

COMDTINST 11101.15A
30 NOV 2020

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 11101.15A

Subj: CRITICAL HOUSING AREAS (CHA)

Ref: (a) Title 37 U.S.C. § 403
(b) Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation (DoD FMR), Volume 7A

1. PURPOSE. To provide policy and criteria governing the establishment, disestablishment, and continuation of Critical Housing Areas (CHA).
2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of staff elements shall comply with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Critical Housing Areas, COMDTINST 11101.15 is hereby cancelled.
4. BACKGROUND. There are many areas within the Continental United States (CONUS) where military and community family housing are in critical short supply. In these areas members may experience difficulty locating suitable family housing. References (a) and (b) authorize the Secretaries of the uniformed services to designate areas meeting the criteria in this Instruction as Critical Housing Areas (CHA). Members in receipt of Permanent Change of Station (PCS) to an area designated as a CHA may request to leave their primary dependent at a previous location or relocate them to an area outside the vicinity of their new PDS. If approved members will receive Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and if applicable, Cost of Living Allowance in the Continental United States (CONUS COLA) for their primary dependents location.
5. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to, nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
6. MAJOR CHANGES. This revision reflects organizational changes to properly identify responsible headquarters programs, updates the worksheet to request CHA designation or CHA

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continuation, requires commands to update their Coast Guard Portal Unit Fact Sheet, as well as all Coast Guard approved social media sites to indicate their designation as a CHA for awareness. Due to changes in the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), if applicable, this revision will also allow members to receive CONUS COLA for a previous Permanent Duty Station (PDS).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.

- a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47). This Instruction is categorically excluded under current Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion DHS (CATEX) A3 from further environmental analysis in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 and the Environmental Planning (EP) Implementing Procedures (IP).
- b. This Instruction will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from the general policy in this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions, Executive Order 12114, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NEPA policy, Coast Guard Environmental Planning policy, and compliance with all other applicable environmental mandates.

8. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located at: <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives/>, and on the CGPortal at: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been evaluated for potential records management impacts. The development of this Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements, in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requirements, and the Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. Commandant (CG-13) has overall responsibility for implementing the CHA program for the Coast Guard.

- a. Commandant (CG-133) is the CHA designation and CHA continuation approval authority.
- b. Commandant (CG-1333) will:

- (1) Update CHA policy as needed to correspond with other policies and guidance received from higher authority; and,
 - (2) Evaluate CHA designation requests and CHA continuation requests to ensure compliance with the criteria in this Instruction, make a recommendation for approval/disapproval to Commandant (CG-133).
- c. Commander, Coast Guard Personnel Service Center will:
- (1) Ensure Housing Authorities are aware of CHA eligibility criteria;
 - (2) Evaluate initial CHA designation requests to ensure compliance with the criteria in this Instruction, make recommendation for approval/disapproval to Commandant (CG-1333);
 - (3) Annually evaluate CHA continuation requests to ensure continued compliance with the criteria in this Instruction, make recommendation for approval/disapproval to Commandant (CG-1333) no later than 1 January;
 - (4) Where appropriate, ensure requests for continuation of CHA designation address correcting the housing deficit (i.e. problem statement) per the Civil Engineering Manual, COMDTINST M11000.11 (series);
 - (5) Where affordability is a concern, evaluate and submit Military Housing Areas (MHA) adjustment requests to Commandant (CG-1333) in conjunction with CHA designation or continuation requests;
 - (6) Publish CHA designation list annually by ALCGPSC message no later than 28 February; and
 - (7) Update CHA designation list when an area is added or deleted throughout the year.
- d. Area Housing Authorities (AHA) will evaluate CHA designation requests and CHA designation continuation requests to ensure compliance with the criteria in this Instruction, make recommendation and forward with any supporting documentation to Commandant (CG-133) thru Commander (PSC-PSD-fs) and Commandant (CG-1333). Enclosure (1), the CHA Designation Request Worksheet is required supporting documentation with all CHA designation and CHA continuation requests.
11. **CRITERIA.** A command may request an area be designated a CHA when military family housing occupancy exceeds 98 percent, and the overall vacancy rate for rental units in the private market is less than three percent.
12. **PROCESS.** Commands may request CHA designation and CHA continuation through their AHA. Enclosure (1), the CHA Designation Request Worksheet is required supporting documentation for all CHA designation and continuation requests. Enclosure (2) is a flowchart

describing the process for requesting CHA designation.

