



**HOUSTON**  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

Transforming Lives & Communities

2640 Fountain View Drive Houston, Texas 77057 | 713.260.0600 P | 713.260.0547 TTY | [www.housingforhouston.com](http://www.housingforhouston.com)

# HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

## CLIENT'S GUIDE FOR A SUCCESSFUL MOVE

A Fair Housing and Equal Employment Opportunity Agency.  
For assistance: Individuals with disabilities may contact the 504/ADA Administrator  
at 713-260-0528, TTY 713-260-0547 or [504ADA@housingforhouston.com](mailto:504ADA@housingforhouston.com)

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## Step 1: Find an Acceptable Unit

Now that you have been issued a Section 8 voucher, you have the opportunity to locate a safe, decent place to live. It is very important that you read the following guidelines before you begin searching for a unit:

- (1) Your voucher is only valid for ninety (90) days. The Houston Housing Authority will only grant an extension as a reasonable accommodation to a client with a verified disability. If you have a verified need for a reasonable accommodation, it is your responsibility to locate a housing unit that meets your needs or to work with the landlord to have the necessary changes made to a housing unit. If you have not located an acceptable unit by the time your voucher has expired, you will no longer be eligible for assistance on the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP).
- (2) Your voucher will serve as verification for property owners that you are eligible to receive rental assistance. When searching for a unit, you should ask the property managers whether they accept Section 8 vouchers. You may determine what properties accept the program by searching on [GoSection8.com](http://GoSection8.com) or by requesting a copy of the property listings at the Authority's 1<sup>st</sup> floor lobby area.
- (3) When locating a unit, it is important to remember that you will only be assisted for the bedroom size of your voucher.
- (4) If you decide to remain in your current unit, you must do the following:
  - a. *Clients New to the Program:* You or your property owner should complete the RTA packet and return it before the expiration of your voucher.
  - b. *Clients Currently Living in Units in the Houston Housing Authority's Section 8 Program:* Complete the enclosed "Staying in Current Unit Declaration" and return it with all documents issued at the time of your move appointment. In addition, please bring a copy of your new lease. You must turn all of this into to the Authority's "RTA booth" before your voucher expires.
  - c. *Clients Who Received a Move Voucher Because Their Assisted Unit Failed Three Inspections:* If your unit failed three inspections but you would like to continue living in it, your landlord should complete the RTA Packet completely.

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## Step 2: Return RTA Packet to Houston Housing Authority

Now that you have located a unit, the property manager must complete the following documents from the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) Packet:

- (1) Request for Tenancy Approval
- (2) Certification of Additional Amenities
- (3) Owner Acknowledgement of Rent Responsibility
- (4) Lead-based Paint Disclosure for pre-1978 Units
- (5) W-9: Request for Taxpayer Identification Number

In addition, the property manager must provide the following documents that are not found in the RTA Packet:

- (1) Proposed Tenant Lease Agreement
- (2) Warranty Deed (filed and recorded - all pages)
- (3) Management Agreement (if applicable)
- (4) Proof of Owner's and Management Company's (if applicable) Social Security/EIN number
- (5) Copy of Owner's Valid Picture Government Identification

**To avoid the termination of your housing assistance, all of these documents must be returned to the Houston Housing Authority before your voucher expires.** Since the Authority will not accept incomplete RTA packets, be sure all the forms shown above are returned in time. When the RTA Packet and the other documents listed above are returned to the RTA Booth, HHA staff will review them for completeness and accuracy. If the documents have been completed correctly, the inspection department will contact the owner of the prospective unit and schedule an inspection to be conducted within 10-15 business days.

## Step 3: Wait for the Unit to be Inspected

Once you or the property manager have turned the RTA Packet and supporting documents in, your RTA Packet will be logged in and forwarded to the inspection department. The inspection department will contact the property owner of the unit and schedule an inspection. The inspection department will schedule the inspection with the landlord only. There are no emergency initial inspections; all requests will be scheduled in the order received. The tenant must follow-up with the landlord regarding the inspection date and result of the inspection. If the unit passes the inspection and the rent has been determined as reasonable, your occupancy technician will send the owner a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract and a Lease Addendum.

