



FAMILY HANDBOOK

A Guide for Families Participating in the
Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program



SCCHA's mission is to provide and inspire affordable housing solutions to enable low-income people in Santa Clara County to achieve financial stability and self-reliance

505 West Julian Street | San Jose, CA 95110
(408) 275-8770 | TDD: (408) 993-3041 | www.scchousingauthority.org



The Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA) does not discriminate in the provision of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, disability, medical condition, and age. It is the policy and commitment of SCCHA to provide assurance that persons with disabilities will be given reasonable accommodation upon request so they may fully access and utilize all housing programs and related services. For additional information, contact the Section 504 Coordinator at (408)275-8770; TDD (408)993-3041.

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Welcome to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program!

This Family Handbook will help guide you in your participation in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. This handbook consists of the following seven chapters.

1. Key Program Elements and Terminology
2. Deciding Where To Live
3. Housing Quality Standards Inspections
4. Portability and Family Self-Sufficiency
5. Program Integrity
6. Informal Reviews and Hearing
7. Fair Housing Laws

Santa Clara County Housing Authority's (SCCHA) goals are to ensure your successful program participation and to provide you with excellent customer service.

- If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Customer Service at (408) 275-8770.
- **A Customer Service Evaluation** form is included at the end of this handbook. Please fill it out and return it to SCCHA at your convenience.
- Please visit the Housing Authority website (www.scchousingauthority.org) regularly for updated program information.
- If you or someone in your home is a person with a disability and you need SCCHA to make an exception to one of its policies, you can request for a Reasonable Accommodation from your assigned Housing Programs Specialist. This request can be made at any time while you are on the program.

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CHAPTER 1. KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS AND TERMINOLOGY

This chapter discusses key elements to the HCV Program. These elements include the Payment Standard, key information in your Voucher, the Tenant Applicant Portal, rent calculation, and more.

Term of the Voucher

- The **term of the Voucher lasts for 120 calendar days** from the date the voucher was issued. If you look closely at your Voucher, you will see that it has an expiration date - do not delay the start of your housing search. The expiration date is in “Box 3” of the Voucher (see star symbol in Figure 1).
- The voucher expiration date can also be found in a flyer that was provided to you in your briefing packet. includes an expiration date notice (Figure 2).
- **Voucher Extensions:** If you need more time to search for a unit, send a written request for an extension to your Housing Programs Specialist at least 10 days before the voucher expiration date. You can make this request through your smart phone or through the internet using our web-based application, which is described below.

SCCHA's Voucher Extension Policy:

- When the extension request is received, the Housing Programs Specialist will extend the voucher an additional 60 days from the date of SCCHA approval or 60 days from the voucher expiration date, whichever is later.
- A final extension of 60 days (beyond the first 60-day extension) may be granted if it is determined that the family is experiencing extenuating circumstances that affected the family's ability to find a unit.

Figure 1. Sample “Voucher: Housing Choice Voucher Program”

Voucher Housing Choice Voucher Program		U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Public and Indian Housing	OMB No. 2577-0169 (Exp. 04/30/2018)
<small>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.</small>			
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.		Voucher Number	
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.)		1. Unit Size	
2. Date Voucher Issued (mm/dd/yyyy) Insert actual date the Voucher is issued to the Family.		2. Issue Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	
3. Date Voucher Expires (mm/dd/yyyy) Insert date sixty days after date Voucher is issued. (See Section 6 of this form.)		3. Expiration Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	
4. Date Extension Expires (if applicable)(mm/dd/yyyy) (See Section 6. of this form)		4. Date Extension Expires (mm/dd/yyyy)	
5. Name of Family Representative	6. Signature of Family Representative	Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)	
7. Name of Public Housing Agency (PHA)			
8. Name and Title of PHA Official	9. Signature of PHA Official	Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)	
1. Housing Choice Voucher Program		2. Voucher	

Figure 2. Sample RFTA Packet
Voucher Expiration Notice

HOUSING AUTHORITY
SANTA CLARA COUNTY
making homes, growing communities

PLEASE READ
IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Head of Household: [] Entity ID No.: []

Your Housing Choice Voucher will expire on:

[] / [] / []

Your voucher will expire unless you **find housing** and submit the completed **Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA)** packet before your voucher expires; **OR** Request to **extend your voucher in writing** before it expires.