- a. When evaluating data to complete Enclosure (1) a three year average will normally be used to determine military family and private sector family vacancy rates. Data may be taken from the following sources: Military owned and controlled family housing utilization report from the Housing Management Information System (HMIS), current BAH data collection results, chamber of commerce data, etc. Projected requirements may be used in locations where there will be a definite and substantial change in station requirements (e. g., homeport changes) or projected commercial or industrial changes that will affect private sector rental family housing availability. In such cases, a detailed explanation and justification must be provided.
 - b. Tenant commands will be included in the CHA designation for the host commands. Where applicable, CHA designation will be applied regionally.
 - c. Areas that do not meet the CHA criteria may request designation based on other considerations, such as affordability of private sector community housing. Documentation such as a market analysis of rental units within a commuting distance of not more than two hours per round trip, housing referral service data, or other pertinent evidence supporting the request for CHA designation must be provided.
 - d. Due to changes in housing market conditions and utilization of government quarters, areas previously designated as a CHA must be reviewed annually to ensure the criteria which supported the original designation remains valid. Areas that no longer meet the criteria, or areas that do not confirm a continued need to be designated as a CHA will be removed from the CHA designation list. Members in receipt of PCS orders to areas removed from the CHA designation list can no longer request BAH and CONUS COLA, if applicable, based on their primary dependents locations. However, members previously approved BAH based on an area's designation as a CHA will continue to receive the approved BAH and if applicable, CONUS COLA rate until an event outlined in Paragraph 15.a thru 15.d. of this Instruction occurs.
13. AWARENESS. To promote awareness of CHA housing options, in addition to the CHA list published by the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center, units located within areas designated as CHA's must update their Coast Guard Portal Unit Fact Sheet, along with all other Coast Guard approved social media sites to indicate their designation as a CHA. Updating Coast Guard Portal Unit Fact Sheets and media sites will provide additional opportunities for members to identify units designated as CHAs when completing their E-Resume. This will also alert members of any areas they may experience difficulties in locating family housing and prevent undesired family separations and financial hardships.
14. MEMBER APPLICATION PROCEDURES. Upon receipt of PCS orders to a unit designated as a CHA, members with dependents may submit a Housing Allowance Protection Worksheet, CG-2025A to Commander, Personnel Service Center (PSC-PSD-fs) requesting to either:
- a. Not relocate primary dependent from a location which is not located in the vicinity of members

previous PDS, and request to receive the BAH rate and, if applicable CONUS COLA based on the primary dependents previous location, effective upon the members reporting date at the new PDS;

- b. Not relocate their primary dependent from the vicinity of the member's previous PDS and request to continue to receive the BAH rate and, if applicable CONUS COLA for their previous PDS, effective upon the members reporting date at the new PDS; or
- c. Relocate their dependents to another civilian housing location and request to receive BAH and, if applicable, CONUS COLA based on their dependent's new location, effective upon the members reporting date at the new PDS.

15. AUTHORIZATION. Upon written authorization by Commander, Personnel Service Center (PSC-PSD-fs) the servicing personnel office shall initiate payment at the indicated rates. These rates will remain in effect until any of the following occur:

- a. The member executes a PCS from their PDS;
- b. The member separates from active duty;
- c. The member's dependency status changes; or,
- d. The member's dependents relocate out of the MHA or County Cost Group for which payment is authorized.

16. GOVERNMENT QUARTERS. Members authorized BAH for their previous PDS, or a civilian location other than their PDS must not be assigned to single type government quarters including UPH, UPLH or owned housing converted to UPH. Area Housing Authorities may authorize assignments to vacant UPH transient rooms on space-available, service-fee basis only. However, when a transient room or bed is needed by an authorized UPH resident, the member must vacate within 3 days at their own expense. Prior to occupying transient spaces members must be counseled on this requirement and sign a statement acknowledging they will be charged a service fee. For planning purposes, assignments to available UPH transient rooms must be considered a short term solution until permanent housing arrangements can be made on the local economy.

17. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

18. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes via the chain of command to: HQS-SMB-CG-Housing@uscg.mil.

