

OWNER'S GUIDE TO SECTION 8



A THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP

Families • Owners • LACDA

About the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

The Section 8 HCV Program offers tenant-based assistance. Participants find their own rental housing in the open market, and pay a portion of their income towards rent. The Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) subsidizes the balance of the monthly rent in direct payments to the owner. The LACDA administers the program in the unincorporated areas and participating cities in Los Angeles County.



OWNER BENEFITS

- Receive a guaranteed monthly payment on the first* of every month via direct deposit.
- Retain total control. You can collect a security deposit, use your own lease, and screen tenants according to your own suitability criteria.
- Receive free biennial inspections to ensure maximum property upkeep.
- By participating in the Section 8 HCV Program, you are helping low-income families obtain housing.

**If the first of the month is a weekend or holiday, payment will be released on the next business day.*

ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OWNERS

To become a participating owner, all you need to do is to lease your rental unit to a Section 8 HCV Program voucher holder. Generally, owners cannot rent to relatives under the Section 8 HCV Program. The LACDA may grant an exception as a reasonable accommodation to a disability.

The LACDA will require you to provide proof of ownership of the rental property, and to certify that the rent you charge the voucher holder is the same as what you currently charge unassisted families.

The LACDA may disapprove you for reasons such as engaging in drug trafficking, committing fraud in connection to a Federal housing program, or being debarred by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from participating as an owner under the Section 8 HCV Program.

HOW TO LIST YOUR PROPERTY

If you wish to advertise your rental property to Section 8 HCV Program participants, please contact the Los Angeles County Housing Resource Center at (877) 428-8844, or visit <http://housing.lacounty.gov/>.

THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP

Your participation and assistance is a major factor in the success of the Section 8 HCV Program. We greatly value your partnership.

OWNERS

- Screen families to determine their suitability as renters.
- Comply with fair housing laws.
- Maintain the housing unit by making necessary repairs.
- Comply with the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract.
- Collect rent from the family and comply with and enforce the lease.

FAMILIES

- Abide by the terms of the lease.
- Pay rent on time and take care of the housing unit.
- Provide any utilities which are not furnished by the owner.
- Provide and maintain any appliances that are not furnished.
- Cover damages to the unit or premises beyond normal wear/tear.
- Comply with the family obligations.
- Report changes in income and family composition.
- Notify the LACDA of plans to vacate the unit.
- Be present for all inspections.

LACDA

- Determine family eligibility for participation in the program.
- Approve units and leases.
- Determine the rental amount for a unit.
- Determine a family's portion of rent to owner.
- Inspect subsidized units annually.
- Ensure that owners and families comply with program rules.
- Provide families and owner with prompt and professional service.
- Issue HAP in a timely manner.

LACDA JURISDICTION

The LACDA provides Section 8 HCV rental assistance within unincorporated Los Angeles County and participating cities. The LACDA provides a mapping resource to verify if your unit address is located within the LACDA's service area. Areas outside of the LACDA's jurisdiction are serviced by other housing agencies. Visit <https://bit.ly/3db0Ypr> to access the jurisdiction checker.

If your rental property is located outside of the LACDA's jurisdiction, contact the City Hall for the area in which the rental property is located to determine the agency responsible for Section 8 HCV Program rental assistance.

FIVE STEPS TO PARTICIPATION

There is no application or registration required on your part! If a voucher holding family expresses interest in leasing a rental property, the owner should:

- 1** Verify the Housing Choice Voucher (form HUD-52646) is current by checking the voucher issuance and expiration dates.
- 2** Screen the family for suitability and discuss the terms of the lease agreement, as well as the Section 8 HCV Program rules and regulations with the prospective family.
- 3** Submit the complete Request for Tenancy Approval packet to the LACDA if you and the family decide to move forward with the tenancy.
- 4** Begin rent negotiations with LACDA staff and schedule a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection.
- 5** Sign the approved lease agreement, lease addendum, and HAP contract (form HUD-52641).

