



# Housing Choice Voucher Landlord Symposium

*Erie Metropolitan Housing Authority*

*April 25, 2024*

# Welcome

Ralph Chamberlain

Executive Director

Erie Metropolitan Housing Authority

# Agenda

- Session One: Housing Choice Voucher Program Overview
- Session Two: Program Updates- National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE)
- Session Three: Housing Choice Voucher Program: Landlord-Tenant Law
- Session Four: Housing Choice Voucher Program: Administrative Flexibilities
- Session Five: Today's Speakers: Salvatore Sortino, President of SVS Companies and Housing Choice Voucher Landlord & Donald Eager, Fair Housing Consultant, presentation about Reasonable Accommodations in regard to pet issues/service animals, and answer questions landlords may have about Fair Housing practices.
- Session Six: Housing Choice Voucher Q&A



# Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Overview

*Susan Waldrom  
Operations Director*

# Thank you to our Landlords!

- ▶ EMHA would like to thank YOU, the **Landlords**, for your participation and partnership with EMHA's Housing Choice Voucher program.
- ▶ Your participation and partnership provides families with affordable, warm, safe, shelter; and in some cases- keep families together.
- ▶ Without Landlords, this would not be possible,
  - ▶ so again **THANK YOU!**

# Housing Choice Voucher Program Overview

- Introduction
- HCV Locally
- Waiting List
- Program Basics, Benefits, and Ways to Participate
- Benefits for Program Participants
- Benefits for Landlords
- Program Roles
- Rent to Landlord
- HAP Contract & Lease
- Tenancy Addendum
- Inspections
- Special Purpose Vouchers

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) INTRODUCTION:

## WHAT IS THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM?

- ▶ The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is the federal government's primary program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the HCV tenant, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs) that receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This means that the tenant, landlord and PHA all have obligations and responsibilities under the HCV program.

# THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM OFFERS:

- SCHEDULED PAYMENT (ALL OR PORTION) BY DIRECT DEPOSIT ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> BUSINESS DAY OF THE MONTH
- FREE INITIAL SCREENING OF TENANTS FOR PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY (LANDLORDS CAN CONDUCT ADDITIONAL SCREENINGS AS THEIR NORMAL PRACTICE)
- FREE AVAILABLE HOUSING LIST ADVERTISEMENT
- FREE SMOKE DETECTORS AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS TO ASSIST WITH PASSING INITIAL INSPECTIONS - WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
- FREE ANNUAL INSPECTION OF THE PROPERTY
- FREE COMPLAINT INSPECTION OF THE PROPERTY IS AVAILABLE, IF NEEDED
- EMHA CONTINUOUSLY MAINTAINS A PARTICIPANT WAIT LIST, SO THERE IS ALWAYS A NEED FOR RENTAL UNITS
- TENANTS MUST COMPLY WITH PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND THEIR LEASE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR HOUSING ASSISTANCE, WHICH TYPICALLY RESULTS IN LONGER-TERM TENANCIES
- FEDERAL FUNDING RECEIVED TO SUPPORT THIS PROGRAM ARE TAX DOLLARS THAT RETURN TO ERIE COUNTY
- ADDITIONALLY, EMHA HAS SPECIAL VOUCHER TYPES:
  - HOMELESS VETERANS (VASH)
  - FOSTER YOUTH TO INDEPENDENCE (FYI)
  - DISABLED AND HOMELESS FOR AGES 18-61 (MAINSTREAM) FOR WHOM EMHA CURRENTLY HAS FUNDING FOR SECURITY DEPOSITS AND OTHER INCENTIVES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT: [ERIEMETROHOUSING.ORG](http://ERIEMETROHOUSING.ORG)  
WHERE YOU CAN FIND HUD'S NEW HCV LANDLORD RESOURCES WEBPAGE AND  
A LANDLORD BRIEFING YOUTUBE VIDEO.





