

Advantages for Landlords of Participating in Charleston Housing's Section 8 Program

Charleston Housing wants to reach out to landlords in Kanawha and Putnam Counties to promote the advantages of renting to families receiving Section 8 rental assistance. The following are just a few benefits:

1. The majority of the rental payment is usually paid by Charleston Housing and is sent directly to the landlord in a timely manner.
2. The landlord may collect the same security deposit as collected for other unassisted tenants.
3. The landlord may evict the family for non-compliance with the lease agreement as they would their other tenants.
4. Landlords use their own lease agreements and may set fixed definite terms after the initial one year term.
5. The property is inspected every year and the landlord is not responsible for damages to the property beyond normal wear and tear caused by any member of the household or guests.
6. Charleston Housing provides newsletters and meetings that inform and educate landlords about program requirements.
7. Direct lines of communication with Charleston Housing staff through mail, telephone or e-mail service.
8. Rent increases may be requested by providing a sixty day notice to Charleston Housing, contingent on the new rent amount being reasonable.



Leasing Property
through the Section 8
Rental Assistance
Program

A Landlord's Guide

What is the Section 8 Program?

- Section 8 is a federally funded program administered by Charleston Housing and is designed to assist low to moderate income families with their monthly rental payment.
- Charleston Housing assists families in Kanawha and Putnam Counties.
- Families are required to pay at least 30% of their monthly household income toward rent and utilities, but they may pay up to 40% depending upon their income and the cost of the rental property.
- Once the property is approved, and a contract is executed, Charleston Housing will make monthly payments directly to the landlord.

In order for a property to be accepted on the Section 8 program there are three steps that must be completed.

Step 1: The Property Must Pass HQS Inspection

Charleston Housing will inspect the property to ensure it passes HUD's Housing Quality Standards. HQS is a minimum inspection code that ensures participating units are decent and safe for the families that will be residing in them. If the unit does not pass the initial inspection the landlord is given up to 30 days to make the necessary repairs. For initial contracts, Charleston Housing can generally inspect a property within ten days of the family submitting the Request for Approval of Tenancy form. Once a unit is on the program it is inspected annually.

Step 2: The Owner's Rent Must Be Reasonable

The second step is to determine whether an owner's requested rent is reasonable in comparison to similar unassisted units in the area. Charleston Housing will make the rent reasonable determination soon after the inspection.

Rent Reasonableness takes into consideration such factors as the size, condition and location of the property, as well as any amenities that are included with the unit. If the requested rent is not reasonable the owner will be asked to lower the rent.

Step 3: The HAP Contract Must Be Executed

Only after the property passes inspection and the rent is determined reasonable should the lease between the owner and family be executed. The lease is to be provided by the owner and must be similar to the one used by the landlord for other tenants. HUD requires a tenancy addendum to be attached to all landlord leases which states program responsibilities for both parties. The HUD addendum overrides any provisions of the owner's lease that may be in conflict.

At the same time the owner will sign a Housing Assistance Payment contract with Charleston Housing. The HAP contract states the amount of assistance CH will provide on behalf of the family and list other contractual responsibilities of both the owner and CH.

Tenant Screening

Please note that Charleston Housing does not screen families for their suitability as tenants. It remains the responsibility of an owner to screen their prospective tenants.

If you're interested in renting to a Section 8 family you may want to advertise your willingness to accept vouchers in a daily or weekly newspaper. You can also contact Charleston Housing at 348-6451 and staff will post your vacant unit on our bulletin board.

If you would like additional information about the Section 8 Program or Charleston Housing visit us at our website address:

www.charlestonhousing.com