Tenant Application Portal (TAP) : A Tool To Communicate With SCCHA

- The Tenant Application Portal (TAP) is an optional, yet convenient way to communicate with your Housing Programs Specialist. With the portal, you can:
 - Submit a request to extend the voucher term
 - Report changes to your income
 - Request to add or delete members to your household
 - Receive a reminder for your appointment dates and times
 - View the name and contact information of your Housing Programs Specialist
 - And more!
- You do not need to download TAP. You can access it from a web browser on your phone or computer at:
 - www.scchousingauthority.org/tenantportal
- You can still submit written requests via US mail or through typical e-mail platforms such as Yahoo, Gmail, or Outlook.

Subsidy Size and Payment Standards

- Your Voucher identifies the number of bedrooms you qualify for (see arrow symbol in Figure 1 above), which is referred to as your Subsidy Size.
- **SCCHA provides one bedroom for every two persons.**
 - If you or someone in your household is a person with a disability and you require an exception to the Subsidy Size policy, you can submit a request for a Reasonable Accommodation to your assigned Housing Programs Specialist.
- SCCHA has established maximum rent amounts that correspond to the number of bedrooms in a unit. This maximum is also called the Payment Standard.
 - For example, if your Subsidy Size is for a 2-bedroom unit, then as you look for units on the open market, search for 2-bedroom units with rents of no more than \$2,851 (see Table 1).
- Through the lease-up process, SCCHA will determine what portion of the Payment Standard will be covered by the Housing Authority, and what portion will be covered by you (see “Rent Calculation and Maximum Allowable Contract Rent” on the following page).
- If you choose a unit that is smaller than the unit size listed on your Voucher, the smaller Payment Standard will be used.

TABLE 1. SANTA CLARA COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY VOUCHER PAYMENT STANDARDS

Effective March 1, 2020								
Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR	Single Room Occupancy (SRO)	Mobile Home Space Rents
\$2,019	\$2,360	\$2,851	\$3,814	\$4,336	\$4,986	\$5,648	\$1,514	\$976

Note: Persons with disability who have located a unit may request a reasonable accommodation for an exception to the Payment Standard: check with your assigned Housing Programs Specialist for more information. You can also submit requests for reasonable accommodations via TAP!

Utility Allowance (VASH vouchers only)

- The utility allowance is an amount deducted from the household's rent portion when the tenant is responsible for utilities.
- SCCCHA issues a Utility Allowance Table, which includes estimates on average monthly utility bills for energy-conscious households.
 - In the back of the handbook there is a Utility Allowance Table which you can use when estimating the amount of utility allowance for which you may qualify (see Figure 6).

Total Tenant Payment (TTP)

- The Total Tenant Payment (TTP) is the amount that a tenant is expected to contribute toward rent, which is calculated based on total household income.
- TTP for *HCV vouchers* will be the higher of the following:
 - 32% of the participant family's gross monthly income; or
 - \$50 minimum rent
- TTP for *VASH vouchers* will be the highest of the following:
 - 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income;
 - 10 percent of the family's monthly income;
 - The minimum rent (\$50)
- The balance of the rent charged by a landlord is covered by SCCCHA which is referred to as the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).

Rent Calculation and the Maximum Allowable Contract Rent

- If you find a unit in the open market that you like, and the owner of that unit offers a contract rent that is *less than or equal to* your Payment Standard, you will pay an out-of-pocket rent to the landlord that is equal to your TTP. The Housing Authority covers the remaining balance ("HA portion") of the contract rent.
- It is possible to rent a unit that is higher than your payment standard, as long as you are not paying more than 50% (40% for VASH) of your monthly income toward rent.
 - 50% (40% for VASH) added to the Payment Standard is your Maximum Allowable Contract Rent.
 - In these cases, you will pay out-of-pocket to the owner the difference between the Maximum Allowable Contract Rent and the Payment Standard.
 - Under no circumstances can SCCCHA approve a lease in which your portion of the rent exceeds 50%

(40% for VASH) of your monthly income toward rent.

