CHARTER OAK COMMUNITIES

ORIENTATION

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

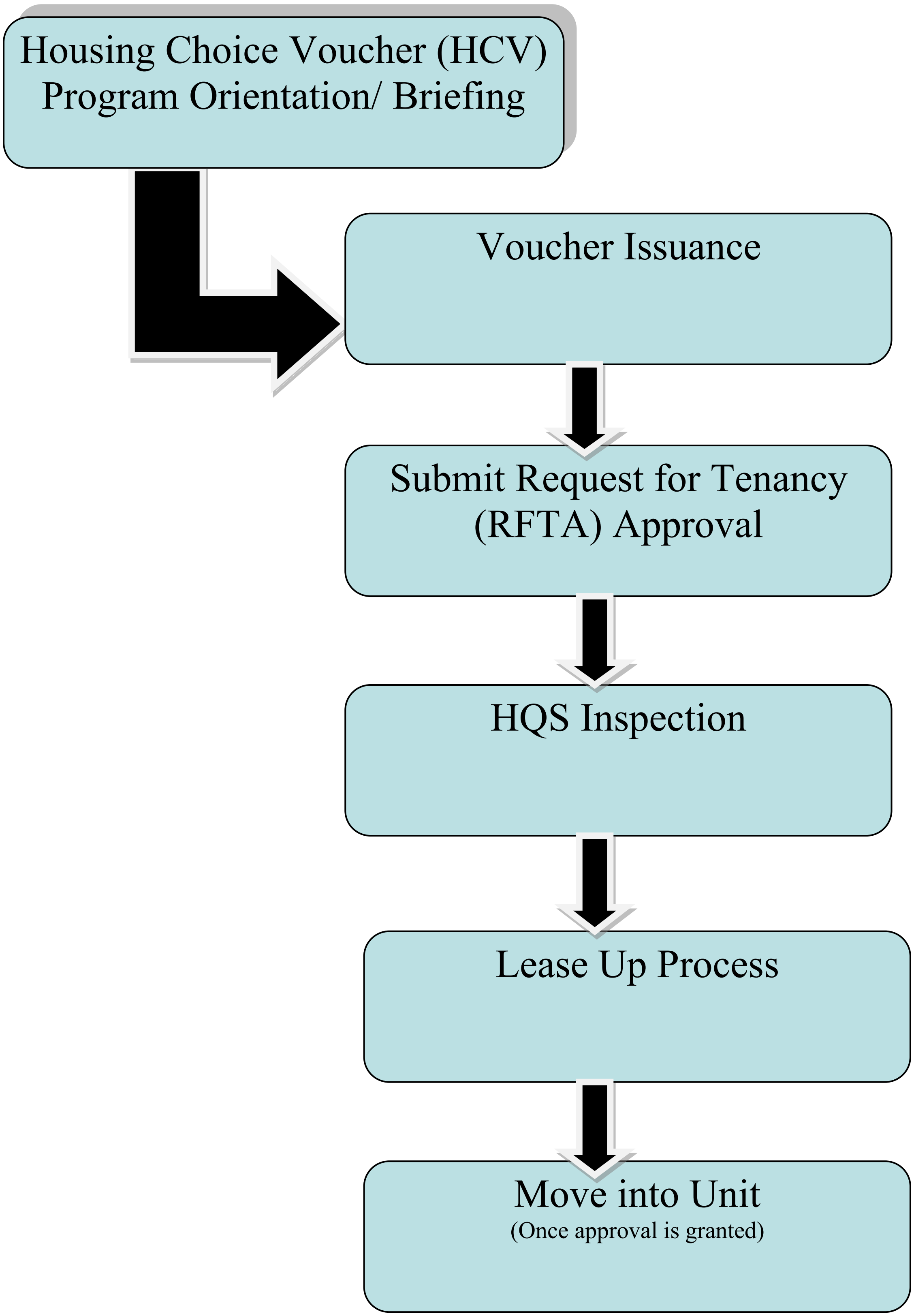
CHARTER OAK COMMUNITIES

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program
Voucher Issuance/Move Briefing
Table of Contents

The following is a list of things we will be discussed as part of your HCV Program move briefing and important program handouts.

- **Initial Procedure**
- **Voucher Issuance, Extensions and Expirations**
- **Assistance to Voucher Holders**
- **City of Stamford Resources and Map**
- **Portability to another City/State**
- **Subsidy/Payment Standards and Utilities**
- **Calculation of Total Tenant Payment and Tenant Rent**
- **Portability**
- **Housing Quality Standards**
- **Security Deposits**
- **Housing Discrimination**
- **Equal Opportunity Laws/State and Federal Discrimination Complaints HUD Handout available in English and Spanish)**
- **Family Responsibilities**
- **Enterprise Income Verification System**
- **Family Self Sufficiency Program**
- **Owner Responsibilities**
- **Prohibited Leases Provisions**
- **Program Abuse/Fraud**
- **Evictions**
- **Program Terminations**
- **Informal Review/Hearing Procedures**
- **HCV Contact Information**

INITIAL PROCEDURE



HOW THE HCV PROGRAM WORKS

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, commonly referred to as Section 8, is a federally funded rental assistance program that helps eligible low-income families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities obtain safe, decent, and affordable housing in the private rental market.

Participating families generally contribute approximately 30 percent of their adjusted monthly income toward rent and utilities, while Charter Oak Communities (COC) pays the remaining eligible housing subsidy directly to the property owner on the family's behalf.

Charter Oak Communities administers the HCV Program under an Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). COC is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal laws, regulations, and HUD requirements while providing fair and consistent administration of the program.

The success of the HCV Program depends on the partnership between HUD, COC, participating property owners, and assisted families. Each party has specific rights and responsibilities established by federal regulations and contractual agreements.

VOUCHER ISSUANCE, EXTENSIONS AND EXPIRATIONS

COC will issue a voucher with an initial term up to a total of 60 calendar days. Any extensions beyond the initial voucher term, voucher extension requests must be submitted in writing prior to the voucher expiration. You may request in writing a total of two (2) extensions of thirty (30) days each if necessary. Please be sure to document your unit search process as you may need to provide documentation demonstrating your search efforts as part of the voucher extension process.

COC will consider an exception to this policy as reasonable accommodation to a person with disabilities.

For Port-In Households Only:

For families porting from other Housing Authorities (HA), COC generally will not extend the term of the voucher that it issues to an incoming portable family unless COC plans to absorb the family into its own program. Families porting from another Housing Authority, voucher extensions requests must be directed to their Initial Public Housing Authority (PHA).

The term of the receiving PHA's voucher may not expire 30 calendar days from the expiration of the initial PHA's voucher. The receiving PHA will extend the terms of the voucher by an additional 30 days. Any other extensions must come from the initial Housing Authority.

At the time of the admission to the HCV Program, families must be income eligible to be issued a voucher. COC has established the eligible low-income (80%) limit for all applicant families. Current income limits are available online at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html.

ASSISTANCE TO VOUCHER HOLDERS

If you or any member of your family is a person with a disability and requires a reasonable accommodation to fully access the HCV Program, please contact your HCV Specialist or COC's Section 504 Coordinator, 203-977-1400 ext. 3352 or via email at RA@charteroakcommunities.org.

COC will assist families with negotiations with owners and provide other assistance related to the families' search for housing.

HOUSING SEARCH RESOURCES

Families who require additional assistance during their search should visit AffordableHousing.com to view the available units which participating unit update periodically. (A unit listing report is included in the move packet. If you do not have personal access to a computer an updated unit listing can be requested by visiting or contacting our office.)

Important Applicant Guidance: In accordance with State of CT Public Act 23-207 the following applies to the application process when searching for units. Owners may not charge any fees outside of:

- Security Deposit
- Advance payment for the first month's rent
- Tenant screening report (limited at $50 per person)
- Keys or special equipment

Additional information is available at:
https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/act/pa/pdf/2023PA-00207-R00SB-00998-PA.pdf

Additional unit search resources:

- https://www.cthousingsearch.org/
- https://resources.hud.gov/

Local housing providers with accessible units:

COC Market Rate Units
Coldwell Banker, Realtor Melanie Healey (203) 249-9149

City of Stamford Below Market Rate Program
https://www.stamfordct.gov/government/operations/land-use-bureau-planning-zoning-zoning-enforcement/community-development/below-market-rate-dwelling-units

New Neighborhoods
76 Progress Drive, Suite 140
Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 998-0889
https://newneighborhoods.org/

Metro Green Apartments
717 Atlantic Street
Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 580-0661
https://www.rosecompanies.com/projects/metro-green-apartments/

CT Housing Partners
1235 Huntington Turnpike, Trumbull, CT 06611
(203) 359-6940
https://cthousingpartners.org/

Southwood Square Apartments
14 Southwood Drive
Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 442-9268
https://www.southwoodbc.com/

Rippowam Park Apartment
133A Connecticut Avenue
Stamford, CT 06902
(833) 225-8043
https://www.rippowamparkct.com/

Bayview Towers
300 Tresser Blvd
Stamford, CT 06901
(203) 964-1445
https://www.bayviewtowersapt.com

FINDING HIGH OPPORTUNITY NEIGHBORHOODS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY ATLAS

"WHERE KIDS GROW UP TO EARN MORE" MAP LAYER

What is the Opportunity Atlas?

The Opportunity Atlas is a map tool that shows how children from low-income families have historically fared as adults, based on income, education, and more, depending on where they grew up. This helps identify neighborhoods that may offer better long-term outcomes for your family.

How to Use the Map:

1. Visit www.AffordableHousing.com, or scan this QR code and enter your city or ZIP code in the search bar
2. Click on the "Layers" icon and turn on the "Where Kids Grow up to Earn More" (Opportunity Atlas) map layer
3. Use the map to explore listings in these areas. Look for darker green areas. These are neighborhoods with higher opportunity scores

Affordable Housing.com OPPORTUNITY INSIGHTS

Why This Matters:

Neighborhoods with higher opportunity scores are linked to:

- Better schools
- Lower poverty rates
- Higher incomes in adulthood for children raised there

Tip: When using your voucher, consider searching in one of these high-opportunity areas. Your housing specialist can help you identify options.

Need Help?

Ask your housing specialist or contact AffordableHousing.com at 866-466-7328

Tips for HCV Unit Search

Explore where you want to live.

With your voucher in hand, it's time to search for housing. In determining which neighborhoods you might like to live in, consider the things that are most important for your family in your new community.

Consider personal priorities and needs such as:

- Schools
- Transportation
- Access to community resources
- Grocery stores including any specialty grocery stores
- Social and family supports
- Places of worship
- When the unit is available

Start your search.

Check with the local housing authority. Participants should ask public housing agencies (PHAs) for a list of landlords that have expressed an interest in participating in the voucher program. The housing authority should also know of any local property listing services.

In addition to talking with the local housing authority, check out some of these well-known property services:

- AffordableHousing.com
- Realtor.com
- Apartments.com

Set aside time to visit units.

Be sure to visit units in person to make sure they meet your needs. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

It may be helpful to visit units during the day and also the evening as well as different days of the week.

Come prepared.

Some landlords are not familiar with the voucher program. There are resources on the landlord page at www.hud.gov/hcv to explain the benefits of the program to landlords.

Typical documents that are requested by landlords include forms of identification (such as driver's license, social security card, etc.) and a completed rental application.

It is important to have ready names and contact information for prior landlords and personal references, the Request for Tenancy Approval packet, and explanations of anything that may show up on a credit or criminal history screening.

Know your rights.

The Fair Housing Act protects people from housing-related discrimination. People may not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender identity or sexual orientation), familial status, or disability. If you believe your rights may have been violated, please visit our website to report housing discrimination.

In addition, some communities have adopted laws that prohibit landlords from discriminating against voucher holders. Some properties are required to accept vouchers as a source of rent payments. Learn more at the HUD Source of Income website (available at www.hud.gov/hcv).

Know what to avoid.

Here is a list of things to avoid when looking for a unit:

- Units renting much higher than the payment standard
- Units that you or someone in your family owns
- Units that won't pass an inspection (serious health or safety defects, significant repairs)

Beware of scammers that will waste your time and money. Do not provide identifiable information about yourself until you have seen a unit and are in the process of filling out an application. **You should never have to pay money to see a unit.**

Budget for housing search.

Some landlords will require application and other fees. Have funds available to apply for units and pay for security deposits, if necessary.

Don't get discouraged.

It can take a while to find a rental unit that meets your family's needs. Most families can successfully lease with their voucher, but it might take some time. Keep searching!

Ask the PHA about its policy on voucher extensions if you need more time for your housing search.

To learn about additional HCV tenant resources, see: https://www.hud.gov/hcv/tenants. Also contact your PHA for more information.

This material is based upon work supported by funding under an award with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. Neither the United States Government, nor any of its employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately-owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the U.S. Government or any agency thereof. Opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of, or a position that is endorsed by, HUD or by any HUD program.

