Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Briefing
What You Will Learn:

■ Moving Packet
■ Voucher Dates
■ How your rent portion is calculated
■ How to Search for a Unit
■ Next Steps Once You Find a Unit
■ Family Obligations

Welcome!

■ Please **turn off** or **silence** your cell phone.
■ Please **no texting** during the presentation.
■ Please provide us your **full attention**.
Housing Choice Voucher Program

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, which offers the opportunity for low-income families to choose affordable housing.

- The HCV program provides tenant-based assistance rather than unit-based assistance, allowing the family to move without losing assistance.

- Through this program, individuals and families receive a voucher, which represents a subsidy that can be used to rent any housing that meets HCV program requirements.

- The rules and regulations of the HCV program are determined by HUD. Opportunity Home is afforded choices in the operation of the program included in Opportunity Home’s Administrative Plan, a document approved by Opportunity Home’s Board of Commissioners.
Housing Choice Voucher Program

HUD establishes federal regulations and provides funding to Opportunity Home.

Opportunity Home establishes local HCV policies (Admin Plan) and administers program.

Opportunity Home provides rent subsidy to owner.

Opportunity Home issues voucher to household.

Owner (Landlord) provides tenant share of rent to owner.

Household pays tenant share of rent to owner.
Portability

- Transferring your voucher to another jurisdiction is called **Portability**.
- To qualify, you must be an eligible program participant in good standing.
- You may only “port out” of Opportunity Home’s jurisdiction:
  - After the initial term of your lease
  - If you have not ported within the past 12 months
- If you are interested in porting out of Opportunity Home’s jurisdiction, please email **Portability@homesa.org**.
HCV Briefing

Looking for a Unit

Where To Look

- Rental ads in the San Antonio Express newspaper
- Friends, family and coworkers
- Neighborhoods you would like to live in: “For Rent” signs

How To Look

- Call potential landlords and make an appointment to see the unit.
- affordablehousing.com
Beware of Rental Scams

Signs of a potential rental scam include:

- Vague listing details
- Not being allowed to view the property before paying an application fee
- Rental price is “too good to be true”
- You are asked to pay or sign right away
- No tenant screening process

How to avoid rental scams:

- Study local markets
- Verify contact information
- Verify the property address on Google Maps
- Always request a tour of the property
- Check for tenant screening process
- Don’t pay before signing
HCV Briefing

Looking For A Unit

Viewing The Unit

- Take a list of previous rental history
- Ask the following questions during your appointment:
  - What is the rent and what utilities will I need to pay?
  - Who will be providing the stove and refrigerator?
  - Are pets allowed? If so, are there any restrictions?
- Inspect the unit:
  - Drive around the neighborhood during day and night.
  - Briefing Packet [here](#)
Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA)

When you have found a unit, the landlord will need to submit an electronic RTA (homesa.org/rtा).

The RTA will need to include the following:

- Address of Unit
- Proposed Rent,
- Security Deposit,
- Date the unit is available for inspection
- Utility/Applicant Responsibility.
11. Utilities and Appliances

The owner shall provide or pay for the utilities and appliances indicated below by an “O”. The tenant shall provide or pay for the utilities and appliances indicated below by a “T”. Unless otherwise specified below, the owner shall pay for all utilities and appliances provided by the owner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Specify fuel type</th>
<th>Provided by</th>
<th>Paid by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Heating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Electric</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Conditioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA)
**Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA)**

Owner’s Certification must be completed for owners with properties that have more than four units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address and unit number</th>
<th>Date Rented</th>
<th>Rental Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Owner’s Certifications:
   a. The program regulation requires the PHA to certify that the rent charged to the housing choice voucher tenant is not more than the rent charged for other unassisted comparable units. Owners of projects with more than 4 units must complete the following section for most recently leased comparable unassisted units within the premises.
   b. The owner (including a principal or other interested party) is not the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless the PHA has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving leasing of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

c. Check one of the following:
   ____ Lead-based paint disclosure requirements do not apply because this property was built on or after January 1, 1978.
   ____ The unit, common areas servicing the unit, and exterior painted surfaces associated with such unit or common areas have been found to be lead-based paint free by a lead-based paint inspector certified under the Federal certification program or under a federally accredited State certification program.
   ____ A completed statement is attached containing disclosure of known information on lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the unit, common areas or exterior painted surfaces, including a statement that the owner has provided the lead hazard information pamphlet to the family.

13. The PHA has not screened the family’s behavior or suitability for tenancy. Such screening is the owner’s own responsibility.

14. The owner’s lease must include word-for-word all provisions of the HJG tenancy addendum.

15. The PHA will arrange for inspection of the unit and will notify the owner and family as to whether or not the unit will be approved.
Request for Tenancy Approval

For more video resources, visit homes.org/video-resources.
If your Request for Tenancy Approval is approved, the landlord will be contacted to schedule an inspection of the unit.

If the unit does not pass inspection, the landlord will be notified of any items that need repair.

Opportunity Home **cannot** make any Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) if the unit has not passed inspection.