- In general, the contract rent will be the lower of:
 - The owner requested rent;
 - The maximum allowable contract rent; or
 - The reasonable rent – market rate for comparable units

Sample 1 and Sample 2 in the following pages further illustrate how HCV and VASH participants' out-of-pocket rents ("family portion") are calculated via a two-step process. This process first begins by identifying the Payment Standard for a unit that you are eligible for, and then involves subtracting your TTP from this standard. The difference between Payment Standard and the TTP is the portion of a contract rent the Housing Authority is willing to cover ("HA portion").

HOW TO CALCULATE RENT FOR HCV VOUCHERS

The Housing Authority (HA) calculates the rent using the lower of the Payment Standard (PS) or the contract rent of the unit. The HA's portion of the rent will be the lower of the PS or the Contract Rent (CR) of the unit minus the family's Total Tenant Payment (32% of monthly gross income). Your portion of the rent will be the contract rent minus the Housing Authority's portion.

Example for a Sample Family:

- 3-bedroom Payment Standard (PS) for Sample Family: =\$3,814
- Sample Family's Total Tenant Payment (TTP) (32% of mos. adj. inc.) =\$1,007

Three different contract rent scenarios lead to different family rent portion scenarios:

Scenario 1: Contract Rent of the Unit **EQUALS** the Payment Standard

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Contract Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Both are the same.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from PS		Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent	
Payment Standard	\$3,814	Contract Rent of the Unit	\$3,814
<u>Minus Family's TTP</u>	<u>\$1,007</u>	<u>Minus HA's Portion</u>	<u>\$2,807</u>
HA's Portion	\$2,807	Family's Portion	\$1,007

Scenario 2: Contract Rent of the Unit is **HIGHER** than the Payment Standard

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Contract Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Payment Standard.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from PS		Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent	
Payment Standard	\$3,814	Contract Rent of the Unit	\$3,935
<u>Minus Family's TTP</u>	<u>\$1,007</u>	<u>Minus HA's Portion</u>	<u>\$2,807</u>
HA's Portion	\$2,807	Family's Portion	\$1,129

Scenario 3: Contract Rent of the Unit is **LOWER** than the Payment Standard

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Contract Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Contract Rent.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from CR		Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent	
Contract Rent	\$3,620	Contract Rent of the Unit	\$3,620
<u>Minus Family's TTP</u>	<u>\$1,007</u>	<u>Minus HA's Portion</u>	<u>\$2,613</u>
HA's Portion	\$2,613	Family's Portion	\$1,007

HOW TO CALCULATE RENT FOR VASH VOUCHERS

The Housing Authority (HA) calculates the rent using the lower of the Payment Standard (PS) or the Gross Rent (GR) of the unit (contract rent plus utility allowance). The HA's portion of the rent will be the lower of the PS or the gross rent of the unit minus the family's Total Tenant Payment (30% of monthly adjusted income). Your portion of the rent will be the contract rent minus the Housing Authority's portion.

Example for a Sample Family:

- 3-bedroom Payment Standard (PS) for Sample Family: = **\$3,814**
- Sample Family's Total Tenant Payment (TTP) (30% of monthly adjusted income) = **\$1,149**
- Utility Allowance (determine using Utility Allowance Table) = **\$252**

Three different gross rent scenarios lead to different family rent portion scenarios:

Scenario 1: Gross Rent of the Unit **EQUALS** the Payment Standard

\$3,814 Gross Rent: Contract Rent plus Utility Allowance: $\$3,562 + \$252 = \$3,814$

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Gross Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Both are same.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from PS
Payment Standard \$3,814

Minus Family's TTP \$1,149

HA's Portion \$2,665

Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent
Contract Rent of the Unit \$3,562

Minus HA's Portion

\$2,665

Family's Portion

\$897

Scenario 2: Gross Rent of the Unit is **HIGHER** than the Payment Standard

\$4,334 Gross Rent: Contract Rent plus Utility Allowance $\$4,093 + \$252 = \$4,334$

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Gross Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Payment Standard.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from PS
Payment Standard \$3,814

Minus Family's TTP \$1,149

HA's Portion \$2,665

Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent
Contract Rent of the Unit \$4,093

Minus HA's Portion

\$2,665

Family's Portion

\$1,428

Scenario 3: Gross Rent of the Unit is **LOWER** than the Payment Standard

\$3,715 Gross Rent: Contract Rent plus Utility Allowance $\$3,463 + \$252 = \$3,715$

General Rule: The Housing Authority will pay the lower of the Payment Standard or the Gross Rent of the Unit minus the Family's TTP. Question: Which is lower? Answer: Gross Rent.