How to Spot and Avoid Rental Scams

AffordableHousing.com

Protect yourself when searching for affordable housing.

Finding housing can be stressful—don't let scammers take advantage. Here are some common red flags and how to stay safe when finding your next home.

When Searching for a Rental

1 Copycat Listings

Scammers copy real listings from sites like AffordableHousing.com and post them on Craigslist or Facebook.

If someone says "DM me" or "Drop your ZIP code," be careful. They may be trying to move the conversation off of a trusted site.

2 Prices That Seem Too Good

If the rent looks much lower than others in the area, it might be fake.

Use the Free Rent Estimator on AffordableHousing.com to compare similar listings.

3 "Landlords" Who Are Out of Town

Scammers often claim to be out of town, overseas, or in the military. They may send you a fake lockbox code, offer a self-tour, or ask for money before you've seen the home.

Never pay before seeing the property in person.

SCAM ALERT

4 Requests for Upfront Payments

Be careful if someone asks you to pay before you sign a lease or view the property.

Real landlords don't ask for money through Zelle, Cash App, Venmo, Bitcoin, or gift cards.

5 Pressure to Act Fast

If someone says "Act fast!", "You're the first approved!", or "We have others waiting," don't rush.

PRESSURE

Take time to confirm the details and make sure the listing is legitimate.

6 Strange Communication Channels

Legit landlords use professional emails or site messaging, not random texts or social media DMs.

Never send personal info (like your SSN or ID) through DMs or text.

How to Spot and Avoid Rental Scams When Searching for a Rental

AffordableHousing.com

7 Fake or Spoofed Websites

Some scammers pretend to be real companies or property managers. They may copy logos, use similar names, or send messages from fake emails like

affordablehousing@outlook.com

Always check the website's spelling, creation date, and contact details to make sure it's a legitimate website and email address.

FAKE

8 Fake Leases or Documents

If the "lease" doesn't list a real property address or owner's name, it's likely fake. Beware of "landlords" who rush you to sign or pay without reading the terms.

You should only get keys from a verified landlord or property manager. Never from an unknown third party.

9 After You Move In

Watch out for fake maintenance requests or emails that pretend to be from your landlord or Housing Authority.

Don't send payments for repairs or share personal info unless you confirm it's from the real contact.

How to Spot and Avoid Rental Scams When Applying for Housing Assistance

1 Fake "Section 8" Websites

Some sites pretend to help with applications but only collect your personal info.

Real programs are **free** and usually end in **.gov** or trusted domains like AffordableHousing.com. Legit sites always name the Housing Authority managing the program and never promise "instant approval" or "guaranteed placement" or ask for a fee to get on a waiting list.

2 People Selling Vouchers or Guaranteed Placement

It's illegal to buy or sell housing vouchers. Anyone offering that is scamming you.

Ignore anyone with offers of preferred waiting list placement, voucher transfers, or fake documents (such as pay stubs or income forms).

3 Impersonators Claiming to Work for a Housing Authority

REPORT

No Housing Authority employee will ever charge a fee to "get you approved."

Report anyone who claims to work for a Housing Authority and offers to sell a voucher to you for a price—this is illegal. Getting a voucher is free and no Housing Authority employee can legally guarantee your placement.

Page 2

How to Stay Safe

AffordableHousing.com

- Never pay before seeing the home in person.
- Check the "Member Since" date on AffordableHousing.com and look for the Trusted Owner badge.
- Avoid payments by wire, Zelle, Cash App, or gift cards.
- If it feels off, pause and contact AffordableHousing.com Customer Support

Report Suspicious Listings

If you see something that doesn't look right, flag it on AffordableHousing.com.

Our team reviews every report to help keep renters safe.

Flag

Reminder

AffordableHousing.com. We'll **never** message you privately or ask you to send money.

Visit AffordableHousing.com for trusted listings and verified owners.

Trusted Owner

Got Questions? We're here to help.

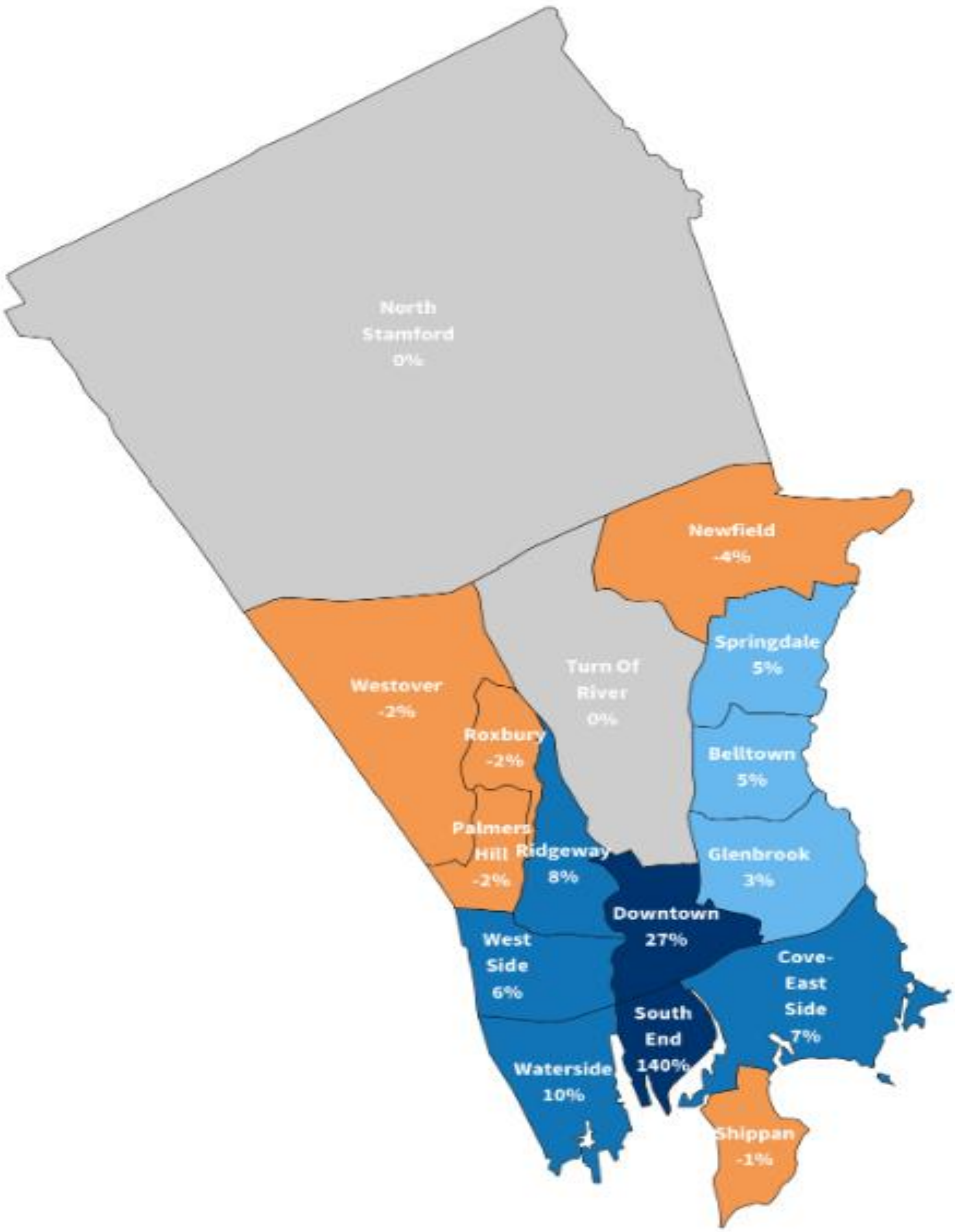
If something doesn't feel right or you're unsure about a listing, contact our support team before taking the next step.

- Call: (866) 466-7328
- Email: support@affordablehousing.com
- Chat: Click "Chat With US" to start a chat on AffordableHousing.com

Page 3

City of Stamford Resources

- http://stamford-downtown.com/business-resources/district-map/
- https://www.stamfordct.gov/
- https://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/board-of-education
- https://ctvisit.com/listings/city-stamford



https://www.ctdatahaven.org/reports/2020-census-data-demographic-change-connecticut-town-and-city-neighborhoods/stamford-neighborhood-changes-2010-2020

SECURITY DEPOSIT

In accordance to CT State law, an owner cannot charge more than two (2) months of the full rent for a security deposit. For tenants 62 years of age and older, the limit is reduced to one month's rent.

To inquire about assistance with Security Deposit you may contact the following service providers for further information:

The Community Action Agency
34 Woodland Avenue
Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 602-8833 ext. 301
www.caawc.org

Person-to-Person
1864 Post Road
Darien, CT 06820
(203) 655-0048
www.p2phelps.org

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin in housing. The Act applies to almost all housing and housing providers in the United States, including private unit owners and property management firms, property owners, federally assisted housing, public housing authorities, realtors, and lenders and insurers of housing.

It also applies to individuals, such as neighbors, who intimidate, coerce, or interfere with the fair housing rights of others. The Act deals with the sale, rental, or financing of housing, as well as any advertisements or statements with respect to housing.

Prohibited Activities Include:

- Discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, national origin
- Refusal to sell or rent dwellings
- Imposing of different terms and conditions of sale or rental
- Falsely denying the availability of housing for sale or rental
- Refusing to make mortgage loans
- Harassing or intimidating persons exercising fair housing rights based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.
- Discrimination based on a person's source of income (see next paragraph)

Source of Income Discrimination:

In Connecticut, HCVs are considered a "lawful source of income" (Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 46a-64) and it is illegal to refuse to rent to a person who has a housing voucher.
The law applies to income from "housing assistance" (including HCV/Section 8 and State Rental Assistance subsidies), Welfare, Social Security, SSI, Alimony and Child Support. The law does permit a unit owner to refuse to rent to an applicant who does not have enough income to pay the rent. But prohibits the refusal based on the applicant's source of income.

How to File a Discrimination Complaint:

Connecticut residents who have been trying to buy or rent a home or apartment and believe their rights have been violated should contact the Connecticut Fair Housing Center first. This agency will send testers to collect proof that an agency or unit owner is discriminating against, and they will also help with filing complaints with the appropriate state and federal agencies. Complaints may be filed with the federal government by completing the enclosed form HUD-903/HUD-903 A.

Where to File a Discrimination Complaint:

- Connecticut Fair Housing Center http://www.ctfairhousing.org
- Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities http://www.ct.gov/chro
- United States Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity Office https://www.hud.gov/topics/housing_discrimination

City of Stamford Fair Rent Program:

Established by City Charter and Ordinance, the Stamford Social Services Commission is responsible for enforcing the City's Fair Rent and Human Rights (anti-discrimination) laws. The Commission also serves as an oversight body on matters impacting the social welfare of Stamford residents and works to ensure that all individuals have the information and support, they need to secure basic needs such as housing, food, and healthcare.

The Social Services Commission Coordinator supports this work by:

- Responding to public inquiries about housing issues, including landlord and tenant rights, evictions, relocation, public and senior housing, and public funding programs
- Investigating complaints of excessive rent increases or reductions in housing services, and coordinating hearings as required by state and local laws

Through these efforts, the Commission helps ensure fairness, equity, and access to essential services for all Stamford residents.

For more information contact Sharona Cowan, Director of Housing at (203) 977 - 4051.

You may submit a Fair Rent Complaint Form at:
https://stamfordct.seamlessdocs.com/ng/fa/FairRentComplaint

Do you know what housing discrimination looks like?

Housing Discrimination is Illegal! Know your rights!

If you feel that you've been denied the sale, rental, or financing of a home because of **race, color, religion, national origin, sex, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, ancestry,** or **legal source of income,** report it!

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities: (800) 477-5737, x3403
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Hotline: (800) 669-9777 *(English)* or (800) 927-9275 *(español)*

For free advice and, if needed, legal representation, call the **Connecticut Fair Housing Center** at **(860) 247-4400 / (888) 247-4401 toll free,** email info@ctfairhousing.org, or visit www.ctfairhousing.org for more information.

Connecticut Fair Housing Center

SUBSIDY STANDARDS

COC does not determine who shares a bedroom/sleeping room; however, there must be at least one person per bedroom on the voucher. On the other hand, there cannot be more than two (2) people per bedroom. All Standards in this section relate to the number of bedrooms on the voucher, not the family's actual living arrangements. COC will assign one bedroom for each two people within the household, except for the following circumstances:

- Single head of household with additional family members not designated as a spouse or co-head will be allocated a separate bedroom.
- Persons of the opposite sex (other than spouses, and children under age 6) will be allocated separate bedrooms.
- Live-in aides will be allocated a separate bedroom.
- Single person families will be allocated one bedroom.

EXCEPTIONS TO SUBSIDY STANDARDS

COC shall grant exceptions from the subsidy standards if the family requests and COC determines the exceptions are justified by the relationship, age, sex, health or disability of family members, or other individual circumstances.

