
General Assistance Handbook 90-01.84: Housing Assistance Vendor Program

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Revised by: E118

Summary:

This Handbook has been revised to reflect changes to the Housing Assistance Vendor Program.

General:

Effective October 1, 2014 General Assistance (GA) regulations state that vendor payment will be used whenever asked for by GA clients. Generally, vendor payments for rent will be paid by direct warrant and any remainder of the grant payment will be issued to the recipient's EBT card.

A Housing Assistance Vendor Program (HAVP) packet will be provided to all applicants and recipients that request their rent be paid directly to the landlord. The HAVP packet will include:

- Request to Vendor Rent Payment Form, 90-259;
- Housing Assistance Vendor Agreement, Form 90-9;
- Substitute IRS Form W-9; and,
- A self-addressed return envelope*.

Note: The envelope should display the address of the office where the ET is located. The exception will be the envelopes including in the RRR packets that are centrally assembled and mailed.

The GA applicant/recipient's housing provider should complete Form 90-9 verifying the client's living situation, as well as the housing cost. The housing provider is not required to provide their taxpayer identification number (TIN), or social security number. The Substitute IRS Form W-9 is used to capture this information. Either the applicant/recipient or the vendor may return forms in the envelope provided.

The Eligibility Technician (ET) should review and verify the information reported on Form 90-9. This includes clearing the address in CalWIN for any other recipients known to be residing at the same address and documenting the actual property owner using the Assessor's records for the property address. All information should be verified by completing the County Use Section on page 2 of Form 90-9.

Specifics:

The HAVP packet should be given (or mailed) to an applicant recipient when he/she asks for their rent to be paid directly to their landlord. To ensure proper routing of the returned documents, the case number must be included on both Form 90-9 and the Substitute IRS Form W-9. The self-addressed envelope must include the ET's worker number.

Note: The agency does not need to receive a valid Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) from the vendor payee prior to issuing any vendor rent payments.

90-9 is not returned by the housing provider:

When the 90-9 is not returned, the vendor payment cannot be initiated. The client will receive the entire cash aid amount on their EBT card.

90-9 is returned by the housing provider, with or without Substitute IRS Form W-9:

The Housing Assistance Vendor Agreement Form 90-9 (and any supporting verification) must be reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Refer to *Handbook 50-6.20: W-9 Processing*, for additional instructions.

1. The ET shall verify that Form 90-9 is complete. This includes:
 - The name of the individual or organization identified as the vendor payee.
 - The mailing address of the vendor payee.
Note: In the case of organizations with multiple facilities, it should list the main office address of the organization.
 - The amount of rent paid by the applicant/recipient.
 - The total number of people sharing the residence.
 - The vendor payee's signature and date signed.
2. All housing verification (i.e. Form 90-9, rent receipt, rental/lease agreement, statement from owner, etc.) of the living situation must be documented and scanned into the case record, **except** the

Substitute IRS Form W-9. These forms are sent directly to the Auditor's Office. Refer to *Generic Handbook 50-6.20, W-9 Processing* for additional instructions. Only **the Complete** Substitute IRS Form W-9s should be sent to the Auditor's Office.

3. All verbal verification (i.e. telephone call, in-person interview with owner/manager) must be documented in Case Comments in CalWIN. Also document the County Use Section on page 2 of Form 90-9.
4. If all documentation is received and verified, initiate a split payment for the verified rent amount.

Drug and Alcohol Facilities and Shelters:

If the applicant or recipient resides in a licensed Drug/Alcohol Residential Treatment Facility or in a Shelter, the manager of the facility should check the appropriate box on Form 90-9 and write CHASS, Domestic Violence Shelter, or the facility's name as appropriate in Section 2. The manager's name and contact information at the facility should also be listed.

1. For organizations with multiple locations or facilities, the payment address and payee should list the main office associated with the taxpayer identification number (TIN).
2. If there is conflicting information provided on Form 90-9, contact the facility to verify the completion of the Housing Assistance Vendor Agreement Form.
3. All verbal verification (i.e. telephone call, in-person interview with owner/manager) must be documented in Case Comments in CalWIN and in the County Use Section on page 2 of Form 90-9.
Note: Refer to GA Handbook 90-02.00 - Community Housing and Shelter Services (CHASS), for detailed information on CHASS eligibility.

ASSESSOR'S and TAX COLLECTOR'S RECORDS:

Verification of the owner of the rental address must be documented in the "County Use Section" on page 2 of Form 90-9.

1. If the owner of record listed on the Auditor's website matches the name of the vendor payee who signed the 90-9, document the information indicated in the "County Use Section."
2. If the owner of record on the Auditor's site does NOT match the name of the vendor payee who signed the 90-9, and is not verified as a legal tenant, verify that this is the owner's authorized representative/manager of the property.
3. All verbal verification (i.e. telephone call, in-person interview with owner/manager) must be documented in Case Comments in CalWIN.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE ASSESSOR'S WEBSITE.

From the main Social Services Staff intranet page:

1. Select AlcoWeb. A new web page will open.
2. Select For Work, then Assessor's Property Value System. Another web page will open.
3. Enter the property address in the displayed fields, and click Submit. The owner records will be listed for the listed address.
4. If no records are found, verify that the information is correct, or if this address is part of another assessed parcel at a separate address. You may need to contact the vendor payee for additional clarification.
5. Document the results of the property search in the "County Use Section" on page 2 of Form 90-9.
Important: Do not print and image the Assessor's information in Web Files. Document findings in the County Use Section on page 2 of Form 90-9.

EXAMPLES:

- Robert Brown requested that his rent be paid directly to his landlord via form 90-259 and was provided a HAVP packet, with a need letter to return the information by September 1st. The 90-9 is not returned and the housing costs are not verified. Mr. Brown's case, if approved, will be authorized for the maximum allowable grant but a vendor payment cannot be initiated.
- Joan White is sharing a house with her sister, Susan White. Susan is renting the house. Joan asks that her rent be paid directly to her sister via form 90-259 and provides a 90-9 listing Susan as the vendor payee, with a copy of Susan's lease. Joan's share of the rent is reported as \$250. The Substitute IRS Form W9 is not returned; the housing allowance is authorized.

References:

9-1-8.4, 9-5-2.1