

Landlord Link

A resource for landlords participating in KCHA's Section 8 program

List Your Property

The King County Housing Authority offers a service to help you list your properties for rent to Section 8 participants.

The service is run by Housing Search Northwest and can be accessed through our website at www.kcha.org or by going directly to www.HousingSearchNW.org.

For those registering online, select "List a place to Rent" on the home page. After being directed to the rental listing page, click on "Register here."

There is no cost to list your unit, and it takes less than five minutes to set up. This resource is available to any property provider, landlord, owner or large-scale property manager who wants to advertise rental properties (and in some areas, for-sale properties).

For more information, please visit either website or call the Section 8 office at 206-214-1300.

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Sequester Update



On March 1st automatic across-the-board budget cuts to all federal programs, or sequestration, went into effect.

To cope with this reduction in federal funding, KCHA has suspended the issuance of housing vouchers that are turned in by families no longer requiring or eligible for assistance. The Authority normally issues between 45 and 50 new vouchers per month.

"Low-income families and individuals struggling with high unemployment in the aftermath of the recession or living on limited fixed incomes and dealing with rising housing costs should not be shut out of critical safety net programs because of gridlock in Washington, D. C.," said Stephen Norman, Executive Director of the King County Housing Authority. For landlords, this does not mean you

won't be approached by voucher holders – as families in the program are still allowed to move – only that you may not see as many. You may have heard other Housing Authorities in the area are placing a freeze on rent increases. KCHA has not chosen that option at this time.

KCHA's program currently provides assistance to about 11,000 families. A typical household in KCHA's program has an average household income of just over \$13,000. In 2011, when KCHA last opened its waiting list (which was capped at 2,500 slots), more than 25,000 families – or 10 times more than could be served – applied. Most of these families are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Both the Housing Authority and the families we serve appreciate your support during this time.

Inspection Misconceptions

There are many misconceptions about Section 8 program requirements, many of which revolve around the inspection process. In this article, we hope to clear up just a few.

There is a lot of paperwork to start the program.

There is really only one form to fill out to get the inspection process started: the Request for Tenancy Approval. This form provides information about the unit. While there are three other forms in the Landlord packet – the Section 8 Landlord Certification, a Taxpayer ID Number request, and the Lead Based Paint disclosure form – only a minimal amount of information and your signature is required.

The inspection scheduling takes too long.

We understand the need for a landlord to get their unit rented quickly. Our inspectors allow time each day to perform the initial inspection. For most, the inspection of the property usually can be completed

within 2 to 7 days following receipt of the request for tenancy approval.

The Housing Authority needs to reinspect everything that fails, which takes time.

As part of special authority granted to KCHA by HUD, we have adopted a change to the inspection guidelines that allows a unit to be acceptable for occupancy if it has no “major” fail items. The HA will conduct reinspections only on units that failed as a result of major failures – such as safety issues.

A unit is eligible to receive a subsidy and the HA will be authorized to execute a HAP contract if there are no outstanding major fail items. Owners of units that had only minor fail items can self-certify upon signature of the HAP contract that the repairs will be made. It is expected that repairs to all failed items will be made within 30 days of the original inspection date, or any extension approved by the HA, regardless whether they are major or

minor fail items.

The Lead-Based Paint rules are far stricter for Section 8 rental units.

This is one where we may have to agree, although we are only following the rules laid out to us in the regulations. The lead-based paint procedures apply only to properties with deteriorated paint surface (peeling, chipping, chalking, cracking, or otherwise damaged or separated paint) that were built before 1978 AND are occupied by households with a child under the age of 6 years (or a pregnant household member). Painted surfaces will be examined as part of the inspection process. Units identified with defective paint will be required to comply with the lead safe housing rule and the federal Renovation Act in order to be placed on or remain in the program. However, if no chipping or peeling paint is evident at the time of inspection, notification of possible LBP is all that is required.

Handling Complaints

The King County Housing Authority has a strong interest in working with neighbors to correct any problems that may be caused at a Section 8 property. We take complaints seriously and try to respond as quickly as possible. What follows is a description of what happens after a complaint comes to our attention.

First, we try to get as many specifics as we can. Who did what, when, where, and how? The more information we get, the quicker we can act.

Next, we do a preliminary investigation. We try to determine whether or not the problem household is, in fact, assisted by the voucher program. (Sometimes neighbors make that assumption incorrectly.) We talk to other neighbors or the landlord to determine if anyone else is aware of the problem. Once we have enough evidence to support the complaint, we contact the family to hear their version of events.

While we do follow up on all complaints, our actions are not always visible to those who are concerned. Even if a family is guilty of the complaint, we do not share confidential information about the family. We know this can be frustrating, but we have an obligation to protect their privacy rights, just as we protect the rights of the complainant. It is also important for the complainant to understand that the Housing Authority only has the ability to remove a family's assistance. This does not remove the offender from the household.

If we determine that a family breached their obligations under the program – including serious or repeated violations of their lease – we will take appropriate action. Depending on the seriousness of the offense and the strength of our documentation, we may issue a warning to the family or proceed directly to termination of their housing assistance.

KCHA Section 8 program

General Questions

To speak with a customer service agent about any Housing Choice Voucher program issue, come in or call.

King County Housing Authority Section 8 Office

700 Andover Park West
Tukwila, WA 98188-3326

Phone: 206-214-1300

Fax: 206-243-5927

However, before any family loses their housing assistance, they are entitled by law to plead their case before an independent hearing officer. At the hearing, the Housing Authority defends its decision to terminate the assistance. However, the final decision is made by the hearing officer.