



# Housing Choice Voucher E-Newsletter

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<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/>



## Common Errors in the Voucher Management System

Assessments of Voucher Management System (VMS) reporting have found that users tend to make mistakes in similar areas. To assist public housing agency (PHA) voucher staff in improving their reporting performance, here are some common errors in data submitted to the VMS. Remember, reducing or eliminating errors makes your life easier: errors require hard edit responses that must be approved before a new month's data can be entered.

### Reporting on Units Leased and their Associated HAP Expense during the Proper Month

**Problem:** The Department requires that units and their associated housing assistance payment (HAP) expenses are to be reported in the month the payment was due, rather than the month it was actually paid. VMS requires that housing authorities correct prior month reporting to reflect any units and their associated HAP costs that should have been reported as leased on the first of a specific month. Thus, if a PHA issues a HAP check in December for a lease-up and the associated HAP cost that took place in October, the PHA's October VMS report should be corrected.

Typically, PHAs close their general ledgers after the end of a month and do not re-open them. This is done to allow the PHA to generate monthly financial statements. Since data previously reported to VMS can change, there will always be some differences between a PHA's general ledger for HAP expense and the VMS report during any month. PHAs which do not have a system to track the difference between the leasing month and the HAP payment issuance run the risk of never correcting their VMS reports.

**Solution:** One way for PHAs to ensure that they can reconcile the difference between their monthly ledgers and VMS reports is to create a spreadsheet which shows for each month the number of units moved from one month to another and the associated HAP expense. Accurately reporting voucher leasing and HAP costs in the correct months is essential to ensuring that the PHA is awarded the appropriate level of renewal funding under re-benchmarking.

### Reporting of Special Use Vouchers in the Incorrect Category

**Problem:** PHAs have often counted their special use vouchers in the "All Other Vouchers" field.

**Solution:** PHAs should enter Special Purpose Vouchers in the appropriate VMS field. These fields are clearly identified, i.e. VASH vouchers should be entered in the VASH field, etc.

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## Misreporting the Number of Vouchers Leased on the Last Day of the Month

**Problem:** Some PHAs misreport in the field “number of vouchers leased on the last day of the month.” They may assume that the number under lease on the first of the subsequent reporting month is the same as the number leased on the last day of month. This is not the case. This field should reflect the actual number of vouchers under leased on the final day of the month. This data is used as the basis for determining if a PHA is meeting the PIC reporting requirements.

**Solution:** Check the numbers; don’t rely on assumptions.

## Pro-Rated vs. Full Month HAP Checks

**Problem:** PHAs may also mistake which HAP amounts should be reported in the field “all voucher HAP expense after the first of the month.” This field is only for pro-rated HAP checks for a partial month, that is, the HAP costs for that month for new HAP contacts effective after the first day of the reported month. It is not for the reporting of full month HAP checks.

**Solution:** Create an internal control system to separate out full month HAP payments from partial month HAP payments.

## Inconsistent Balance Reporting in NRA and UNA Accounts

**Problem:** PHAs are not consistently reporting the balances in their Net Restricted Assets (NRA) and Unrestricted Net Assets (UNA) accounts.

**Solution:** At this time, there are no edits on these fields, so PHAs must ensure that they make the entry. Neither field will accept “0” as a response. If “0” is the correct value, the PHA may choose to note that fact in the Comments. The next software release will resolve this by allowing the entry of “0” in both fields.

## FindYouthInfo.gov Offers Resources on Youth Topics

FindYouthInfo.gov is a Web-based resource for PHAs, government agencies, parents, and youth on topics that engage and challenge young people. These include bullying, dating violence, cyberbullying, mentoring, and positive youth development.

FindYouthInfo.gov was created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), which is composed of representatives from 12 Federal agencies including HUD that support programs and services focusing on youth. IWGYP tasks include gathering input from stakeholders to develop an overarching strategic plan for youth policy.

The Web site provides interactive tools and other resources to help youth-serving organizations and community partnerships plan, implement, and participate in effective programs for youth:

- The Evidence-Based Program Directory, a searchable database on FindYouthInfo.gov, provides users with information about such efforts, and communities can determine whether replicating these strategies will meet their needs.
- The Collaboration Center profiles new Web sites and collaborations, and provides technical assistance for entities seeking to learn how to establish partnerships.
  - o It also includes the Partnership Resource Library, which links to publications and Web sites with more information about collaboration and partnerships.
  - o The Solutions Desk is focused on transition-age youth. The Solutions Desk provides sample documents, forms and reports developed by youth collaborations across the country; hosts monthly information sharing calls; links to funding opportunities; and takes requests for technical assistance.

To find out more: <http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/index.shtml>

To find out more and provide input on the strategic plan for youth policy, visit: <http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/strategicPlan.shtml>

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