






What's in it for the Landlord?


 **Reduced turnover.** Voucher holders can afford to rent for longer periods of time because the VHA adjusts its payment when a tenant's financial situation changes. (e.g., loss/change of job, etc.)


 **Dependable and timely payments.** VHA payments are mailed directly to the landlord the first day of each month.


 **Increased options.** Landlords select and approve the tenant of their choice. The landlord may choose to rent to non-Voucher holders at any time.

 **Flexibility.** Landlords determine the length of the lease (month to month, 6 month, 1 year, etc.) that is right for them.

 **Tenant incentives to maintain property.** In addition to losing their security deposit, Voucher holders risk losing continued housing assistance if the property is damaged at move-out.

 **Landlord support.** Experienced specialists familiar with your tenant are available to assist you with questions and issues regarding your lease with the Voucher holder.

 **Timely updates.** Participating landlords receive quarterly newsletters with helpful information such as the latest changes in rental laws, landlord rights, upcoming seminars, and maintenance tips that could save you time and money.

 **Free advertising.** Since VHA provides a list of available properties to participants, you increase your rental unit's market exposure at no cost to you.

Common Myths about the Housing Choice Voucher Program:

MYTH: *Voucher holders cannot be charged the same security deposit as in the open market.*

FACT: Participating landlords may charge the same security deposit as in the open rental market. For unfurnished units, the security deposit can be twice the monthly rent.

MYTH: *Housing Voucher Program leases go on and on.*

FACT: Leases are determined by the landlord and revert to month to month after the initial term. The landlord has the option of entering into a second lease with the tenant if he/she so desires.

MYTH: *Once a family is on the Housing Voucher Program, they can add anyone they want to the household.*

FACT: Voucher holders must get permission from **both** the landlord and the VHA before adding another person.

MYTH: *Units rented to Voucher holders have to meet higher standards than those for other tenants.*

FACT: The standard is the same. Housing Quality Standards follow California State law and cover the same health and safety issues.

MYTH: *The Vacaville Housing Authority inspects units participating in the program only once a year.*

FACT: In the open market, California State law prohibits entering a rental unit solely to inspect it. For properties participating in the program, however, special inspections may be requested (when warranted) by either the landlord or the Voucher holder.

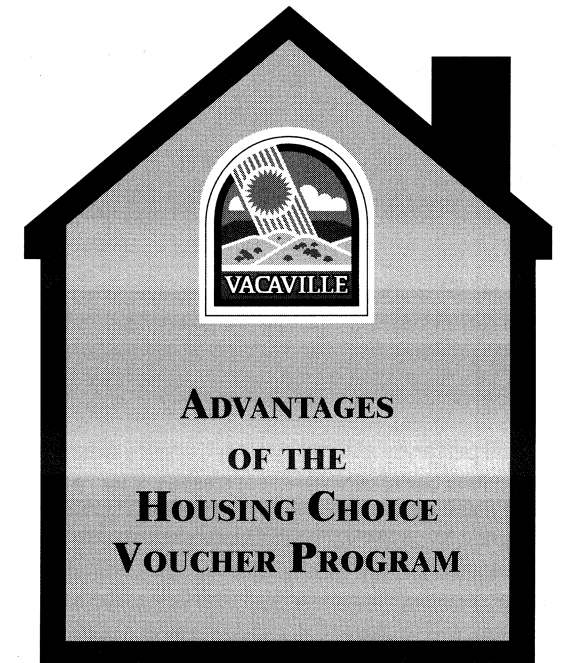
MYTH: *Voucher holders cannot be evicted.*

FACT: Any legal notice, including eviction, may be served on a Voucher holder, the same as in the open rental market.

MYTH: *In the event of a legal eviction, landlords do not receive their subsidy payment.*

FACT: Because the VHA's portion of the rent is considered an "assistance payment" and not rent, a landlord can continue to receive the subsidy payment throughout the eviction process and even through the end of the month in which the family moves out of the unit.

Landlord/ Manager's Guide



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Solano County Housing Authority
40 Eldridge Avenue Suite 2
Vacaville, CA 95688

**HEARING IMPAIRED ONLY:
(707) 449-5680**

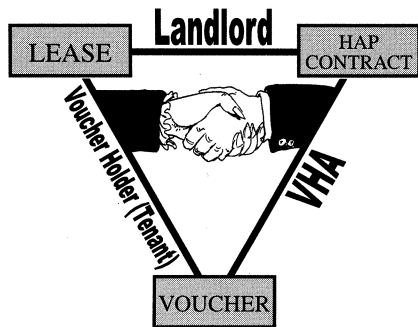
Q. What is the Housing Choice Voucher Program?

A. The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federally funded program managed by the City of Vacaville Housing Authority (VHA). This updated version of the Section 8 program better addresses issues and concerns identified by landlords.

Many Voucher holders are families who receive income from a combination of sources because they are elderly, disabled, attend school, or work in jobs where they just don't earn enough to support themselves or their family. The program helps low-income households by subsidizing their rents.

The subsidy payments, made directly to the landlord, are usually the difference between a percentage of tenant income and the payment standard established for housing units by bedroom size.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:



Housing Assistance Payments Contract (HAP): Written agreement between the VHA and the landlord that includes the initial amount of rent paid by the VHA to the landlord.

Lease: Written agreement between the landlord and Voucher holder for renting housing unit for a specific length of time, in agreement with the HAP Contract. Includes rent amounts, notification requirements, and landlord and Voucher holder responsibilities. Provided by the landlord.

Voucher: Document issued by VHA that describes Voucher holders' obligations for participating in the program.

