

Landlord FAQ

How does the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program work?

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federal assistance program to help low-income people afford safe, sanitary and decent housing. Families and individuals with HCV vouchers find their own housing and pay a percentage of their income for rent. NBHA pays the landlord the rest of the rent.

These are the steps involved in renting to a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher tenant:

- A family with a current HCV voucher views your apartment and wants to rent it.
- You screen the tenant(s) to make sure they are suitable.
- You agree to lease to the tenants and they contact NBHA's Section 8 office for approval.
- NBHA checks to make sure the family can afford the rent, the rent is reasonable compared to other rents in the community, and the lease is acceptable.
- NBHA sends an inspector to check your apartment to make sure it meets program standards.
- After the apartment passes inspection, NBHA sends you a contract to sign.
- You sign the contract with NBHA and sign the lease with your tenants, and the family moves in.
- The family pays its portion of the rent and NBHA pays the rest.

How do I list my apartment with NBHA?

- If you would like to rent to HVC tenants, you should contact NBHA to let us know you have an apartment available. We will add your apartment to our listings. This is a free service.
- You may also advertise on your own. If you place an ad, include a notice stating that you welcome Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher tenants.

Does the Housing Authority screen Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher tenants?

The Housing Authority does not screen tenants for you. You must do this yourself, just as you would screen non-assisted tenants. You should ask for Social Security number, references, current and previous landlords, credit history, employment history, criminal record, etc., and check the information carefully.

There are many services available to help you screen tenants. These services can check to see if the prospective tenant has a criminal record, has been evicted, or has bad credit. When checking references, always contact the previous landlord as well as the current landlord, because the current landlord may want the tenants to move out. NBHA will tell you the number of people on the voucher, current and previous address, and current and previous landlord. NBHA's concern is checking that the applicant meets the income limits and other Section 8 HCV eligibility requirements. Screening the tenant is the landlord's responsibility.

Who pays the security deposit?

If you want a security deposit, you must collect this from the tenant. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program has no responsibility for damages, unpaid tenant rent, or other claims you might have against the tenant. The maximum security deposit you may collect is one month's rent. You may not collect the last month's rent.

Do I sign a lease with the tenant?

You must sign a lease with the tenant for a minimum of one year. The lease should include:

- names of the landlord and tenant
- address of the rental unit
- term of the lease and how it will be renewed
- monthly rent amount
- which utilities are paid by the tenant
- which appliances must be provided by the tenant
- Tenancy Addendum
- You must include the [Tenancy Addendum](#) exactly as it appears on the HUD web site

How much rent can I charge?

The rent you charge must be reasonable compared to other units of similar size in your community. NBHA will compare your rent to our payment standards, which are based in part on the fair market rents in New Britain. The fair market rents are the average gross rents (rent plus utilities) being paid in your community for modest apartments of varying sizes.

If the gross rent (rent plus utilities) for your apartment is less than or equal to the payment standard, the tenants pay 30% of their monthly income for rent and NBHA pays the rest. If the rent is higher, the tenants must make up the difference.

However, they are not allowed to pay more than 40% of their income for rent when they first rent an apartment.

If you want to increase the rent when you renew the lease, you must get approval from NBHA. The rent must remain reasonable and within the family's ability to pay or it will not be approved.

How do I get paid?

NBHAA will send you a check for our portion of the rent each month. We will continue to do so as long as the tenant remains eligible for the program and your apartment meets the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program standards. You are responsible for collecting the tenant portion of the rent each month.

May I evict a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher tenant?

You may evict a Section 8 HCV tenant in the same way you would evict a non-Section 8 HCV tenant. The same laws apply.