

Housing Choice Voucher Program

Program Description

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by the City of Tyler. The program assists “very low” income families, Single-family homes, Elderly, and persons with disabilities to pay their rent. Participants in the Housing Choice Voucher Program receive assistance to rent privately-owned housing units that are located in apartment complexes, condominiums, townhouses, single-family homes, or mobile homes. Priority is given to serving households with incomes at or below 30 percent of the median income for the Tyler, Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The Owner’s Responsibilities:

- Provide the Housing Agency with complete and accurate information pertaining to the family income and composition.
- Report changes in income and family composition that happens throughout the year.
- Locate a suitable unit and pay security deposit and application fee to owner.
- Attend scheduled appointments and return document on time.
- Maintains the property and repairs and damages beyond normal wear and tear.
- Comply with the terms of the lease.
- Pay their portion of rent on time to the owner.
- Comply with all family obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher.

Steps to Participate in the Program:

- Finding a Tenant- Eligible families are issued assistance and will approach you via ads you have put in the paper or rent sign placed in yards.
- Determining Rent Amount-The rent requested must be comparable to similar unassisted units in the area of the rental property.
- Approving a Tenant- Upon receiving call from assisted families, you are encouraged to screen them on the basis of the family’s tenancy history.

- Agreement to Enter Lease- Once you have selected a person or family and collected the appropriate fees and deposits, you will need to complete the owner packet that will be provided by the prospective tenant.
- Affordability- If the family is moving into a new unit, they may not pay more than 40 percent of their adjusted monthly income towards rent and utilities.
- Initial Inspection of the Unit- If the unit meets the affordability of the family and Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection will be requested.
- Signing the HAP and Lease- After the unit passes an HQS inspection and the rent amount is approved, the rent portions will be calculated and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract will be prepared. It will take an average of five to ten days after the unit passes inspection to prepare this paperwork.

Most Common HQS Failed Items:

- Non-functional smoke detector
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Railings not present where required
- Peeling exterior and interior paint
- Trip hazards caused by install floor coverings (carpets/vinyl)
- Cracked or broken windowpanes
- Inoperable burners on stoves or inoperable range hoods
- Missing burner control knobs
- Inoperable bathroom fan/no ventilation
- Leaking faucets or plumbing
- No temperature/pressure relief valve on water heaters

Property Owner/Manager Check List

- 1) **Free Advertising.** You may list units available for lease with us. We have the forms available at the office. Once the property is placed in the vacancy book located in our lobby, it will be advertised to housing voucher holders.
- 2) **Select and Screen the applicant.** When a family with a Housing Choice Voucher

approaches you, follow your regular screening procedure. We do not screen participants to determine their suitability as tenants.

- 3) **Collect a Security Deposit, if you require one-** The tenant is responsible for paying the security deposit. Deposits may not exceed those charged to non-assisted tenants.

- 4) **Complete a Request for Tenancy Approval and return to our office.** The tenant will provide this form and this initiates the free inspection. It is very important that this document is completed thoroughly to enable us to expedite the inspection. Please call with any questions.

- 5) **Complete the Owner Information form and a W-9.** Housing Assistance payment cannot be released prior to receiving these documents.

- 6) **Inspection of the unit-** The unit must pass a HQS inspection. The inspection scheduler will contact you to schedule an inspection within 3-5 days from receipt of the Request for Tenancy Approval.

- 7) **Provide signed Lease and Contract-** You will be notified that the HAP contract is ready for signature. Housing Assistance payment will be released only after the HAP contract is signed. You will receive a copy after all signatures are obtained.

- 8) **For initial leases, expect to receive the first Housing Assistance Payments approximately 30 days from the date the unit passes inspection-** Payment will not commence until the unit passes the inspection, the tenant moves into the unit and the Housing Assistance Payments Contract is signed.

- 9) **After the initial lease is executed-** The City of Tyler housing check rent portion will be sent the first of each month.

- 10) **Affordable rent for the tenant-** The tenant pays approximately 30% of their adjusted income towards rent. The tenant is responsible for paying their portion directly to the owner/manager by the first of each month.

For additional information please call: Neighborhood Services/Housing at (903) 531-1303.