

Housing Choice Voucher Program

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Determines eligibility for housing assistance
 Inspects unit for safety and rent reasonableness
 Enters into contract with Landlords
 Approves Lease for The Families
 Issues Housing Assistance Payments (HAP)
 Annually Monitors Landlord's and Family's Participation

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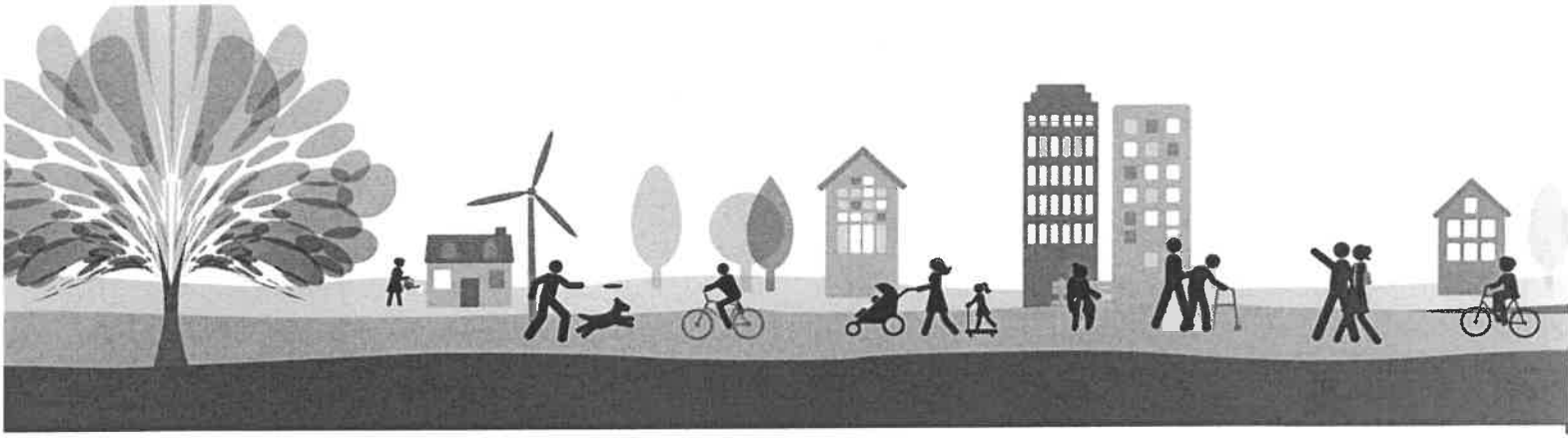
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FAMILY

Furnishes complete information needed by the Housing Authority (HA)
 Finds units
 Complies with Housing Choice Voucher Program Regulations
 Complies with Lease
 Reports Household and Income Changes

LANDLORD

Contact references and screens family
 Leases unit to Family
 Complies with HACR Rules and Contract
 Receives Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)
 Collects family's portion of rent
 Repairs & maintains property
 Enforces Lease



Families Participating in The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program are:

Responsible for finding a suitable housing unit

The Housing Authority (HA) does not limit the family's choice in choosing a rental unit in the housing market.

Not screened by The Housing Authority

Landlords are responsible for screening their prospective tenants.

Not the Housing Authority Residents

The landlord is responsible for the management of the rental unit. The HCV Program is not authorized to perform property manager duties and is not a party to the lease.

Responsible for their own conduct and the conduct of their guest

The landlord is responsible to enforce the provisions of the lease.

Subject to HUD rules and regulations for the HCV Program which are enforced by the Housing Authority

The HA will take the appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the HCV program.

Participants (i.e. tenants) are subject the Prohibited Criminal Activity (PCA) Policy for drug-related or violent criminal activity

Any family participating in the HCV Program that engages in drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity can be terminated from the program. If the family is terminated from the program, the lease is still in effect and the landlord must proceed with legal action if the tenant is unable to fulfill their lease obligations as paying the full contract rent, etc. Any information regarding verifiable drug-related or violent criminal activity by an assisted family should be directed to the HA.



Good Residents

The probability of selecting a desirable resident is high due to the volume of program participants to choose from. The choice is yours—you make the selection based on your own selection criteria. Application fees are acceptable as long as HCV participants are charged the same fee as non-HCV participants in accordance with State law. The use of renter reference services is encouraged. As in all cases, please consult with the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County for landlord/tenant questions.

Maximum Upkeep of Property

In addition to your own inspection(s), your property will be inspected initially by a HA representative and a minimum of once a year thereafter. The HA enforces Housing Quality Standards (HQS). HQS is meant to ensure a safe, sanitary, and healthy living environment for HCV families. Coupling these HA inspections with your own periodic property inspections, you will be able to ensure that your property is being properly maintained.