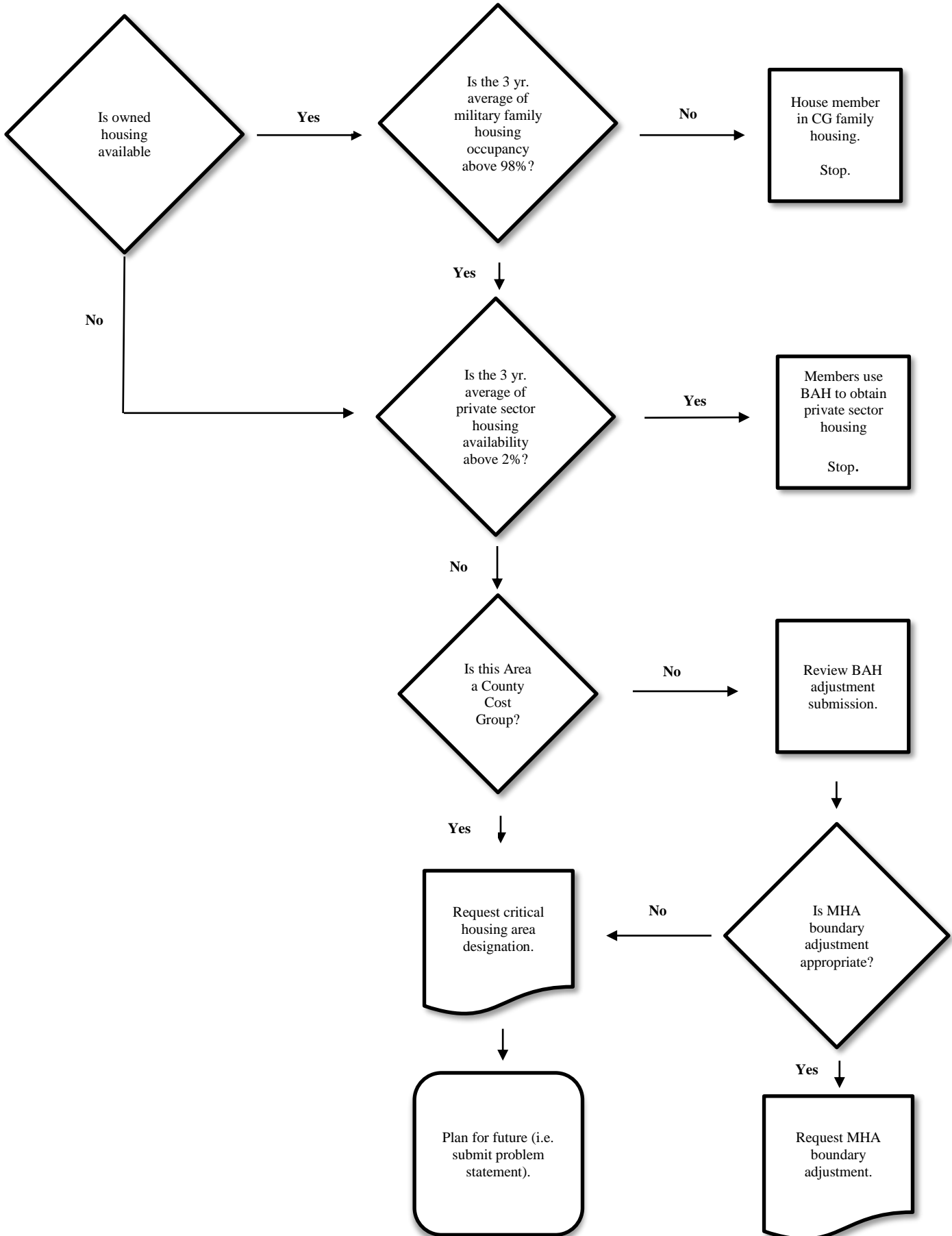
/DR. DONNA M. NAVARRO /
U.S. Coast Guard
Director of Military Personnel

Encl: (1) Critical Housing Area (CHA) Designation/Continuation Request Worksheet
(2) Critical Housing Area Flow Chart

Critical Housing Area (CHA) Designation and Continuation Request Worksheet			
Section I – General Information			
Name and Address of Unit Requesting CHA Designation or Continuation			
Military Housing Area (MHA) or County Cost Group (CCG) number:			
Is owned housing available (circle one): Y / N			
Total number of owned family homes (If Applicable)		Total number of family owned homes converted to UPH (If Applicable)	
Military family housing three year vacancy rate %:			
Private sector family housing three year vacancy rate%:			
Projected number of increase or decrease of military personnel due to unit relocation, decommissioning or establishment:			
Are there any projected local commercial or industrial changes that will affect private sector rental family housing availability either positively or negatively?			Y / N
If the answer to the above question is yes, comments are required below.			
Sources of Information			Attached
Housing Management Information System Report (HMIS)			Required
Rental Market Analysis			Y / N
Rental Market Referral Listing			Y / N
BAH Data Collection Results			Y / N
Chamber of Commerce Data			Y / N
Other:			Y / N
Section I – Comments (Attach additional pages if needed)			
Section I - Requestors Signature			
Name (Last, First, Rate/Rank)		Signature	Date
Section II – AHA Endorsement/Comments			
Recommend Approval		Recommend Disapproval	
		AHO/LHO Signature	Date
Section II – Comments (Attach additional pages if needed)			

Section III – PSC-PSD-fs Endorsement/Comments					
Recommend Approval		Recommend Disapproval		PSC-PSD-fs Signature	Date
Section III – Comments (Attach additional pages if needed)					
Section IV – CG-1333 Endorsement/Comments					
Recommend Approval		Recommend Disapproval		CG-1333 Signature	Date
Section IV – Comments (Attach additional pages if needed)					
Section V – CG-133 Endorsement/Comments					
Approved		Disapproved		CG-133 Signature	Date
Section V – Comments (Attach additional pages if needed)					

Enclosure (2) to COMDTINST 11101.15A
Critical Housing Area Flow Chart



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