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FACT SHEET

The Section 8 Existing Housing and Voucher Program, established by the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act is the Federal Government's major operating program for assisting lower income families in securing decent, safe, and sanitary housing. The program emphasizes competitive forces of the private market while leaving to the public housing agency the responsibility for providing lower income families with necessary financial and other assistance such as coordination and referrals involving other agencies in Houston and Harris County.

This program places the choice of housing in the hands of the Certified family and encourages the family to shop wisely, investigating a wide range of housing opportunities. The Certified family negotiates directly with the landlord to secure rental accommodations suited to their needs (the family may already occupy the unit). The family negotiates for the best lease terms, for not less than one year, meeting rental requirements and standards. The Harris County Housing Authority is responsible for informing both the certified family and the landlord as to what standards are required.

The Fair Market Rate (Maximum Rent Level) for each size unit is established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assure participation owners of a Fair Market Rent. The certified family cannot enter into a lease in which the gross rent, including utilities, exceeds the Fair Market Rates.

On the Section 8 Voucher Program the family is obligated to pay not less than ten percent of their monthly gross family income. The Family's rent portion will be based on the total gross family income and the contract rent on the unit.

The Housing Assistance Payment for both programs will be the difference between the Family rent and the Contract rent.

A Certified Family can, by abiding by the rules of the program, participate in the programs as long as funds are available and the family remains eligible. Since family housing needs change, such as changes in family size, job locations and the like, the program is designed to facilitate moves by the family without loss of assistance as long as the family terminates its existing lease within the provisions of its lease and finds alternative housing within the jurisdiction of the Harris County Housing Authority. However, in situations where an eligible certificate/voucher holder elects to exercise the portability feature of the certificate/voucher, the eligible certificate/voucher holder may move to another PHA's jurisdiction or in national portability (moves to another state) the move is limited to an area where a Housing Authority is administering a Voucher program.

The Landlord (Owner) as a participant in the Section 8 Program is responsible for the provision of decent, safe, and sanitary housing to tenants at a reasonable rent. The Owner's dwelling unit must pass housing quality standards (HQS) and must be maintained to those standards as long as the owner receives assistance payments.

The Harris County Housing Authority/Landlord contact begins after the Housing Authority approves the tenant/landlord lease terms and determines the dwelling unit complies with the program standards. The unit must be located in the Harris County Housing Authority's Direct Service area which is defined as the unincorporated areas of Harris County. Please see attached map of direct service area.

**HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Section 8 Existing Housing Voucher Program**

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO THE LANDLORD

Dear Owner/Landlord

The tenant is solely responsible to the landlord for the rent until the Harris County Housing Authority approves the Housing Assistance Payment Contract with the landlord.

Please do not confuse the Contract with the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA). The RTA is the document, when signed by the landlord and tenant, used to facilitate the unit inspection. The Contract is executed after the unit has met all requirements of housing quality standards.

Only the executed Housing Assistance Payment Contract guarantees payment to the landlord, not the inspection.

Based on the current workload, Contracts are written within fifteen (15) working days after the unit has passed inspection.

Subsidy checks are issued to the landlord on or about the first of each month. The initial check will be mailed on or about the 1st of the following month if the contract was executed before the 15th of the month. If the contract was executed after the 15th of the month the check will be mailed 45 days after execution of the Contract; however, the payment will be retroactive from the date stated on the Contract. All other checks thereafter should be received on or about the first of each month.

If you do not receive the payment as stated in this letter please contact the tenant's Housing Counselor at (713) 578-2100.

PLEASE BE ADVISED it is your responsibility to immediately notify our office in writing when you learn your tenant has moved or intends to vacate. (e.g., submit a copy of the thirty day (30) notice, if any). Your signature and endorsement of the Housing Assistance Payment check means you are certifying that the Section - 8 participant is presently residing in the rental property that is under Contract and the Contract unit is safe, decent and in sanitary condition.

