Housing Search Workshop
Agenda

- Introduction
- Brief program overview
- What to expect from the housing search process
- Housing search tools
- Taking advantage of technology
- How to fill out a rental application
- How to talk to prospective landlords
# Overview of the Voucher

**Voucher**

Housing Choice Voucher Program

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

Public Reporting Burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.05 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. This agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless that collection displays a valid OMB control number. Assurances of confidentiality are not provided under this collection. This collection of information is authorized under Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f). The information is used to authorize a family to look for an eligible unit and specifies the size of the unit. The information also sets forth the family’s obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

**Privacy Act Statement.** The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is authorized to collect the information required on this form by Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f). Collection of family members’ names is mandatory. The information is used to authorize a family to look for an eligible unit and specifies the size of the unit. The information also sets forth the family’s obligations under the Housing Choice Voucher Program. HUD may disclose this information to Federal, State and local agencies when relevant to civil, criminal, or regulatory investigations and prosecutions. It will not be otherwise disclosed or released outside of HUD, except as permitted or required by law. Failure to provide any of the information may result in delay or rejection of family voucher issuance.

---

**Please read entire document before completing form**

**Fill in all blanks below. Type or print clearly.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voucher Number</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Unit Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Issue Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Expiration Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Date Extension Expires</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Insert unit size in number of bedrooms. (This is the number of bedrooms for which the Family qualifies, and is used in determining the amount of assistance to be paid on behalf of the Family to the owner.)

2. Date Voucher Issued (mm/dd/yyyy)
   Insert actual date the Voucher is issued to the Family.

3. Date Voucher Expires (mm/dd/yyyy) Insert date sixty days after date Voucher is issued. (See Section 6 of this form.)

4. Date Extension Expires (if applicable)(mm/dd/yyyy) (See Section 6. of this form.
The Voucher Payment Standard, based on HUD’s established rates for Fair Market Rent, is the maximum subsidy SCCHA can provide toward the contract rent.
Affordability

1. Gross Monthly Income =
2. 32% =
3. 40% =

40% - 32% = Difference + Payment Standard
= Affordability factor

1. Gross Monthly Income = $1000
2. 32% = $320
3. 40% = $400

$400 - $320 = $80 + $2360 (ex: 1 BR Payment Standard)
= $2440 Affordability factor

Don’t apply for units beyond this price

- Unit must be comparably priced
- Don’t make side payments!
What to Expect From The Housing Search Process

- Competitive rental market
- Vacancy is very low and rents are very high
  - Current voucher holders: Don’t move if you don’t have to
  - New voucher recipients:
    - Ask your landlord if you can apply your voucher to your current unit – already have a relationship!
- Landlords are selective – own criteria
- Prepare yourself
  - Your filled out application and credit report
  - Have the security deposit available ahead of time
  - Have answers ready for commonly asked questions
Rental unit lists
Voucher
Payment standard
40% figure
Script
Application
Credit report
Cover letter
Section 8 pamphlet
References
Folder to hold documents
Presentable clothing
Know Your Target Housing

- Is it safe?
- Is it near public transportation, good schools, your job?
- Is it near your family and friends?
- Is it the right size for your family?
- Is it decent, safe and sanitary?
- Does it come with appliances (refrigerator, stove, etc.)
- Which utilities do you have to pay?
- Where are the closest laundry facilities?
- If there is a yard, who is responsible for maintaining it?
- Do they allow pets?
Taking Advantage of Technology

- www.goSection8.com
- www.craigslist.org
- www.rentals.com
- www.homes.com
- www.apartments.com
- www.ForRent.com
Useful search terms

- “Section 8 ok”
- “Section 8 okay”
- “Section 8 welcome”
- “Section 8 approved”
- “Section 8 accepted”
Possible signs of a housing scam:

- The deal is too good to be true.
- The rent is very low, and the landlord offers to pay all utilities.
- The actual address is not disclosed.
- They ask you for money or a credit card number before you view the property.
- They ask you to wire money.
- The landlord is out of town or out of the country.
“I am part of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, which provides rental assistance for families. I pay part of the rent to you each month and the rest of the rent will be paid to you by the Housing Authority.”
Benefits For Owners

- Guaranteed regular payments from Housing Authority
  - Regular payments regardless of tenant’s financial situation
  - No limit on program participation for tenants – stable payments for years
- Loyalty Payments
  - If re-rent to another Section 8 participant, eligible for a $1500 Landlord Loyalty Payment
  - Re-renting must occur within 90 days of the last Section 8 participant vacating the unit
- Bonus Payments
  - New owner who have never rented to Section 8, eligible for a one-time payment up to $2500.00 depending on the cost of the unit
How to Talk To Prospective Landlords

- Dress professionally
- Always be polite and professional
- Be upfront with information
- Answer truthfully
- Ask questions
- Have your answers ready
- Leave clear, and detailed phone message
10 Questions Landlords Can’t Ask

1. Where were you born?
2. Have you ever been arrested for anything?
3. What is your sexual orientation?
4. Do you have any disabilities?
5. Tell me about your kids?
6. Do you go to church around here?
7. Are you married?
8. Are you on welfare?
9. How old are you?
10. What race are you?
Questions Landlords May Ask

1. Why are you moving?
2. When do you plan on moving in?
3. What is your monthly income?
4. Can I ask for references from your former landlords and employer?
5. Will you submit a rental application and consent to a credit and background check?
6. How many people will be living in the apartment?
Community Resources

- **Emergency Assistance Network**
  - May be able to provide assistance with a portion of the security deposit based on the zip code
  - Need to have a signed lease and approved inspection report already before they will process your application
  - Agencies often run out of funds quickly at the beginning of the month—call to get more information about their funding cycle and application process

**Don’t forget!**

- Initial vouchers expire after 120 calendar days
- If you need an extension, you must request it in writing **before** your voucher expires
Road to Housing Search

Search
- Search for a unit
- Complete application process with the landlord and get accepted
- Have owner complete the RFTA packet

Submit
- Submit the RFTA packet to SCCHA
- SCCHA schedules an inspection appointment within 3-5 business days. If unit fails inspection, owner has 10 days to complete repairs
- After unit passes inspection, SCCHA determines contract rent with owner

Sign
- Owner and family sign HAP contract and lease
- Owner and SCCHA sign HAP contract
The unit you select must pass a Housing Quality Standards inspection, including (but not limited to):

- Working toilet and tub or shower
- Working sinks in the kitchen and bathroom with hot/cold water
- Working refrigerator, stove and oven (or microwave in some circumstances)
- Locks on all exterior doors and accessible windows
- Working heater
- Adequate lighting and ventilation
- Working smoke detector and a safe escape route in case of fire
- Building must be structurally sound
Housing Search Workshop