Briefing Handbook

GUIDE TO THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

CITY OF TYLER
HOUSING AGENCY (THA)
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
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Before we get started…

Restroom Locations-front lobby

Please silence cell phones

Section 8
Housing Choice Voucher Program
(HCV)

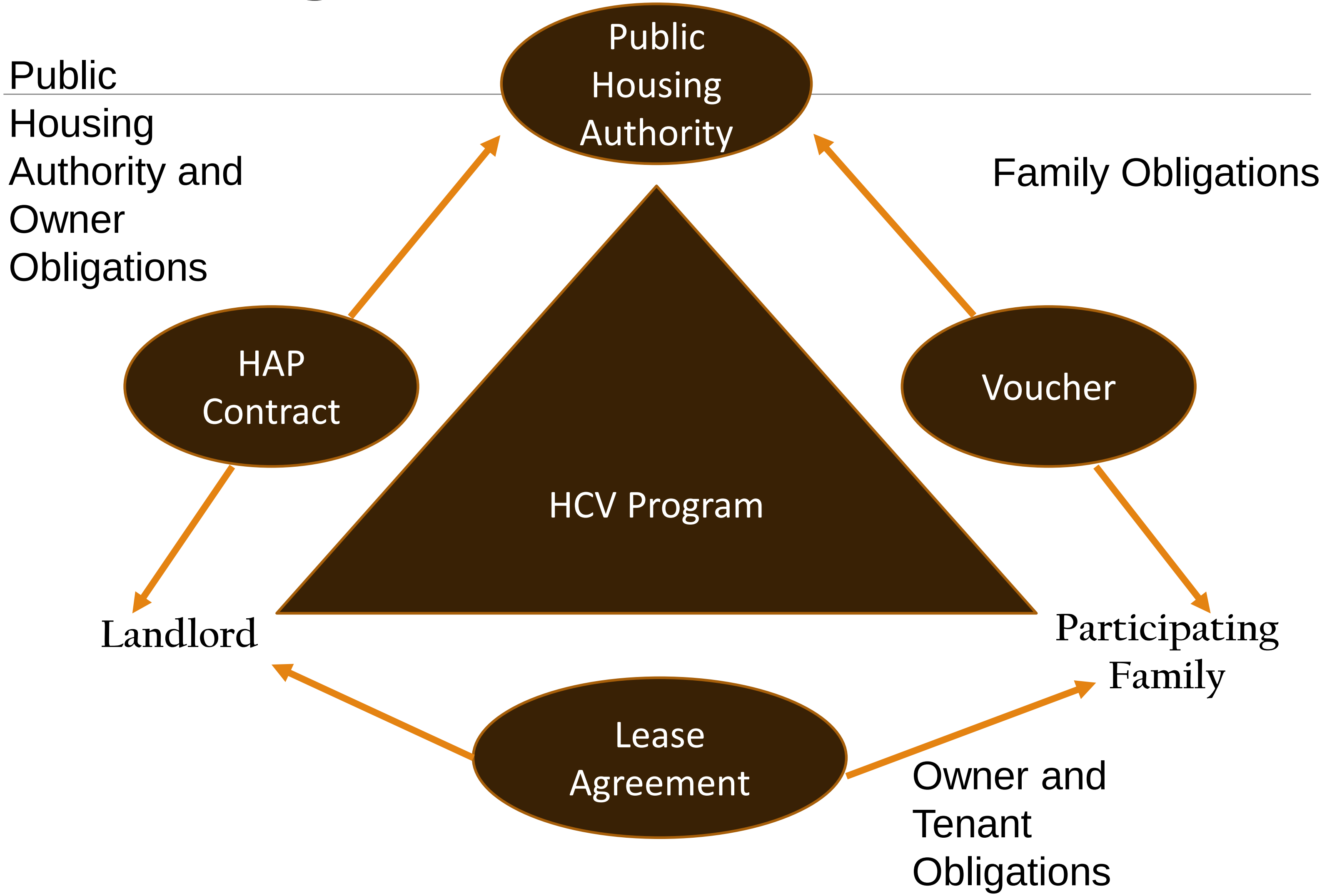
Program is designed to help eligible low to moderate income families obtain affordable housing and to provide increased housing choice.

Rules and regulations of this program are set by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

THA Programs

- Housing Choice Voucher
- Family Self Sufficiency
- Homeownership
- Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)
- Tenant Protection

Housing Choice Voucher Partnerships



Housing Agency's Responsibilities

Determine if an applicant is eligible for the program

Explain rules and regulations of the program

Issue a voucher

Approve the unit, owner and tenancy

Make housing assistant payments to the owner in a timely manner

Housing Agency's Responsibilities Cont'd

Make sure the family and unit continue to qualify under the program

Make sure owners and families follow the programs rules

Provide families and owners with professional service

Family's Responsibilities

The Family has the following major responsibilities:

- Abide by the requirements of the lease;
- Pay rent on time;
- Maintain the unit and the yard (if single family unit);
- Not damage the unit beyond normal wear and tear;
- Provide the household income to Tyler Housing Agency and report changes in income for ALL family members within 10 days;
- Cooperate with Tyler Housing Agency in inspections and reexaminations;
- Secure permission of the landlord and Tyler Housing Agency before adding household members.