Q. What advantages does the VHA offer?

A. Consider the following:

Tenant information. Landlords are offered the names, addresses, and phone numbers, when known, for as many as three previous landlords. Also, current credit reports are available for many Voucher holders. This saves you time and money.

Annual inspections. While California State law prohibits entering a rental unit solely for inspection, VHA inspects properties participating in the program every year to make sure they meet basic health and safety standards. Participating landlords are invited to attend.

Free advertising. VHA may help reduce your costs and your vacancy rate since properties participating in the program receive extra market exposure at no cost to you.

Q. Does the program restrict how much I can charge for a security deposit?

A. No. The landlord can charge the same security deposit allowable by California State law. For unfurnished units, for example, the security deposit may be up to twice the monthly rent.

Q. Is there a maximum rent that may be charged?

A. No. The only requirement is that the rent be reasonable for the size, type, and location of unit. The Housing Choice Voucher Program has no rent "cap". Participating households choose their own housing and pay the difference between the subsidy amount and the monthly rent. After the initial lease term (which is determined by the landlord), rent can be raised according to the rental agreement and State law.

Q. How can I tell if my housing is eligible?

A. Any type of housing may be rented – apartments, houses, mobile homes, etc. – as long as the unit is located within Vacaville city limits, meets basic health and safety standards, and the rent is reasonable for the size, type, and location of unit.

Q. What are the landlord's responsibilities?

A. The rights and responsibilities of a landlord under the Housing Choice Voucher Program are the same as in the open market. The landlord:

- screens and selects the tenant
- collects the family's portion of the rent
- maintains the unit and makes necessary repairs
- insures tenant and landlord obey the terms of the lease
- may evict the tenant for breaking the rules of the lease
- obeys Fair Housing laws

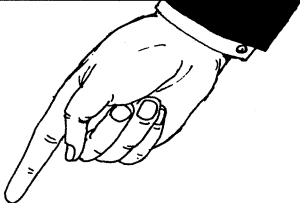


Q. How can I participate?

A. Please call the Vacaville Housing Authority at **(707) 449-5675** to learn more about the program and its advantages or to get answers to any questions you may have. Housing specialists are available Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm.

The City of Vacaville Office of Housing and Redevelopment provides its programs and services in a non-discriminatory manner and is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

How does the Housing Choice Voucher Program compare to renting in the open market?

OPEN RENTAL MARKET		VOUCHER
A COMPARISON OF THE OPEN RENTAL MARKET AND THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM:		
Landlord selects tenant, based on own established selection criteria. The landlord decides whether or not to rent to any particular tenant.	TENANT SELECTION	No difference.
May be terminated for cause.	LEASE TERMINATION	No difference.
Tenant pays 100% of the rent. Payments may be late or missed.	RENT PAYMENTS	VHA mails subsidy payments to the landlord the first of the month. Voucher holder pays balance of rent directly to the landlord.
After initial term of lease, rent increases require 30 days written notice.	RENT INCREASES	After initial term, rent increases require 60 days written notice. Rent increases must be reasonable for size, type, and location of unit.
California State law prohibits landlords from entering a rental unit for the sole purpose of inspecting a rental property.	INSPECTIONS	VHA inspects and approves units before the lease is signed. Properties are also inspected once a year to make sure the property meets basic health and safety standards. Landlords are invited to attend.
Landlord is on his/her own to resolve any and all tenant problems such as non-payment of rent, property damage, unauthorized persons living in the unit who are not on the lease, etc.	TENANT PROBLEMS	VHA counselors are available to assist landlords and Voucher holders.
Some tenants may not be able to maintain monthly rent payments without assistance.	TURNOVER	Subsidies enable Voucher holders to afford the rent for longer periods of time because subsidies may be increased when income decreases.
If the tenant violates the lease, the landlord may evict in accordance with State law.	EVICITION	No difference.

The landlord may collect a security deposit in an amount up to twice the monthly rent for unfurnished units.	SECURITY DEPOSIT	No difference.
Tenant is solely responsible for rent payment.	HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT	The VHA's payment is mailed directly to the landlord by the first of the month.
Counselors are not familiar with your tenant.	LANDLORD SUPPORT	Experienced specialists familiar with your tenant are available to assist with questions and issues.
Additional time is required to obtain tenant's credit history. References provided by tenant may not be valid or current.	TENANT INTRODUCTION SHEET	VHA provides a current credit report and names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the last three known landlords that rented to the Voucher holder. The VHA does not screen for rental history, credit, etc.
Landlords are on their own to keep up to date with current changes in laws and rental market issues.	NEWSLETTERS	Newsletters are published quarterly to keep VHA landlords informed of rental issues, upcoming events, and other items of interest.
No incentive to keep unit in good condition other than security deposit.	TENANT DAMAGES	Voucher holders are encouraged to maintain unit. Tenants who leave damages at move-out risk losing their subsidy in addition to security deposit.
Landlord provides lease and selects the term they prefer, usually month-to-month.	LEASE DURATION	No difference.
Landlord preserves all rights accorded under California State law and U.S. Federal law.	LANDLORD RIGHTS	No difference. The VHA cannot evict a Voucher holder from his/her unit, only the landlord can.
Not available.	SPECIAL INSPECTIONS	Either landlord or Voucher holder can request a special inspection for cause.
Landlord has no way of knowing tenant's previous damage claim history.	TENANT INFORMATION	Landlord may ask if the VHA has paid any Damage Claims on behalf of the Voucher holder.
Leases can be terminated for serious or repeated lease violations without prior approval.	LEASE TERMINATION	No difference.