Payments to the owner cannot begin until the process above is complete.

INSPECTIONS

WHAT IS AN HQS INSPECTION?

The HQS are the minimum health and safety standards allowed by HUD to ensure that assisted housing units are decent, safe, and sanitary. The LACDA is required to perform an HQS inspection of HCV-assisted units before a participant enters into a HAP contract with an owner, and at least biennially after that.

HOW DO INSPECTORS DECIDE TO PASS OR FAIL A UNIT?

Inspectors use the HUD Inspection Checklist. These checklists are used as a guideline to determine if the unit complies with HQS. One failure item on this checklist will result in a failed inspection.



Inspectors must then determine whether it was owner or tenant-caused and whether it is an emergency or non-emergency fail. Inspectors will note the inspection result and provide details of all failure items.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE INSPECTION RESULTS FAIL?

The owner and the family will be notified of the results. The owner has the option to correct the items or cancel the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA). The family will also have the option to wait for the owner to correct the failed items within a reasonable time or continue a housing search. A re-inspection of the unit must be scheduled to confirm that the unit passes HQS.

- *Emergency fail (Owner-related deficiency)*

The owner will be notified via telephone, fax, or email regarding the emergency condition. The owner will have 24 hours to repair the unit before a re-inspection occurs. If items are not corrected, the HAP will be abated (suspended) on the first of the month following the failure date, and will not be reinstated until the inspection passes.

- *Non-emergency fail (Family's responsibility to fix)*

The family has 30 days to correct the deficiencies. A re-inspection will be conducted to verify correction of failed items. If items are not corrected, the LACDA will initiate subsidy termination.

- *Non-emergency fail (Owner's responsibility to fix)*

The owner has 30 days to correct the deficiencies. A re-inspection will be conducted to verify correction of failed items. If items are not corrected, the HAP will be abated (suspended) on the first of the month following the failure date, and will not be reinstated until the inspection passes.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The owner retains full control over the screening and selection process. The LACDA maintains a policy of “zero-tolerance for drug-related and violent criminal activity.”
- As with any other tenant, Section 8 HCV Program-assisted families can be evicted by the owner for lease violations. The eviction process is determined by State law, not Section 8 HCV Program regulations.
- The owner may collect a full security deposit, up to the maximum permitted by State and local laws.
- The owner has the same rights to legal action against a tenant who leaves damages beyond the security deposit collected as for any other tenant as allowable by California State law.
- The owner may request market rate rent for new contracts. Rents may equal, but not exceed, other comparably sized and equipped units in the area. Note: the program limits the total rent amount for each Section 8 HCV Program participant. The limits are based on income and family size.
- The Section 8 HCV Program allows for rent increases. The owner may request a rent increase once each year after the initial term of the lease at the participant’s annual reexamination to compensate owners for inflationary costs of operation and maintenance (as long as the rent remains reasonable when compared to other comparable unassisted units of the same size).
- The LACDA is not a party to the lease. The owner is responsible for the management of the rental unit.



OWNER INCENTIVES

OPEN DOORS

In an effort to increase the number of property owners participating in the County's rent assistance programs, the LACDA provides an enhanced customer service experience for property owners. Through a collaborative effort between the LACDA and Los Angeles County, Open Doors provides owners with monetary and non-monetary assurances who rent their available units to subsidized families.

HOMELESS INCENTIVE PROGRAM (HIP)

HIP offers monetary incentives to encourage landlords to rent their available units to the LACDA's homeless Section 8 HCV Program voucher holders. Owners with available units in the Cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, Inglewood, Baldwin Park, Norwalk, Burbank, Redondo Beach, Long Beach, Culver City, Kern County, and the LACDA's jurisdiction may also participate in this Program.

For more information on owner incentives:
(626) 586-1585 | HIP@lacda.org



LANDLORD/TENANT RESOURCES

<https://dcba.lacounty.gov>
(800) 952-5210

<https://www.hrc-la.org>
(800) 477-5977



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