Owner's Responsibilities

The Landlord has the following major responsibilities:

- Tenant selection and background screening;
- Compliance with the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract;
- Maintain the unit in accordance with the federal Housing Quality Standards;
- Collect the tenant portion of the rent;
- Cannot collect from tenant any amount owed by the Public Housing Agency.
- Most important for landlords to enforce the lease

Owner's Responsibilities Cont'd

The Landlord has the following major responsibilities:

- If you issue a notice violation, lease termination, or eviction to tenant, submit a copy to Tyler Housing Agency.
  - ✓ Warning Letters
  - ✓ Counseling Notices
  - ✓ Notice for grounds to propose termination of lease
- Notify the Tyler Housing Agency when problems arise.

EIV Information

Enterprise Income Verification is used by Housing Agencies for the following purpose:

- Confirm name, social security number & date of birth.
- Verify your reported income sources & amounts.
- Confirm your participation in only one HUD program.
- Confirms if you owe an outstanding debt to any Housing Agency.
- Negative reporting from past Public Housing or Section 8 Programs.

EIV continued

Enterprise Income Verification will alert your Housing Agency if you or anyone in your household has used a false Social Security Numbers, failed to report complete & accurate income, or is receiving rental assistance at another address.

Overall, the purpose of Enterprise Income Verification is to identify & prevent fraud within HUD rental assistance programs, so that we can assist as many eligible families as possible.

How does the Housing Agency Determine Income?

The Housing Agency calculates the total annual income from all sources of income, examples of income:

- Employment
- Public Assistance
- Unemployment
- Pensions
- Relocation Payments
- Child Support
- Net Income of a Business
- SSI/Social Security

How does the Housing Agency Determine Income Cont'd?

Examples of Income

- Workers' Compensation
- Annuities
- Interest from Assets
- Regular Contributions/Gifts
- TANF
- Disability
- Alimony
- Military Pay
- Net Income from Real/Personal Property

What is Adjusted Income?

There are (5) five possible deductions and allowances.

- **Dependents**
- **Elderly/Disability Allowance**
- **Allowable Medical Expenses**
- **Allowable Disability Assistance Expenses**
- **Allowable Childcare Expenses**

Dependents

$480 deduction for:

- Household member under 18
- Household member over 18 and a full time student
- Person with disability other than head of household or spouse

Elderly/Disability Allowance

$400 deduction for families who have a 62 or older:

- Head
- Spouse
- Sole member
- Person with a disability

Allowable Medical Expenses

Expenses over 3% of annual income for elderly or disabled family.

Allowable Disability Assistance Expenses

Expenses over 3% of annual income for family member if the disability allows that member to work.

Allowable Childcare Expenses

Reasonable expenses if:

- It allows a family member to work, attend school, or seek employment
- Family member is 12 years old or younger

Violence Against Women Act

VAWA provides protections for victims of:

Domestic violence: Any felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse, intimate partner, person with whom the victim shares a child, person who is or has cohabitated with the victim

Dating violence: Violence committed by a person who is/was in a social relationship of intimate nature with victim as determined by considering three factors

Sexual assault: Any nonconsensual sexual act prohibited by law

Stalking: Any conduct directed toward a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for safety or suffer substantial distress

“Affiliated individual” of the victim: Immediate family or any individual living in the household

Violence Against Women Act protections are not only available to women, but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex or gender identity.

Violence Against Women Act

What protections are provided by Violence Against Women Act?

- Denial of Assistance
- Termination of Tenancy or Assistance
- Emergency Transfer- see Attachment IV

3 ways to prove that you are a victim

- complete the certification form in the office-see Attachment III

- provide a statement from a victim service provider, attorney or medical professional

- provide police or court record

- Confidentiality

Subsidy Standards

Subsidy standards determine voucher size and the number of bedrooms on which subsidy will be paid, not the family's actual living arrangements:

Generally, 1 Bedroom for each 2 persons in the household, except in the following circumstances:

- Persons of the opposite sex (other than spouse/co-head, and children under the age of 3) will be allocated separate bedrooms.
- Live-in Aide will be allocated a separate bedroom but family members of the live-in aide will not be allocated a separate bedroom.
- Single parent and infants under the age of 3 will be allocated a one bedroom.
- A pregnant individual with no other children will be allocated a one bedroom.
- Elderly, disabled single person will be allocated a one bedroom
- Local occupancy standards apply

Payment Standard and Utility Allowances

- Fair Market Rents (FMR) Published by October 1st each year
  - Public Housing Agency's must adopt payment standards between 90% and 120% of the HUD Fair Market Rents.

