

Housing Choice Voucher Program Landlord and Tenant Information

Responsibilities of the Owner

Rental property owners participating in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program deal directly with the tenant. Units must be maintained in accordance with HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS). An initial inspection of the unit must verify that the unit meets HQS, local and state sanitary codes before a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract can be executed.

Owners must:

- Maintain their units according to HQS, local and state regulations.
- Adhere to HUD requirements of non-discrimination regulations.
- Fulfill their obligations under the terms of the lease signed by them and the tenant.
- HAP to the owner will be abated for non-compliance of HQS regulations.
- Notify the Housing Authority of any intention to evict the tenant. It is the owner's responsibility to evict tenants if lease violations occur.
- Collect the security deposit and the tenant's share of the monthly rent.
- Not collect any monies in excess of the contract rent or amenity fees as stated in the lease.

By endorsing the HAP check each month, the owner is certifying that:

- Full payment has been received; the amount of the payment is correct and the payment meets all contract requirements.
- The unit is currently in a decent, safe and sanitary condition and in compliance with the HAP contract.
- The unit is currently occupied by the eligible family that has been approved by the Housing Authority.

Responsibilities of the Tenant

The family shall be responsible for fulfilling all obligations as a participant on the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and will abide by the written rental agreement (lease) entered into with the owner.

The family must:

- Notify Clearwater Housing Authority (CHA), in writing, of any changes in family size, household income or criminal activity within ten (10) days. Failure to report these changes may result in termination of rental assistance and/or the family will be obligated to enter into a repayment agreement.
- Not engage in any drug related or violent criminal activity. Any such activity may result in termination of rental assistance.
- Not violate the lease by allowing an unauthorized person(s) to reside in their unit. An unauthorized person is one who is not listed on the lease and application and uses the family's address. Guests are allowed to visit for up to fourteen (14) days per year. Absence of the unit by the family for thirty (30) days or more may result in termination of rental assistance.
- Pay their security deposit and rent portion upon obtaining possession of unit.
- Immediately advise the owner of any repairs that are needed in the unit. If the owner cannot be reached by telephone, the tenant must mail a written request to the landlord with a copy forwarded to CHA. If the owner will not make an effort to make necessary repairs within a reasonable time limit, the family must notify CHA in writing. The family is financially responsible for any tenant related damages to the unit.
- Keep the unit in a decent, safe and sanitary manner. The family is responsible for maintaining good housekeeping. Utilities must be connected at all times.

Responsibilities of the Housing Authority

Clearwater Housing Authority (CHA), as the administering agent of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, also has responsibilities.

CHA must:

- Review applications, determine eligibility and issue vouchers.
- Ensure that all participating families are briefed on the specifics of the HCV Program.
- Provide technical assistance to families in locating a unit.
- Conduct initial inspections of units to verify compliance of HQS prior to executing a HAP contract.
- Prepare and execute the HAP contract.
- Ensure that owners are paid HAP in a timely manner on a monthly basis.
- Inspect rental units at least annually in accordance with HQS and notify owners and tenants of the results.
- Recertify families annually to re-determine eligibility.
- Administer the HCV Program in a fair and equitable manner to all parties concerned.
- Establish, administer and enforce policies and HUD regulations.

**Understanding the
Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)
Program**

The HCV Program is income-based and is designed to provide rental assistance to eligible, very low income families, disabled and elderly individuals while allowing the maximum mobility housing selection. The HCV Program is a voluntary program, and any rental unit within the city limits of Clearwater has the potential to be included. Units must meet the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the owners/landlords must enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with Clearwater Housing Authority (CHA). In the HCV Program, the tenant and the Housing Authority pay their respective portions of the rent directly to the owner. Program participants are selected from a waiting list and must be income eligible. It is the owners' responsibility to check references and screen tenants to determine a tenant's suitability.

**CHA may deny or terminate assistance
with respect to these types of serious
violations:**

- 1.) Drug related or violent criminal activity on or off the rented property by program participants, household members or guests. Drug related criminal activity shall mean the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, use or possession with intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use of a controlled substance. Alcohol abuse which interferes with health, safety, or peaceful enjoyment of the property by persons residing in the immediate vicinity, CHA's employees, representatives, contractors, agents, law enforcement officers and/or the public.
- 2.) Activity that threatens the health, safety, or peaceful enjoyment of any persons residing in the immediate vicinity, CHA's employees, representatives, contractors, agents, law enforcement officers, and/or the public.

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**CLEARWATER
HOUSING
AUTHORITY**

**Housing Choice
Voucher (HCV)**

***Basic Information
Guide for***

Landlords and Tenants