“Rent” Whether Resident Has Income or Not

The HCV Program affords you the opportunity to fill a vacant rental unit with an assisted participant. The program helps tenants by giving the family an opportunity to rent affordably, based on their income. The HA determines the affordable amount of rent at the time the family initially leases up. Thereafter, the HA determines the tenant’s portion of rent based on their income, and the HA pays the difference between the contract rent and the tenant portion of rent. In contrast to the market-rate marketplace, landlords and owners have a consistent cash-flow month-to-month. These built-in payments avoid slow pays and possible evictions in the event of income loss by the family.

Help with Paperwork

HA staff is available to assist landlords completing paperwork related to the HCV Program. Many landlords participating with the HCV Program start off with one unit and continue to add units as they learn the program.



Simple Step by Step Process

- ❖ Advertise your property using the Available Property List (www.affordablehousing.com) or any other means of advertising.
- ❖ Interview and screen prospective tenants.
- ❖ Select a tenant who has met your screening criteria, fill out the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) packet that the tenant has in their possession and submit the fully completed packet to The Housing Authority.
- ❖ Once the RFTA has been received by the Housing Authority, it will be reviewed to determine if the unit is affordable and comparable to the surrounding area. If the unit is not affordable, we will contact you to inform you the maximum monthly rent we can approve based on family's income. If you can not accept the lower rent the RFTA is simply disapproved and you move on with selecting a new tenant. If the HA can not find any comps to support your asking rent, the HA will contact you request that you provide comps to support your asking rent.
- ❖ You will be contacted to schedule a Housing Quality Inspection (HQS), where the Landlord & tenant must be present.
- ❖ Once unit has passes inspection, a lease effective date must be established, and a copy of a signed lease will need to be submitted to the Housing Authority.
- ❖ The Housing Assistance Payments Contract (HAP Contract) will be signed by the Landlord and a Housing Authority representative (A copy of the executed HAP Contract will be mailed out to Landlord and Tenant).
- ❖ Tenant receives keys to the unit and move's in.
- ❖ The Initial HAP payment can take up to 30 days, however the agency goal is to issue HAP payment within 10 days after the lease/HAP contract have been executed. This time frame will depend on Landlord providing all requested information. Once the initial payment has been processed the monthly payments will be processed on the 1st business day of each month.

Note: The landlord must not be related to any member of the assisted family by means of the following:

Parent -Grandparent -Child -Grandchild -Brother/sister (Disabled persons may request an exception "Reasonable Accommodation").

Landlord is Responsible for:

- Performing all management and rental functions, including resident screening.
- Maintaining the unit in accordance with the HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS).
- Comply with equal opportunity requirements and all Fair Housing laws applicable to the property.
- Furnishing all information required under the Housing Assistance Payment Contract (HAP).
- Paying for utilities included in the lease/HAP Contract.
- Collecting the following from each Section 8 assisted family:
 - ❖ Any necessary security deposits
 - ❖ The tenant portion of the monthly rent
 - ❖ Any charges for damages caused by the family

General Landlord Information

This section is a question and answer summary for owners, agents and managers of rental property. Landlord Seminars are held in both east and west county.

What is the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a program funded by Congress and the President and under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and administered by the Housing Authority of the County of Riverside to provide decent, safe and sanitary affordable rental housing for very low income families. The Housing Authority (HA) assists these families by paying a portion of the contract rent to the landlord and the family pays a portion of the rent to the landlord. The family pays approximately 30 percent of their monthly income as their share of the rent.

Who is eligible for a Voucher?

Families with income that is 50 percent or less of the median income for the area qualify as very low income families. An eligible family can be a single person household that is elderly or disabled, as well as families of two or more.

What does the landlord need to do?

The landlord must attract a family that has already been determined as eligible and has been issued a Voucher indicating eligibility by the Housing Authority. **The landlord is responsible to screen the family for suitability as a tenant, just as they would any prospective tenant.**

If the landlord decides to rent to the family, a Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) is completed and submitted to the HA. Eligible families are given the RFTA at the time they are issued a Voucher. The HA schedules an inspection of the rental unit in approximately seven days. If the unit meets HUD Housing Quality Standards and the rent amount is approvable by standards set by HUD, the lease is signed by the landlord and tenant and the contract is signed by the HA representative and the landlord.