# EMHA Voucher Caseload Division

effective 09/15/23

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  - ▶ INTAKE (wait list) & PORTABILITY
  
- ▶ **CIERRA YONTZ**
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  - ▶ EMHA INSPECTOR

**EMHA Payment Standards  
which reflect all utilities included  
have increased effective January 1, 2024 as follows:**

<b>Zero Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$844.00</b>		<b>Five Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$1,789.00</b>
<b>One Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$849.00</b>		<b>Six Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$2,022.00</b>
<b>Two Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$1,058.00</b>		<b>Seven Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$2,255.00</b>
<b>Three Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$1,279.00</b>		<b>Eight Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$2,489.00</b>
<b>Four Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$1,555.00</b>		<b>Nine Bedroom:</b>	<b>\$2,722.00</b>

# HOW THE PAYMENT STANDARD APPLIES AND CLIENT AFFORDABILITY

1.) Family with two children, no income, submits RFTA for two-bedroom unit and landlord has requested \$900.00 in rent:

Payment Standard:	\$1058.00
Minus Utility Allowance for all utilities paid by tenant:	<u>\$ 200.00</u>
Maximum contract rent that can be approved:	\$ 858.00 *EMHA must ask landlord to reduce contract rent by \$42.00

2.) Family with two children, \$10, 000 annual income, submits RFTA for two-bedroom unit and landlord has requested \$900.00 in rent:

Payment Standard plus difference in 30% and 40% of tenant's income: \$1058.00 + \$75.00=	\$1133.00
Minus Utility Allowance for all utilities paid by tenant:	<u>\$ 200.00</u>
Maximum Contract rent that can be approved:	\$ 933.00 *the client's income supports the amount over the payment standard

3.) Family with two children, regardless of family income, submits RFTA for two-bedroom house and landlord has requested \$1058.00 (payment standard) in rent:

Payment Standard:	\$1058.00
No Utility Allowance to subtract as all utilities paid by LANDLORD:	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Maximum contract rent that can be approved:	\$ 1058.00

In all three scenarios, should the rent comparability of another similar, unsubsidized unit in the open market be less, then the Landlord would be asked to further reduce the requested contract rent.

Reminder, when we have to ask a landlord to reduce the rent to meet the tenant's affordability- it is only for the first one year only- you can submit a rent increase request 2 months prior to the anniversary month of the lease.

Please also visit our website at [eriemetrohousing.org](http://eriemetrohousing.org) for Landlord videos, links, and other information!

# HCV Locally

- Provides rental assistance to more than 2 million low-income households nationwide
- *Erie Metropolitan Housing Authority* provides rental assistance to approximately 1,300 low-income households in Erie County

# HCV Waiting List

How does an individual or family receive assistance in the Housing Choice Voucher program?

- Those interested in participating in HUD's HCV program apply through their local housing authority.
- The public housing authority (PHA) maintains a waiting list and offers vouchers as they become available.
- Applicants must be low-income to be eligible.
- Each PHA has the discretion to establish local preferences to reflect local needs and priorities.
- EMHA preference categories:
  - Displaced by Gov't action (i.e.: unit condemned due to landlord inaction, foreclosure, etc.)
  - Victim of Domestic Violence
  - Veteran
  - Mainstream, Elderly
  - Foster to Youth Independence
  - Working Family, Full-time student, Disabled
- Families who qualify for any such local preferences may be offered a voucher ahead of others that do not qualify for preferences.
- When applicants are selected, they are interviewed to determine if they meet eligibility requirements.

## HCV Program: Basics, Benefits, and Ways to Participate Video on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6n9bwwMH30>

### **Content of Video includes:**

Federal Govt program for assisting low income families

Basics of the HCV Program

Benefits of the HCV Program

How Prospective Landlords can Participate

Uses a role-play with two landlords that explains how it works

PHA receives funding from the federal government to administer the HCV Program locally and help low income families afford rent

Participant's receive rental assistance from their PHA but find housing units in the rental market that meets their needs

In other words, the rental assistance is provided on behalf of the participant directly to the landlord

However participants can choose their own neighborhood and type of housing

Landlords post information about available units in places where people participating in the HCV Program will see it

If a Voucher Participant applies for a unit, the landlord screens their rental application, just as they would for any other applicant

This is another opportunity to find prospective tenants and HCV tenants tend to be stable and long term, plus it's a great way to help others

Voucher tenants stay in the same property on average 8-9 years, they also pay rent on time, take good care of their properties

What does the PHA do?

