

LINC VI Rental Assistance Program

Frequently Asked Questions - for Families with Children Shelter Providers

March 2015

Questions Related to the Client

1. What if a client has been in shelter less than 90 days?

Shelter providers can work with clients to start exploring LINC VI as an exit plan at any time; however, DHS will not approve any applications submitted for clients who have been in shelter less than 90 consecutive days.

2. If a client already has a LINC I, II, III, IV, or V certification letter, can the client still be eligible for LINC VI?

Yes, as long as the client submits the LINC VI application, is found eligible, and funding remains available, the client may exit shelter with LINC VI.

3. What is the client contribution for LINC VI?

There is no client contribution for LINC VI. DHS will review the requested rent amount to ensure it is within the allowable limits and HRA will make rent payments directly to the primary occupant.

4. If a client applies for LINC VI and is found ineligible, can the client reapply?

Yes, a client may reapply at any time and may be found eligible if the reason for ineligibility has been remedied. For instance, if a client was found ineligible because they identified a host family residence posed a risk to the health, safety, or welfare of the client's household, the client can reapply after identifying a different host family residence. However, LINC VI subsidies will be available so long as funding for the program remains, and a prior ineligible application does not guarantee there will be funding for a subsequent application.

5. Can LINC VI be renewed?

LINC VI can be renewed for up to five (5) years if funding for the program remains available and the client meets renewal requirements, including compliance with LINC program requirements.

6. Is the HRA furniture allowance available for LINC VI clients?

Yes, LINC VI clients may receive a furniture allowance from HRA for the purchase of beds and dressers.

Questions Related to the Primary Occupant / Host Family

7. Why does the primary occupant have to complete an IRS W9 form, and what are the implications?

The primary occupant must submit a completed IRS Form W9 because LINC VI rent payments are paid directly to the primary occupant and are considered taxable income.

8. Can a primary occupant participate in LINC VI if he/she does not have a social security number or individual tax identification number?

No. LINC VI requires the primary occupant to complete IRS Form W9, providing either a social security number or an individual tax identification number. As such, a primary occupant that does not have a social security number or an individual tax identification number will not be approved for the program.

9. Who can get an individual tax identification number?

The IRS issues individual tax identification numbers to people who do not have, and are not eligible to obtain, a Social Security number. For more information, visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/General-ITIN-Information>.

10. Why is an SCR clearance of all host family members required?

DHS is concerned about the safety of client families and their children. A clearance with the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) will help DHS determine whether the host family's residence is safe and appropriate.

11. Why is a sex offender registry check of all host family members required?

DHS is concerned about the safety of client families and their children. A sex offender registry check will ensure that LINC VI families with children do not move to a residence that includes a Level 2 or 3 sex offender.

12. What happens if a member of the primary occupant's household does not consent to an SCR clearance or sex offender check?

Without consent from all members of the primary occupant's household 18 and over (and on behalf of all children under 18), the primary occupant's family will be excluded from participating as a host family for a client with LINC VI. This information is included in the *LINC VI Primary Occupant Statement*, as well as in the *LINC VI Fact Sheet for Host Families*. Even so, it is still important for the DHS client and shelter staff to discuss these requirements with the primary occupant.

13. Can LINC VI be used to move in with a host family who has a subsidized apartment?

No. Most subsidized housing programs, such as NYCHA, Section 8, and FEPS have tenancy rules that may not permit a LINC VI client to move into the residence.

14. What is a Life Safety inspection?

This is an inspection performed by DHS to make sure the host family's residence is safe. DHS inspectors will review an apartment to determine whether certain standards are met, including whether windows work and are in good condition, whether window guards are in place, whether there is clean running hot and cold water, whether there are exposed wires, whether working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are installed. This is not the same as an inspection based upon Section 8 Housing Quality Standards (HQS).

15. What is an overcrowding assessment?

This is an assessment performed by DHS and happens along with the Life Safety inspection. The purpose of the overcrowding assessment is to make sure that the host family's residence will not be overcrowded when the DHS client moves in. The assessment involves looking at how many people reside in the host family's residence, their age and gender, and the sleeping arrangements.

16. My client has a friend who is willing to sublet an apartment to her. Is that allowed?

No, the primary occupant must reside in the apartment in order for it to be a viable residence for LINC VI.

17. Can the primary occupant charge the client for heat and hot water?

No, the primary occupant may not ask the LINC VI client to pay anything towards the housing. This is considered a side deal and is strictly prohibited.

18. Does the primary occupant have to provide the LINC VI client with household items such as food or electricity?

No. Although the primary occupant is prohibited from charging the LINC VI client for the housing, the primary occupant is not responsible for providing the LINC VI client with household items such as food, electricity, or other personal items.

19. How is a client's rent determined when the host family owns the residence?

The primary occupant must indicate the client's rent amount on the *LINC VI Primary Occupant Statement*. DHS will review the amount to determine whether it is consistent with LINC VI program rules. In most cases where the host family owns the residence, the allowable client rent amount will be \$650 for a client household of 1-2, \$750 for a client household of 3-4, and \$1,000 for a client household of 5 or more.

20. What if the primary occupant receives cash assistance?

If a primary occupant and family receive cash assistance, they can still be considered as a host family with LINC VI. However, the rent the primary occupant charges the LINC VI client may not be more than the primary occupant's rent obligation minus the primary occupant's public assistance shelter allowance.



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