

Online Portals Provide Accessibility, Improve Communication

Happy New Year! This month we highlight two exciting outcomes of our ongoing Customer Service Initiative:

- the development and rollout of our new web-based Tenant Portal
- upgrades to our Owner Portal

These online portals at <https://www.scchousingauthority.org> are giving Section 8 families and landlords instant access to information that's important to them and at the same time providing greater accessibility to complete certain processes without having to come into SCCHA.

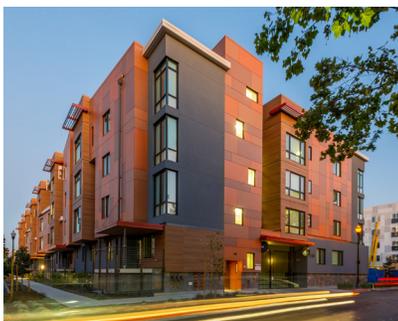
Available 24/7 through a web browser, the Tenant Portal gives SCCHA Section 8 participants an easy way to notify SCCHA of changes to their household or income, upload documents, and contact their housing specialist. Now that the Tenant Portal is available for current Section 8 families, we're working on developing an online tool that will enable all applicants to add their names to a new permanently open Section 8 voucher program interest list, which we anticipate rolling out sometime in 2020.

Upgrades to our Owner Portal are making it easier for landlords to do business with us, from enrolling in direct deposit to viewing 1099 tax forms, Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) history and caseworker information. In fact, we've discontinued mailing monthly HAP statements and 1099 tax forms (though owners may still opt-out from accessing their 1099 tax forms via the portal).

All of these accessibility improvements support those who may not have the means or ability to come to our building during regular business hours while also saving paper and postal resources and giving clients more control. SCCHA's Owner Ombudsperson Susanne Cordova is happy to help landlords navigate the new system or answer any questions! To reach her or our team, call the **Owner Portal hotline at 1.888.827.7091**.

Katherine Harasz
Executive Director

Tenant Interest Lists Open for Multiple SCCHA-Owned Properties



Project-based vouchers are ensuring every unit's permanent affordability at SCCHA's Laurel Grove Family Apartments.

Our property manager, FPI Management Company, has opened the tenant interest lists at 15 SCCHA-owned affordable housing properties. FPI expects the interest lists to remain open for the first few months of 2020. Interested applicants may contact each property directly for more information about the application process. *Note: These properties are managed by FPI, please do not contact SCCHA.* Income limits and other restrictions may apply. Visit <https://fpisccha.com/properties/> to view properties with open tenant interest lists.

Agency Awarded 125 Additional Supportive Housing Vouchers

In addition to the new 110 VASH vouchers discussed on page 2, our agency applied for and was awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) an additional 125 Mainstream (*non-MTW program*) vouchers. Referrals for these Mainstream vouchers will come to us from the County Office of Supportive Housing, which is helping to identify non-elderly, disabled county residents who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness. Kudos to our Policy Team and to our successful community partnerships that continue showing how federal supportive housing resources are being leveraged in Silicon Valley.

Landlord Appreciation Reception Planned for February 27

The success of the Section 8 program depends on the participation of private property owners. In 2019 SCCHA welcomed over 250 new landlords to our dedicated team of over 6,000 owners. For more information or to join our landlord team, call Owner Ombudsperson Susanne Cordova at **1.888.827.7091**.

2019 in Review

At the close of 2019 during our annual employee appreciation lunch, SCCHA staff enthusiastically presented the many ways they're supporting our tag line: "making homes, growing communities." Here are few highlights of our aggregate accomplishments in 2019:



Celebrating our 2019 Strive Scholarship Program awardees.

- Based on our Policy team's area rent survey, in April 2019 HUD increased the Fair Market Rent for the Santa Clara County metro area by about 4.7%, thereby increasing our federal Section 8 funding by about \$152 per voucher holder.
- In July 2019 HUD granted us permission to project-base up to 40% of our voucher inventory (up to 6,709 of our MTW Section 8 vouchers), an activity that when fully implemented will more quickly house families on our waiting lists while ensuring the permanent affordability of rental homes and apartments.
- SCCHA's Board approved the master plan for the East Santa Clara Street Development in San Jose, where SCCHA owns six acres of a 12-acre site shared with Santa Clara County. SCCHA intends to develop at least 300 affordable rental units and a new office building (part of which SCCHA will occupy) on the SCCHA-owned property.
- Customer Service served over 63,295 people through our newly designed lobby and call center.
- Training and Outreach held over 120 workshops and briefings for tenants and owners.
- Finance received clean audits for SCCHA financials and all 32 of SCCHA's affiliated corporations.
- Scholarships of \$1,000 each were awarded to 52 dedicated students through our 2019 Strive Scholarship program.
- We welcomed new tenant commissioner, Marilyn Russell.
- More than 230 project-based vouchers (PBVs) for permanent supportive housing were conditionally awarded to developers across 7 projects.
- Looking forward: We have 8 projects representing about 600 new units and 150 rehabilitated units in our agency's 10-year development pipeline!

More Veterans Leave Streets Than Become Homeless

The community-wide All the Way Home campaign began on Veterans Day 2015 with the goal of housing all of Santa Clara County's veterans who are experiencing homelessness. On Veterans Day 2019, the coalition reported that 1,602 formerly homeless veterans have been housed, and that for the first time since the program began, more veterans are leaving our streets than are becoming homeless.

We're proud to report that during the four-year campaign more than 800 formerly homeless veterans have been housed with the help of a federal Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program voucher. Ninety-six percent of those housed with a VASH voucher remain stably housed. So far 826 landlords have joined our coalition to house veterans, with an average of seven new landlords coming on board per month.

The success of our county's public, private and nonprofit partnership in housing veterans continues to help our agency make the case for more federal resources. At the end of 2019, SCCHA was invited by HUD to apply for 110 additional VASH vouchers. This will bring our total allocation up to 1,332 VASH vouchers, or more than \$17 million annually. About 80% of our VASH vouchers are under lease and the remaining are either in the hands or soon to be in the hands of homeless veterans.

Visit <https://destinationhomesv.org/allthewayhome/landlords> to learn more about renting to veterans.