

17 Facts You Should Know About Section 8

- When you are first issued your Housing Choice Voucher, it is good for 90 Days. Therefore, you must rent a unit within 90 days to participate in the Section 8 Program. If you cannot find housing within 90 days, the Housing Authority has the ability to extend the search time if you can demonstrate that you have made a good faith effort to find housing. An extension can be given for up to 90 days.
- Families with Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers can rent any unit for which the owner is willing to sign an agreement with the SFHA for receiving rental subsidies.
- You cannot pay more than forty percent (40%) of your monthly-adjusted income towards your portion of rent for a new rental unit. You should try to rent a unit that rents for no more than the Payment Standard.
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher participants are responsible for paying their own Security Deposit to the owner. An owner cannot charge more than two months' rent for a security deposit unless the unit is furnished. For furnished units, the owner may charge up to three months' rent for security deposit.
- The Payment Standard is the value used to determine the amount of subsidy you are entitled to for your household. The SFHA will use the smaller of your household bedroom size (Voucher Bedroom Size) or actual unit size to determine what your subsidy should be.
- Your Housing Choice Voucher subsidy is the Payment Standard minus your Total Tenant Portion. The Unit Rent minus the Payment Standard is the Tenant Rent.
- Your Total Tenant Portion is the greater of 30% of your monthly adjusted income, 10% of your monthly gross income or the HUD approved \$25 minimum rent.
- Any unit rented under the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program must be decent, safe and sanitary and meet Housing Quality Standards (HQS). The SFHA inspects all new units and every rented unit annually to ensure compliance with HQS
- A landlord cannot deny you an application for housing or reject you for tenancy based solely on the fact that you have a Section 8 subsidy.
- The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is protected under the San Francisco Rent Control Ordinance for rent increases and terminations of tenancy.
- Section 8 Vouchers can only be issued to families who are in good standing with the San Francisco Housing Authority. If you have an outstanding debt to the SFHA, clear it up as soon as possible.

- The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher can be transferred anywhere in the United States where there is a Housing Authority willing to administer your Voucher. Some restrictions may apply if you have not lived in the issuing jurisdiction for one year.
- All families participating in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program are required to verify that they have legal immigration status.
- A Section 8 landlord can only terminate a tenancy with just cause as dictated by the Rent Ordinance of San Francisco for units built prior to 1979. For units built after 1979, the regulations governing the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program shall prevail.
- Families who are required to pay utilities in their rental unit receive a utility allowance from the SFHA to cover average utility costs for that unit bedroom size. The utility allowance lowers the tenant rent portion so that they have extra income to pay for their utilities. Families who use excessive utilities must make up the difference out of their own pocket.
- A Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program participant cannot rent a unit from anyone who is a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of a household member. Exceptions can be made as a reasonable accommodation for a disabled family member.
- The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher can be used to purchase a home and assist in paying for a mortgage. You must have been employed for one year and be a participant of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program to qualify.