COC will grant an exception upon request as an accommodation for persons with disabilities.
Circumstances may dictate a larger size than the subsidy standards permit when people cannot share a bedroom because of a need, such as a **verified medical or health reason.**

COC will not issue a larger voucher due to additions of family members other than by birth, adoption, marriage, or court-awarded custody.

Requests based on health-related reasons must be verified by a **doctor or health professional.**

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING VOUCHER SIZE

Voucher Size	Person in Household (Minimum #)	Person in Household (Maximum #)
0 Bedroom	1	1
1 Bedroom	1	2
2 Bedroom	2	4
3 Bedroom	3	6
4 Bedroom	4	8
5 Bedroom	6	10
6 Bedroom	8	12

PAYMENT STANDARDS

- The Payment Standard is the amount used to calculate the housing assistance a family will receive in the Voucher Program. The payment standard is based on the HUD fair market rents and is applied uniformly to all participants except for allowing a reasonable accommodation. When searching for a unit keep in mind that the payment standards are only guides. The payment standard amount includes utilities. Qualifying for a unit will include using the payment standards, utility allowance schedule, and the total family income. To properly determine if you are eligible to lease a unit, a complete calculation must be performed using information from the RFTA form and your file.

- The rent may exceed the Payment Standard if the family qualifies based on their income.

- The Payment Standard changes only at annual recertification or when the family moves to another unit.

DETERMINING THE PAYMENT STANDARD

The appropriate Payment Standard for the family must be the lower of:

- The Payment Standard for the family unit size – A Family may rent a unit with more bedrooms than stated on the Voucher, but the family's subsidy will be based on the Payment Standard for the size for which the family is eligible.

or

- The Payment Standard for the unit rented by the family – If the family rents a unit with fewer bedrooms, it must comply with the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) requirements (not more than two persons per living/sleeping room). The subsidy would be based on the Payment Standard for the unit size the family has rented.

Payment Standards for our Voucher Program Effective 10/1/2025:

These amounts are subject to change annually.

Bedroom Size	Payment Standard
Studio	$2,007
One Bedroom	$2,436
Two Bedroom	$2,912
Three Bedroom	$3,521
Four Bedroom	$4,173
Five Bedroom	$4,799

UTILITY ALLOWANCES

The Utility Allowance Schedule is used in the calculation to determine the family payment to the owner.

The Utility Allowance Schedule is intended to help cover the cost of utilities not included in the rent. Allowances are based on the typical cost of utilities and services paid by similar households that occupy similar size and types of units in the city of Stamford. Allowances are not based on an individual family's actual energy consumption.

The Utility Allowance Schedule is reviewed annually and updated, as necessary. COC's current Utility Allowance Schedule is available on our website at https://charteroakcommunities.org/housing-choice-voucher/housing-choice-voucher-section-8-faq/.

<u>CALCULATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT (TTP) AND TENANT RENT</u>

- After the family finds a unit to rent, the TTP and Tenant Rent can be calculated. But first the housing subsidy must be calculated.

- The TTP is the highest of : 30% of monthly adjusted income;
  10% total monthly income; **<u>OR</u>**
  Minimum rent which is $50.00

- Your TTP will be provided by your Housing Specialist (caseworker).

- The family's contribution will depend on the rent of the unit that is chosen.

- When the (HAP) exceeds the Rent to the Owner, we will send you a Utility Allowance Payment (UAP) check for the difference. The purpose of this payment is to assist you with your monthly utilities.

- At new admissions or when a family moves, the family share (total family share) cannot be more than 40% of the family's adjusted monthly income. Your 40% will be provided by your Housing Specialist (caseworker).

- We cannot calculate your housing subsidy or perform the affordability check until you have found an apartment and bring in your RFTA.

- If you would like to calculate the subsidy and determine whether the apartment is affordable, you may use the enclosed worksheet.

- The housing subsidy is the lower of: Payment Standard minus the TTP **<u>OR</u>** Gross Rent (owner's rent plus utilities) minus TTP.

Calculation of Income and Family Rent Portion for the Housing Choice Voucher Program

This flyer provides a basic overview of how a public housing agency (PHA) determines payment standard and calculates income and the family rent portion for Housing Choice Voucher tenants.

What is a payment standard and can I go over that amount?

The payment standard is the maximum monthly amount that the PHA will pay for rent plus utilities. The PHA establishes payment standards according to bedroom size. The payment standard used for a family is the lower of:

- The payment standard for the family unit size indicated on their voucher OR
- The payment standard for the size of the unit leased by the family
- People with disabilities may request a payment standard exception of up to 120% from the PHA as a reasonable accommodation to allow the rental of a unit that meets their disability-related needs.

The payment standard is not a rent limit. In some cases, you can choose a more expensive unit. But you would have to pay the difference.

How does the owner get paid under the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

The payment is made of two parts.

- The PHA will calculate the portion of the rent amount that you will pay the owner. Typically, this will be 30 percent of your family's monthly adjusted income. The exact amount varies depending on which utilities are your responsibility. Typically this amount is referred to as the **Family Rent Portion** or **Total Tenant Payment**.
- The PHA pays the **Housing Assistance Payment** or HAP. HAP is the difference between the **Family Rent Portion** and either the **gross rent (the cost of rent plus any tenant-paid utilities)** or the **payment standard.**

How does the PHA typically determine the Family Rent Portion?

1. **The PHA determines your annual income.**
2. **The PHA determines your annual adjusted income by subtracting any mandated or other deductions.**
3. **The PHA divides the annual adjusted income by 12 (months) to determine your monthly adjusted income.**
4. **The PHA will determine which is the highest of**
   - The monthly income x 10%
   - The monthly adjusted income x 30%
   - For families receiving welfare, the portion of welfare that is set aside for housing costs (in certain states)

The highest amount will be the Family Rent Portion.

How does the PHA determine an annual income?

For initial admissions or recertifications that take place in between annual recertifications–known as interim recertifications—PHAs must use anticipated income (current income) (i.e., the family's estimated income for the upcoming 12-month period).

For annual recertifications, the PHA must determine the family's income from the past 12 months. The PHA will adjust this amount for the recertification to show current income adjustments. Adjustments include changes related to interim recertifications.

PHAs may use income verification from another federal means-tested program such as a public assistance program to verify gross annual income.

What is included in my annual income?

To estimate the family's income for the upcoming 12-month period, the PHA will include:

- All amounts from all sources not excluded in 24 CFR 5.609(b) for each adult family member 18 years or older or the head of household or their spouse.
- Unearned income by or on behalf of each dependent under 18 years.
- Income from net family assets with certain exceptions.

How is my annual income adjusted?

Adjustments to annual income can include required (also called "mandatory") deductions such as those for dependents, elderly or disabled households. Mandatory deductions can include health and medical care expenses and also reasonable attendant care and auxiliary apparatus expenses. The medical and attendant deductions are for costs you have paid and not been repaid for. They are above certain percentages of the annual income as phased in under certain circumstances or adjusted by hardship exemptions. Another required deduction is for reasonable child-care expenses if a family member needs child care to be able to work or go to school. A PHA might establish additional deductions.

How often is family rent portion calculated?

Family rent portion is calculated at move-in and recertification. You must also report changes in income that take place. A household or family should request a PHA review their family's income between annual reviews if there are changes in a family situation or if there is a significant change in income.

Increases in income of 10% or more also require a PHA to review a household's income in an interim recertification. A series of smaller reported increases in adjusted income that equal or exceed 10% will also require a review to assess if the rent needs to be changed. Ask your PHA about any exceptions.

For more HCV tenant resources, visit HCV Applicant and Tenant Resources at https://www.hud.gov/helping-americans/housing-choice-vouchers-tenants.

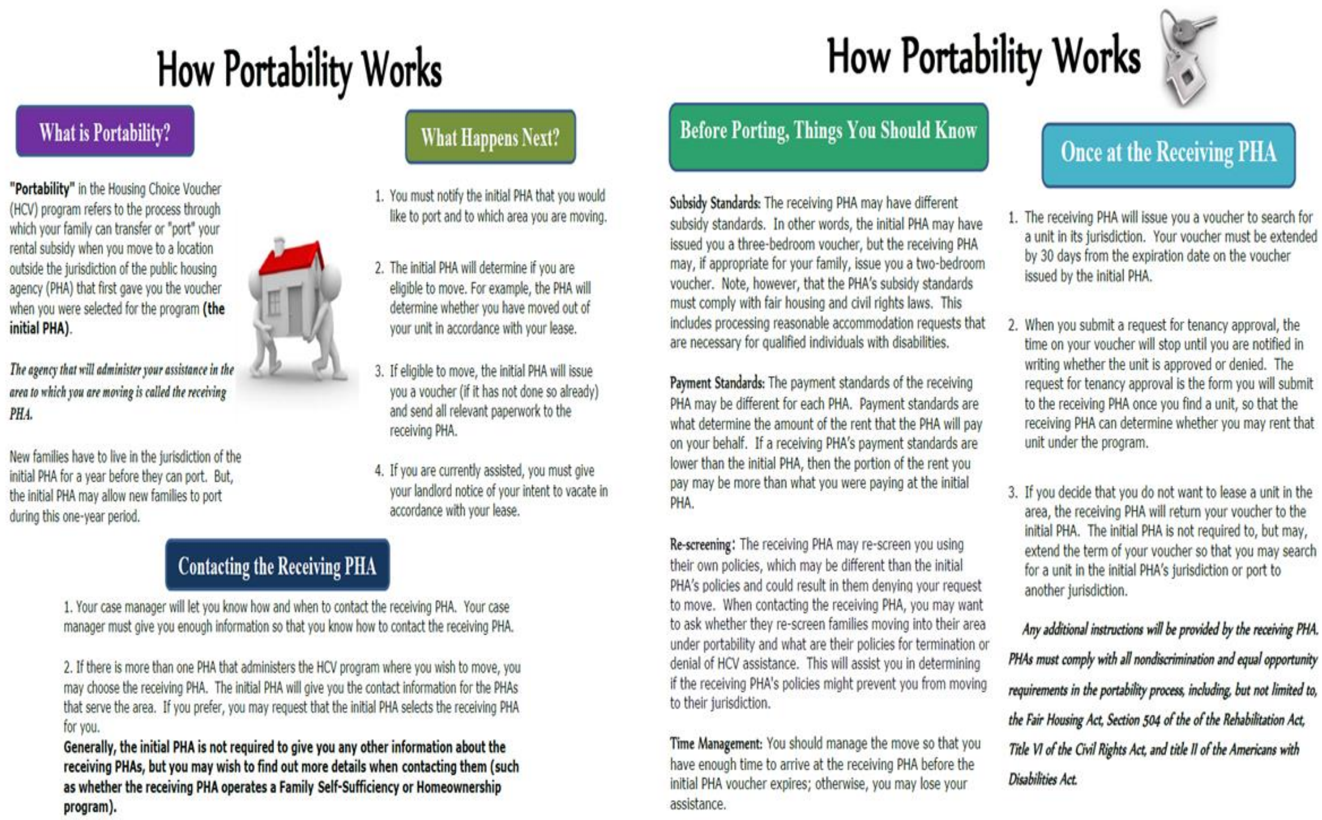
Contact your local PHA for more information about any additional income included or excluded or additional deductions. To receive deductions or exclusions, you may need to provide proof of eligibility.

♦

PORTABILITY

Your voucher is portable, which means you are eligible to move to another HCV Program's jurisdiction that administers a tenant-based program. However, COC will deny portability requests to nonresident applicants during the first 12 months after they are admitted to the program.

Applicant households must be income-eligible for admission in the area where you are relocating.



COC Portability Procedures:

- You must complete the attached Family Request for Portability form and return it to the HCV Specialist assigned to your voucher or COC via email at portability@CharterOakCommunities.org. We recommend that you submit this form as soon as you begin your housing search in another area. It has been our experience that the transfer goes more smoothly when the form is submitted at least sixty (60) days before the expiration date of your Voucher.
- COC will send HUD-52665 form and supporting documentation to the receiving housing agency.
- The receiving agency performs all program functions, including the following:
  - Bill us or absorb you into their program.
  - Issue you a Voucher, whether administering or absorbing, for the term remaining on the Stamford's Voucher.
  - Determines whether to extend your Voucher.
  - Determines your unit size in accordance with subsidy (occupancy) standards of their agency.
  - May decide to deny or terminate assistance.
  -

If you want to relocate to another jurisdiction, and the receiving agency where you are now living has not absorbed you, COC must send a new HUD-52665 to the new agency. The procedures for doing this depend on the policy of the agency where you are currently being assisted.

Other Housing Authorities:

- If you are interested in moving to another area, you should contact that area to find out their portability procedures (i.e. interview dates, inspections dates, need information).

