

Frequently Asked Questions about the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly Section 8)

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federal rent subsidy which assists participants with monthly rental payments. This Program ensures that the families have a safe, decent and sanitary place to live. The Housing Authority of the City of Charleston administers funds received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (U.S. HUD) and distributes them in the form of Housing Choice Vouchers to eligible families and individuals.

A Voucher allows participating households (tenants) to rent housing that meets their needs. The tenant pays a portion of the rent directly to the landlord. The Housing Choice Voucher Office pays the landlord the difference between the tenant's portion of the rent and the total rental amount.

Here are answers to frequently asked questions about the program:

1. Are you accepting Housing Choice Voucher applications?

Please check our website (www.chacity.org) for current status on applications.

The direct link to the HCV applications status on the website is:

<http://www.chacity.org/public-notice-details.cfm?NoticeID=30>

2. Why does The Housing Choice Voucher Office have a waiting list?

Since the demands for affordable housing, specifically federally-subsidized rental programs such as The Housing Choice Voucher Program, usually exceeds available limited resources, The Housing Authority of the City of Charleston, like other housing authorities, maintains a waiting list, because of the volume of people who need housing assistance, and because we do not want an applicant to wait an enormous amount of time waiting for the assistance. The Housing Choice Voucher Office will re-open its waiting list for new applications after all eligible applicants on the waiting list are housed.

Note: Submission of an application does not guarantee that housing will be offered.

3. What are some of the reasons that could prevent me from getting housing assistance?

Failed criminal background screening, previous evictions, over income, failure to appear for scheduled appointments, failure to provide necessary documents to determine eligibility.

4. Why does The Housing Choice Voucher Office accept so many applications if there isn't enough housing?

Families in our Housing Choice Voucher Program can remain in the program as long as they adhere to program rules and regulations. We generally have a small turnover of housing units on an annual basis and expect to offer housing to a small percentage of applicants who apply. We allow the opportunity for anyone to apply, but however; it does not guarantee that housing will be provided.

5. How does the Housing Choice Voucher Office determine the ranking for the waiting list?

Your name will be drawn according to Preferences (Disabled or Elderly) and the date and time of your application.

6. I have moved since I submitted my application, should I notify The Housing Choice Voucher Office?

It is very important that you keep your address information up to date. If your address has changed, you must notify The Housing Choice Voucher Office in writing by mail, by phone or visit our office located at:

The Housing Authority of the City of Charleston
550 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29403
Phone: 843-723-4491

We are open Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 4:30p.m. Walk-in hours are Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30a.m. to 12 noon.

7. I have (gotten married, had a baby, adopted a child, divorced, lost my job, gotten a raise) since I submitted my application. How will this affect me?

If your family size changed you must notify The Housing Choice Voucher office in writing. The addition or removal of family members may change your bedroom size, but your ranking will always stay the same. Changes in your income may affect your eligibility or rental payments. Changes of income will be processed at the time of eligibility interview.

8. Do I have to be a citizen to apply for housing assistance?

No, you do not have to be a citizen; however, you must have eligible immigration status.

9. What is the maximum amount of income that I can earn in order to qualify for Housing Choice Voucher assistance?

Please refer to the Income Guideline Chart below.

Household Size	Extremely Low Income	Very Low Income
1	\$16,350	\$27,300
2	\$18,700	\$31,200
3	\$21,330	\$35,100
4	\$25,750	\$38,950
5	\$30,170	\$42,100
6	\$34,590	\$45,200
7	\$39,010	\$48,300
8	\$43,430	\$51,450

11. How is the Bedroom size determined?

The Housing Choice Voucher Office will assign one a Bedroom for each two persons within the household. Persons of the opposite sex (other than spouses, and children under age 8) will be allocated separate bedrooms.

12. If the Housing Choice Voucher Office cannot pay the rent that the Landlord asks for, can I pay the difference?

No. You should never pay more than the Housing Choice Voucher staff state you should pay.

13. How much of the rent would I have to pay?

That depends on a number of factors including your income, the deductions to which you are entitled, the number of people in your household which determines your voucher size, the applicable payment standard and the utility allowance for the unit you have chosen. Generally speaking, you will pay between 30% and 40% of your monthly-adjusted income for rent.

14. What documents should I bring to my first appointment?

You should bring Proof of income, Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards, Photo Identification, and any documents that pertain to you and your household income and expenses to every appointment.