

Landlord Introduction Q&A

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz , also serving Hollister and San Juan Bautista

Oct 05

We offer many landlord-friendly services:

- ✓ Direct deposit of Housing Authority rent checks.
- ✓ Prompt and consistent Housing Authority payments.
- ✓ Market-comparable rent levels.
- ✓ Vacancy payment for the remainder of the month when a tenant moves out.
- ✓ Flexible lease terms.

An Overview of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program for Landlords of Rental Units

How does the program work?

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program provides rental assistance to low income individuals and families, who select their own rentals from units on the private market. **We do not assist the unit—we assist the family who rents the unit.**

- ✓ The family pays about a third of their income in rent to the landlord, and we pay the rest, up to a certain limit, directly to the landlord.
- ✓ Each rental unit must pass an initial and annual inspection.
- ✓ The landlord uses his/her own lease with our addendum. Month-to-month leases are acceptable.
- ✓ Rent increases are permitted as long as the total rent is no more than our "reasonable rent" standard.
- ✓ The landlord can leave the program at the end of any lease term. The HCV program does not require notice to the tenant, however, state law may require it.
- ✓ The landlord can charge a market-rate security deposit in accordance with his/her practices and state law.

Can I get my current tenant on the program?

We assist people who are already on our waiting list. You can encourage tenants to apply, but there will be a lengthy wait, typically years.

If one of your tenants is issued a voucher, he/she has the option of remaining in your unit if you would like to participate in the program.

Does the Housing Authority screen the tenants?

The Housing Authority screens for program eligibility. We do not screen to see if they will be a good tenant. We check income eligibility and legal immigration status. We conduct registered sex offender checks and may deny certain violent or drug-related criminals if the information is disclosed to us.

However, these are minimal standards. We encourage landlords to screen tenants as they would do with their non-subsidized tenants.

Remember, this is your tenant. Screen them as you would any other tenant.



Questions? Call our Info Line at 454-5955
or visit us online at www.hacosantacruz.org



2931 Mission Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060 Open M-TH 8-5, Closed Fridays
For our business office or para información en español: 831 454-9455
Program rules are subject to change. Use this as general guidance only.

TDD: 831 469-0122

Landlord Introduction Q&A cont'd

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Welcome to the Housing Choice Voucher Program

A Housing Choice Voucher tenant has applied to rent my unit. What next?

The tenant will give you a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) to complete. We will review the RTA, negotiate the rent with you, and schedule an inspection. See our "Inspection Q&A."

After the unit passes inspection, the RTA is approved, and the contract is signed, the tenant is authorized to move in. **Your first rent check will arrive after all paperwork is processed.**

If the tenant moves in early, we will not start paying our portion of the rent until these steps are complete. The tenant would be responsible for the entire rent amount.

What if I Have a Problem with a HCV Tenant?

This is your tenant, like any other tenant. You can take any action, up to and including eviction, in accordance with the law and the terms of your lease. Please consult an attorney or apartment association before taking action, and copy us on any notices of lease violation.

How Much Rent Can I Collect?

The rent that you can collect under the HCV program is based upon:

- ✓ The "reasonable rent" for your area and your unit type. We base this rent on our own market studies. Landlords can submit their own "comparable rents" for us to consider in determining the reasonable rent.
- ✓ The rent the landlord charges for comparable unassisted units. In other words, you cannot collect more from the HCV program than you would from any other renter.
- ✓ Our staff will work with you to determine the allowable rent for your unit.

You are responsible for collecting the tenant's portion of the rent, which is based on the family's income. The tenant pays between 30-40% of his/her income in rent. After the initial lease term, the tenant may pay more than 40% with Housing Authority approval. **We must approve the total rent you collect, including rent increases.**

Can I list my vacant units with the Housing Authority?

Yes! We provide free rental listings on our website and in printed listings that we give to voucher holders who are searching for a place to rent.

To list a unit, visit the Landlords section of our website or call our Info Line. Also, you can state in your own rental ads that you will accept Housing Choice Vouchers.



Need More Info?

Visit our website or call our Info Line for more resources, such as:

- ✓ Request for Tenancy Approval Form (RTA)
- ✓ Free Rental Listing Service
- ✓ Inspection Q&A & checklist
- ✓ Online Rent Calculator
- ✓ Direct Deposit and Other Forms for Landlords

Info Line: 831 454-5955

Website: www.hacosantacruz.org