Step 1: Calculate HA portion: subtract TTP from GR
Gross Rent \$3,715

Minus Family's TTP \$1,149

HA's Portion \$2,566

Step 2: Calculate Family portion: subtract HA portion from Contract Rent
Contract Rent of the Unit \$3,463

Minus HA's Portion

\$2,566

Family's Portion

\$897

CHAPTER 2. DECIDING WHERE TO LIVE

The Housing Choice Voucher program is about choices. You have a choice as to where you would like to live. You can also choose the type of unit in which you would like to live. To assist you in this regard, please consider the helpful hints below, as you search for a unit in a neighborhood of your choice. Once you've found a unit, this section also discusses what you need to do with respect to submitting in a timely manner a key HCV Program document called the RFTA. A HUD brochure titled "A Good Place to Live" is attached to this handbook to further assist in your search for a unit.

It is important to note that, even if you have located a unit whose owner is willing to participate in the HCV program, the Housing Authority still needs to play an important role in determining whether you can live there: before you can start receiving rental assistance, the Housing Authority still must inspect and approve the unit, as well as approve the contract rent.

Leasing In-Place

- You may be able to continue to live in your current unit and start receiving assistance, if the owner who has been renting to you all this time agrees to enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with the Housing Authority.
- Check with your landlord to see if (s)he is interested in participating in the HCV Program. If yes, the owner will still need to complete the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) packet that was provided to you at the briefing appointment.

Locating a Unit

When searching for a unit, you will discover that owners advertise their rental properties in many ways:

- GoSection8 website provides list of available and accessible rental units where the property owner has agreed to rent to a Section 8 voucher holder: www.gosection8.com
- This HUD website is an interactive tool to search for housing opportunities and other housing related resources based on location: <https://resources.hud.gov/>
- SCCCHA posts the lists of available and accessible units on the wall by the front entrance or can be picked at the reception desk. The lists are updated every Thursday.
- Local newspapers, rental magazines, and real estate offices are other sources for available units.

Helpful Hints: Is the Unit Suitable for You?

When you are searching for housing, you might consider the following:

Housing unit considerations:

1. Does the unit size meet your needs and is the size for which you are eligible?
2. Is the unit safe, decent, safe, and sanitary?
3. Are appliances available such as a refrigerator and stove (this is important if you are not able to provide your own)?
4. What utilities will you have to pay for?
5. Where is the laundry facility?
6. If there is a yard, will you be responsible for maintaining it?

Personal and neighborhood considerations:

7. Is the unit close to family and friends?
8. Is the neighborhood safe? (You might want to drive around at different times of day to observe your potential neighborhood.)
9. If you have a pet, are pets allowed?
10. Is the unit close to your job, public transportation, shopping, and schools? Listings on GoSection8 provide useful information on the proximity of homes to schools, shopping, and transit!

Consider choosing units in “high opportunity areas”

11. Are any of the units you have thus far identified located in a “**high opportunity area**”? To determine if a unit is in such an area, you can check the SCCCHA’s list of available units that is posted outside of the Housing Authority building. “High opportunity areas” tend to experience less crime, offer greater employment opportunities, and, for youths, have well-performing schools with low drop-out rates and high levels of college attendance.¹

Applying for a Unit

Make sure you have your Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) and Voucher with you while you are searching. When you find a unit, consider the following:

- Make an appointment with the prospective property owner or agent, and when you eventually meet the property owner, make a positive first impression.
- Have your references available.
- Be prepared to provide information about how you will pay any required deposits.
- Have your Voucher, Payment Standards and Utility Allowance Tables (if applicable) with you to help determine if the asking rent is too high.
- What is contract rent? (The method to determine if the rent is too high is explained in this packet.)
- Which utilities are the tenant responsible for paying?
- How much is the security deposit?
- Who takes care of repairs and maintenance?

