



**Western Piedmont Council of Governments
Regional Housing Authority**

New Housing Choice Voucher Landlord Information

Thank you for your interest in renting your unit through the Regional Housing Authority's (RHA) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

The Housing Choice Voucher program would not exist without owners and landlords such as yourself.

This packet includes the following:

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(Attached) New Owner W-9 and Direct Deposit Forms

Please contact Kelley Hayward at 828.485.4252 or kelley.hayward@wpcog.org with further questions about becoming a participating landlord, or if you need further assistance with any required paperwork.

Steps to Become a HCV landlord

1. **Submit a Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA)**

All eligible Housing Choice Voucher holders will have been given an RFTA packet for you to complete. Instructions are on the cover page. You may also contact the office for an appointment to complete your first packet with a member of our staff. Tenants have a limited amount of time to search for housing, so it is important that you complete and submit the RFTA as quickly as possible.

2. **Approval of the RFTA**

The RHA will approve or deny the RFTA within 3 days of receiving it. Approval is based on affordability for the household. A HUD mandated calculation is used to determine if the unit is affordable for the family. This includes the total rent, a utility allowance for any tenant supplied utilities, and the household's income and voucher size.

If the unit is deemed unaffordable the RHA may contact you to see if you are willing to accept a decreased rent amount to make the unit affordable. It is at your discretion to accept or deny this request.

Once the RFTA is approved the landlord and tenant will be notified of the estimated Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) that will be made on behalf of the family, and the unit will be scheduled for inspection.

3. **Initial Inspection**

RHA staff will contact you to schedule an inspection within 15 days of approving the RFTA, or the estimated ready date you provide for the unit, whichever is later. An Inspection Readiness Checklist is attached for your convenience. If the unit does not pass inspection, landlord will be given 30 days to correct any deficiencies and schedule a reinspection.

4. **Lease and Contract**

Once the unit passes inspection, the landlord and tenant will sign a lease. The lease cannot be dated prior to the passed inspection date, and must be for at least one year. The lease must specify the unit address, rent amount, and who is responsible for required utilities. It must also include a copy of the HUD Tenancy Addendum.

Once the RHA received a copy of the lease we will execute a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract between the RHA and the landlord. A copy of this contract will be sent to you, along with a W-9 and Direct Deposit form, and the final rent portion notice.

All payments are made via Direct Deposit. The signed contract, W-9 and Direct Deposit information must all be returned to the office before payment can begin.

5. **Ongoing Assistance**

The RHA bases assistance on continued cooperation from both the family and the landlord. Annual inspections and reviews will be conducted to review the property, as well as tenant income and familial status. The RHA will continue making payments as long as both the property and tenant are eligible based on Housing Choice Voucher regulations and policies.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do I need to be pre-approved?

A. No, there is no pre-approval process.

Q. Who screens the tenant?

A. The Regional Housing Authority is required by HUD to determine eligibility of each tenant for the program. That determination does not include suitability for your specific unit. Therefore, we encourage landlords to use the same screening process for a HCV tenant as you would for a any other tenant.

Q. Do you send me tenants or can I pick my own?

A. This is a Housing Choice Voucher program. That means each participant is given a voucher and is able to choose where they want to live. We do NOT make recommendations or assign tenants to properties.

Q. How do Housing Choice Voucher tenants know I have a unit available?

A. We have a *List of Landlords* available for tenants. It includes landlord names and telephone numbers. The list is given to prospective tenants at their briefing appointment. Please let us know if you would like to be included on this list.

Landlords may also list their property with affordablehousing.com. This is a free website were you may list your property and remove the listing once the unit is rented. All voucher holders are advised to check the site regularly.

Q. How much will the RHA pay?

A. There is no pre-determined amount. HUD provides a mandated calculation that is based on individual household income, size, and unit variables. Once we receive the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) an estimate can be provided. A list of current payment standards and income requirements is available at wpcog.org/regional-housing-authority.

Q: How do I get paid by the RHA?

All payments are made via direct deposit. A completed W-9 and Direct Deposit Form must be submitted to our office to arrange payment.

Q. What is the RFTA?

A. Request for Tenancy Approval. This packet that is given to tenant when they begin their rental search. We ask that landlords complete the request so that we have the information we need about the unit to calculate rent amounts and to perform an inspection.

Q. When will you do this inspection?

A. The unit must be available for inspection within 30 days of submitting the RFTA to our office. Inspections will be done within 15 days of receiving the RFTA, or with 15 days of the ready date you provide. The office will contact you to schedule the inspection.

Q. When can the tenant move in?

A. The RHA cannot provide assistance until the unit passes inspection. Therefore the RHA encourages landlords and tenants to wait until the inspection passes before signing the lease, giving keys and completing the move in process. If the tenant moves in early, the lease will need to be re-dated once the inspection passes.

Q: Can I increase the rent?

Once the tenant has been under HAP contract in the assisted unit for one year, a rent increase may be requested. A copy of the increase will need to be sent to the tenant and RHA. The RHA will implement the increase for the 1st of the month following a 60 day notice to the tenant.

Q: Do I have to keep a voucher tenant if they violate my lease?

No! Issue all appropriate lease violations as you would for any other tenant. It is at your discretion to provide a notice to vacate or file for eviction, as you would with any other tenant who is not an HCV participant. Please treat HCV tenants the same as you would any other tenant. We just ask that you keep us informed of any issues so we can provide assistance with the situation.

Q: Why are there so many acronyms in your program?

We like to use abbreviations. Housing Choice Voucher, Request for Tenancy Approval, and Housing Assistance Payment Contract become a tongue-twister if you say them enough.