

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

OVERVIEW

Occupancy standards ensure that units are occupied by families of the appropriate size. Occupancy standards describe the methodology and factors HANO uses to determine the unit size for which a family qualifies and includes the identification of the minimum and maximum number of household members for each unit size. Units must meet the applicable HQS space requirements.

When a family is determined to be eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP), HANO ensures that the family fully understands the way the program operates and the family's obligations under the program through both an oral briefing and a briefing packet. Once the family is fully informed of the program's requirements, HANO issues the family a voucher according to occupancy standards for the size of the family.

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

Determining Family Unit (Voucher) Size

24 CFR 982.402

For each family, HANO determines the appropriate number of bedrooms under HANO subsidy standards and enters the family unit size on the voucher that is issued to the family. The family unit size does not dictate the size of unit the family must actually lease, nor does it determine who within a household will share a bedroom/sleeping room.

This table is a can be used as a guideline to assist staff with applying occupancy standards. This table must be used in conjunction with the narrative policies included in the Occupancy Guidelines portion of this Plan and HUD's Maximum HQS Space Standards. For example a 4 person family consisting of a head of household, her 6 year old daughter and her 7 year old and 9 year old sons would not necessarily be provided with a 4 BR vouchers or a 2 BR Voucher as referenced in the table below. When the Occupancy Standards are factored in, this household would be eligible for a 3 BR voucher – one for the head of household, one for the daughter and one for the two sons.

<u>Number of Bedrooms</u>	<u>Min. Persons/Unit</u>	<u>Max. Persons/Unit</u>
0 BR	1	1
1 BR	1	2
2 BR	2	4
3 BR	3	6
4 BR	4	8
5 BR	5	10
6 BR	6	12

The following requirements apply when HANO determines family unit size:

- The subsidy standards must provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed to house a family without overcrowding.
- The subsidy standards must be consistent with space requirements under the housing quality standards.
- The subsidy standards must be applied consistently for all families of like size and composition.
- Generally, HANO will assign one bedroom for each two persons within the household, except for

approved cases of reasonable accommodation or as approved through the guidelines listed below:

- Persons of the opposite gender (other than spouses, ~~and children under age 5~~) will be allocated separate bedrooms.
- ~~Same gender adults~~Persons of the same gender of different generations may be allocated separate bedrooms. A generation is defined as 15-10 years.
- ~~Adults and children of the same gender (except for in the case of a parental or legal guardianship relationship) with an age gap of at least 25 years will be allocated separate bedrooms.~~
- ~~Parents and/or legal guardians will be required to share a bedroom with a child until the child is 5 years of age. Once a child reaches age five, the parent and/or legal guardian will be allocated a separate bedroom.~~
- ~~Children shall be assigned a separate bedroom at the age of five if they are of a different gender. Once a child reaches age five, they cannot share a room with a child of an opposite gender for occupancy standard purposes, regardless of the age of the other child.~~
- ~~Two children of the same gender share a bedroom.~~
- Single-person families will be allocated one bedroom.
- Live-in aides will be allocated a separate bedroom.
- No additional bedrooms shall be allocated for the family of a live-in aide.
- ~~A child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family in determining the family unit size.~~
- A family that consists of a pregnant person ~~(with no other persons)~~ must be treated as a two person family will count the pregnant person as at least two people for determining the family unit size and into account the unborn child or children.
- ~~Any live in aide (approved by HANO to reside in the unit to care for a family member who is disabled or is at least 50 years of age) must be counted in determining the family unit size~~
- ~~Unless a live in aide resides with a family, the family unit size for any family consisting of a single person must be either a zero or one bedroom unit, as determined under HANO subsidy standards.~~

Exceptions to Occupancy Standards

24 CFR 982.402(b)(8)

HANO may grant an exception to its established occupancy standards if HANO determines that the exception is justified by the age, sex, health, handicap, or relationship of family members or other personal circumstances. Reasons may include, but are not limited to:

- A need for an additional bedroom for medical equipment.
- A need for a separate bedroom for reasons related to a family member's disability, medical or health condition.

The family must request any exception to the subsidy standards in writing. The request must explain the need or justification for a larger family unit size, and must include appropriate documentation. Requests based on health-