Request For Tenancy Approval (RFTA)

- After you complete the owner’s application process and they would like to accept you as their tenant, provide them with the RFTA packet to complete.
- You will also need to sign and complete the Head of Household and Tenant sections of the packet.
- The entire packet will then need to be returned to the Housing Authority to start the leasing process.
- While the RFTA is being processed, the “clock” on your voucher term will stop. If the request is disapproved for any reason, a new RFTA will be issued to you and the “clock” will start up again where it left off (i.e. no time lost).
- You will only be issued one RFTA at a time. Do not make copies of the RFTA.

¹ HUD, Housing Choice Voucher Guidebook, “Chapter 2: Expanding Housing Opportunities and Mobility” (2015), page 2-1 (https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/DOC_35612.PDF or <https://bit.ly/2wT7i2M>)

Housing Authority Policy on Providing Information to Property Owner

The Housing Authority is required to provide the prospective owner/agent with all available previous owner(s) contact information.

CHAPTER 3. HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS INSPECTIONS

Inspection

- When the Housing Authority receives the RFTA packet, the Housing Programs Specialist will use a third-party vendor to determine if the contract rent is acceptable based on the maximum allowable contract rent requirement and rent comparable analysis.
- Once the proposed contract rent is approved, the unit will be scheduled for an inspection: the prospective owner/property manager must be present for the inspection!
- **All units must pass inspection.** The packet “Inspection Process & Lease Information” includes a “Pre-Inspection Checklist” that lists many of the items that will be inspected.
- If the unit does not pass inspection, the owner will have 10 days to make the necessary repairs; a re-check of the unit will be scheduled. If the repairs are not made within the required timeframe, the RFTA will be cancelled, and you will be given a new RFTA to start your search for another unit.

After the Inspection

- When the unit passes the inspection, the Housing Authority will enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (“HAP”) contract with the owner. You will enter into a Lease Agreement with the property owner.
- Housing Authority will pay its share of the rent (HAP) on the effective date of the contract. You will be responsible for any days moved-in prior to the contract date.

HUD Required Tenancy Addendum

- HUD requires that their Tenancy Addendum be incorporated into any Lease Agreement between the tenant and the property owner word-for-word.
- A copy of the HUD Tenancy Addendum is included in this handbook.
- The Tenancy Addendum must also be attached to your copy of the Lease Agreement. You should review the addendum, and verify the following sentence is stated on the Lease Agreement prior to your signing. If this sentence is not included in the Lease Agreement, the Housing Authority cannot approve the unit:

“The HUD Tenancy Addendum is incorporated by reference into the lease”.

CHAPTER 4. PORTABILITY AND FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Moving Out of Santa Clara County

- With your Voucher, you can move to any county under the jurisdiction of a housing authority. E
- Each housing authority may have its own rules and procedures, such as income eligibility, subsidy standards, and payment standards.
- After you receive your voucher, you may submit a request to move at any time if you were living in Santa Clara County when you registered on the Section 8 wait list.
- If you were not living in Santa Clara County when you registered on the wait list, you must remain in the County for the first year you are a program participant.
- If you wish to move after your initial lease agreement terms, contact your assigned Housing Programs Specialist.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)

The FSS Program is a voluntary program designed to encourage HCV participants to work towards becoming financially independent of welfare systems and economically self-sufficient.


- The Program is an **opportunity** to improve your financial situation.
- The Program puts **cash** into an escrow account for you and your family.

A flyer is enclosed with at the end of this handbook with further information (see Figure 5).

CHAPTER 5. PROGRAM INTEGRITY

If you or your family cause a breach (violation) of the “Family Obligations”, your housing assistance may be terminated. The second and third pages of your Voucher lists “Family Obligations” (see **arrow** in Figure 3) that you must follow while in the Section 8 program – please read these pages carefully. At each reexamination appointment, your Housing Specialist will review the Family Obligations, and all adult members must sign and date the form confirming your family understands each item listed.

