

Section 8 Owner FAQ

Can a Voucher be used to rent from a relative?

Section 8 participants cannot rent from their immediate relatives. This includes the participant's mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, grandchildren, stepfamily, in-laws, or any member of his or her household. Participants with disabilities may be eligible for an exception if it is necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation for a family member with a disability.

What types of housing can someone rent with a Section 8 Voucher?

Section 8 Vouchers can be used to rent houses, duplexes, triplexes, apartments, condominiums, townhouses and cottages. Other housing types, such as group homes and shared rentals are only available as a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

How long is the lease?

The lease term is normally for one year. Shorter lease terms (such as 6 months) are available if you and your tenant agree to it and if the shorter term is market practice. The Lease Agreement will automatically become a month-to-month agreement after the initial term. If you and your tenant prefer to renew the lease for another one-year term you can agree to this by signing a new lease & contract for another year.

What is the Housing Assistance Payment Contract?

The Housing Assistance Payment Contract (HAP Contract) is the legal agreement between OHA and the property owner. The contract outlines the owner's rights and responsibilities and details OHA's payment agreement with the owner. After the owner signs the HAP contract, an OHA manager must approve the rent and approve and sign the contract to make the agreement valid. A sample HAP Contract is included in the back of this guide. The HAP Contract has the same term as the lease and terminates automatically when the lease is cancelled.

Who pays for utilities?

The property owner decides which utilities he or she will provide and which utilities the family will be responsible for. Utility service, including water, must be on at the time of the move-in inspection. Utilities that the Section 8 participant pays for cannot be master metered or shared with another unit or common area and must be billed directly by the utility service provider.

What are the owner's responsibilities in the Section 8 Voucher Program?

Property owners maintain the same rights and responsibilities in the Voucher program as they have with non-Section 8 tenancies, including:

- Performing all management and rental functions, including leasing and tenant screening.
- Ensuring that the property meets basic health and safety standards, including paying for any owner-supplied utilities.
- Collecting a security deposit, tenant monthly rent portion, and charges for any damages caused by the tenant.