- Below are addresses that are commonly used by our participants. If you would like the address of an agency in Connecticut that is not listed below or a list of all PHAs in the country, please visit HUD website at

  https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts

Park City Community
150 Highland Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Tel.# (203) 337-8900

Danbury Housing Authority
P.O. Box 86
Danbury, CT 06813-0086
Tel.# (203)7 44-2500

Derby Housing Authority
P.O. Box 843
254 Elizabeth Street
Derby, CT 06418
Tel.# (203) 735-6652

Greenwich Housing Authority
P.O. Box 141
Greenwich, CT 06830
(203) 869-1138

Hamden Housing Authority
P.O. Box 185095
Hamden, CT 06518
Tel.# (203) 248-9036

New Britain Housing Authority
34 Marimac Road
New Britain, CT 06053
Tel.# (860) 225-3534

New Haven Housing Authority
360 Orange Street
P.O. Box 1912
New Haven, CT 06509
Tel.# (203) 498-8800

New London Housing Authority
78 Walden Avenue
New London, CT 06320
Tel.# (860) 443-2851

Norwalk Housing Authority
P.O. Box 508
24 ½ Monroe Street
South Norwalk, CT 06856-0508
Tel.# (203) 838-8471

West Haven Housing Authority
15 Glade Street
West Haven, CT 06516
Tel.# (203) 934-9266

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) INSPECTIONS

All units must pass a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection before assistance can begin.

Inspections Occur:
- Before moving-in
- Annually or biennially (when eligible)
- Upon request by the family or property owner
- For quality-control purposes

Before a HAP Contract Can Be Executed
The unit must:
- Meet HQS requirements
- Meet local code requirements
- Pass all required inspections
- Meet HUD rent reasonableness requirements

Please refer to the **"A Good Place to Live"** booklet included in the move packet. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issues this guide. It includes additional information about Housing Quality Standards (HQS), unit requirements, and other helpful guidance.

Lead-Based Paint (LBP) Disclosure:

All owners that sell or rent pre-1978 units are required by federal regulation to notify and disclose known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards.

To assist potential HCV unit owners in complying with this regulation, our office is providing you with the following materials:

- A copy of the pamphlet entitled, “Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home”.
- A copy of the EPA/HUD Lead Fact Sheet; and
- A copy of the “Disclosure of Information on Lead Based Paint and Lead Paint Hazards” form

Information on how to acquire additional copies of both the pamphlet and the disclosure form can be found on the Fact Sheet.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITES

The full list of your family obligations is specified on the back of your Voucher. When the family's unit has been approved and the HAP Contract executed, the family must follow the rules listed below to continue participating in the HCV Program.

As an HCV participant you are required to:

Provide Information

- Submit all information requested by COC or HUD
- Provide documentation related to income and family composition.
- Disclose Social Security Numbers
- Complete required authorization forms
- Ensure all information is accurate and complete.

Report Changes - Notify COC in writing of:

- Income changes
- Family composition changes
- Births
- Adoptions
- Court-awarded custody
- Household members moving out.
- Extended absences from the unit

Maintain Program Compliance

- Use the assisted unit as your primary residence.
- Pay your portion of rent on time.
- Pay utility bills for tenant-paid utilities.
- Allow inspections with proper notice.
- Provide copies of any eviction notices.
- Obtain approval before adding household members.

Prohibited Activities - Participants may not:

- Commit fraud or program abuse.
- Sublease the unit.
- Receive duplicate housing assistance.
- Engage in illegal drug-related activity.
- Engage in violent criminal activity.
- Cause serious lease violations.
- Damage the unit beyond normal wear and tear.

Housing Choice Voucher Tenant Responsibilities

Participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program have rights and responsibilities as program participants. Some responsibilities may vary, so check with your public housing agency (PHA). Learn more about your responsibilities by reading your lease.

When am I required to notify the PHA?

- When you are away from your unit for an extended period of time.
- Before ending the lease or moving out of the unit.
- If there are changes to your family, such as a new birth or a death in your household, or if someone moves out.
- When there are changes to your family's income.

What information am I required to supply during a recertification?

- Income information. You may be required to provide asset information based on the policy of your PHA.
- Information on each household member's immigration status.
- Each member's social security number.

What are my responsibilities regarding inspections?

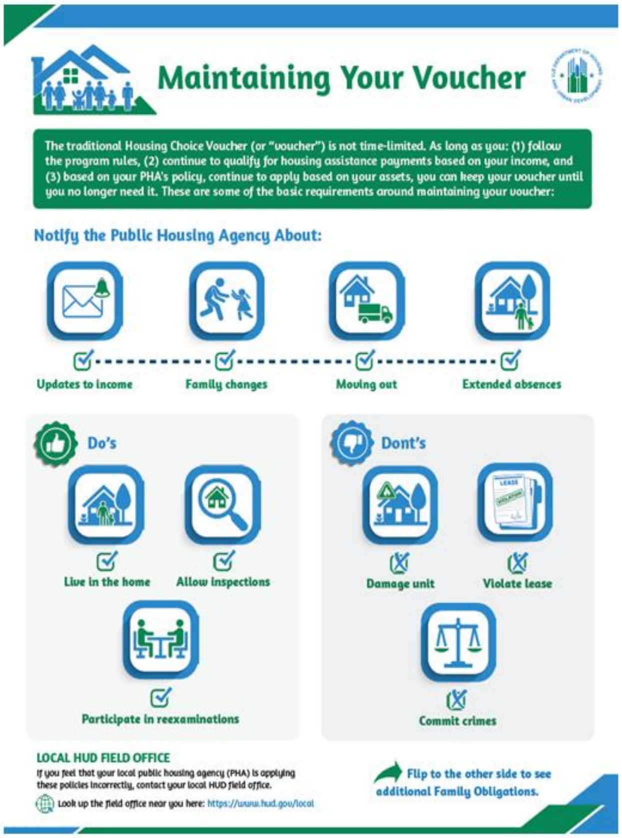
- You must allow the PHA to inspect your unit for periodic inspections, complaints, or emergencies.

What are my obligations to the unit?

- You must follow the terms of your lease. This includes paying your rent portion and utility bills you are responsible for.
- You must maintain the unit. That includes not damaging the unit.
- You cannot participate in any drug-related or violent criminal activity and cannot commit any other crime that would threaten or bother your neighbors. You also cannot use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol in a way that bothers your neighbors.

For more Housing Choice Voucher tenant resources, visit https://www.hud.gov/hcv/tenants

Contact your local PHA for more information.



Maintaining Your Voucher

The traditional Housing Choice Voucher (or "voucher") is not time-limited. As long as you: (1) follow the program rules, (2) continue to qualify for housing assistance payments based on your income, and (3) based on your PHA's policy, continue to apply based on your assets, you can keep your voucher until you no longer need it. These are some of the basic requirements around maintaining your voucher:

Notify the Public Housing Agency About:

- Updates to income
- Family changes
- Moving out
- Extended absences

Do's

- Live in the home
- Allow inspections
- Participate in reexaminations

Dont's

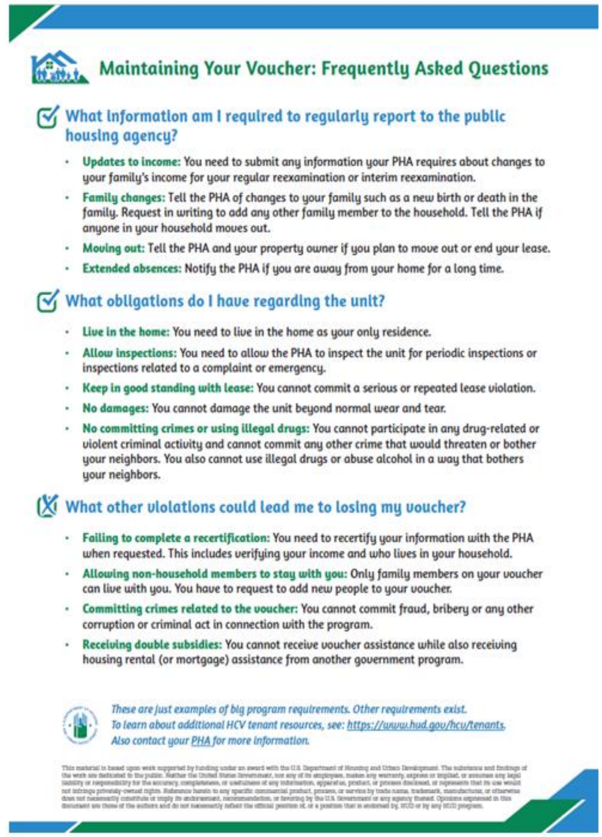
- Damage unit
- Violate lease
- Commit crimes

LOCAL HUD FIELD OFFICE

If you feel that your local public housing agency (PHA) is applying these policies incorrectly, contact your local HUD field office.

Look up the field office near you here: https://www.hud.gov/local

Flip to the other side to see additional Family Obligations.



Maintaining Your Voucher: Frequently Asked Questions

What information am I required to regularly report to the public housing agency?

- **Updates to income:** You need to submit any information your PHA requires about changes to your family's income for your regular reexamination or interim reexamination.
- **Family changes:** Tell the PHA of changes to your family such as a new birth or death in the family. Request in writing to add any other family member to the household. Tell the PHA if anyone in your household moves out.
- **Moving out:** Tell the PHA and your property owner if you plan to move out or end your lease.
- **Extended absences:** Notify the PHA if you are away from your home for a long time.

What obligations do I have regarding the unit?

- **Live in the home:** You need to live in the home as your only residence.
- **Allow inspections:** You need to allow the PHA to inspect the unit for periodic inspections or inspections related to a complaint or emergency.
- **Keep in good standing with lease:** You cannot commit a serious or repeated lease violation.
- **No damages:** You cannot damage the unit beyond normal wear and tear.
- **No committing crimes or using illegal drugs:** You cannot participate in any drug-related or violent criminal activity and cannot commit any other crime that would threaten or bother your neighbors. You also cannot use illegal drugs or abuse alcohol in a way that bothers your neighbors.

What other violations could lead me to losing my voucher?

- **Failing to complete a recertification:** You need to recertify your information with the PHA when requested. This includes verifying your income and who lives in your household.
- **Allowing non-household members to stay with you:** Only family members on your voucher can live with you. You have to request to add new people to your voucher.
- **Committing crimes related to the voucher:** You cannot commit fraud, bribery or any other corruption or criminal act in connection with the program.
- **Receiving double subsidies:** You cannot receive voucher assistance while also receiving housing rental (or mortgage) assistance from another government program.

These are just examples of big program requirements. Other requirements exist.
To learn about additional HCV tenant resources, see: https://www.hud.gov/hcv/tenants.
Also contact your PHA for more information.

REEXAMINATIONS

Annual Reexaminations:

All program participants are recertified once a year to complete an annual reexamination. As part of the annual reexamination process, families are required to provide updated information to COC regarding the family's income, expenses, and composition. The annual recertification process is initiated via electronic resident portal.

Families will be asked to supply all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) before the deadline specified in the notice. The required information will include COC-designated reexamination form, an Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, as well as supporting documents or forms related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

COC will notify the family in writing if any required documentation or information is missing. The missing information or documentation must be provided within 10 business days of the date COC notifies the family. If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time, the family may request an extension. If the family does not provide the required documents or information within the required time (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of termination.

If the family requests or COC schedules an in-person interview, families will be asked to bring all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) to the reexamination appointment.
Any required documents or information that the family is unable to provide at the time of the interview must be provided within 10 business days of the interview.

After initial voucher issuance and lease-up, if a participant family is approved to move to a new unit within COC's jurisdiction, the family must complete an annual recertification.

Interim Reexaminations:

HCV participants must report all changes in family income and composition between annual reexaminations. Participants may request a reexamination at any time. Interim reexaminations may be initiated by the participant household via the electronic resident portal or in writing by completing the Interim Reexamination Packet.

- **Increase in Household Income**

  - A program participant is required to report, **IN WRITING**, increases in family income within ten (10) days of the change. Failure to report any changes within ten (10) days may result in the termination from the HCV program. When a change is requested, required documentation must be completed and additional documents that reflect the change must be provided.

  - The increase generally will be effective on the first of the month following 30 days' notice to the family.
  - If a family fails to report a change within the required time frames or fails to provide all required information within the required time frames, the increase will be applied retroactively, to the date it would have been effective had the information been provided on a timely basis. The family will be responsible for any overpaid subsidy and may be offered a repayment agreement or may be terminated from the program for failure to provide requested documents.

- **Decreases in Family's Rent**

    - A change can be requested if there is a change in family income or an increase in allowances. When a change is requested, required documentation must be completed and additional documents that reflect the change must be provided.
    -
    - The decrease will be effective on the first day of the month following the month in which the change was reported, and all required documentation was submitted. In cases where the change cannot be verified until after the date the change would have become effective, the change will be made retroactively.

    - If the family causes a delay in processing the change, decreases in the family share of the rent will be applied prospectively, from the first day of the month following completion of the change processing.