Families who apply, qualify and receive a voucher pay 30% of their monthly income towards rent

The PHA covers the remaining portion of the rent through a Housing Assistance Payment (or HAP) and pays it directly to landlords every single month

The program provides low income families a choice in where they rent with their voucher and helps them maintain decent, safe and sanitary housing

HCV Participants can rent any type of housing unit, but with some limitations

For example, the number of people in the household will impact the number of bedrooms a family will qualify for with their voucher

Landlords in a variety of properties can benefit from participating in the HCV Program

This includes landlords with duplexes, triplexes, large apartment complexes, single family homes, landlords with units in town, in the suburb and in rural areas

If a participant loses their job and can't afford their rent, their portion of the rent may be adjusted along with the PHA so the landlord receives the same total rent payment

Next step to renting:

- 1) Contact the PHA
- 2) Market the unit
- 3) screen and select tenants
- 4) complete rental paperwork
- 5) PHA reviews rent and inspects the unit
- 6) sign lease and HAP contract
- 7) begin receiving rent
- 8) periodic inspections and renewals

Periodic inspections can help you with identifying maintenance needs early on before problems snowball

# HCV Benefits for Participants

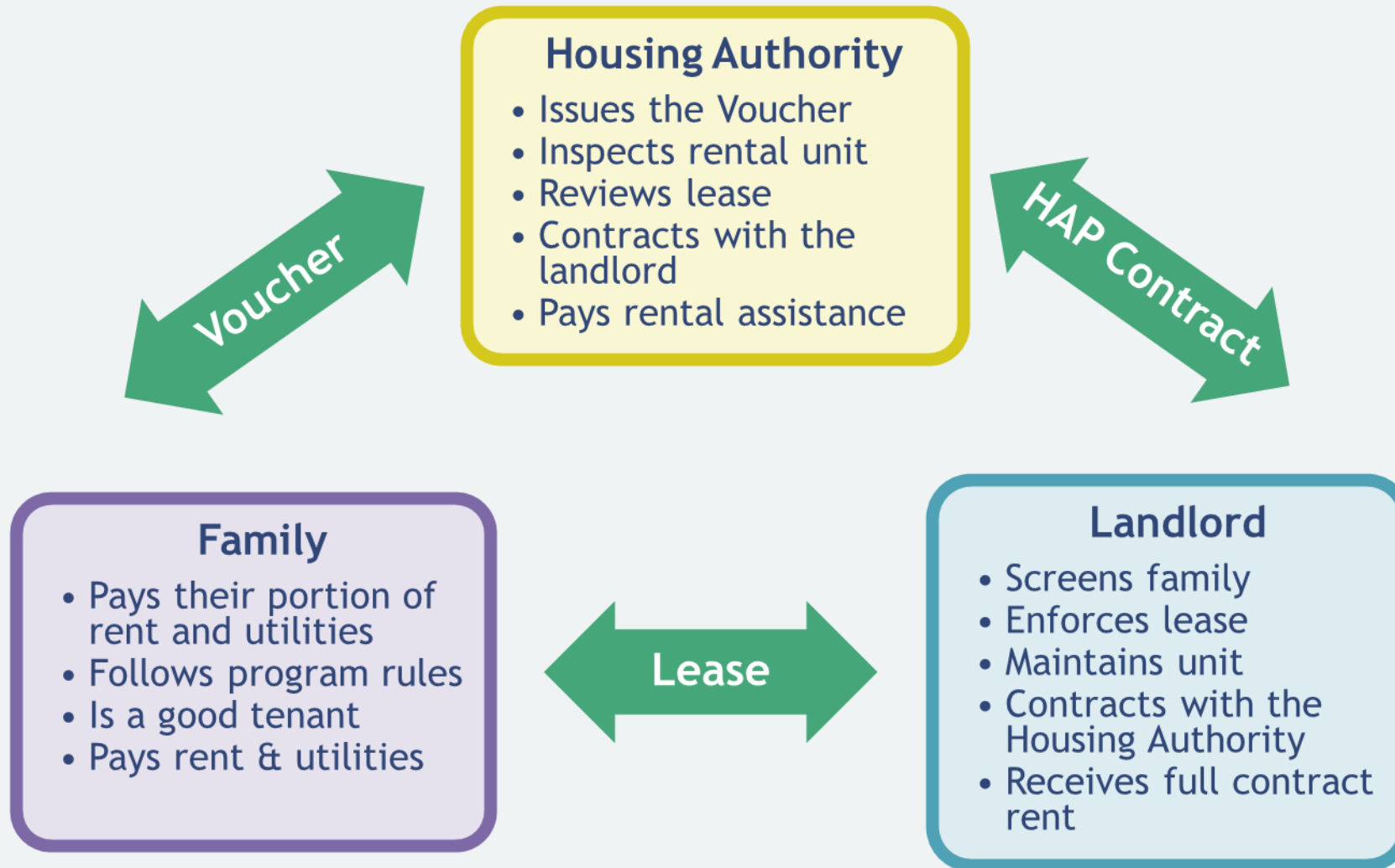
- HCV provides low-income families a rental subsidy
- Voucher holders pay 30-40% of their monthly income towards rent
- Voucher holders choose where they want to live in Erie County. They may also be able to exercise the portability feature of transferring their voucher to another jurisdiction
- Voucher holders choose what type of property they want to rent, with some limitations
- If a participant's income decreases their portion of rent will also decrease while the rental subsidy increases, so the total rent remains the same. This increases housing stability
- If a participant's income increases to the point where the rental subsidy is zero, they can remain on the program for 180 days, this helps encourage families to pursue employment and professional development/growth because this won't result in them losing their subsidy immediately