Figure 3. Page 2 of Sample Voucher: Family Obligations



<p>3. PHA Approval or Disapproval of Unit or Lease</p> <p>A. When the family finds a suitable unit where the owner is willing to participate in the program, the family must give the PHA the request for tenancy approval (on the form supplied by the PHA), signed by the owner and the family, and a copy of the lease, including the HUD-prescribed tenancy addendum. Note: Both documents must be given to the PHA no later than the expiration date stated in item 3 or 4 on top of page one of this voucher.</p> <p>B. The family must submit these documents in the manner that is required by the PHA. PHA policy may prohibit the family from submitting more than one request for tenancy approval at a time.</p> <p>The lease must include, word-for-word, all provisions of the tenancy addendum required by HUD and supplied by the PHA. This is done by adding the HUD tenancy addendum to the lease used by the owner. If there is a difference between any provisions of the HUD tenancy addendum and any provisions of the owner's lease, the provisions of the HUD tenancy addendum shall control.</p> <p>D. After receiving the request for tenancy approval and a copy of the lease, the PHA will inspect the unit. The PHA may not give approval for the family to lease the unit or execute the HAP contract until the PHA has determined that all the following program requirements are met: the unit is eligible; the unit has been inspected by the PHA and passes the housing quality standards (HQS); the rent is reasonable; and the landlord and tenant have executed the lease including the HUD-prescribed tenancy addendum.</p> <p>E. If the PHA approves the unit, the PHA will notify the family and the owner, and will furnish two copies of the HAP contract to the owner.</p> <p>1. The owner and the family must execute the lease.</p>	<p>4. Obligations of the Family</p> <p>A. When the family's unit is approved and the HAP contract is executed, the family must follow the rules listed below in order to continue participating in the housing choice voucher program.</p> <p>B. The family must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Supply any information that the PHA or HUD determines to be necessary including evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status, and information for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition.2. Disclose and verify social security numbers and sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.3. Supply any information requested by the PHA to verify that the family is living in the unit or information related to family absence from the unit.4. Promptly notify the PHA in writing when the family is away from the unit for an extended period of time in accordance with PHA policies.5. Allow the PHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice.6. Notify the PHA and the owner in writing before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease.7. Use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be the family's only residence.8. Promptly notify the PHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child.9. Request PHA written approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit.10. Promptly notify the PHA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit. Give the PHA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
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The most common Family Obligation violations that could result in termination of housing assistance are:

- Unauthorized persons living in the assisted unit
- Not reporting all household income
- Subleasing the assisted unit
- Side payments to the landlord

It is very important that you contact your assigned Housing Programs Specialist when:

- You are unsure about any additional money the landlord is asking from you
- You have questions about any program rules.

CHAPTER 6. INFORMAL REVIEWS & HEARINGS

Applicants and Program Participants have the right to an informal review (applicants) or hearing (participants) if notice of cancellation of the Voucher or termination of assistance is issued from the Housing Authority.

Applicants

- If your Voucher is cancelled, or your name is removed from the waiting list, you will receive a letter from the Housing Authority stating the reason(s) for the decision.
- The letter will also inform you that you can submit a written request for an informal review to the Housing Authority if you would like to contest the decision.
 - In preparation for the review, you may submit any evidence that you believe will assist with your case.

Participants

- If you receive written notification that your housing assistance is terminated, you may be provided the opportunity to submit a written request to the Housing Authority for an informal hearing if you would like to contest the decision.
- You may also submit a written request for an informal hearing if you require clarification as to how your subsidy size or utility allowance was determined, or how your portion of the rent was calculated.
- Upon receipt of your written request for an informal hearing, a letter will be sent to you with a scheduled date and time.
 - You may bring legal counsel, witnesses, and evidence when presenting your case.
- If your family follows the “Family Obligations”, you should never have to experience this process.

CHAPTER 7. FAIR HOUSING LAWS

Fair Housing Equal Opportunity (FHEO)

- It is a violation of federal law for a housing provider to refuse to rent or sell a home, to offer unequal terms, quote different prices, or apply different policies on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, sex, familial status, sexual orientation, or national origin.
- State law prohibits discrimination on the basis of marital status and source of income.
- If you believe that you have experienced housing discrimination, you are encouraged to contact the Housing Discrimination Hotline: 1-800-669-9777 and the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-887-8339.
- This packet includes a list of resources on Page 18 that can assist you if you experience housing discrimination.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

- The law prohibits the denial of admission, termination of assistance, or termination of tenancy for lease violations, criminal activities, or other good cause if the violations occurred as a direct result of a family member being the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.
- The restrictions are described in the Tenancy Addendum, which is the document provided by the Housing

Authority that must be included in the lease agreement.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

- SCCHA's policy is to provide meaningful access to its programs and services to persons who have limited English proficiency.
- Translation and interpretation services will be provided **free of charge**.
- Please notify the Housing Authority at least 3 days in advance if you require LEP services, including persons who are members of the hard-of-hearing and deaf community.

