

## 2. MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

- Arrive on time for your appointment with the landlord.
- The landlord will interview you. Be prepared.
- Appearance should be clean and neat. Be friendly but business-like.
- If you bring your children, make sure they are clean, well behaved, and dressed neatly.



- Emphasize the positive points of your family's behavior and background.
- Be honest about credit history, references, etc.
- Wait until you have decided on a unit before you begin discussing the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The perfect time to discuss the program is when the landlord asks you to fill out the rental application.

**Remember, the landlord is interested in:**

- **your ability to pay the rent on time;**
- **your willingness to pay the rent, and**
- **your maintenance of their property.**

## 3. CHECK OUT THE APARTMENT/HOUSE

- Make an appointment to see the rental. Plan on getting there early to look around the neighborhood. 
- Take your time and inspect the rental thoroughly. Make sure everything is in working order. Remember, the unit must meet Housing Quality Standards.
- If repairs are needed, ask the landlord if repairs will be made before you move in. Promises should be put in writing.



## Once You've Found a Place...

### A. SUBMIT VHA FORMS

After the landlord agrees to rent to you, the following forms must be filled out and submitted to the VHA:

- Tenancy Addendum
- Request for Lease Approval
- Lease Agreement
- Lead Based Paint Form for units build prior to 1978.



### B. VHA INSPECTIONS AND APPROVAL

After you turn in the required forms, the VHA will schedule an on-site inspection to make sure:

- The unit meets Housing Quality Standards; and
- The rent is reasonable according to local market conditions.

The VHA will provide both you and the landlord with a copy of the inspection report.

### C. FILL OUT AND SUBMIT THE CONDITION AND INVENTORY REPORT



After the Move-in Inspection is completed, fill out the *Condition and Inventory Report* thoroughly. **TAKE YOUR TIME!** Make sure both you and the landlord sign the form. Submit this form to the VHA. Accurately filling out this report helps keep you from being charged for damages you didn't cause.

### D. UNIT INSPECTIONS

In order to verify that Housing Quality Standards are being kept up, the VHA must make annual unit inspections. You are required to allow these inspections after reasonable notice (at least 24 hours) has been given. If you do not allow these inspections, you could lose your assistance. The landlord will also be invited to the inspection.




## How to Find a Place to Live





**VACAVILLE HOUSING  
AUTHORITY**  
40 ELDRIDGE AVENUE, SUITE 2  
VACAVILLE, CA 95688  
(707) 449-5675


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


## 1. GET ORGANIZED

- Keep in mind the estimated amount of rent the Vacaville Housing Authority (VHA) will pay on your behalf. 

- Have an  **idea** where you want to live. Remember, you can not rent from an immediate family member.


-  Make a list of the type of housing and amenities you want in order to get an idea of the kind of unit you're looking for.

- Refer to the Classified Ad Section in the newspaper, bulletin boards in laundromats or supermarkets, the VHA Referral List, real estate offices and yard signs, and ask your friends. 

- Have a list of questions ready to ask the potential landlord. Your questions should include:
  - How much is the rent?
  - Which utilities are paid by the landlord? By the tenant?
  - How many bedrooms are there?
  - Will you be responsible for maintaining the landscaping?
  - If you have a pet, be sure to ask if pets are allowed.

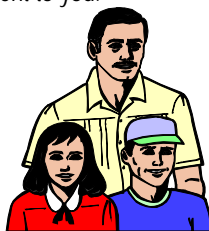
- Keep a log (provided by the VHA) of landlords you contact.



- Have a good record keeping system. Keep copies of leases and move-in inventories, as well as receipts for rent, security deposits, and holding deposits. 

## 4. TRY TO BARGAIN FOR THE BEST DEAL

- Make a good “first impression.” The more responsible you look in the eyes of the landlord, the more the landlord will want to rent to you.



- Filling out an application thoroughly and accurately can be a good tool when it comes to negotiating with the landlord.
- If the unit needs some minor repair not required by the VHA, you may be able to negotiate it with the landlord.
- You may also be able to negotiate the rent or responsibility for payment of utilities.



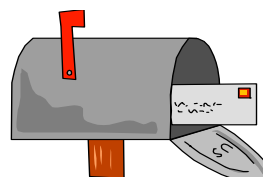
**Keep in mind your negotiating power may depend on the availability of units.**

## 5. EXPLAIN THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM TO THE LANDLORD

During your Housing briefing, you received an information packet. Included in the packet is a brochure for the landlord with detailed information on the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Please be sure to give this to the landlord once you have decided on a unit. (Copies are available through the VHA.) Make sure the landlord is aware of these points about the program:

- The VHA will pay the monthly housing subsidy directly to the landlord each month. You, the tenant, will pay the balance to the landlord.

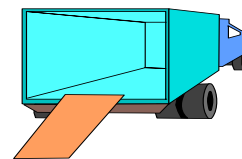


- The landlord chooses the tenant using the same criteria and rules as for non-Voucher tenants.
- The security deposit is limited by California law and is your full responsibility.
- The VHA will inspect the unit to make sure it meets basic health and safety standards. In addition, the VHA will inspect the unit at least annually to make sure both you and the landlord are properly maintaining it.

- The landlord will provide the lease. It may be cancelled during the initial term only for the following reasons:
  - Serious and/or repeated violations of the lease,
  - Violation of California or local law, and/or
  - Other good cause.

After the initial term, the lease may be terminated in accordance with its conditions.

- The landlord is not permitted to increase the rent charged during the initial term of the lease.
- In the Voucher program, the landlord may raise the rent after the initial term by giving you and the VHA at least 60 days written notice before the start of the increased rent. The notice must give the new rent amount and when the increased rent takes effect.
- If your family moves, the landlord is under no obligation to continue renting their unit to other Voucher holders.



- Eviction proceedings are the same as in any other rental arrangement. The VHA has no role in eviction. If you violate the lease, the landlord may evict you in accordance with California law.

- If the landlord has additional questions about the Housing Choice Voucher Program, ask them to contact the Vacaville Housing Authority at (707) 449-5675.

## 6. READ AND UNDERSTAND YOUR LEASE AGREEMENT

- Read the lease so you know what it says about late charges, pets, restrictions on occupants or guests, etc. By signing the lease, you are agreeing to these terms!



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

**If you need assistance finding a unit due to a disability, please contact your Housing representative.**