



Frequently Asked Questions

From the TENANT'S Perspective

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1. How does the Housing Authority help people in need of housing assistance?

The Housing Authority can help by paying a portion of your rent directly to your landlord through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Another way the Housing Authority assists people is by making Housing Authority-owned apartments available to low-income households at an affordable rent.

2. How can I get a Section 8 Voucher or move in to a Housing Authority-owned apartment?

All households in need of rental assistance at a privately owned unit must first place their name on the Housing Authority Section 8 Voucher Waitlist. When your name reaches the top of the list, you will be asked to complete an application so that your eligibility for the Housing Choice Voucher Program can be determined.

If you want to move into a Housing Authority-owned apartment, go to the website of Property Management, Inc. (an affiliate of the Housing Authority) to see what properties are accepting applications.



3. How do I place my name on the Section 8 Waitlist?

The Section 8 Voucher Waitlist is opened periodically on an as needed basis. When the Waitlist is re-opened, a public announcement is placed in area newspapers and information posted on this website.

4. How long will it take for me to reach the top of the Waitlist?

It is not possible to predict how long it will take for someone to get to the top of the Waitlist. The wait depends on the rate of turnover in the rental assistance programs and the level of funding made available by HUD. In many cases, you may have to wait 4 to 9 years before your name will reach the top of the List.

5. How can I check my status on the Waitlist?

Check the Voucher Waitlist page to see which position number is currently being processed or you may call the Housing Authority Customer Service Desk at 415-715-3280 to speak to a Customer Services Representative.

6. What happens when my name reaches the top of the Waitlist?

You will receive a letter informing you that your name has reached the top of the Waitlist and that the Housing Authority is ready to begin the application process. You will be asked to complete a Personal Declaration Form and return it to our office. Upon receipt, an application appointment will be scheduled.

7. What happens if I do not receive the application appointment letter?

It is important for you to inform the Housing Authority of all address changes while your name is on the Waitlist. If you fail to respond because you did not receive the letter or if the letter is returned as "undeliverable", the Housing Authority will proceed down the List and remove your name from the Waitlist. If you have any changes, submit this Change of Address Form.

8. After I submit my application, how long will it be until I receive housing assistance?

It could take several weeks or months to process your application, verify your eligibility and issue you a Voucher for rental assistance. You can shorten the time it takes by promptly submitting all documentation requested by the Housing Authority and showing up at your appointments on time.

9. What happens when you issue my Voucher?

When you are issued a Voucher for rental assistance, you must attend a Voucher Briefing. Briefings are held at the Housing Authority office. Staff will review the requirements of the program and provide valuable information to assist you in your housing search.



10. After I receive my Voucher and attend the Voucher Briefing, what do I do to begin receiving rental assistance?

To begin receiving housing assistance, you must first do the following:

- Find a unit you agree to rent from a landlord willing to participate in the Section 8 Voucher Program.
- You and the landlord must sign a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) form and submit it to the Housing Authority.
- If the rent is within the general limits of the Program, an inspection of the unit by the Housing Authority will be scheduled. The unit you select must pass a Housing Quality Standards inspection. The inspection will be scheduled within 5-10 business days from receipt of the RTA if the unit is vacant and ready to be inspected.

11. How much will my rent be?

Your portion of rent paid to the owner is based on a formula established by HUD and cannot exceed 40% of your adjusted monthly income.

12. What are Housing Quality Standards?

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) are national minimum standards established by HUD to ensure that subsidized units are safe, decent and sanitary. The unit must pass the HQS inspection before your rent subsidy can begin. HQS include requirements such as all utilities (gas, electric, water) must be working, windows and doors must have locks that work, all plumbing fixtures must work and there are no leaks, and the unit is in good condition overall.

13. Does the Housing Authority pay my rental assistance to me or the property owner?

The Housing Authority mails your rental assistance to the owner on the first business day of each month. You must also pay your share of the rent each month directly to the owner. Failure to do so may lead to your termination from the Section 8 Voucher Program.

14. What happens if my income or family composition changes after I begin receiving rental assistance?

Whenever your income changes or you have a change in family composition (persons moving in or out of your household) you are required to report the change to the Housing Authority in writing within 10 business days. The Housing Authority will determine if and when a change in rent is required and you will be notified in writing.

15. What happens if my unit needs repairs?

You should notify the owner immediately if your unit is in need of a repair. If the owner fails to respond, contact the Housing Authority Inspections Unit at 415-715-3281.



16. How long can I remain in the Section 8 Voucher Program?

Current program rules allow you to continue to receive housing assistance as long as you are income-eligible and as long as you fulfill your tenant obligations established by HUD for the Section 8 Program. You will lose your assistance when your income rises to the point that your portion of the rent matches or exceeds the full amount of the rent, or if you are terminated from the Program for violating the rules.

17. What if I want to move at the end of my lease?

Before you can move to another unit and continue to receive your housing assistance, you must complete your tenant obligations under your current lease. This includes giving the property owner a proper 30-day notice to vacate, and sending a copy of the notice to your Housing Specialist. Your Specialist will send you a letter with information on what you need to do to receive a Transfer Voucher.

18. What if the owner wants me to move?

If you are a Section 8 participant, your owner may request that you move at the end of your lease term. If you receive a written notice to move, call your Housing Specialist who will advise you on the steps needed for you to receive a Transfer Voucher. It is very important for you to fulfill your lease obligations and pay your rent on time each month. If you violate any of your lease provisions, the owner may serve a notice for a lease violation(s), in which case you may no longer be eligible for the Program. Contact your Housing Specialist as soon as you receive any written notice from your landlord.