# HCV Benefits for Landlords

- Landlords of all types can benefit from participating in the HCV Program
- Provides another opportunity for landlords to find prospective tenants
- Apply the same screening criteria as they would for any other applicant
- HCV tenants tend to be stable and long-term tenants stay in the same property on average 8-9 years
- The PHA sends the subsidy payment directly to the landlord every single month
- Periodic inspections can help identify maintenance needs early on



# HCV Program: Roles



# What is a Voucher?

- A voucher is a written contract between the Housing Authority and family describing program requirements and confirms family's eligibility for rental assistance
- Vouchers expires after 120 days if a family does not select a unit
- Lists the bedroom size the PHA has determined suits their family composition
- Can be adjusted in size if the family's household composition changes

# Sample Voucher

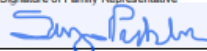
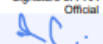
## Voucher Housing Choice Voucher Program

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

OMB No. 2577-0169  
(Exp. 04/30/2018)

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 <b>entire</b> document before completing form Fill in all blanks below. Type or print clearly.		Voucher Number 12345
1. Insert <b>unit size</b> 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 3 bedroom	
2. <b>Date Voucher Issued (mm/dd/yyyy)</b> Insert actual date the Voucher is issued to the Family.	2. Issue Date (mm/dd/yyyy) March 15, 2022	
3. <b>Date Voucher Expires (mm/dd/yyyy)</b> Insert date sixty days after date Voucher is issued. (See Section 6 of this form.)	3. Expiration Date (mm/dd/yyyy) July 13, 2022	
4. <b>Date Extension Expires (if applicable)(mm/dd/yyyy)</b> (See Section 6. of this form)	4. Date Extension Expires (mm/dd/yyyy)	
5. Name of Family Representative Suzie R Public	6. Signature of Family Representative 	Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) 3/15/2022
7. Name of Public Housing Agency (PHA) Your Town PHA		
8. Name and Title of PHA Official Ima Caseworker	9. Signature of PHA Official 	Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) 3/15/2022