OWNER'S STATEMENT: MY SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD ALL OF THE ABOVE:

SIGNATURE OF OWNER OR MANAGING AGENT

DATE

Standard Housing Requirements

Unit must have, at least:

- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Living room/sleeping room
- One sleeping room (for each 2 persons) with doors & doorknobs
- Outside doors and windows that can be locked; a window latch on each exterior window
- Adequate vented heating and cooling systems with Seal of Approval label
- Safe approved water supply
- Fire escape or outside windows that open in case of fire 1 in each sleeping area
- Entrance without going through another person's property
- No dangerous gases or air pollution
- No rodents (rats and mice) or vermin (cockroaches and insects)
- Bedroom window/door guards must be designed to be operable from inside and a key affixed in proximity for such window/door guards lock

Bathroom must have, at least:

- Private indoor toilet
- Basin - Hot and cold water
- Exhaust ventilation or outside window that opens

Kitchen must have, at least:

- Stove and Refrigerator
- Adequate storage, preparation & serving space
- Garbage cans
- One overhead or wall light & one other electrical outlet
- All appliances provided must be working

Living and sleeping rooms must have, at least:

- One window
- Two electric outlets, one overhead or wall outlet
- No loose surface materials

Building must be in good condition:

Floors:

- No bulging holes or cracks
- No loose surface materials
- Walls No leaning or buckling - loose siding

Ceilings:

- Firm and watertight
- No Large cracks or holes
- No loose surface materials

Entrance, walkways, stairways, halls and porches:

- A doorknob lock or keyed dead bolt on each exterior door
- A sliding door pin, door handle latch or security bar on each exterior sliding door
- A keyless bolting device and a door viewer on each exterior door (peep hole)
- No danger of tripping or falling
- Elevators: Safe and operating condition correct sliding glass door if sliding section is on the exterior side of door to prevent glass from being removed

Paint:

- Owner must provide information about lead-base paint

SECTION 8 LANDLORD CERTIFICATION

RE: _____
TENANT NAME

STREET ADDRESS OF ASSISTED UNIT

Texas
CITY/TOWN STATE ZIP

Ownership of Assisted Unit

I certify that I am the legal or the legally designated agent for the above referenced unit, and that the prospective tenant has no ownership interest in this dwelling unit whatsoever.

Approved Residents of Assisted Unit

I understand that the family members listed on the dwelling lease agreement, as approved by the Harris County Housing Authority, are the only individuals permitted to reside in the unit. I also understand that I am not permitted to live in the unit while I am receiving housing assistance payments.

Housing Quality Standards

I understand my obligations in compliance with the Housing Assistance Contract, related to performing necessary maintenance to ensure the unit continues to comply with Housing Quality Standards.

Security Deposit and Tenant Rent Payments

I understand that the amount of security deposit and the tenants portion of the contract rent are determined by the Harris County Housing Authority, and that it is illegal to charge any additional amounts for rent or any other item not specified in the lease which have not been specifically approved by the Harris County Housing Authority.

Reporting Vacancies to the Harris County Housing Authority

I understand that should the assisted unit become vacant, I am responsible to notify the Harris County Housing Authority immediately in writing.

Computer Matching Consent

I understand the Housing Assistance Payment Contract permits the Harris County Housing Authority or HUD to verify my compliance with the Contract. I consent for the Harris County Housing Authority or HUD to conduct computer matches to verify my compliance, as they deem necessary. The Harris County Housing Authority and HUD may release and exchange information regarding my participation in the Section 8 programs with other Federal and State agencies.

Administrative and Criminal Actions for Intentional Violations

I understand that failure to comply with the terms and responsibilities of the Housing Assistance Payments contract is grounds for termination of participation in the Section 8 Program. I understand that knowingly supplying false, incomplete or inaccurate information is punishable under Federal or State criminal law.

Signature of Landlord/Agent

Date _____

WARNING--Title 18 US Code Section 1001 states that a person is guilty of a felony for knowingly and willingly making a false or fraudulent statement to any Department or Agency of the United States. State law may also provide penalties for false or fraudulent statements.



