

WASHINGTON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

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WASHINGTON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Washington County Housing Authority is very pleased to know that you are interested in participating in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. This program has proven to be extremely successful in assisting low income families obtain affordable, safe, sanitary housing. By participating in this program, you can be more confident that the family will be able to afford the rent and to pay their rent on time.

Before approving the lease, it is important that you understand that it is your responsibility as the Landlord/Agent to screen families based on tenant histories. You will want to consider such factors as the family's rent and utility payment history, previous history regarding care of property and respecting the rights of others, or any other rental history information.

The attached pages will assist you in completing the Request for Tenancy Approval packet that the tenant will provide to you and answer many questions that you may have. Upon request, "THE OWNER'S HANDBOOK, A GUIDE TO SECTION 8 RENTAL PROGRAMS" will be made available to owners and property managers. This handbook will assist you in understanding how the programs work and includes samples of the lease, lease addendum and contract. Also included is a glossary of Section 8 terms and other information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Section 8 Department of the Washington County Housing Authority at 724-228-6060.

**SECTION 8
WASHINGTON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

• *The Housing Authority may not approve a unit for lease if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of the Section 8 voucher-holder that is seeking to rent the unit. The Housing Authority however, could still approve the unit for lease, if the Housing Authority determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities. This policy applies to new admissions and moves with continued assistance.*

• *When completing the attached papers, please do not skip any areas. Any spaces left incomplete will cause a delay and possible rejection of housing assistance for this tenant at this unit.*

• *A copy of the deed* for the property to be subsidized must be furnished by the owner prior to contract execution. The signatures on the Housing Choice Voucher, Request for Lease Approval, and all relating documents must correspond with the person(s) listed as owners on the deed. (Please refer to the enclosed landlord information form that is included in this packet). Failure to provide a copy of the deed will cause a delay and possible rejection of housing assistance for this tenant at this unit.

• *The tenant will be responsible for paying the security deposit directly to the landlord.* The owner may collect a security deposit from the tenant however; the PHA may prohibit the owner from collecting a security deposit in excess of amounts charged by the owner to unassisted tenants.

No landlord may require a sum in excess of two month's rent to be deposited in escrow for the payment of damages to the leasehold premises and/or default in rent thereof during the first year of any lease.

During the second and subsequent years of the lease or during any renewal of the original lease, the amount required to be deposited may not exceed one month's rent.

• *It is the Owner's responsibility to screen the prospective Tenant.*

• *Moving in before the unit has passed the HQS Inspection:* It is not encouraged for the tenant to enter into a lease or move into a unit prior to the unit passing the HQS Inspection.

• *When the Request for Tenancy Approval is properly completed and returned to this office,* the Housing Authority must insure that the requested rent for the unit is comparable to other units located in the same area.

• The Request for Tenancy Approval packet for a new unit must be received by the Housing Authority **no later than the 10th of a month**. The lease, contracts and subsidy will be effective on the first of the month **following the month in which** the unit passes the inspection (providing the tenant is eligible for subsidy for that period).

• A Housing Quality Standard Inspection will be scheduled.

• ***Following the final approval*** of the unit the Housing Authority will calculate the amount of rent to be paid by the tenant and the amount of Housing Assistance (HAP) that the Housing Authority will be sending to the landlord on behalf of the tenant

Prepare the lease and contracts.

Two copies of the lease and contracts *will be sent to the landlord.* The tenant and landlord should arrange a time to review and sign the leases and contracts.

Both copies must be returned to this office for final authorization before payments can be made.

An executed copy of the Lease and Contract will be sent to the tenant and a copy will be sent to the landlord along with the initial payment.

• ***The landlord may include an addendum to the lease*** if the landlord wishes to address specific requirements of the tenant, such as late fees for the tenant's portion of the rent, pets, etc. The landlord must provide the signed addendum when submitting the completed Request for Tenancy Approval packet. The addendum will be reviewed and if approved, a copy will be included with the lease. The terms of the addendum may not contradict any terms of the Lease or Contract, fair housing laws or any federal regulations for participation in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

• ***The term of the lease will be one year.*** After the first year, the lease will be renewed as a month-to-month lease unless Owner provides a written notice each year to the Housing Authority. The notice must be signed by the landlord and tenant and submitted to the Housing Authority 60 days before the lease expires.

• ***The tenant's annual re-certification*** process will begin three months prior to the lease expiration lease date.

• ***The unit will be inspected annually.*** All required repairs to the unit must be completed and the unit must pass inspection by the 15th of the month prior to lease termination. It is advised that the Landlord/Agent conduct periodic inspection(s) throughout the year to ensure that the tenant has not caused damage to the unit or neglected to inform the owner of problems.

• ***The Housing Authority will send its portion of the rent*** directly to the landlord. The Housing Assistance Payment will be mailed between the first and tenth of the month. If the landlord and tenant have agreed on a late fee to be charged to the tenant if the rent is not paid by an agreed upon date, the landlord may only charge the tenant the late fee if the tenant's portion of the rent is not paid by the agreed upon date.

• ***The tenant will pay their portion of the rent*** directly to the landlord.