

Laconia Housing

Model Emergency Transfer Plan for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Emergency Transfers

Laconia Housing is concerned about the safety of its tenants, and such concern extends to tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. In accordance with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA),¹ Laconia Housing allows tenants who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to request an emergency transfer from the tenant's current unit to another unit. The ability to request a transfer is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The ability of Laconia Housing to honor such request for tenants currently receiving assistance, however, may depend upon a preliminary determination that the tenant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and on whether Laconia Housing has another dwelling unit that is available and is safe to offer the tenant for temporary or more permanent occupancy.

This plan identifies tenants who are eligible for an emergency transfer, the documentation needed to request an emergency transfer, confidentiality protections, how an emergency transfer may occur, and guidance to tenants on safety and security. This plan is based on a model

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

emergency transfer plan published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal agency that oversees that **Section 8 Assistance Programs and Section 515 Rural Housing Programs** is in compliance with VAWA.

Eligibility for Emergency Transfers

A tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, as provided in HUD's regulations at 24 CFR part 5, subpart L is eligible for an emergency transfer, if: the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains within the same unit. If the tenant is a victim of sexual assault, the tenant may also be eligible to transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises within the 90-calendar-day period preceding a request for an emergency transfer.

A tenant requesting an emergency transfer must expressly request the transfer in accordance with the procedures described in this plan.

Tenants who are not in good standing may still request an emergency transfer if they meet the eligibility requirements in this section.

Emergency Transfer Request Documentation

To request an emergency transfer, the tenant shall notify Laconia Housing's management office and submit a written request for a transfer to Laconia Housing 32 Canal St, Laconia NH –Attn: Sabina Prescott, Senior Property Manager. Laconia Housing will provide reasonable accommodations to this policy for individuals with disabilities. The tenant's written request for an emergency transfer should include either:

1. A statement expressing that the tenant reasonably believes that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence if the tenant were to remain in the same dwelling unit assisted under Laconia Housing's program; OR

2. A statement that the tenant was a sexual assault victim and that the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period preceding the tenant's request for an emergency transfer.

Confidentiality

Laconia Housing will keep confidential any information that the tenant submits in requesting an emergency transfer, and information about the emergency transfer, unless the tenant gives Laconia Housing written permission to release the information on a time limited basis, or disclosure of the information is required by law or required for use in an eviction proceeding or hearing regarding termination of assistance from the covered program. This includes keeping confidential the new location of the dwelling unit of the tenant, if one is provided, from the person(s) that committed an act(s) of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against the tenant. See the Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act For All Tenants for more information about Laconia Housing's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of information related to incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Emergency Transfer Timing and Availability

Laconia Housing cannot guarantee that a transfer request will be approved or how long it will take to process a transfer request. Laconia Housing will, however, act as quickly as possible to move a tenant who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to another unit, subject to availability and safety of a unit. If a tenant reasonably believes a proposed transfer would not be safe, the tenant may request a transfer to a different unit. If a unit is available, the transferred tenant must agree to abide by the terms and conditions that govern occupancy in the unit to which the tenant has been transferred. Laconia Housing may be unable

to transfer a tenant to a particular unit if the tenant has not or cannot establish eligibility for that unit.

If Laconia Housing has no safe and available units for which a tenant who needs an emergency is eligible, Laconia Housing will assist the tenant in identifying other housing providers who may have safe and available units to which the tenant could move. At the tenant's request, Laconia Housing will also assist tenants in contacting the local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking that are attached to this plan. Tenant will be responsible for any costs associated with occupancy of the prior unit that are determined to be unrelated to the domestic violence incident. All damages directly resulting from domestic violence will be waived; however, the tenant is required to first exhaust all available resources for reimbursement or assistance prior to the waiver being applied.

Safety and Security of Tenants

Pending processing of the transfer and the actual transfer, if it is approved and occurs, the tenant is urged to take all reasonable precautions to be safe.

Tenants who are or have been victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233, or a local domestic violence shelter, for assistance in creating a safety plan. For persons with hearing impairments, that hotline can be accessed by calling 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

Tenants who have been victims of sexual assault may call the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE, or visit the online hotline at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>.

Tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

Attachment: Local organizations offering assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If you or someone you know is experiencing or has experienced domestic or sexual violence, you can contact the crisis center nearest you for information, referrals and support. In emergency situations, call 911. In non-emergency situations, you can talk to an advocate at your local crisis center about your options.

Statewide NH Hotlines

Domestic violence or stalking: 1-866-644-3574

Sexual assault: 1-800-277-5570.

These agencies listed below are all member programs of the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. They all provide many of the same types of services and crisis lines are available 24/7.

New Beginnings Without Violence and Abuse

P.O. Box 622

Laconia, NH 03247

1-866-644-3574 (domestic violence)*

1-800-277-5570 (sexual assault)*

603-528-6511 (office)

Voices Against Violence

P.O. Box 53

Plymouth, NH 03264

603-536-1659 (crisis line)

603-536-5999 (office)

Crisis Center of Central New Hampshire (formerly Rape and Domestic Violence Crisis Center)

P.O. Box 1344

Concord, NH 03302-1344

1-866-841-6229 (crisis line)

603-225-7376 (office)

YWCA Crisis Service

72 Concord St.

Manchester, NH 03101

603-668-2299 (crisis line)

603-625-5785 (Manchester Office)