### 1. Housing Choice Voucher Program

- A. The public housing agency (PHA) has determined that the above named family (item 5) is eligible to participate in the housing choice voucher program. Under this program, the family chooses a decent, safe and sanitary unit to live in. If the owner agrees to lease the unit to the family under the housing choice voucher program, and if the PHA approves the unit, the PHA will enter into a housing assistance payments (HAP) contract with the owner to make monthly payments to the owner to help the family pay the rent.
- B. The PHA determines the amount of the monthly housing assistance payment to be paid to the owner. Generally, the monthly housing assistance payment by the PHA is the difference between the applicable payment standard and 30 percent of monthly adjusted family income. In determining the maximum initial housing assistance payment for the family, the PHA will use the payment standard in effect on the date the tenancy is approved by the PHA. The family may choose to rent a unit for more than the payment standard, but this choice does not change the amount of the PHA's assistance payment. The actual amount of the PHA's assistance payment will be determined using the gross rent for the unit selected by the family.

### 2. Voucher

- A. When issuing this voucher the PHA expects that if the family finds an approvable unit, the PHA will have the money available to enter into a HAP contract with the owner. However, the PHA is under no obligation to the family, to any owner, or to any other person, to approve a tenancy. The PHA does not have any liability to any party by the issuance of this voucher.
- B. The voucher does not give the family any right to participate in the PHA's housing choice voucher program. The family becomes a participant in the PHA's housing choice voucher program when the HAP contract between the PHA and the owner takes effect.
- C. During the initial or any extended term of this voucher, the PHA may require the family to report progress in leasing a unit at such intervals and times as determined by the PHA.

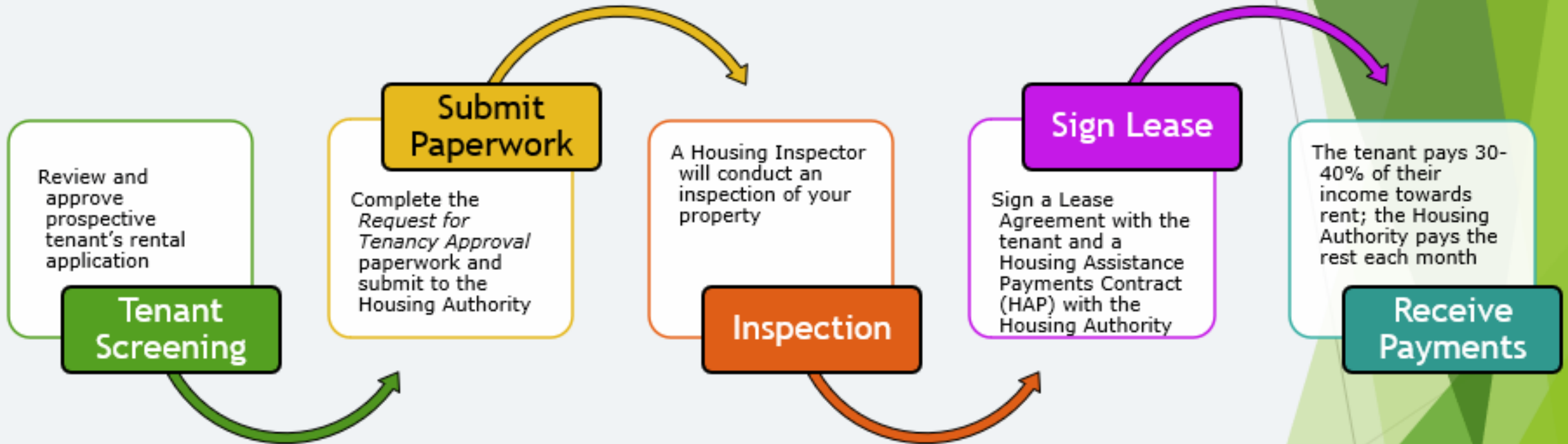
# Leasing a Unit

- Family selects a unit, completes RFTA paperwork with landlord (Request for Tenancy Approval)
- PHA reviews RFTA, determines if the rent is reasonable and affordable for the family
- PHA inspects the rental unit using HUD established physical inspection standards called Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- HQS set minimum criteria for the health and safety of program participants
- Family & landlord sign a lease, PHA & landlord sign a HAP Contract
- Family moves in and pays their portion of the rent, PHA pays subsidy to landlord

# HAP Contract and Landlord Lease

- **Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract** between the PHA and landlord
  - May not be modified
  - Governs housing assistance payment
  - Includes required tenancy addendum
- **Landlord Lease** between tenant and landlord
  - Enforced by landlord
  - Tenancy addendum becomes part of landlord lease

# Voucher lease-up process



# HAP Contract

The Housing Assistance Payments Contract is an agreement between the Landlord and the Housing Authority. Key details of the lease are reflected in the HAP Contract.