- **Changes In Family Composition**

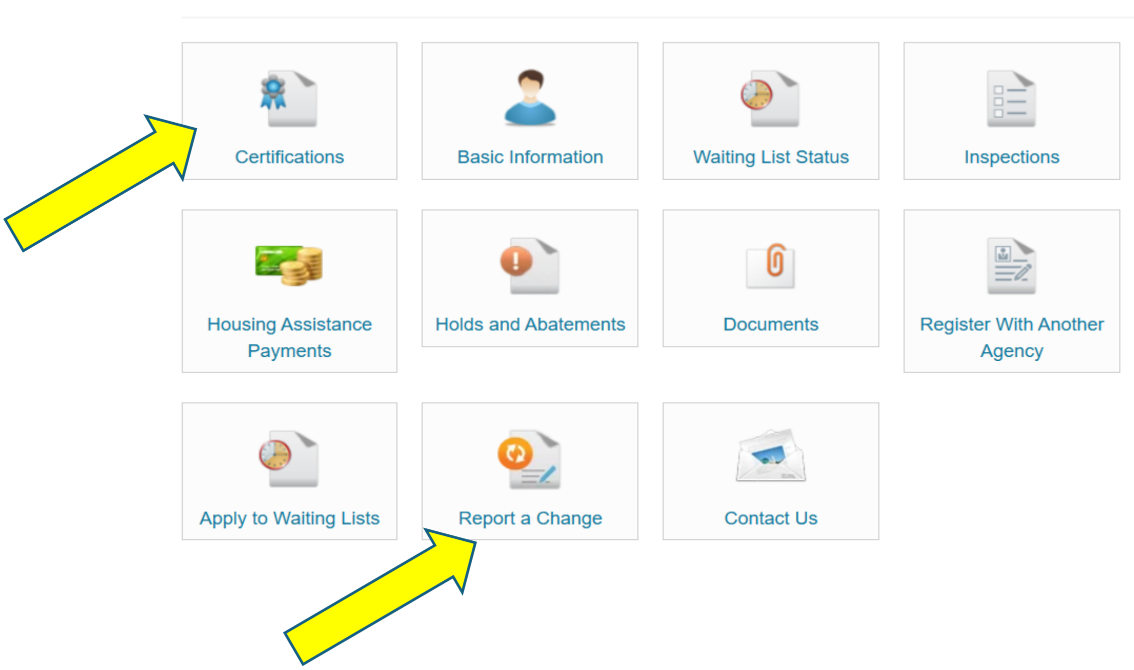
The family is required to report, **IN WRITING**, all changes in the family's composition within ten (10) days of the change. Failure to report any changes within ten (10) days may result in the termination from the HCV program.

When a change is requested, required documentation must be completed and additional documents that reflect the change must be provided.

Any changes in family composition must be acknowledged and approved by the unit owner (in writing), prior to the change. COC must also approve of the change.

A family may be required to move because of an increase or decrease in family size after initial occupancy of a unit.

Whenever there are changes in payment, COC will notify he participant family and unit owner in writing.



ENTERPRISE INCOME VERIFICATION

EIV is a web-based computer system containing employment and income information on individuals participating in HUD's rental assistance programs, including the HCV Program. This information assists HUD in making sure "the right benefits go to the right persons".

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Housing • Office of Multifamily Housing Programs

RHIIP

RENTAL HOUSING INTEGRITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

EIV & You

ENTERPRISE INCOME VERIFICATION

What YOU Should Know if You are Applying for or are Receiving Rental Assistance through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

What is EIV?

EIV is a web-based computer system containing employment and income information on individuals participating in HUD's rental assistance programs. This information assists HUD in making sure "the right benefits go to the right persons".

What income information is in EIV and where does it come from?

The Social Security Administration:

- Social Security (SS) benefits
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits
- Dual Entitlement SS benefits

The Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) National Directory of New Hires (NDNH):

- Wages
- Unemployment compensation
- New Hire (W-4)

What is the information in EIV used for?

The EIV system provides the owner and/or manager of the property where you live with your income information and employment history. This information is used to meet HUD's requirement to independently verify your employment and/or income when you recertify for continued rental assistance. Getting the information from the EIV system is more accurate and less time consuming and costly to the owner or manager than contacting your income source directly for verification.

Property owners and managers are able to use the EIV system to determine if you:

- correctly reported your income

They will also be able to determine if you:

- Used a false social security number
- Failed to report or under reported the income of a spouse or other household member
- Receive rental assistance at another property

Is my consent required to get information about me from EIV?

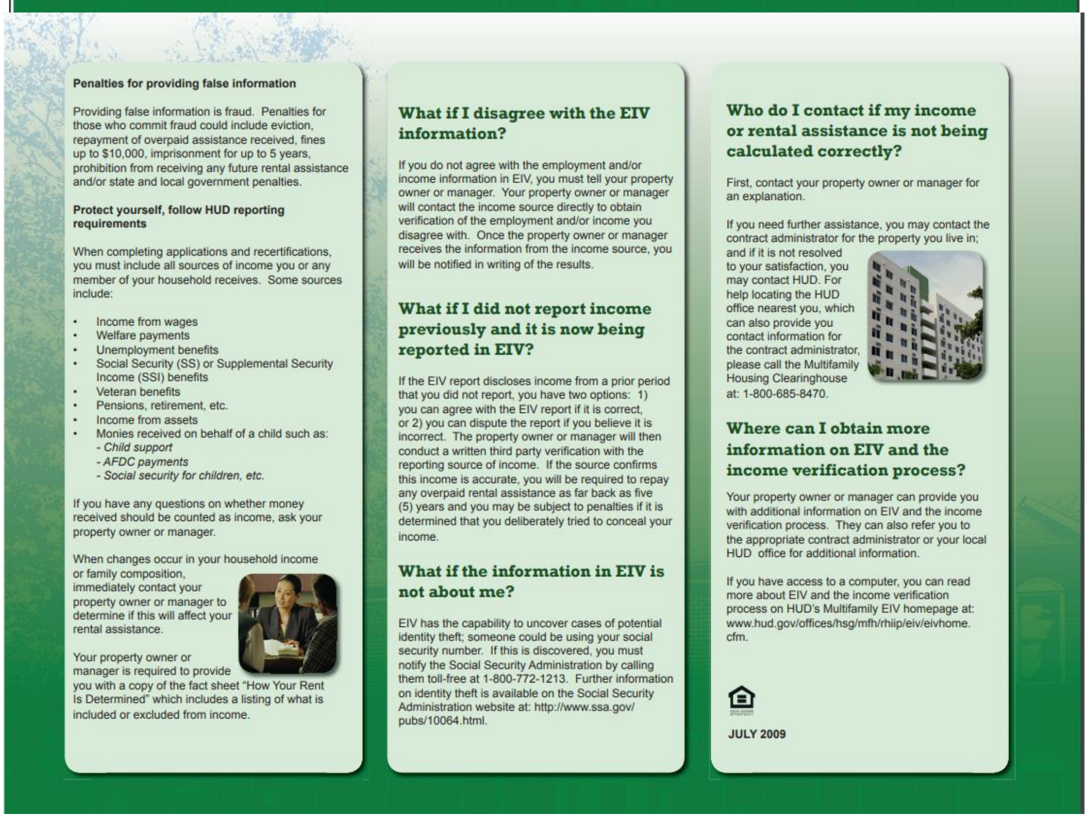
Yes. When you sign form HUD-9887, Notice and Consent for the Release of Information, and form HUD-9887-A, Applicant's/Tenant's Consent to the Release of Information, you are giving your consent for HUD and the property owner or manager to obtain information about you to verify your employment and/or income and determine your eligibility for HUD rental assistance. Your failure to sign the consent forms may result in the denial of assistance or termination of assisted housing benefits.

Who has access to the EIV information?

Only you and those parties listed on the consent form HUD-9887 that you must sign have access to the information in EIV pertaining to you.

What are my responsibilities?

As a tenant in a HUD assisted property, you must certify that information provided on an application for housing assistance and the form used to certify and recertify your assistance (form HUD-50059) is accurate and honest. This is also described in the *Tenants Rights & Responsibilities* brochure that your property owner or manager is required to give to you every year.



Penalties for providing false information

Providing false information is fraud. Penalties for those who commit fraud could include eviction, repayment of overpaid assistance received, fines up to $10,000, imprisonment for up to 5 years, prohibition from receiving any future rental assistance and/or state and local government penalties.

Protect yourself, follow HUD reporting requirements

When completing applications and recertifications, you must include all sources of income you or any member of your household receives. Some sources include:

- Income from wages
- Welfare payments
- Unemployment benefits
- Social Security (SS) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits
- Veteran benefits
- Pensions, retirement, etc.
- Income from assets
- Monies received on behalf of a child such as:
  - *Child support*
  - *AFDC payments*
  - *Social security for children, etc.*

If you have any questions on whether money received should be counted as income, ask your property owner or manager.

When changes occur in your household income or family composition, immediately contact your property owner or manager to determine if this will affect your rental assistance.

Your property owner or manager is required to provide you with a copy of the fact sheet "How Your Rent Is Determined" which includes a listing of what is included or excluded from income.

What if I disagree with the EIV information?

If you do not agree with the employment and/or income information in EIV, you must tell your property owner or manager. Your property owner or manager will contact the income source directly to obtain verification of the employment and/or income you disagree with. Once the property owner or manager receives the information from the income source, you will be notified in writing of the results.

What if I did not report income previously and it is now being reported in EIV?

If the EIV report discloses income from a prior period that you did not report, you have two options: 1) you can agree with the EIV report if it is correct, or 2) you can dispute the report if you believe it is incorrect. The property owner or manager will then conduct a written third party verification with the reporting source of income. If the source confirms this income is accurate, you will be required to repay any overpaid rental assistance as far back as five (5) years and you may be subject to penalties if it is determined that you deliberately tried to conceal your income.

What if the information in EIV is not about me?

EIV has the capability to uncover cases of potential identity theft; someone could be using your social security number. If this is discovered, you must notify the Social Security Administration by calling them toll-free at 1-800-772-1213. Further information on identity theft is available on the Social Security Administration website at: http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10064.html.

Who do I contact if my income or rental assistance is not being calculated correctly?

First, contact your property owner or manager for an explanation.

If you need further assistance, you may contact the contract administrator for the property you live in; and if it is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may contact HUD. For help locating the HUD office nearest you, which can also provide you contact information for the contract administrator, please call the Multifamily Housing Clearinghouse at: 1-800-685-8470.

Where can I obtain more information on EIV and the income verification process?

Your property owner or manager can provide you with additional information on EIV and the income verification process. They can also refer you to the appropriate contract administrator or your local HUD office for additional information.

If you have access to a computer, you can read more about EIV and the income verification process on HUD's Multifamily EIV homepage at: www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/rhiip/eiv/eivhome.cfm.

JULY 2009

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

COC is committed to helping families build a better future.

The Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program is a HUD program offered to Low-Income Public Housing residents and HCV (Section 8) holders living in Stamford through a partnership with Family Centers and COC. The program is designed to provide families with opportunities to gain experience, to empower themselves and to become self-sufficient.

Families will work with a program coordinator over a five-year period to establish and work toward goals aimed at achieving economic independence and family self-sufficiency. For more information or to apply, contact FSS coordinator, Barbara Moscova at (203) 324-3167 x4115 or bmoscova@familycenters.org.

INFORMATION TO OWNERS

Upon request, COC is required to provide prospective owners with the address of the applicant and the names and addresses of the current and previous unit owner, if known. COC will make an exception to this requirement if the family's whereabouts must be protected due to domestic abuse or witness protection.

COC will inform owners that it is their responsibility to determine the suitability of prospective tenants. Owners will be encouraged to screen applicants for rent payment history, eviction history, damage to units and other factors related to the family's suitability as tenant.

COC will provide the following information to prospective unit owners, upon written request from the unit owner, based on documentation in its possession:

Eviction history
Damage to rental units
Rent payment history
Criminal activities or Drug trafficking by family members
Previous tenancy as an HCV participant

The information will be provided for the last **3 years**.
The information will be provided **orally or in writing.**

OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES:

The owner must execute a lease with the tenant and sign the HAP Contract with the COC. COC is not a party to the lease. The lease is a legally binding agreement between the owner and the tenant.

The owner is responsible for fulfilling all obligations under both the HAP Contract and the lease, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Performing all management and rental functions, including tenant selection and screening;
- Maintaining the unit in accordance with HQS and local City codes;
- Complying with State and Federal Fair Housing Laws, as well as equal opportunity requirements;
- Preparing and furnishing COC with information required under the Contract;
- Collecting from the family: any applicable security deposit, the tenant portion of the rent, and any charges for damage caused by the family or their guests.
- Enforcing tenant obligations under the Lease;
- Paying for utilities and services (unless required by the family as specified in the Lease).

By accepting the HAP, the unit owner is assuring COC that the family members on the lease actually live in the unit, the contract unit is in decent, safe, and sanitary condition, and he/she is providing all the services, maintenance and utilities as agreed to in the lease.

