



**TO:** HACLA Board of Commissioners

**FROM:** Margarita Lares, Chief Programs Officer *Margarita Lares*  
Carlos Van Natter, Director of Section 8 *Carlos Van Natter*

**THROUGH:** Douglas Guthrie, President and CEO *Douglas Guthrie*

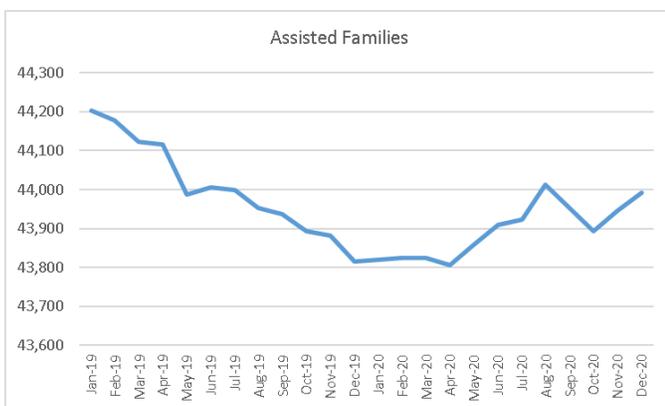
**DATE:** March 25, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Impact of HACLA CARES Landlord Incentives on Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Leasing

Evaluating the impact of the HACLA CARES Landlord Incentives implemented July 1, 2020 by comparing 2019 and 2020 data will not meet the proper standards of policy evaluation since the Housing Authority is operating under extraordinary circumstances where multiple waivers to statutory program operations were granted by HUD to maintain critical program operations, including but not limited to voucher issuance, voucher term, inspections, and HAP contract execution. There is no control group identified to compare results versus a treatment group that received the landlord incentive. The landlord incentive was not the only variable implemented as program operations were temporarily adjusted due to the pandemic, therefore it would not be a fair assessment to try to measure the impact of a one-dimensional variable.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the above, 2019 and 2020 data can be offered, with the underlying assumption that these are absolute numbers that are reported under two different scenarios: pre-pandemic under normal program operation and post-pandemic.

**Leasing.** The number of families receiving housing assistance in 2019 and 2020 is shown below.

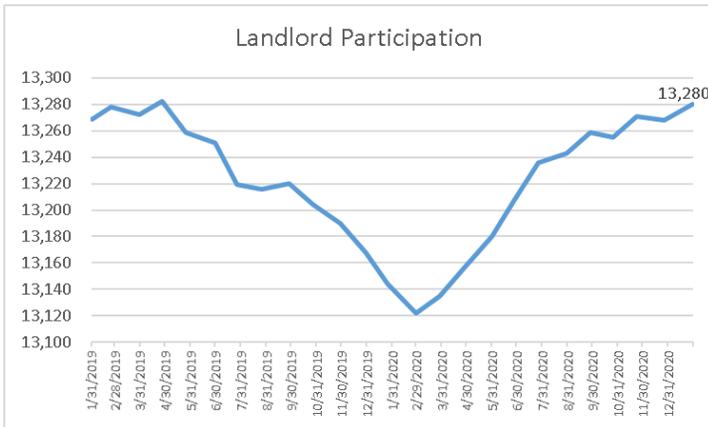


Families receiving assistance slightly decreased in 2019 as leasing decreased due to the challenging rental market

<sup>1</sup> Even HUD acknowledges that “experimentation in landlord outreach and incentives that PHAs and local governments are now conducting, as well as the variation in SOI laws and enforcement, offer researchers a tremendous opportunity to learn more about effective strategies.” *Landlords: Critical Participants in the Housing Choice Voucher Program*. HUD PD&R. Winter 2019, p.9

of high rents and low vacancies discussed previously. Assisted families stabilized in 2020 and saw a slight increase by yearend. This took place even though the number of vouchers issued trended down due to the challenges of issuing them during the pandemic and voucher holders took more time to look for units with their waivers. The Landlord Incentives are believed to be a factor in that.

**Landlord participation.** The increase in the number of assisted families has had a positive impact on the number of landlords receiving HAP payments on behalf of participant families.



HUD’s intent to offer a landlord incentive was “in recognition of added difficulties of making units available for HCV families to rent while stay-at-home orders or social distancing practices are in effect” (PIH Notice 2020-08 dated April 28, 2020). HACLA has met this objective by stabilizing and slightly increasing lease up.