The landlord is expected to collect a security deposit and the family's share of the rent. The landlord is expected to maintain the property's overall condition and see that the basic plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling systems, etc. are functioning properly. **Should the family violate the terms of the lease or fail to pay the rent, the landlord would evict the family through the normal court eviction procedure and send the HA copies of any notices that the tenant is served as they are served.**

The HA will mail a check to the landlord on the first business day of each month for the HA portion of the rent. **Direct deposit of the HA portion is available** and encouraged to prevent loss or theft of the payments for Voucher participants.

What does the family need to do?

The participating family is responsible to pay the rent and the utilities for which they are obligated under the lease. They are also responsible to follow all the terms of the lease. The family is responsible for normal housekeeping maintenance of the rental unit. (Please see the Participant Obligations on our web site for additional program obligations for the family.) Serious or repeated lease violations can result in the termination of housing assistance under the federal regulations. If

the family damages the rental unit beyond normal wear and tear, they are responsible to pay for the damages. Damaging the unit may also result in the termination of a family's assistance.

How do I get started?

In order to list your property you must register for the affordablehousing.com website. There are three ways to list your property with affordablehousing.com website for free - they are by computer, by fax, or by mail. For fastest service and to access all of affordablehousing.com's free features it is recommended that you add your listing online at www.affordablehousing.com.

If you do not have internet access then you can add a free listing by either fax or mail. If you wish to print and fax, or mail the Property Listing Form, it is available here: [Property Listing Form – affordablehousing.com](#). For verbal instructions on how to list by fax or mail please call Affordable Housing.com toll free at 866.466.SEC8 (7328) and press “2” for Landlord options. If you are having difficulty listing online and need technical assistance please press “4”.

The listing information is made available to Voucher families who are looking for a unit. An informational packet for new owners will be mailed to you at your request.

What are the rent limits?

The contract rent represents the **total** cash to the owner from both the tenant and the Housing Authority. The tenant share is the amount that the tenant pays plus any utilities that the tenant is required to pay. The Housing Authority pays part of the contract rent based on a sliding scale that is tied to the tenant's income. No payments in addition to the contract rent are allowed.

The Voucher payment standards are rent amounts at which the participating family would be paying 30 percent of their income toward the rent. Families may pay slightly more but they **may not pay more than 40 percent of their income** toward rent and utilities. The Housing Authority determines the maximum allowable payment to the owner. This amount cannot be increased even if the rent exceeds the payment standard. Voucher rents must also be certified as reasonable in comparison to other open market rents in the area.

The following voucher payment standards are effective **October 01, 2021**.

Voucher Payment Standards

October 01, 2021

Bedrooms	Payment Standard
0	\$1,168
1	\$1,322
2	\$1,659
3	\$2,271
4	\$2,542
5	\$2,923
6	\$3,304

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of rental unit qualifies?

Any existing rental housing may be eligible; single family homes, condominiums, apartments, mobile homes, townhouses, duplexes, etc. All rental units must conform to Housing Quality Standards and meet local code requirements.

Where can the unit be located?

They can be located anywhere in Riverside County.

May I raise the rent once I have signed a contract?

Not in the first year of the lease. After the first year, you may request an increase in the rent. In the case of a Voucher rent increase, the family must pay the entire amount of the increase and they may move to another unit if they feel they cannot afford the increase. The landlord must request an increase in writing at least 60 prior to the anniversary date in order to get the increase on the anniversary date. If the request is received at a later date, the increase will be effective at least 60 days later.

If the rent amount that I am requesting is not as much as I want, can the tenant pay an additional amount?

No. "Side payments" are prohibited by the regulations and by the contract that you sign with the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority would have the right to terminate the contract and allow the tenant to relocate.

May an owner sell a property while it is under contract with the Housing Authority?

Yes, an owner may sell the property under contract.

How often are the units inspected by the Housing Authority?

The rental units are inspected prior to a contract being signed and at least annually thereafter.

What are the benefits for a participating landlord?

The Housing Authority portion of the rent is sent to your checking account on the first business day of each month. The Voucher program allows you to fill a vacancy in a rental unit with a tenant who, by being on the program, gives you greater assurance of being able to afford the unit. If a participant's income decreases and they report the change to the Housing Specialist, the Housing Authority may be able to increase payments to make allowance for the decrease.

May I rent my unit to a family member who is receiving rental assistance through the Housing Voucher Choice Program?

No. Federal Regulations [24 CFR 982.306 (d)] prohibits the Housing Authority from approving a unit for assistance if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, sister, or brother of any member of the family. The only exception to this regulation is when a family member is a person with disabilities and it has been determined that approving the unit would provide a reasonable accommodation for that family member.

Can I get an inspection before I find an eligible family that wants to rent my unit?

