

Owner/Landlord Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher FAQ

I have a house/apartment that I would like to rent to voucher holders. What do I do?

Inform AHA of any available units you have and allow AHA to list you on their landlord list.

Do I need to do a background check on a Section 8 tenant?

If you'd like. AHA does not screen your tenant for you.

Does my unit meet HUD requirements? What kind of inspection do you do?

Please refer to the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) brochure.

How do I determine rent?

AHA determines the rent portion the tenant pays and the portion AHA pays.

You may request a contract rent that is comparable with the rental market in your area. If it is too high for a specific client we will contact you and give you the choice of accepting a lower contract or not.

How long does it take for the tenant to move in?

A participant family can move in as soon as the unit passes the Housing Quality Standards Inspection as long as they are not under another current lease agreement. (Lease Agreement must be made for the 1st of the month.)

When will I get my first check? How are payments made?

We generally send payments out on the first of each month. Beginning January 1, 2012 all Housing Assistance Payments will be made by Direct Deposit.

What kind of information do I have to provide to AHA?

- Proof of ownership
- Social Security number or Tax ID Number
- Direct Deposit Form

What does the contract look like? Can I use my own? Can I see it?

A copy of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract will be given to you for review. As for the Lease Agreement, you can use whatever lease form you would normally use or the standard lease agreement provided by AHA. A copy of that signed lease agreement must be provided to AHA.

My tenant has not paid his/her portion of the rent? What do I do?

AHA cannot give legal advice. What would you do if the tenant was not subsidized? Provide copies of any notices or correspondence you give to the tenant to AHA also.

My tenant moved out without notification. What do I do?

Notify AHA immediately.

My tenant has damaged the unit. What do I do? Will AHA pay for the damage?

If a tenant damages the unit or violates a lease agreement, the landlord must treat that tenant as they would any non-subsidized tenant. The only difference in the eviction process is that the landlord must send copies of all legal notices to AHA. The tenant is responsible for all damages. Report documented damages to AHA.

My tenant's sister (or mother, brother, boyfriend, etc...) is staying in the unit also. Now what? Is this legal?

Only those persons authorized by AHA and listed on the HAP contract may reside in the unit. It is YOUR responsibility to uphold the terms of the HAP contract and the lease agreement. Take whatever steps you deem necessary.

I need to raise the rent. What do I do?

After the initial 12 month HAP Contract ends, you may request a rent increase with a 60-day written notice of proposed rent increase to the tenant and to AHA (Example: Contract ends April 30th, Notice of Proposed Rent Increase sent to tenant and AHA no later than March 1st.). AHA must approve the rent increase. If it is approved, you will be notified in writing. If it is not approved, you will be given the opportunity to adjust the requested rent.

What is the HUD 'rent comparables' (or rent reasonableness) policy?

Contract rent must be comparable/reasonable to at least three comparable non-assisted units in the immediate area of the unit.

There is an error in my monthly rent payment or I did not receive a check from AHA. Who do I call?

Contact AHA ASAP at (315) 253-6249.

Can AHA provide me with any information about my tenant? I know that he/she used a voucher at another property before wanting to rent with me.

According to HUD and AHA policy, we can provide prospective landlords with the following information from our records, if requested: the family's current address and the name and address of the current or previous landlord. We absolutely cannot offer opinion as to the suitability of the tenant, nor can we respond to any claims/statements made by the current/previous landlord.

What are "Payment Standards" and "Fair Market Rents"?

Payment Standards are based on the Fair Market Rents (FMRs), and must be within 90% - 110% of the FMRs. Fair Market Rent (FMR) is the combination of rent and tenant-paid utilities used for participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program. FMRs are adjusted annually by HUD to reflect the area's current market rents. Payment Standards are used to calculate the maximum amount of the housing subsidy that AHA will pay on behalf of a family. In general, rents on the Voucher Program should not exceed the Payment Standard (rent plus utility expense).

Disclaimer: The information in the FAQ sections is deemed to be reliable, but in some cases it may vary because of specific factors not considered here. In all matters, any application, agreement, authorization form, or contractual obligation is subject to state and federal laws, HUD regulations and the terms of the documents signed with applicants, tenants and landlords. The answers provided here are intended only as a guide intended to cover many common questions received on a daily basis. Please consult AHA for more information.