Harris County Housing Authority

DATE: _____

SECTION 8 VACANCY LISTING FORM

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

NAME OF LANDLORD: _____

ADDRESS OF UNIT TO BE LISTED:

ZIP CODE: _____ AREA: _____

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON (S) & PHONE NUMBER: _____

BEDROOM (S) AVAILABLE	REQUESTED RENTS
EFFICIENCY	\$ _____
ONE BEDROOM	\$ _____
TWO BEDROOM	\$ _____
THREE BEDROOM	\$ _____
FOUR BEDROOM	\$ _____

AMENITIES: _____

NOTE: The unit must be located in the Harris County Housing Authority's direct service area which is defined as the unincorporated areas of Harris County (see direct service area map). Your unit/dwelling will appear on our vacancy list for a period of three months. If the unit/ dwelling becomes unavailable within the three-month period or you wish to have the unit/dwelling listed longer than three months, you must contact this office. If this office is not notified, your listing will be removed.



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Unit Information Form (Form MUST be completely filled out)

Unit Address: _____ Apartment Number: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Unit Type

- Single Family/House Detached Family
 Manufacture/Mobil Home
 Row House/Garden Apt.
 Two/Three (Duplex)

Unit Size & Age

Number of Bedrooms: _____ Number of Bathrooms: _____ Square Ft. _____ Year Built: _____

Utilities

Heat Type: Natural Gas Bottle Gas/Propane Electric or Oil

Paid by: Owner Tenant

Hot Water: Natural Gas Bottle Gas/Propane Electric or Oil

Paid by: Owner Tenant

Cooking: Natural Gas Bottle Gas/Propane Electric or Oil

Paid by: Owner Tenant

Water Type: City Water Well Water

Paid by: Owner Tenant

Sewer Type: Public Sewer Septic Tank

Paid by: Owner Tenant

Maintenance

Check box if Owner Provided:

- Lawn
 Pest Control
 Trash

Amenities

Check box if Owner Provided:

- Stove/Range
 Refrigerator
 Dishwasher
 Microwave
 Washer
 Dryer

- Hook-ups for Washer/Dryer
 Garbage Disposal
 Ceiling Fans
 Gated Community
 Swimming Pool

Air Condition: Central Window/Wall None

Heat: Central Window/Wall Space None

Parking

Garage: 1 car 2 cars or more **Carport:** 1 car 2 cars or more

Other: Assigned Unassigned Driveway None

Rate the overall condition of your unit: Average New Good Very Good Fair Below Average



Landlords/Owners Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher Program?

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher program.

2. Who pays what in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program?

When a family is determined to be eligible for the program and funding is available, the PHA issues the family a **Housing Choice Voucher**. The family receives the Voucher at the tenant briefing. They then begin looking for a unit. The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects. There are four Housing Authorities in the County, the City of Houston, City of Pasadena, City of Baytown and Harris County.

In the Housing Choice Voucher Program, the maximum amount that the PHA will pay is an amount equal to the **payment standard** minus the **total tenant payment**.

The payment standard is established by the PHA but must be set at an amount that is between 90% and 110% of the HUD-established **fair market rent (FMR)** for the program and the area. HCHA has adopted 100% FMR for its service area.

HCHA Voucher Payment Standards
Effective November 1, 2010

1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR
\$767	\$931	\$1241	\$1560

3. What steps do I take when a Section 8 HCV is interested in my rental property?

It is important to note that the Voucher Payment Standard is the **maximum rent subsidy** amount allowed by HCHA. The final determination of rent may be established in accordance with the “rent reasonableness” process set on section 5 (page 3). All properties must be considered RENT REASONABLE for HCHA to enter into a HAP contract. Each Landlord will have a HAP contract with the PHA and a lease with the tenant. These documents must have the same starting date. In the Section 8/HCV program, the tenant pays a portion of the rent based on their income and the Housing Authority pays the balance.