Figure 4. Sample "Housing Discrimination Referral Notice" from SCCHA

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION REFERRALS



If you believe you have been refused housing on the basis race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, disability, medical condition, and age, source of income, gender orientation, then notify one of the agencies listed below. To file a complaint with HUD, you may also complete the complaint form included in this Briefing Packet titled: "Are You a Victim of Housing Discrimination?" and mail it to:

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
600 Harrison Street, Third Floor
San Francisco, CA 94107-1300
Telephone: (415) 489-6524 or 1-800-347-3739
Fax (415) 489-6558 • TTY (415) 436-6594
E-mail: **Complaints_office_09@hud.gov**

Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity Division (9E)
California Department of Fair Employment and Housing:
Telephone: (800) 884-1684.
Visual impairment: 800-884-1684
Videophone at (916) 226-5285 or TDD at (800) 700-2320.

The following agencies are authorized to investigate and/or give legal advice regarding housing discrimination:

Project Sentinel/Fair Housing (Milpitas)
10 Dempsey Road
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 946-6582

Project Sentinel/Fair Housing (South County)
7950 Church Street, Suite #210
Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 720-9888

Project Sentinel/Fair Housing
430 Sherman Avenue, Suite 308
Palo Alto, CA 94306
(415) 321-6291

Legal Aid Society – Community Legal Services
480 North First Streets
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 998-5200

Asian Law Alliance
184 East Jackson Street
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 287-9710

Senior Adults Legal Assistance (SALA)
Central County Office
160 E. Virginia Street, Suite, #260
San Jose, CA 95110
(408) 295-5991

Figure 5. Family Self Sufficiency Program Flyer

Housing Choice Voucher Program Participants:

\$AVE MONEY

when you increase your earned income



Join the
Family
Self-Sufficiency
Program!

- Improve personal financial situation
- Establish a special savings account
- Receive case management support

For more information, complete this form and return to us.
TEL. 408.993.3026 | FAX: 408.993.4426
505 W. JULIAN STREET, SAN JOSE, CA 95110



HOUSINGAUTHORITY
SANTA CLARA COUNTY
making homes, growing communities

First name: _____	Last name: _____
Mailing Address: _____	
Phone Number: _____	Email: _____

By submitting this form, you are authorizing SCCHA or its contractor to contact you to provide more information about the FSS Program.

Figure 6. SCCHA Utility Allowance Table (Oct 2019)