Rent Increases:

- Unit owners may request a rent increase only once a year.
- Unit owners must submit rental increases requests in writing to the resident and our office a 60-days prior to the effective date.
- If rent increase is over the Payment Standard, the excess amount will be the responsibility of the tenant.
- The tenant has the option to move (with proper notice to the unit owner and HCV) if they cannot afford to pay the increase.
- The rent must meet HUDs Rent Reasonableness requirements.
- If the unit owner wants to change the terms and conditions or the lease, a new lease and contract must be executed.
- If unit owners want to change the utility responsibilities, a new RFTA must be submitted to the HCV office prior to making these changes and is subject to COC approval.

LEASE TERMINATIONS

Lease Termination by the Owners:

Owners must give the family and COC written notice of intentions of lease terminations. Owners may terminate tenancy in accordance with Connecticut State and local laws and only for the following reasons.

- Serious and repeated violations of the terms and conditions of the lease;
- Violations of Federal, State, or local law which directly relates to the occupancy or use of the unit or common areas; or
- Other Good Cause:
    - Family history of disturbance to neighbors, destruction of property, or habits that result in damage to the unit.
    - Criminal activity by family members involving crimes of physical violence.
    - The owner’s desire to use the unit for personal use, after the first year of the lease. Business or economic reasons, after the first year of the lease, such as a sale the property, renovation, or the request for a rent higher than COC can approve.

Lease Termination by the Family:

The family may terminate the tenancy without cause after the first year of the lease. Moves during the initial year of the lease are not allowed.

The family must provide the owner with written notice of its intent to move and terminate the lease in accordance with the lease terms. The notice period may not be less than 30 days. The family must also notify COC of its intent to terminate the tenancy and indicate whether it wishes to receive assistance in securing another unit.

Evictions:

Under federal regulations and state law, a unit owner may evict a tenant from the unit only by initiating legal proceedings through the court. Unit owners must strictly follow all federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the type of notice(s) which must be served to a tenant. Any notice(s) required by federal regulations may be combined with and run concurrently with any notices under state and local law.

After the tenant has been properly served with the required notices, the unit owner may file an eviction action in Connecticut Superior Court.

The unit owner must provide COC with a copy of any owner eviction notice given to the participant. The tenant also has the same responsibility.

Owner Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract Terminations by COC

The HAP contract may end automatically or be terminate by COC if:

- The family moves from the unit
- The owner evicts the family

COC must give the owner and the family 30 days' notice of the termination. COC must advise the family that they are responsible for paying the full market rent of the unit if they choose to remain in the unit after HAP contract termination. HAP contracts may be terminated by COC for the following reasons:

- The owner is not in compliance with the terms of the HAP Contract.
- The owner has committed fraud.
- COC terminates assistance to the family.

PROGRAM ABUSE/FRAUD

It is important that you report all income and any changes in family composition and comply with your HCV family obligations and lease responsibilities. We urge you to be sure that you are fulfilling these obligations and responsibilities because failure to do so is grounds for termination of your rental assistance. Areas of potential abuse by families include:

- Misrepresentation of income, assets, deductions, and family composition;
- Agree to pay extra ("side") payments more than tenant rent.
- Initiating and participating in bribes to obtain or increase program benefits;
- Subletting an assisted unit;
- Allowing unauthorized persons to occupy the unit.
- Committing serious lease violations.

If a unit owner commits fraud, it is considered a breach of Contract and is grounds for termination of the Contract. Areas of potential abuse by owners include:

- Collecting false amounts for unpaid rent, tenant damages or vacancy loss;
- Collecting extra ("side") payments in excess of the family's share of the rent;
- Collecting assistance payments for units not occupied by the HCV tenant family;
- Bribing Housing Authority employees to certify substandard units as standard or to approve rents in excess of reasonable rents.

PROGRAM TERMINATIONS

HUD regulations specify mandatory and optional grounds for which COC can terminate a family's HCV assistance. They also specify the circumstances under which an owner may terminate the tenancy of an assisted family.

COC must give the family and the owner a 30-day written notice for termination.

Mandatory Terminations:

HUD requires COC to terminate HCV program assistance for certain actions and inactions of the family and when the family no longer requires assistance due to increases in family income.

Mandatory terminations include:

- Family no longer requires assistance or chooses to terminate assistance;
- Eviction:
- Any member of the family fails to sign and submit consent forms;
- Failure to document citizenship;
- Failure to disclose and document social security numbers;
- Conviction of Methamphetamine Manufacturing or production;
- Lifetime Registered Sex Offenders;
- Failure of Students to Meeting Ongoing Eligibility Requirements:
- Use of Illegal Drugs and Alcohol Abuse
- Drug-Related and Violent Criminal Activity

Other Authorized Reasons for Termination of Assistance:

HUD permits COC to terminate a family's HCV assistance under a number of circumstances. COC has the discretion to determine whether termination is appropriate in accordance with HUD regulations.

COC will terminate a family's assistance if:

- The family violates their obligations under the program;
- Family files to comply with reexamination requirements;
- A family and/or its guests caused a breach of housing quality standards:
- A family member is evicted from federally assisted housing in the last three years:
- Any member of the family commits fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with federal housing program;
- The family currently owes rent or other amounts to any Public Housing Agency (PHA) in connection with the Section 8 or public housing assistance under the 1937 Act:
- The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts the PHA paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease:
- The family refuses to pay COC for amounts under repayment agreement:
- A family member has engaged in or threatened violent or abusive behavior toward COC personnel:
- Serious and/or repeated lease violations:
- Family absence from the unit:
- Asset Limitation - Under HOTMA 102/104, and upon implementation

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Equal to Zero:

A participant who is not receiving any subsidy, but whose HAP contract is still in force, may request a voucher to move to a different unit. A family becomes Zero HAP family, when 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income equals or 10 percent of the family's monthly income equals or exceeds the rent to the owner, plus any applicable utility allowance. Discontinuance of the HAP does not affect the family's other rights under the lease, nor does it prevent the resumption of the payments as a result of any changes later in the family's income or composition.

This is contingent on whether 180 calendar days have elapsed since our last payment made on the behalf of the family and if the family resides in the same unit. If there is no change in the families' circumstances during the 180-day period, the family will be terminated from the program.

INFORMAL REVIEW OR HEARING PROCEDURES

If COC determines an applicant ineligible for participation or an assisted family ineligible for further participation in the HCV Program, COC will notify applicant/participant in writing stating the reasons for the termination. The family has the right to request, within ten (10) business days of the termination notice, an informal review (applicants) or hearing (participants).

The family or its counsel/representative will be given the opportunity to examine evidence, question any witnesses and present testimony or evidence in its favor. After conducting a review/hearing, COC will notify the family, in writing, within ten (10) business days of its decision. The decision of the review/hearing will be based solely on the evidence provided at the review/hearing and will state the legal and evidentiary grounds for the decision.

Program participants are entitled to an opportunity for an informal hearing for decisions related to:

- The determination of the family's annual or adjusted income used to compute the HAP.
- The determination of the appropriate utility allowance (if any) for the tenant-paid utilities from the HCV Program utility allowance schedule.
- The determination of the family unit size under the HCV subsidy (occupancy) standards.
- The determination that a family is over housed or the determination that the family is denied an exception to the subsidy standards.
- The determination to terminate assistance for a participant family because of the family's action or failure to act.
- The determination to terminate assistance because the participant family has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than the maximum period permitted under the HCV policy and HUD rules.

Participants are **not** entitled to a hearing due to the expiration of their Voucher.

Housing Choice Voucher Tenant Rights

Participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program have rights and responsibilities as program participants. Some rights may vary, so check with your public housing agency (PHA). Learn more about your rights by reading your lease.

When can I request an informal hearing?

- If you think your public housing agency (PHA) applied a policy incorrectly, you can contest your PHA's decision related to:
  - Your annual income calculation.
  - Your rent portion.
  - The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) amount sent to the property owner.
  - The appropriate utility allowance for your unit.
  - The subsidy standard applied to your household. In other words, the number of bedrooms your family qualifies for under the PHA's policy.
  - A determination to end your assistance because of your action or failure to act.
  - A determination to end your assistance because your family was absent from the unit.

When can I request repairs to my unit?

- Any time a repair is needed to make your home safe and habitable. If the property owner refuses to make needed repairs to your unit, you may request an inspection from the PHA. The inspection should encourage the owner to make the repair. If the owner refuses to make the repair, the PHA will eventually stop HAP payments and terminate the contract. The PHA will give you a voucher to move.

What is a reasonable accommodation? When can I receive a reasonable accommodation?

- A reasonable accommodation is a change to your PHAs's policy or process that allows a person with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in the program. Your PHA can tell you how to request a reasonable accommodation.
- Examples of a reasonable accommodation include:
  - A larger voucher size to allow a person with a disability to have a live-in-aide.
  - A sign language interpreter during a public PHA meeting so a person with hearing loss can participate.
  - Large-print documents for a person with limited eyesight.
  - Additional search time to allow a family more time to find an accessible unit.
  - An exception payment standard, meaning a higher rent subsidy, to make a unit that meets a family's disability-related needs affordable for that family.

English is not my first language. Can I get information in my language?

- Yes. You can receive oral information from your PHA in your preferred language. The PHA will have a staff member that speaks your language or provide a free interpreter.

When and where can I move with my voucher?

- You can move with continued assistance at any time as long as your lease has ended. You may be limited to one move per year.
- There is an exception for persons covered under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Someone who has experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking, and has a voucher, must be allowed to move with continued assistance. Learn more at https://www.hud.gov/vawa
- You can move anywhere else in the country where there is a Housing Choice Voucher program. This process is called "porting."

How can I participate in my PHA board?

- All PHA clients are entitled to participate in the public PHA board meetings. Your PHA will publicly post their board meeting schedule.

A property owner told me they don't take vouchers. Is that legal?

- It depends on where you live. Some areas have what is called "source of income" law. Source of income laws make it illegal for property owners to refuse HCV renters the chance to apply for their units because they have an HCV. So, ads that say something like, "No Section 8" or "Not voucher approved," are illegal.
- To find out if your community has a source of income law search here: https://www.hud.gov/Program_Offices/Public_Indian_Housing/Source_Income_Protections

How can I report discrimination?

- If you feel that you have been discriminated against and you want help, find your federally supported local fair housing organization here: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/contact_fhip
- You can also file a complaint directly with HUD: https://www.hud.gov/fairhousing/fileacomplaint

For more Housing Choice Voucher tenant resources, visit https://www.hud.gov/hcv/tenants

Contact your local PHA for more information.

VAWA

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protections are not only available to women but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. HUD is the federal agency that oversees that COC is in compliance with VAWA.

Your rights under VAWA

If you are a victim of:

- Domestic violence
- Dating violence
- Sexual assault
- Stalking
- you may have the following protections:
- Protection from denial of housing assistance
- Protection from termination of assistance
- Protection from eviction related to the abuse
- Confidentiality protections
- Emergency transfer rights
- Continued assistance when eligible
- The right to self-certify using HUD Form 5382

You Also Have The Right To:

- Request law enforcement assistance
- Request a lease bifurcation
- Receive HUD VAWA notifications and forms
- Be free from retaliation for exercising VAWA protections