If the unit does not pass inspection, it may cause delay in your assistance.
Plan to Move

Costs
- Security deposit
- Your portion of the first month’s rent
- Possible utility deposits and hook-up fees
- Cost of moving

When To Move

- Always wait to move in **AFTER** the unit passes inspection.
- If the landlord refuses to make the necessary repairs to meet inspection requirements and you have already moved in, you will need to move out and find a new unit.
Moving In

Get Information From Your Landlord

- Who should you contact for repairs?
- Who should you contact in case of emergency when they're not available?
HCV Briefing

Remember!

Once you have possession of the unit:

- You are responsible for notifying the landlord about maintenance problems.
- Keep a contact log with your landlord about needed repairs for your records.

Opportunity Home will get involved with maintenance issues only after you have given written notice to the landlord with a copy to Opportunity Home, and only if the landlord does not respond.
Family Obligations

- Use the Housing Choice Voucher
- Supply all accurate information
- Attend all appointments
- Allow for inspections
- Pay your rent portion
- Maintain Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- Live in the unit for the initial year: you may not move during this time

HCV Briefing

- Have the unit be your only place of residency
- Report any changes in family composition
- Report any decreases in income
- If you are an FSS, Homeownership or Zero-Income Participant, report any increases in income
- Cannot be absent for greater than 45 days
The Big Three

Changes In Income

- If you have a decrease in income or if you have an increase in income (for special participants), submit a completed “Change of Income Request Form” in person or through email/fax within 10 business days.

Family Composition

- Notify Opportunity Home of any absences, or if any household member stops residing in the unit, within 10 business days by submitting a completed “Change of Family Composition - Remove Household Member Packet.”

- Any additions to the household must be approved before the household member moves in. Submit a completed “Change of Family Composition - Add Household Member Packet.”

Visitors

- You may have guests as long as they have a different permanent address and do not spend more than 7 consecutive days in your unit.

- You must follow your landlord’s rules on visitors, detailed in the lease.

- You are responsible for the actions of anyone in your unit.
Termination

- When a decision is made to terminate your rental assistance, the family is sent written notice of that decision, which states:
  - the program violation;
  - how to request an Informal Hearing; and
  - the time frame you have to request the Informal Hearing.
- If the family does not request a hearing within the specified time, the decision will be upheld.
- Hearings are conducted by an individual not involved in making the decision to terminate.
- The family is strongly encouraged to bring supporting documentation of their case to the Informal Hearing.
Fair Housing

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is against the law to base any housing decision on the following:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex
- Handicap
- Familial Status
- National Origin

If you feel anyone has refused to rent to you for any of these reasons refer to and or complete the Housing Discrimination Information form in your Applicant Packet.
Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

VAWA provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

For all individuals, regardless of sex, gender identity or sexual orientation.

- You cannot be denied admission, denied assistance, terminated or be evicted from rental housing because you are a victim.
- If you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, you may request an emergency transfer.
- Opportunity Home may ask you to submit a written request or fill out a form where you certify that you meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA.
- Opportunity Home must keep all VAWA information confidential.
Current Lessee

- Must give written 30-Day Notice to your landlord.
- Turn in all keys upon moving out of your unit
- Settle all outstanding accounts
  - Not settling your account may lead to termination of your housing assistance
- New HAP Contract/Lease will begin after your scheduled move out date from previous unit.
Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)

Your Housing Choice Voucher indicates your eligibility to participate in the HCV Program and enables you to search for a decent, safe and sanitary unit.

Your voucher will expire in **120 days**. You must find a suitable unit within that time frame.
Voucher Extensions

- As of September 1, 2023, you must submit voucher extension requests in writing.

- To request an extension, you can find the Request for Voucher Extension Form on the homesa.org/resources page or email your assigned Housing Assistance Specialist.

- After the first extension, documentation supporting your extenuating circumstances or a Reasonable Accommodation request will be required. Submission of these does not guarantee your voucher extension request will be granted.
Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs)

- Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) are calculated at the ZIP code level rather than for the entire metropolitan region, which allows for a better reflection of neighborhood rental markets.
- SAFMRs provide voucher holders greater access to high-opportunity areas.
Myth: The less income I make, the more subsidy I receive!

- Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is not only determined by income.
- The Shopping Allowance provides your maximum family contribution to rent.
- You must select a unit that best suits your needs according to the zip codes listed on your shopping estimate.
Contract Rent & Maximum Family Contribution Shopping Allowance (Rent Simplification)

Bedroom size: 1

Rent amounts shown on this document are not final, approved amounts. Rent must be requested and determined to be reasonable through Opportunity Home's review process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code Group</th>
<th>Maximum Rent to Owner</th>
<th>Column A Tenant Pays Utilities</th>
<th>Column B Owner Pays All Utilities</th>
<th>Column C Maximum Family Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zip Code Group 1</td>
<td>78073, 78207, 78208*, 78226</td>
<td>$886</td>
<td>$985</td>
<td>$416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip Code Group 2</td>
<td>78201, 78202*, 78203*, 78210, 78211, 78214, 78221, 78225, 78228, 78237, 78242</td>
<td>$958</td>
<td>$1,057</td>
<td>$416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAFMR Shopping Allowance
HCV Briefing

Video Resources

For video resources on navigating the moving process and submitting a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA), scan the QR code above or visit homesa.org/video-resources.
Questions?
Thank you!