**Housing Assistance Payments Contract  
(HAP Contract)  
Section 8 Tenant-Based Assistance  
Housing Choice Voucher Program**

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

**Part A of the HAP Contract: Contract Information**

(To prepare the contract, fill out all contract information in Part A.)

**1. Contents of Contract**

This HAP contract has three parts:

- Part A: Contract Information
- Part B: Body of Contract
- Part C: Tenancy Addendum

**2. Tenant**

**3. Contract Unit**

**4. Household**

The following persons may reside in the unit. Other persons may not be added to the household without prior written approval of the owner and the PHA.

**5. Initial Lease Term**

The initial lease term begins on (mm/dd/yyyy):

The initial lease term ends on (mm/dd/yyyy):

**6. Initial Rent to Owner**

The initial rent to owner is: \$   
During the initial lease term, the owner may not raise the rent to owner.

**7. Initial Housing Assistance Payment**

The HAP contract term commences on the first day of the initial lease term. At the beginning of the HAP contract term, the amount of the housing assistance payment by the PHA to the owner is \$  per month. The amount of the monthly housing assistance payment by the PHA to the owner is subject to change during the HAP contract term in accordance with HUD requirements.

# Tenancy Addendum

The Tenancy Addendum is a standard HUD form that is attached to the Lease between the Landlord and the Tenant which details the program rules.

## TENANCY ADDENDUM Section 8 Tenant-Based Assistance Housing Choice Voucher Program (To be attached to Tenant Lease)

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

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169  
exp. 7/31/2022

The Tenancy Addendum is part of the HAP contract and lease. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.5 hours. This includes the time for collection, reviewing and reporting the data. The information is being collected as required by 24 CFR 982.451 which in part states the PHA must pay the housing assistance payment promptly. This agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless there is a valid OMB number. Assurances of confidentiality are not provided under this section.

HUD is committed to protecting the privacy of an individual's information stored electronically or in paper form in accordance with federal privacy laws, guidance and best practices. HUD expects its third-party business partners including Public Housing Authorities who collect, use, maintain, or disseminate HUD information to protect the privacy of that information in accordance with applicable law.

### 1. Section 8 Voucher Program

- a. The owner is leasing the contract unit to the tenant for occupancy by the tenant's family with assistance for a tenancy under the Section 8 housing choice voucher program (voucher program) of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- b. The owner has entered into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract (HAP contract) with the PHA under the voucher program. Under the HAP contract, the PHA will make housing assistance payments to the owner to assist the tenant in leasing the unit from the owner.

### 2. Lease

- a. The owner has given the PHA a copy of the lease, including any revisions agreed by the owner and the tenant. The owner certifies that the terms of the lease are in accordance with all provisions of the HAP contract and that the lease includes the tenancy addendum.
- b. The tenant shall have the right to enforce the tenancy addendum against the owner. If there is any conflict between the tenancy addendum and any other provisions of the lease, the language of the tenancy addendum shall control.

### 3. Use of Contract Unit

- a. During the lease term, the family will reside in the contract unit with assistance under the voucher program.
- b. The composition of the household must be approved by the PHA. The family must promptly inform the PHA of the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child. Other persons may not be added to the household without prior written approval of the owner and the PHA.
- c. The contract unit may only be used for residence by the PHA-approved household members. The unit must be the family's only residence. Members of the household may engage in legal profit making activities incidental to primary use of the unit for residence by members of the family.
- d. The tenant may not sublease or let the unit.
- e. The tenant may not assign the lease or transfer the unit.