Step 1: Evaluate him or her as you would any other renter. Make sure that your tenant selection standards are based on objective, business-related considerations, such as previous rental history, etc.

Step 2: Read and complete the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA Packet). It is very important that the following information is completed.

- Unit rented (address, apartment number, and any other information needed to identify the unit)
- Number of bedrooms in the unit.
- Proposed rent.
- Date unit available for inspection.
- Utilities and appliances to be supplied by the owner.
- Utilities and appliances to be supplied by the tenant.

Step 3: Attached your own pre-lease to the RFTA packet. The pre-lease must specify all of the following:

- Name of the owner
- Name of the tenant
- Unit rented (address, apartment number, and any other information needed identify the unit)
- The term of the lease (must be for 12 months)
- Amount of the monthly rent to owner.

Step 4: Return the RFTA packet to tenant to submit to the Housing Authority (HA). The Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification (Form W-9) can be brought in to our office by you or faxed.

ity (HCHA) once the Request for Tenancy is turned in?

n. A W-9 form must be turned in before an inspection takes place.

onableness.

r the HCHA will contact you to set a Housing Quality Inspection (HQS) inspection.

y obtains comparables on assisted and unassisted housing for the purpose of determining rents the housing authority will pay at

s that the initial rent to owner is a reasonable rent.

in effect 60 days before the contract anniversary (for the unit size rented by the family) as compared with the FMR in effect

other time.

may not exceed the reasonable rent as most recently determined or redetermined by the PHA.

to owner is a reasonable rent in comparison to rent for other comparable unassisted units in the same market area. To make this
contract unit; and

ties to be provided by the owner in accordance with the lease.

cepting each monthly housing assistance payment from the PHA, the owner certifies that the rent to owner is not more than ren

6. How is my rent determined?

Step 1: HCHA will access current MLS listings for comparisons of your unit or HAR.Com rents based on specific streets, key map number(s), neighborhood(s), zip code(s) and/or current rents in the HCHA database. HCHA will start at the smallest common denominator MLS listings for a specific street.

Step 2: HCHA will average the leasing rents for the surrounding rental units in the area. The average rent will be compared to your proposed rent. If the average rent is within the proposed rent of your unit, the rent for your unit will be approved. If the proposed rent is more than the average rent, a HCHA representative will contact you regarding the maximum amount HCHA will pay.

7. What is a Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Inspection?

Before the PHA can make payment to you on behalf of a tenant family, the unit must meet HUD's minimum Housing Quality Standards. These standards have been implemented by HUD nationwide to ensure that all assisted units meet minimum health and safety standards. For the inspection the owner must have all utilities connected.

Below is a list of the most common fail conditions.

- Nonfunctional smoke detectors;
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates;
- No railings where required;
- Peeling exterior and interior paint;
- Tripping hazards caused by permanently installed floor covering (carpet/vinyl);
- Cracked or broken window panes;
- Inoperable stove burners or range hoods;
- Missing burner control knobs;
- Inoperable bathroom fans or no ventilation in bathroom;
- Leaking faucets or plumbing;
- No temperature/pressure-relief valve on water heaters;
- No weather stripping for doors;
- Missing spacers at breaker box.

If the housing unit does not pass the initial inspection, you will be notified in writing of any items that failed and given a reasonable time to make repairs. When the repairs are complete, the PHA will reinspect the unit. The PHA is not responsible for any payments until a Housing Assistance Payment contract has been executed.

8. How soon can a person or family move into my unit?

Once the lease and unit are approved, you will enter into a contract with the PHA, and you will sign a lease agreement with the family.

