

## THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federally funded program governed by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designed to provide rental assistance to low-income families seeking affordable housing in the private rental market. The program assists families with their rental obligations, increase housing choices and present opportunities for upward mobility through participation in self-sufficiency curriculums and activities.

Section 8 requires a three-way relationship between the Authority, the property owner and the participant. The participant and the Authority sign a Voucher Contract, the participant and the owner sign a lease agreement, and the owner and the Authority sign a Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract. These documents detail the responsibilities of each party.

Upon receipt of a voucher, the Section 8 family participant selects a unit and submits an application to the owner. The owner then pre-screens family and completes a Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) form. The Authority reviews and subsequently approves the RFTA and performs a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection on the unit. If the unit passes inspection, contracts are executed and the family moves into the unit. Both the Section 8 participant and the Authority pay portions of the rent directly to the owner.

### **FAMILY ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

- The family's household annual income must not exceed HUD's established income limit.
- The family must be a U. S. citizen or legal non-citizen
- Persons evicted from Public Housing or any Section 8 Program for drug related criminal activity are **ineligible** for at least three years.

### **AUTHORITY AND FAMILY PAYMENTS:**

- Payment Standards are established by the Authority and are based on the cost of housing and utilities in the Authority's jurisdiction.
- The family's share of gross rent (rent to owner plus allowances for tenant paid utilities) must not exceed 40% of the family monthly income.
- The Authority's HAP payment will not exceed the amount of the Payment Standard minus the family total tenant payment.

### **OWNER, FAMILY AND AUTHORITY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **OWNER:**

- Performs tenant screening prior to selection and leasing
- Complies with terms of the HAP contract and lease
- Performs all usual management and landlord functions

- Maintains the unit in accordance with HQS and makes required repairs in a prompt manner.
- Notifies the Authority when the family vacates the unit
- All owner responsibilities are further defined in the HAP contract and the lease

### **FAMILY**

- Supply all required information to the Authority and/or HUD as necessary for participation in the program
- Search for housing
- Pay their portion of the rent and adhere to all lease requirements
- Permit annual and other reasonable inspections of unit
- Use the unit solely as the principle place of residence, agreeing not to assign or sublet.
- Promptly notify the Authority within 10 days of any family composition or income change
- Pay all applicable utility bills
- Maintain the unit in the manner as requested by the owner
- Notify the Authority and landlord prior to vacating the unit
- Not be involved in any fraudulent activities
- Comply with the voucher and terms of the lease

### **AUTHORITY**

- Comply with HUD regulations and the Authority's Administrative Plan
- Receive and process applications, determine eligibility, maintain the waiting list, select applicants, issue and provide housing information to voucher holders
- Provide the owner with the participant's current address and the name and address of the family's former and current landlord.
- Inspect the selected unit prior to providing assistance, and at least annually during the tenancy term.
- Determine the amount of housing assistance payment and whether the rent is reasonable
- Recertify family income and composition at least annually
- Establish and adjust Authority utility allowances.
- Administer a Family Self-Sufficiency Program
- Make prompt payments to owner
- Enforce owner compliance with HAP contracts and take appropriate action for noncompliance
- Affirmatively further fair housing and comply with equal housing opportunity requirements.

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