### 4. Rent to Owner

- a. The initial rent to owner may not exceed the amount approved by the PHA in accordance with HUD requirements.
- b. Changes in the rent to owner shall be determined by the provisions of the lease. However, the owner may not raise the rent during the initial term of the lease.
- c. During the term of the lease (including the initial term of the lease and any extension term), the rent to owner may at no time exceed:

- (1) The reasonable rent for the unit as most recently determined or redetermined by the PHA in accordance with HUD requirements, or
- (2) Rent charged by the owner for comparable unassisted units in the premises.

### 5. Family Payment to Owner

- a. The family is responsible for paying the owner any portion of the rent to owner that is not covered by the PHA housing assistance payment.
- b. Each month, the PHA will make a housing assistance payment to the owner on behalf of the family in accordance with the HAP contract. The amount of the monthly housing assistance payment will be determined by the PHA in accordance with HUD requirements for a tenancy under the Section 8 voucher program.
- c. The monthly housing assistance payment shall be credited against the monthly rent to owner for the contract unit.
- d. The tenant is not responsible for paying the portion of rent to owner covered by the PHA housing assistance payment under the HAP contract between the owner and the PHA. A PHA failure to pay the housing assistance payment to the owner is not a violation of the lease. The owner may not terminate the tenancy for nonpayment of the PHA housing assistance payment.
- e. The owner may not charge or accept, from the family or from any other source, any payment for rent of the unit in addition to the rent to owner. Rent to owner includes all housing services, maintenance, utilities and appliances to be provided and paid by the owner in accordance with the lease.
- f. The owner must immediately return any excess rent payment to the tenant.

### 6. Other Fees and Charges

- a. Rent to owner does not include cost of any meals or supportive services or furniture which may be provided by the owner.
- b. The owner may not require the tenant or family members to pay charges for any meals or supportive services or furniture which may be provided by the owner. Nonpayment of any such charges is not grounds for termination of tenancy.
- c. The owner may not charge the tenant extra amounts for items customarily included in rent to owner in the locality, or provided at no additional cost to unsubsidized tenants in the premises.



# Inspections

An Inspector will conduct an Inspection to ensure that HUD inspection standards are met.

All housing units with HCV Tenants must meet the following thirteen (13) HQS Performance requirements\*

- Sanitary facilities
- Food Preparation and refuse disposal
- Space and security
- Thermal Environment
- Illumination and electricity
- Structure and materials
- Interior air quality
- Water Supply
- Lead-based pain
- Site and neighborhood
- Sanitary Conditions
- Smoke detectors

\*HUD is currently piloting new inspection standards called NSPIRE. The NSPIRE model prioritizes health, safety and functional defects over appearance. If implemented, the earliest these standards would be used is late 2023.

# Special Purpose Vouchers

- HUD funds HCV assistance to serve special populations including:
  - Veterans (HUD-VASH vouchers)
  - Foster to Youth Independence( FYI vouchers)
  - Non-elderly disabled (Mainstream voucher)

# Where to learn more

- HUD's Landlord Page:  
[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/hcv/landlord](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/landlord)
- [HUD Exchange Landlord Page:](#)
- <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/public-housing/hcv-landlord-resources/>
- Housing Choice Voucher Fact Sheet:  
<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/PIH-HCV-Landlord-Fact-Sheet.pdf>



# Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program: Program Updates

*Cierra Yontz  
EMHA Inspector*

# Policy Changes

## **NSPIRE** NATIONAL STANDARD FOR THE PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF REAL ESTATE

*Inspections changing from Housing Quality Standards (HQS) to  
National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate  
(NSPIRE) Effective October 1, 2024.*

*HUD's template guide can be found at  
[hud.gov/reac/nspire/standards](https://www.hud.gov/reac/nspire/standards)*

## NSPIRE cont....

Some of the new standards that are different from HQS that landlords can expect to see include:

