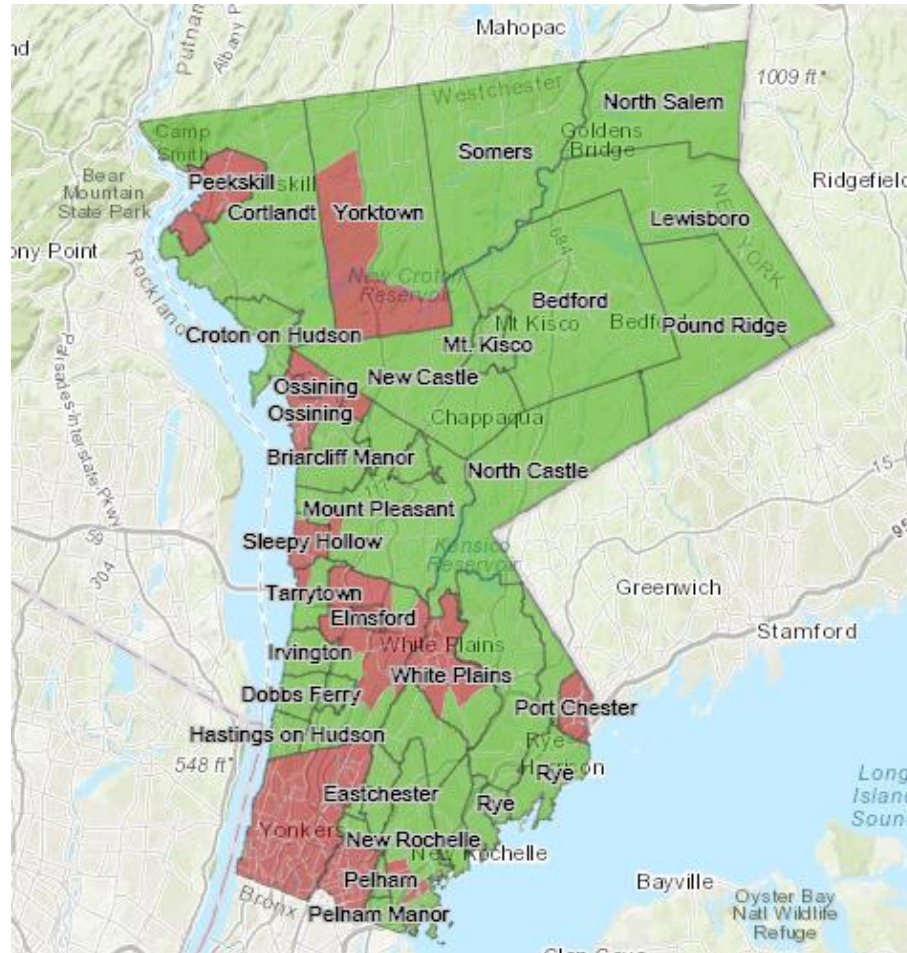
What is the Westchester Neighborhood Choice Program (WNCP)?

- ▶ WNCP strives to provide prompt customer service to property owners through a single point of contact.
- ▶ WNCP recruits and works with landlords in Westchester's best communities as partners.
- ▶ WNCP recruits and educates HCV holders on the benefits of moving to opportunity areas and helps them locate, apply for, and move into housing in good school districts.

What is the Westchester Neighborhood Choice Program (WNCNP)?

- ▶ WNCNP promotes Family Self Sufficiency.
- ▶ WNCNP strives to affirmatively further fair housing.

Program Jurisdiction



All areas in green are considered opportunity areas.

Owner Benefits

Ready to Rent

- ▶ Pre-Mobility Counseling
- ▶ Credit Clean Up
- ▶ Housing Search Counseling
- ▶ Training on How to be a Good Neighbor and Good Tenant

Owner Benefits

Housing Search Enhancements

- ▶ WNCP Assists with Housing Search and acts as Liaison between Owner and Perspective Tenant
 - ▶ Brokerage Fees
 - ▶ Security Deposit Assistance
 - ▶ Higher Payment Standards
-
- ▶ HCV requirements regarding rent reasonableness and HQS Inspections still apply

Owner Benefits

Post Move-In Benefits

- ▶ Stable Tenancy
- ▶ Partner in Enforcement
- ▶ Portion of Rent Paid by State
- ▶ Post Move Counseling for Families
- ▶ Conflict Resolution

Participating Family Requirements

- ▶ Pre and Post Move Counseling
- ▶ Credit Readiness
- ▶ Compliance with Lease
- ▶ Compliance with other HCV Requirements

Fair Housing

The premise is simple:

- ▶ Everyone has the legal right to live anywhere he/she wants (and can afford) to live. Fair Housing laws apply to individuals and families, Voucher Holders and non-Voucher Holders alike and requires that all prospective tenants be treated equally.

Protected Classes

Various laws exist that protect renters from discrimination based on the following:

- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Ancestry
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Military Discharge Status
- ▶ Color
- ▶ National Origin
- ▶ Age
- ▶ Familial Status
- ▶ Gender Identity
- ▶ Source of Income

Prohibited Actions

Housing Providers must not:

- ▶ Deny a household the opportunity to apply for housing.
- ▶ Deny a qualified applicant the opportunity to participate in a housing program.
- ▶ Provide housing that is different than provided to others.
- ▶ Subject anyone to segregation.

Prohibited Actions

Housing Providers must not:

- ▶ Restrict access to any benefit enjoyed by others.
- ▶ Treat a person differently when determining eligibility or other admission requirements.
- ▶ Steer an applicant or participant towards or away from any particular area based upon any of the factors of protected class

Prohibited Actions

Housing Providers must not:

- ▶ Publish a notice of availability that prefers or excludes persons of a protected class.

Exception:

- ▶ Persons with disabilities may be segregated when it can be demonstrated that it is necessary to provide effective housing.

Screening

The following are permissible the screening process:

- ▶ Checking credit history and references
- ▶ Conducting criminal background checks
- ▶ Reviewing previous rental history
- ▶ Requiring prospective tenants to fill out a thorough application form

Fair Housing Act

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful for landlords to:

- ▶ Refuse to rent housing to you if you are a qualified applicant
- ▶ Tell you housing is not available when it is available
- ▶ Show you apartments or homes in certain neighborhoods only
- ▶ Advertise housing to preferred groups of people only
- ▶ Deny you property insurance

Fair Housing Act

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is against the law for landlords to:

- ▶ Refuse to make certain modifications or accommodations for persons with a mental or physical disability, including persons recovering from alcohol and substance abuse and HIV/AIDS-related illnesses
- ▶ Harass, coerce, intimidate, or interfere with anyone exercising or assisting someone else with fair housing rights

Reporting Discrimination

- ▶ To report housing discrimination or to learn more about it, call the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at (800) 496-4294. You may also file a complaint on line at <https://www5.hud.gov/Hud903/main/pagHUD903Form.jsp>.

Victims of Domestic Violence

Under VAWA, an Owner cannot:

- ▶ Deny housing to individuals solely because they are victims of domestic violence
- ▶ Evict or terminate individuals solely because they are victims of domestic violence
- ▶ The perpetrator may be evicted

Westchester County Source of Income

Property Owners cannot refuse to rent to persons based upon certain sources of income.

- ▶ This means that, all else being equal, an owner should not turn away an applicant who meets all of that owner's requirements just because that applicant will be paying rent with the assistance of a voucher or other rental assistance.



Questions?



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Thank You!