- Payment Standards are "gross" rent: rent to the owner plus utility allowance for the tenant paid utilities.

- Utility allowances are county wide schedules based on average consumption data and usage for the unit type.
  - Third party contractors conducts the utility study annually, if the rate changes by 10% allowances must be revised.

Rent Reasonableness

Housing Agencies must compare the unit to 3 other units in the area that are the same amount of rent or lower.

SIDE PAYMENTS

IF YOU DO NOT QUALIFY FOR A PARTICULAR UNIT IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR YOU TO PAY THE DIFFERENCE FOR THE UNIT.

Terminations

If any family member:

- Commits fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt act in connection with any federal housing program
- Violates a family obligation under the voucher program
- Commits drug-related criminal activity or violent criminal activity

Terminations

If any family member:

- Is illegally using a controlled substance
- Is abusing alcohol and it interferes with the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premise by other residents
- Has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior toward Housing Agency personnel

Portability

Portability applies to families moving out of or into the Public Housing Agency’s jurisdiction within the United States and its territories.

- Within the limitations of the regulations and this policy, a participant family has the right to receive tenant- based voucher assistance to lease a unit outside the Public Housing Agency’s jurisdiction, anywhere in the United States, in the jurisdiction of a Public Housing Agency with a tenant- based program.
- When a family requests to move outside of the Public Housing Agency’s jurisdiction, the request must specify the area to which the family wants to move.

Portability Cont'd

- If there is more than one Public Housing Agency in the area in which the family has selected a unit, the Public Housing Agency will choose the receiving Public Housing Agency.
- They are issued a voucher and Request for Tenancy Approval Form
- Once they find a unit that they are qualified for, Tyler Housing Agency will determine whether the unit is eligible according to HUD "rent reasonableness" and percent-of-income requirements. Then Tyler Housing Agency will conduct a Housing Quality Standard Inspection (HQS).
- The rental subsidy begins on the date the unit passes the Housing Quality Standard inspection, if the family moves into the unit before it passes the inspection, the family is responsible for all the rent until the date the unit passes inspection.
- The City of Tyler Neighborhood Services required that you must live in our jurisdiction for one year once receiving your voucher before portability is allowed.

Family Self Sufficiency Program

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is a voluntary program designed to assist families in becoming economically independent and self-sufficient.

With the support of local

agencies Family Self Sufficiency combines:

- case management
- education
- job training
- Homeownership

It is your choice to participate!

The decision to participate means that you and your family are committed to attain self-sufficiency and economic independence.

Homeownership

The Homeownership Program allows families to use their Housing Choice Voucher to help with monthly homeownership costs.

Inspections

Housing Quality Standard (HQS) helps to insure that your home will be decent, safe, and sanitary.

The **Housing Choice Voucher** has three main kinds of inspections:

1. Initial Inspections – all units must pass an inspection before a Housing Assistance Payment contract can be executed.
2. Annual Inspection – every unit under contract must pass an inspection annually.
3. Biennial Inspection-after you have had an annual inspection your unit will then be inspected every other year.
4. Special Inspection – these are inspections in response to complaints or required quality control inspections.

HQS Inspections

- Life/safety items must be inspected within 24 hours from date of inspection
- All other repairs must be completed within 30 days
- Failure to make repairs results in abatement (prorated reduction of daily rate of rent for number of days the unit is not in compliance with Housing Quality Standards)
- If no repairs after 30 days of abatement, Housing Assistance Payment contract is terminated
- Tenant issued voucher to locate new unit unless fail items are responsibility of the tenant.

Qualified Job Seeker Program

All 0 (zero) earned income Head of Household, Spouse, Co-Heads and adult family members 18 (eighteen) years and older will be REQUIRED to participate in the Qualified Job Seeker (QJS) Program and will be given 90 (ninety) calendar days to complete the program.

Household members can VOLUNTARILY participate in the QJS Program if they meet the following criteria:

1. Currently enrolled in school as a full-time student,
2. Receiving SS,
3. Receiving SSI, and/or
4. Elderly/disabled

FAIR HOUSING

What is Fair Housing- is the right of everyone to have an equal opportunity to housing services like:

Rental and Sales   Mortgages and Appraisals

Insurance   Advertising

Free from discrimination based on:

Race   Color

National Origin   Religion

Sex (Gender)   Familial Status

Disability

How do I know if it is Discrimination? Fair Housing video

Contact the Local Office- 888-560-8913

File a complaint online at www.hud.gov

Mail in complaint form

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

801 North Cherry, 27th Floor

Fort Worth, TX. 76102

Email complaints_office_06@hud.gov

Questions?