No. The resources of the Housing Authority are limited and we can only do inspections after your unit is selected by an eligible family and a Request for Tenancy Approval is completed. We also request that you make any necessary repairs prior to an inspection to avoid the necessity of another inspection and a delay in the start of the lease and contract effective period.

What does a unit have to have to pass inspection?

Please see our checklist for tenants and landlords for more information. The unit needs to meet basic building codes for safe and sanitary housing. Doors and windows must open, close and lock. Plumbing and electrical systems must work properly. Heating and cooling must be adequate. Most well maintained rental units should be able to pass an inspection.

INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR TENANTS and LANDLORDS

In order for your unit to pass inspection, it must meet certain requirements of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The list below covers those items which most commonly cause a unit to fail. Please read and use the enclosed booklet "A Good Place to Live" to inspect your unit BEFORE you request an inspection.

REMEMBER, YOUR UNIT MUST PASS INSPECTION WITHIN THE ALLOTTED TIME FRAME OR YOUR RENTAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE TERMINATED OR YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO RELOCATE TO ANOTHER UNIT.

- 1. Modifications or adaptations to a unit must meet applicable National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (N-SPIRE).
- 2. All utilities such as water, gas and electricity must be in service.
- 3. Working smoke detectors are required in every unit and on every level.
- 4. Cooking stove and oven must be clean and in working order.
- 5. Refrigerator must be clean and in working order.
- 6. There must be a heating system that works.
- 7. There must be hot and cold running water in the kitchen and bathroom(s).
- 8. There must be a shower or bathtub that works and does not leak.
- 9. There must be a secure flush toilet that works and does not leak.
- 10. The bathroom must have either a window to the outside with a screen **OR** an exhaust fan.
- 11. There must not be any plugged drains (check for slow drains).
- 12. All windows and doors must have locks that work, and all exterior doors must have working deadbolts (inside cannot be keyed – must be butterfly type lock).
- 13. Each room with a window must have at least one window screen in good condition.
- 14. All bedrooms must have at least one window with a screen or exterior door with a screen.
- 15. All electrical outlets must have cover plates and be in good condition. All outlets must be properly installed; three prong outlets must also be grounded.
- 16. All electrical outlets within 6ft or less that are near a water source (i.e. Sink) must be grounded to a GFCI receptacle.
- 17. There must not be any missing, broken or cracked windows.
- 18. There must not be any water damage (or excessive water damage) caused by leaks.

- 19. The hot water heater tank MUST have a temperature pressure relief valve with a downward discharge pipe made of galvanized steel or copper tubing (NO PVC) that does not terminate more than 18 inches (1 ½ ft) or less than 2 inches above the floor or waste receptor flood-level rim or to the outdoors. Two earthquake straps (one in the top third and one in the bottom third) are required for all hot water heaters. If plumber's tape is used as earthquake strap, it must be wrapped completely around the tank. An exception would be in the case of electric water heaters located inside a cupboard, typically under a countertop and commonly referred to as 30 gallon stubbies (these are half the size of a normal water heater. In these instances, one earthquake strap is preferred but Plumber's tape may be used to secure the water heater).
- 20. There must not be any chipping, peeling paint anywhere inside or outside of the unit. See lead-based paint disclosure for any unit built prior to 1978; there cannot be any deteriorated and peeling paint if the HCV Unit was constructed prior to 1978 and there is a child under the age of six.
- 21. The floor covering cannot be torn or have holes that can cause someone to trip.
- 22. If there are stairs and railings, they must be secure. Stairs with 4 or more steps require secure hand railings.
- 23. The roof must not leak. (Check the ceiling for stains.)
- 24. All security bars on windows must have a quick release mechanism.
- 25. All units located east of and including Palm Springs must have a functional cooling system.
- 26. All overhead lights or ceiling fans must be installed properly.
- 27. There must not be any inoperable or unregistered vehicles on the premises.
- 28. Certified Carbon Monoxide Detectors must be installed in all single family Dwellings having a fossil fuel burning heater or appliance (such as gas stove, or oven), fireplace, or attached garage. (SB183) They must be installed on every level.
- 29. Any door leading from an attached garage into the unit, must be considered a Fire Rated door. Most Fire Rated doors contain a seal that verifies the door is a Fire Rated door. In the event, a seal is not found on the door, a solid core door in most instances, will suffice as a Fire Rated door. For example, a bedroom door or any other door that is not considered a solid core door will not pass as a Fire Rated door. The fire rated door must have a self-closing mechanism.
- 30. The contract rent must be reasonable based on the rent of comparable units in the area (within 1 mile).

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