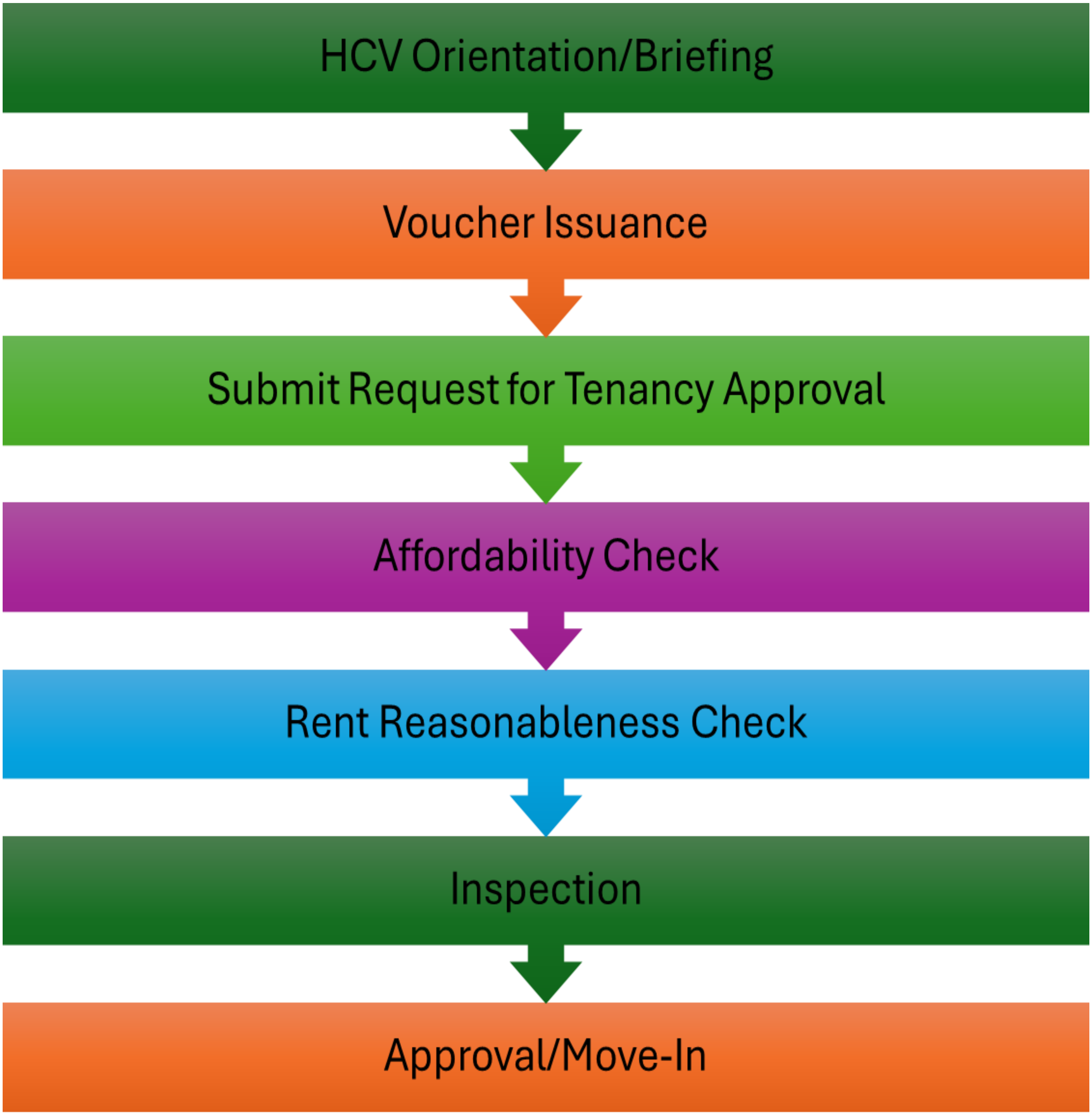
For Additional VAWA Information:

You may view a copy of HUD's final VAWA rule at https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/5720-F-03VAWAFINRULE.PDF

Additionally, HUD's VAWA forms are attached to this packet. VAWA regulations are also available on our website in our HCV Administrative Plan and are available to you upon request.

For questions regarding VAWA, please contact COC's Section 504 Coordinator at RA@CharterOakCommunities.org, (203) 977-1400, 22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, CT 06901.

LEASING A UNIT



COC HCV MOVE PACKET

Upon voucher issuance, COC provides applicants or participants with a move packet that includes important forms and documents reviewed during the move briefing. Some of these documents include:

- Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) Form
- Air Conditioning Form
- Lead Disclosure Form
- Rent Reasonableness Supplement Form
- Voucher Issuance Checklist
- Lead Fact Sheet
- Self-Inspection Checklist
- HUD's Good Place to Live Pamphlet
- Lease Requirements
- HUD's Tenancy Addendum

To determine whether a unit can be considered for review and eligibility, the above-referenced documents must be submitted to the Agency, along with a proposed lease. The proposed lease must not be signed.

Lease Requirements:

The following information must be included in all leases:

- Name of owner and tenant
- Address of unit rented (including apartment number)
- The term of the lease (initial and any provisions for renewal – renewal can be automatic or definite term)
- Lease must spell out which utilities and appliances are supplied by the owner, and which are supplied by the family. The list includes heat, hot water, cold water, cooking fuel, other electric, air-conditioning sewer, trash collection, range/microwave, refrigerator, etc.
- Lease cannot contain any of the HUD prohibited lease provisions.

Procedures for Returning the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) Form/Move Packet:

COC will not approve a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, sister, or brother of any member of the family, unless COC determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

1) Once you find a unit, you should then give the perspective owner the RFTA form to complete the packet. These documents will be needed to determine unit eligibility and to schedule the inspection.

2) The unit owner must fill out the Lead Based Paint Disclosure form, sign it and have you sign it. If there is an agent involved, he/she must sign as well. The form **must** be returned with your RFTA and a sample lease.

3) The Proposed Lease should not be signed; the lease cannot conflict with HUD rules and regulations. If the lease contains provisions that are in direct conflict with the rules and regulations. The lease and the RFTA must have the same utility responsibilities.

4) The RFTA must have all the correct information, **the unit must be vacant**, and the unit must be ready for inspection for the form to be processed. All utilities must be turned on, prior to the inspection of the unit.

5) Once you have received the form from the unit owner, please return it to the HCV Specialist you are working with. (Contact information provided herein.)

6) If the name on the RFTA does not match the name of the owner with the City of Stamford records, we will need the Deed to the property before your form can be processed.

7) If the paperwork is approved, an inspection will be scheduled within 5 days from the request submitted if the unit is ready to be inspected.

8) The tenant and unit owner **MUST BE PRESENT** at the inspection.

9) Once you have submitted your RFTA, the term of your Voucher will be suspended until we have approved or denied the RFTA.

10) The unit owner’s initial HAP may take approximately 30-60 days to receive from move-in day.

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE HCV TEAM

COC is pleased to announce the launch of our new HCV Participant and Landlord Portal through Rent Café, now available on our website at www.charteroakcommunities.org.

The portal is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and offers a variety of convenient, user-friendly features designed to streamline communication and enhance customer service.
Key features include:

- HCV Participants can complete annual recertifications online, submit interim requests, view the Housing Specialist assigned to their case, and access important program information.
- Landlords can view payment ledgers, review inspection results, and update their contact and banking information.

In addition to the online portal, program forms are available on our website through the Forms Resource Library, along with answers to frequently asked questions and a copy of our Administrative Plan.

To provide the highest level of service and minimize waiting times, our office serves clients by appointment only. If an in-person appointment is needed, please contact our office using the directory below, and a member of our team will be happy to assist you. Appointments help ensure that each customer receives the time and attention they need. Reasonable accommodations will be made for urgent situations and individuals with disabilities.

The HCV office is located at 22 Clinton Avenue, 1st Floor, Stamford, CT, and is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Our office is closed on most federal holidays and may also close due to inclement weather. Therefore, we strongly recommend calling ahead to confirm that the office is open before visiting.

HCV Team Directory:

If you are a current participant of the HCV Program whose voucher is administered by COC or if you are a unit owner of a current program participant, you may contact the HCV team member assigned to your case using the directory below. Each specialist is assigned an alphabetical caseload by **participant's last name.**

Please note, specialist assignments are subject to change without notice. Please visit the online portal or our website to confirm the most recent and updated Specialist assignment:

HCV Participant by Last Name/Service Area	HCV Team Member	Phone # 203-977-1400 & Ext.	Email
HCV Waiting List Management & New Port-Ins	Veronica Nieves	3312	vnieves@charteroakcommunities.org
A – DAR	Ruth Jean-Pierre	3336	rjean-pierre@charteroakcommunities.org
DAS – HIM	Ali Diop	3313	aliouned@charteroakcommunities.org
HIN – MOO	Jenny Vitali	3360	jvitali@charteroakcommunities.org
MOP – SAI	Elvin Rodriguez	3306	erodriguez@charteroakcommunities.org
SAJ – Z	Ed Poole	3333	epoole@charteroakcommunities.org
Port-Ins: A – L	Melissa Reyes	3330	mareyes@charteroakcommunities.org
Port-Ins: M – Z	Wendy Herrera	3302	wherrera@charteroakcommunities.org
HCV Manager	Gabriela Parada-Bravo	3304	gparada@charteroakcommunities.org
HCV Administrator	Anna Augustin	3314	aaugustin@charteroakcommunities.org
Reasonable Accommodation & VAWA Requests	Jacqueline Figueroa	3352	ra@charteraokcommunities.org
HCV Inspector	Patricia Sanzaro	3355	psanzaro@charteroakcommunities.org
HCV Inspector	Curtis Robinson	3311	crobinson@charteroakcommunities.org

ATTACHMENTS

- Form HUD-5380 VAWA Notice of Occupancy Rights
- Form HUD-5382 VAWA Certification of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking
- Portability Request Form

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
OMB Approval No. 2577-0286
Expires 1/31/2028

Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

When should I receive this form? A covered housing provider must provide a copy of the Notice of Occupancy Rights Under The Violence Against Women Act (Form HUD-5380) and the Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (Form HUD-5382) when you are admitted as a tenant, when you receive an eviction or termination notice and prior to termination of tenancy, or when you are denied as an applicant. A covered housing provider may provide these forms at additional times.

What is the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA")? This notice describes protections that may apply to you as an applicant or a tenant under a housing program covered by a federal law called the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA"). VAWA provides housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking. VAWA protections must be in leases and other program documents, as applicable. VAWA protections may be raised at any time. You do not need to know the type or name of the program you are participating in or applying to in order to seek VAWA protections.

What if I require this information in a language other than English? To read this information in Spanish or another language, please contact Charter Oak Communities
22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, CT 06901, 203-977-1400 or go to
You can read translated VAWA forms at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/forms/hud5a#4**.** If you speak or read in a language other than English, your covered housing provider must give you language assistance regarding your VAWA protections (for example, oral interpretation and/or written translation).

What do the words in this notice mean?

- *VAWA violence/abuse* means one or more incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- *Victim* means any victim of *VAWA violence/abuse*.
- *Affiliated person* means the tenant's spouse, parent, sibling, or child; or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in the tenant's household; or anyone for whom the tenant acts as parent/guardian.
- *Covered housing program*[1] includes the following HUD programs:
  - Public Housing
  - Tenant-based vouchers (TBV, also known as Housing Choice Vouchers or HCV) and Project-based Vouchers (PBV) Section 8 programs
  - Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)
  - Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy
  - Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly
  - Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities
  - Section 221(d)(3)/(d)(5) Multifamily Rental Housing
  - Section 236 Multifamily Rental Housing
  - Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program
  - HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) program
  - The Housing Trust Fund
  - Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program
  - Continuum of Care program
  - Rural Housing Stability Assistance program
- *Covered housing provider* means the individual or entity under a covered housing program that is responsible for providing or overseeing the VAWA protection in a specific situation. The covered housing provider may be a public housing agency, project sponsor, housing owner, mortgagor, housing manager, State or local government, public agency, or a nonprofit or for-profit organization as the lessor.

[1] For information about non-HUD covered housing programs under VAWA, see Interagency Statement on the Violence Against Women Act's Housing Provisions at https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/InteragencyVAWAHousingStmnt092024.pdf.

What if I am an applicant under a program covered by VAWA? You can't be denied housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA just because you (or a household member) are or were a victim or just because of problems you (or a household member) had as a direct result of being or having been a victim. For example, if you have a poor rental or credit history or a criminal record, and that history or record is the direct result of you being a victim of VAWA abuse/violence, that history or record cannot be used as a reason to deny you housing or homeless assistance covered by VAWA.

What if I am a tenant under a program covered by VAWA? You cannot lose housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA or be evicted just because you (or a household member) are or were a victim of VAWA violence/abuse. You also cannot lose housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA or be evicted just because of problems that you (or a household member) have as a direct result of being or having been a victim. For example, if you are a victim of VAWA abuse/violence that directly results in repeated noise complaints and damage to the property, neither the noise complaints nor property damage can be used as a reason for evicting you from housing covered by VAWA. You also cannot be evicted or removed from housing, housing assistance, or homeless assistance covered by VAWA because of someone else's criminal actions that are directly related to VAWA abuse/violence against you**,** a household member, or another affiliated person.

How can tenants request an emergency transfer? Victims of VAWA violence/abuse have the right to request an emergency transfer from their current unit to another unit for safety reasons related to the VAWA violence/abuse. An emergency transfer cannot be guaranteed, but you can request an emergency transfer when:

1. You (or a household member) are a victim of VAWA violence/abuse;
2. You expressly request the emergency transfer; **AND**
3. **EITHER**
    a. you reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) stay in the same dwelling unit; **OR**
    b. if you (or a household member) are a victim of sexual assault, either you reasonably believe that there is a threat of imminent harm from further violence, including trauma, if you (or a household member) were to stay in the unit, or the sexual assault occurred on the premises and you request an emergency transfer within 90 days (including holidays and weekend days) of when that assault occurred.

You can request an emergency transfer even if you are not lease compliant, for example if you owe rent. If you request an emergency transfer, your request, the information you provided to make the request, and your new unit's location must be kept strictly confidential by the covered housing provider. The covered housing provider is required to maintain a VAWA emergency transfer plan and make it available to you upon request. To request an emergency transfer or to read the covered housing provider's VAWA emergency transfer plan, the HCV Specialist Assigned to your voucher, or Charter Oak Communities' Section 504 Coordinator at RA@CharterOakCommunities.org, 203-977-1400
22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, CT 06901 . The VAWA emergency transfer plan includes information about what the covered housing provider does to make sure your address and other relevant information are not disclosed to your perpetrator.