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## Step 4: Move into the Unit

**You can not move in until the Houston Housing Authority and your property owner have executed a HAP (Housing Assistance Payments) Contract. Once the Houston Housing Authority and the property manager have signed the HAP (Housing Assistance Payments) Contract, you may move into the unit on the effective date of the HAP contract. Your lease must begin on the same day as the HAP Contract. If you move in before this date then you will be responsible for all rent before the HAP Contract is effective. The Authority will no longer date HAP Contracts back to the date your unit's inspection passed.**

Important Note: If your landlord ever attempts to charge you for more rent than the portion the Houston Housing Authority has notified you to pay, please contact your occupancy technician immediately.

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## **Housing Choice Voucher Program**

### **NOTICE TO HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS REGARDING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

*Upon request, this notice and the Reasonable Accommodation Policy & Procedures will be made available in an alternate format.*

The Houston Housing Authority is committed to ensuring that its policies and procedures provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in and benefit from its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV), services and activities. The Houston Housing Authority is dedicated to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are not discriminated against on the basis of disability, in connection with the operation of its HCV program, services and activities. The Houston Housing Authority provides reasonable accommodations to HCV applicants and residents if they have a disability and reasonable accommodations are necessary for them to have the opportunity to enjoy the HCV program, services and activities.

A reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, alteration or adaptation in policy, procedure, practice, program, or facility that gives a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in and benefit from, a program or activity. Examples of reasonable accommodation may include:

- installing flashing light smoke detectors in an apartment for a household member with a hearing impairment;
- providing a reader, during a housing interview, for a applicant or resident with a vision-impairment;
- installing grab bars in the apartment bathroom of a resident with a disability;
- permitting an outside agency to assist an applicant with a disability to meet the screening criteria.

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Generally, the Houston Housing Authority must provide a reasonable accommodation unless the requested accommodation poses an undue financial and administrative burden to the Houston Housing Authority or require a fundamental change in its program. In certain circumstances, however, the Houston Housing Authority must receive the approval of the landlord from whom the HCV tenant is renting before implementing a reasonable accommodation. Situations in which the landlord lawfully refuses to allow an accommodation may alter the Houston Housing Authority's obligation to provide the specific accommodation requested by the tenant.

HCV residents with a disability requesting reasonable accommodation must fulfill their lease terms such as: paying rent, caring for their apartment, reporting required information, not disturbing the neighbors, etc. with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Requests for a reasonable accommodation may be made to the Section 504/ADA Administrator, at the Houston Housing Authority Central Office, 2640 Fountainview, Houston, Texas 77057. The individual making the request will be provided with the Request for Reasonable Accommodation form which should be completed, signed and returned for processing. Assistance with completing this form is available from Houston Housing Authority staff. Please call the Section 504/ADA Administrator (phone number 713-260-0528/713-260-0547 (TYY) if you have any questions or concerns about reasonable accommodation.

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## STAYING IN CURRENT UNIT DECLARATION

If you decide to remain in your current unit that is assisted by the Houston Housing Authority, and it is not in failed inspection status, you must sign below and return this form to the Houston Housing Authority. You must turn this form in along with your new lease before your voucher expires or you will be subject to termination. Detach and return this form to the RTA Booth in Suite 100 before 4 p.m. on Monday through Friday.

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINTED NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER or CLIENT NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CURRENT ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE NEW LEASE EXPIRES:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## CLIENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received the *Client's Guide for a Successful Move* packet from the Houston Housing Authority.

I also understand that my voucher is valid for only 90 days and that my failure to find a unit and turn in the RTA Packet with all documents within the 90 days will result in my termination from the HCVP Program.

I also understand that I will be responsible for all rent if I move into a unit before the Houston Housing Authority has an executed HAP Contract with my property owner.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
HHA Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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