- ▶ Smoke alarms: Smoke alarms are required on each level of the home and inside each sleeping area.
- ▶ Carbon Monoxide alarms: Carbon monoxide alarms are required inside units and in unit inside areas such as hallways that contain a fuel-burning appliance or fireplace.
- ▶ Cosmetic deficiencies: Cosmetic deficiencies to a unit or its exterior are no longer considered a deficiency.
- ▶ List of life-threatening deficiencies: A list of deficiencies that are considered life threatening must be adopted by all PHAs. (The full list is available in the Federal Register in [85 FR 5458](#).)
- ▶ Setting minimum temperature requirements: If the inspection is on or between October 1 and March 31, and the permanently installed heating source is not working, or it is working but the interior temperature is below 64 degrees, that is considered a life-threatening deficiency. If the interior temperature is between 64 and 67.9 degrees, it is considered a non-life-threatening deficiency.



# **Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program: Landlord-Tenant Law**

# Landlord-Tenant Law

- Landlord-tenant laws govern the relationship between a landlord and a tenant in a residential setting.
- Landlord-tenant laws usually regulate issues concerning rental property, which include the obligations of a tenant and a landlord, and terms of the lease including issuing of notices and security deposits.
- Landlord-tenant laws are contained in the state laws and they may also be included in local ordinances. In cases where there are both, the most restrictive applies.
- For our jurisdiction, you can find the applicable Landlord-tenant laws here:

Local/City Law: [eriecounty.oh.gov/FairHousing](http://eriecounty.oh.gov/FairHousing)

[https://cityofsandusky.com/government/department/code\\_compliance/fair\\_housing.php](https://cityofsandusky.com/government/department/code_compliance/fair_housing.php)



# Tenant Obligations

Some tenant obligations will be covered in the law, if not prohibited in the law, you may add other obligations in your lease:

- Keep the unit in a sanitary condition
- Comply with housing and health codes
- Do not damage or destroy the unit
- Pay utility costs not provided for by the landlord
- Other rules in the lease (i.e.: cut own grass, no smoking, etc.)

# Landlord Obligations

Landlord obligations will be covered in the law. Some of these may include:

- Provide safe, habitable and clean rental unit to the tenant
- Maintain shared areas of a rental property
- Comply with housing and health codes
- Provide notice before entering the property
- Pay owner supplied utility charges
- Maintain owner supplied appliances

# LANDLORD TIPS:

**It is advised that landlords complete their own periodic inspection of their property with at least a 24-hour notice to their tenant. Relying on the annual inspection by the Housing Authority allows a lot to happen in between those annual inspections. Landlords being cited by contracted inspector Housing Authority Services (HAS) for failures that the landlord feels should be tenant responsibility should call their tenant's case manager to advise and the case manager can look at this on a case-by-case basis.**

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**Landlord screening- EMHA is responsible for screening for program eligibility with a look-back period for criminal records of three years. Landlords should be screening for suitability- meaning you may wish to check for an eviction history, criminal history more than a three-year look-back period, employment history, credit history, etc. There are free public access websites such as Sandusky Municipal Court website's record check, local police checks, etc.**



# **Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program: Administrative Flexibilities**

# Flexibilities Implemented

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the following flexibilities were implemented in order to enable program operations to continue as much as possible and continue to be available:

- Drop-boxes - Drop-boxes facilitate delivery of documents to PHA during pandemic.
- Phone - Many PHA staff remain teleworking, phone lines have remained open.
- Email - Email communication is also being used to collect supporting documentation, and to communicate with applicants, participants, and landlords
- The Housing Choice Voucher Program is successful because of the partnerships we make with landlords. Our focus on customer service and effective partnerships means that we listen to your needs and make adjustments where we can.
- Many of these flexibilities also creates time savings which are used to provide better service delivery across all areas.
- By implementing these flexibilities, we hone our value of continually improving our programs.



# Today's Speakers:

- Salvatore Sortino, President of SVS Companies and Housing Choice Voucher Landlord
- Donald Eager, Fair Housing Consultant, presentation about Reasonable Accommodations in regard to and pet issues/service animals and will answer fair housing questions you may have



# Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Q & A

\*We ask that these are general program questions. Please feel free to contact the appropriate case manager for case specific questions\*



**Thank you for joining us today!**