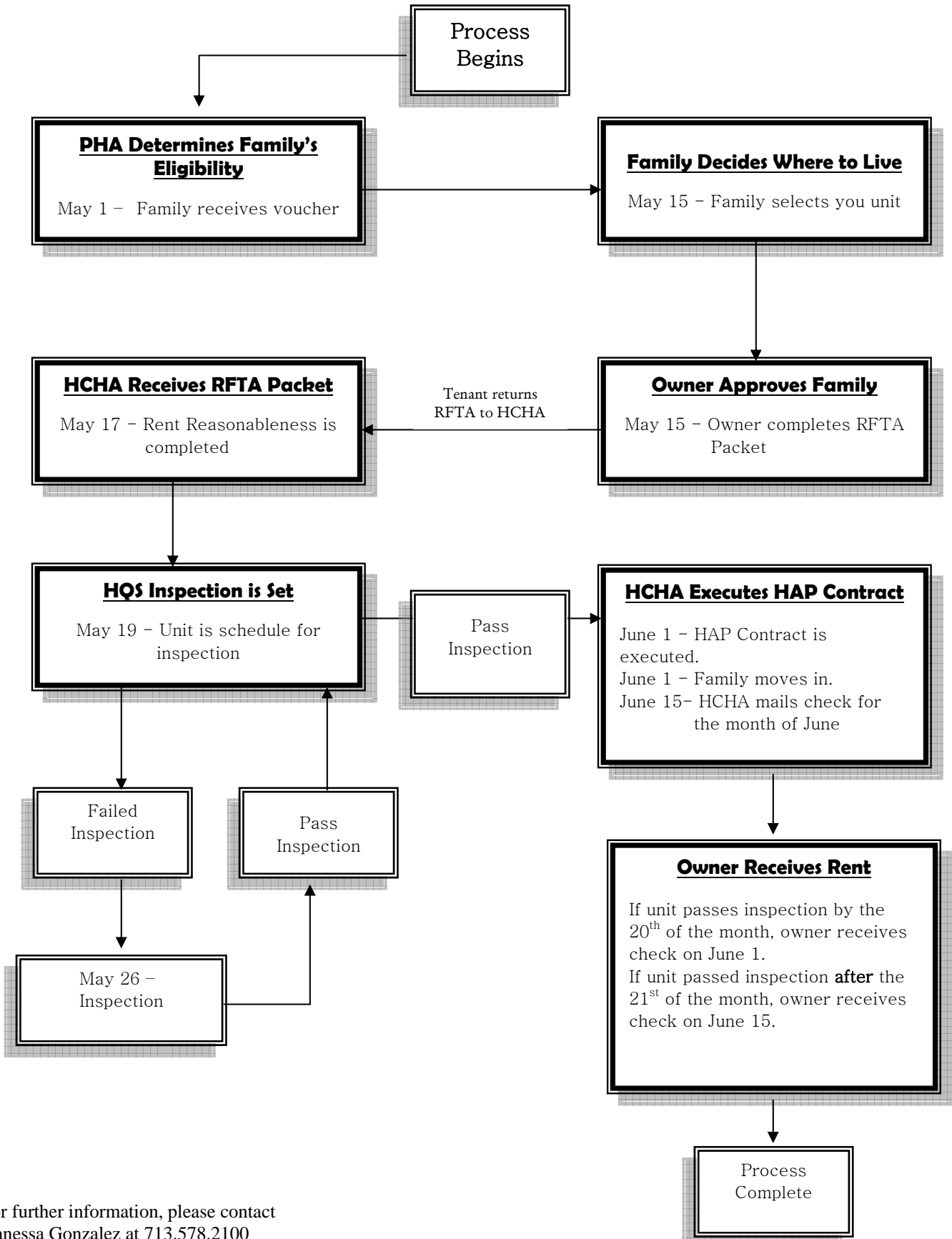
- Contracts only begin on the **First** of the month.
- If the family moves in without a contract, the family is responsible for the full amount of the monthly rent.

9. When do I receive my first check?

HCHA will begin making payment to you after the tenancy has been approved and the Housing Assistance Payments Contract (HAP) has been signed and received. The Housing Assistance Payment Contract must:

- Be signed by the landlord;
- Have a lease. The lease must match the beginning and ending date as on the HAP contract.
- HCHA will mail a payment on the first of each month.

10. Example of the Process.



For further information, please contact
Vanessa Gonzalez at 713.578.2100