Can the perpetrator be evicted or removed from my lease? Depending on your specific situation, your covered housing provider may be able to divide the lease to evict just the perpetrator. This is called "lease bifurcation."

What happens if the lease bifurcation ends up removing the perpetrator who was the only tenant who qualified for the housing or assistance? In this situation, the covered housing provider must provide you and other remaining household members an opportunity to establish eligibility or to find other housing. If you cannot or don't want to establish eligibility, then the covered housing provider must give you a reasonable time to move or establish eligibility for another covered housing program. This amount of time varies, depending on the covered housing program involved. The table below shows the reasonable time provided under each covered housing programs with HUD. Timeframes for covered housing programs operated by other agencies are determined by those agencies.

Covered Housing Program(s)	Reasonable Time for Remaining Household Members to Continue to Receive Assistance, Establish Eligibility, or Move.
HOME and Housing Trust Fund, Continuum of Care Program (except for permanent supportive housing), ESG program, Section 221(d)(3) Program, Section 221(d)(5) Program, Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program	Because these programs do not provide housing or assistance based on just one person's status or characteristics, the remaining tenant(s), or family member(s) in the CoC program, can keep receiving assistance or living in the assisted housing as applicable.
Permanent supportive housing funded by the Continuum of Care Program	The remaining household member(s) can receive rental assistance until expiration of the lease that is in effect when the qualifying member is evicted.
Housing Choice Voucher, Project-based Voucher, and Public Housing programs (for Special Purpose Vouchers (e.g., HUD-VASH, FUP, FYI, etc.), see also program specific guidance)	If the person removed was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing. For HUD-VASH, if the veteran is removed, the remaining family member(s) can keep receiving assistance or living in the assisted housing as applicable. If the veteran was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.
Section 202/811 PRAC and SPRAC	The remaining household member(s) must be given 90 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation or until the lease expires, whichever is first, to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.
Section 202/8	The remaining household member(s) must be given 90 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation or when the lease expires, whichever is first, to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing. If the person removed was the only tenant who established eligible citizenship/immigration status, the remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.
Section 236 (including RAP); Project-based Section 8 and Mod Rehab/SRO	The remaining household member(s) must be given 30 calendar days from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing.
HOPWA	The remaining household member(s) must be given no less than 90 calendar days, and not more than one year, from the date of the lease bifurcation to establish program eligibility or find alternative housing. The date is set by the HOPWA Grantee or Project Sponsor.

Are there any reasons that I can be evicted or lose assistance? VAWA does not prevent you from being evicted or losing assistance for a lease violation, program violation, or violation of other requirements that are not due to the VAWA violence/abuse committed against you or an affiliated person. However, a covered housing provider cannot be stricter with you than with other tenants, just because you or an affiliated person experienced VAWA abuse/violence. VAWA also will not prevent eviction, termination, or removal if other tenants or housing staff are shown to be in immediate, physical danger that could lead to serious bodily harm or death if you are not evicted or removed from assistance. **But only if no other action can be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat** should a covered housing provider evict you or end your assistance, if the VAWA abuse/violence happens to you or an affiliated person. A covered housing provider must provide a copy of the Notice of Occupancy Rights Under The Violence Against Women Act (Form HUD-5380) and the Certification of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking (Form HUD-5382) when you receive an eviction or termination notice and prior to termination of tenancy.

What do I need to document that I am a victim of VAWA abuse/violence? If you ask for VAWA protection, the covered housing provider may request documentation showing that you (or a household member) are a victim. BUT the covered housing provider must make this request in writing and must give you at least 14 business days (weekends and holidays do not count) to respond, and you are free to choose any <u>one</u> of the following:

1. <u>A self-certification form (for example, Form-HUD 5382)</u>, which the covered housing provider must give you along with this notice. Either you can fill out the form or someone else can complete it for you;
2. <u>A statement from a victim/survivor service provider, attorney, mental health professional or medical professional</u> who has helped you address incidents of VAWA violence/abuse. The professional must state “under penalty of perjury” that he/she/they believes that the incidents of VAWA violence/abuse are real and covered by VAWA. Both you and the professional must sign the statement;
3. <u>A police, administrative, or court record</u> (such as a protective order) that shows you (or a household member) were a victim of VAWA violence/abuse; **OR**
4. <u>If allowed by your covered housing provider, any other statement or evidence provided by you.</u>

It is your choice which documentation to provide and the covered housing provider must accept any one of the above as documentation. The covered housing provider is prohibited from seeking additional documentation of victim status or requiring more than one of these types of documentation, unless the covered housing provider receives conflicting information about the VAWA violence/abuse.

If you do not provide one of these types of documentation by the deadline, the covered housing provider does not have to provide the VAWA protections you requested. If the documentation received by the covered housing provider contains conflicting information about the VAWA violence/abuse, the covered housing provider may require you to provide additional documentation from the list above, but the covered housing provider must give you another 30 calendar days to do so.

Will my information be kept confidential? If you share information with a covered housing provider about why you need VAWA protections, the covered housing provider must keep the information you share strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from your other tenant files. No one who works for your covered housing provider will have access to this information, unless there is a reason that specifically calls for them to access this information, your covered housing provider explicitly authorizes their access for that reason, and that authorization is consistent with applicable law.

Your information <u>**will not be disclosed**</u> to anyone else or put in a database shared with anyone else, except in the following situations:

1. If you give the covered housing provider written permission to share the information for a limited time;
2. If the covered housing provider needs to use that information in an eviction proceeding or hearing; or
3. If other applicable law requires the covered housing provider to share the information.

How do other laws apply? VAWA does not limit the covered housing provider's duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property, or civil protection orders issued to protect a victim of VAWA abuse/violence. Additionally, VAWA does not limit the covered housing provider's duty to comply with a court order with respect to the distribution or possession of property among household members during a family break up. The covered housing provider must follow all applicable fair housing and civil rights requirements.

Can I request a reasonable accommodation? If you have a disability, your covered housing provider must provide reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services that may be necessary to allow you to equally benefit from VAWA protections (for example, giving you more time to submit documents or assistance with filling out forms). You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even for the first time during an eviction. If a provider is denying a specific reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, your covered housing provider must first engage in the interactive process with you to identify possible alternative accommodations. To request a reasonable accommodation, please contact Section 504 Coordinator at RA@CharterOakCommunities.org . Your covered housing provider must also ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities.

Have your protections under VAWA been denied? If you believe that the covered housing provider has violated these rights, you may seek help by contacting U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 860-240-4800 . You can also find additional information on filing VAWA complaints at https://www.hud.gov/VAWA and https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/VAWA. To file a VAWA complaint, visit https://www.hud.gov/fairhousing/fileacomplaint.

Need further help?

- For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit https://www.hud.gov/vawa.
- To talk with a housing advocate, contact Domesitic Violence Crisis Center, https://www.dvccct.org/, 203-853-0418 .

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to range from 45 to 90 minutes per each covered housing provider's response, depending on the program. This includes time to print and distribute the form. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing this burden can be sent to the Reports Management Officer, QDAM, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20410. This notice is required for covered housing programs under section 41411 of VAWA and 24 CFR 5.2003. Covered housing providers must give this notice to applicants and tenants to inform them of the VAWA protections as specified in section 41411(d)(2). This is a model notice, and no information is being collected. A Federal agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.

CERTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

Confidentiality Note: Any personal information you share in this form will be maintained by your covered housing provider according to the confidentiality provisions below.

Purpose of Form: If you are a tenant of or applicant for housing assisted under a covered housing program, or if you are applying for or receiving transitional housing or rental assistance under a covered housing program, and ask for protection under the Violence Against Women Act ("VAWA"), you may use this form to comply with a covered housing provider's request for written documentation of your status as a "victim". This form is accompanied by a "Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act," Form HUD-5380.

VAWA protects individuals and families regardless of a victim's age, sex, or marital status.

You are not expected **and cannot be asked or required** to claim, document, or prove victim status or VAWA violence/abuse other than as stated in "Notice of Occupancy Rights Under the Violence Against Women Act," Form HUD-5380.

This form is **one of your available options** for responding to a covered housing provider's written request for documentation of victim status or the incident(s) of VAWA violence/abuse. If you choose, you may submit one of the types of third-party documentation described in Form HUD-5380, in the section titled, "What do I need to document that I am a victim?". Your covered housing provider must give you at least 14 business days (weekends and holidays do not count) to respond to their written request for this documentation.

Will my information be kept confidential? Whenever you ask for or about VAWA protections, your covered housing provider must keep any information you provide about the VAWA violence/abuse or the fact you (or a household member) are a victim, including the information on this form, strictly confidential. This information should be securely and separately kept from your other tenant files. This information can only be accessed by an employee/agent of your covered housing provider if (1) access is required for a specific reason, (2) your covered housing provider explicitly authorizes that person's access for that reason, **and** (3) the authorization complies with applicable law. This information will not be given to anyone else or put in a database shared with anyone else, unless your covered housing provider (1) gets your written permission to do so for a limited time, (2) is required to do so as part of an eviction or termination hearing, **or** (3) is required to do so by law.

In addition, your covered housing provider must keep your address strictly confidential to ensure that it is not disclosed to a person who committed or threatened to commit VAWA violence/abuse against you (or a household member).

What if I require this information in a language other than English? To read this in Spanish or another language, please contact Charter Oak Communities
22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, CT 06901, 203-977-1400 or go to
. You can read translated VAWA forms at https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/forms/hud5a#4. If you speak or read in a language other than English, your covered housing provider must give you language assistance regarding your VAWA protections (for example, oral interpretation and/or written translation).

Can I request a reasonable accommodation? If you have a disability, your covered housing provider must provide reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services that may be necessary to allow you to equally benefit from VAWA protections (for example, giving you more time to submit documents or assistance with filling out forms). You may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even for the first time during an eviction. If a provider is denying a specific reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, your covered housing provider must first engage in the interactive process with you to identify possible alternative accommodations. Your covered housing provider must also ensure effective communication with individuals with disabilities.

Need further help? For additional information on VAWA and to find help in your area, visit https://www.hud.gov/vawa. To speak with a housing advocate, contact Domesitic Violence Crisis Center, https://v
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TO BE COMPLETED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING

1. **Name(s) of victim(s):** ____

2. **Your name** (*if different from victim's*)**:** ___________________________________

3. **Name(s) of other member(s) of the household:** ___________________________

   ____

4. **Name of the perpetrator** *(if known and can be safely disclosed)***:**_____________________

5. **What is the safest and most secure way to contact you? (You may choose more than one.)**

   If any contact information changes or is no longer a safe contact method, notify your covered housing provider.

   ☐ Phone Phone Number: ___________________________________

   Safe to receive a voicemail: ☐ Yes ☐ No

   ☐ E-mail E-mail Address:___________________________________

   Safe to receive an email: ☐ Yes ☐ No

   ☐ Mail Mailing Address:___________________________________

   Safe to receive mail from your housing provider: ☐ Yes ☐ No

   ☐ Other Please List:___________________________________

6. **Anything else your housing provider should know to safely communicate with you?**

Applicable definitions of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking:

Domestic violence includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who lives with or has lived with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

Spouse or intimate partner of the victim includes a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, as determined by the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Dating violence means violence committed by a person:

(1) Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; **and**

(2) Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) The length of the relationship; (ii) The type of relationship; and (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Sexual assault means any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

(1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others **or**

(2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Certification of Applicant or Tenant: By signing below, I am certifying that the information provided on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection, and that one or more members of my household is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking as described in the applicable definitions above.

______________________________ ______________________

Signature **Date**

Public Reporting Burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. This includes the time for collecting, reviewing, and reporting. Comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing this burden can be sent to the Reports Management Officer, QDAM, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410. Housing providers in programs covered by VAWA may request certification that the applicant or tenant is a victim of VAWA violence/abuse. A Federal agency may not collect this information, and you are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.

CHARTER OAK COMMUNITIES

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM
FAMILY REQUEST FOR PORTABILITY

PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY HCV FAMILY

Date________________________________ Email: ______________________________

Name: (print) _________________________ Address:_____________________________

Telephone#:__________________________ Work#:______________________________

Complete the following information on the area you want to move to under portability option.

Name of Housing Authority____

Address: ____

City/State/Zip____

Name of Portability Officer____

Housing Authority Fax. # ____

Signature of Family____

RETURN THIS FORM TO: Charter Oak Communities
Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program
22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, CT 06901
Portability@CharterOakCommunities.org

PART II: PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY USE ONLY:

APPROVED _____ DENIED_______

Documentation of Telephone Contract to Receiving PHA: Date_______________________

Receiving PHA will: ________Absorb ______Administer & bill

Receiving PHA____

Address____

City/State/Zip____

Comments____

Staff Initial____ Date_____________________________