2019/2020 Utility Allowances Schedule - Effective 10/01/2019											
Locality: Santa Clara County; San Jose											
Unit Type: Semi-Detached, Rowhouse, Townhouse		Description:		Includes structures with two to four units side-by-side and under one roof, duplexes and two-family homes							
		Monthly Dollar Allowances; Number of Bedrooms									
Utility or Service		SRO	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR	7 BR	8 BR
Heating	a. Natural Gas	16	21	27	31	33	38	43	48	54	60
	b. LPG/Propane	56	75	85	94	104	114	123	138	154	172
	c. Electric	17	23	30	37	41	46	50	56	63	70
Cooking	a. Natural Gas	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	11	13	14
	b. LPG/Propane	10	13	17	21	25	29	33	37	41	46
	c. Electric	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	24
Other Electric/Lighting		14	19	32	44	61	74	87	97	109	122
Air Conditioning		No Allowance									
Water Htg.	a. Natural Gas	5	6	13	18	26	32	39	44	49	55
	b. LPG/Propane	16	21	43	64	85	106	128	143	160	179
	c. Electric	7	9	19	29	39	49	59	66	74	83
Water		20	26	31	42	59	77	94	105	118	132
Sewer		26	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Trash Collection		26	34	34	34	68	68	103	103	103	103
Range/Microwave		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Refrigerator		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Unit Type: Low-Rise and High-Rise		Description:		Includes multi-family apartment buildings of 5 or more units and buildings of 5 stories or more with elevators							
		Monthly Dollar Allowances; Number of Bedrooms									
Utility or Service		SRO	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR	7 BR	8 BR
Heating	a. Natural Gas	10	13	15	15	19	20	23	26	29	32
	b. LPG/Propane	32	43	48	54	59	65	70	78	88	98
	c. Electric	9	12	16	21	24	26	29	32	36	41
Cooking	a. Natural Gas	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	11	13	14
	b. LPG/Propane	10	13	17	21	25	29	33	37	41	46
	c. Electric	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	24
Other Electric/Lighting		15	20	31	39	48	57	66	74	83	92
Air Conditioning		No Allowance									
Water Htg.	a. Natural Gas	5	6	13	18	26	32	39	44	49	55
	b. LPG/Propane	16	21	43	64	85	106	128	143	160	179
	c. Electric	7	9	19	29	39	49	59	66	74	83
Water		20	26	31	42	59	77	94	105	118	132
Sewer		26	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Trash Collection		26	34	34	34	68	68	103	103	103	103
Range/Microwave		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Refrigerator		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Unit Type: Single Family Detached; Manufactured Home		Description:		Includes building structure housing only one family under one roof							
		Monthly Dollar Allowances; Number of Bedrooms									
Utility or Service		SRO	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR	7 BR	8 BR
Heating	a. Natural Gas	20	26	30	32	41	43	53	59	66	74
	b. LPG/Propane	63	84	94	105	116	127	138	155	173	193
	c. Electric	21	28	36	41	46	51	57	64	71	80
Cooking	a. Natural Gas	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	11	13	14
	b. LPG/Propane	10	13	17	21	25	29	33	37	41	46
	c. Electric	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	24
Other Electric/Lighting		22	29	42	55	68	81	94	105	118	132
Air Conditioning		No Allowance									
Water Htg.	a. Natural Gas	5	6	13	18	26	32	39	44	49	55
	b. LPG/Propane	16	21	43	64	85	106	128	143	160	179
	c. Electric	7	9	19	29	39	49	59	66	74	83
Water		20	27	35	50	73	97	121	136	151	169
Sewer		33	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	44
Trash Collection		26	34	34	34	68	68	103	103	103	103
Range/Microwave		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Refrigerator		5	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7



SCCHA's mission is to improve the lives of low-income families, persons with disabilities and seniors in Santa Clara County by providing affordable, high-quality housing.

Customer Service Evaluation

This evaluation may be completed and submitted to the Housing Authority at any time: your feedback is always welcome.

1. Type of Service Provided: ☐ Appointment ☐ Inspection ☐ Walk-in
2. When my unit was inspected, questions or concerns I had were addressed. ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. When I call the Housing Authority, my call is answered promptly, and I am put through to the appropriate person. ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. If I leave a message, I receive a return phone call by the next working day. ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. I am treated with respect and consideration by Housing Authority staff. ☐ Yes ☐ No
Name of staff providing service: _____
6. How could the Housing Authority improve its customer service? _____

If you would like to provide additional comments, please write on the back of this form.

Optional and confidential: Name: _____

Please return this form to:

The Santa Clara County Housing Authority
505 West Julian Street
San Jose, CA 95110
Attention: Customer Service Task Force
Phone (408) 275-8770; FAX (408) 993-4070



The Santa Clara County Housing Authority (SCCHA) does not discriminate in the provision of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, disability, medical condition, and age. It is the policy and commitment of SCCHA to provide assurance that persons with disabilities will be given reasonable accommodation upon request so they may fully access and utilize all housing programs and related services. For additional information, contact the Section 504 Coordinator at (408)275-8770; TDD (408)993-3041.

40091 Customer Evaluation Form May 21, 2010

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.scchousingauthority.org

Main Number: 408-275-8770

TDD: 408-993-3041

Section 504 Coordinator: 408-275-8770

Housing Discrimination Hotline: 1-800-669-9777
& Federal Information Relay Service: 1-800-887-8339

Fair Housing, HUD, San Francisco: 1-800-347-3739 & TDD: 1-415-489-6554

California Department of Fair Employment and Housing: Communication Center
(800) 884-1684.

If you have a visual impairment, please call 800-884-1684; use the Videophone at (916) 226-5285 or TDD at (800) 700-2320.

Tenant's Rights in California

www.dca.ca.gov/publications/landlordbook/catenant.pdf