



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHE

536 Culbertson Lane
Natchitoches, LA 71458-0754
(318) 352-9774 Fax (318) 357-8064

natchitocheshousing@outlook.com

Landlord Information Packet

Revised 05/2019



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PROSPECTIVE LANDLORD SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches (HACN), Louisiana has a **Section 8 Rental Assistance Program** that provides rental assistance to low income families within its jurisdiction.

We accept tenant applications each week and process these applications based on income eligibility and criminal history investigations. Once determined eligible, the applicant is placed on a waiting list according to the time and date of the application. We do not screen for anything other than income and criminal history, and the results of these checks are not released outside the Housing Authority. Therefore, it is ultimately up to the landlord to decide whom he or she would like to have as a tenant. It is a good idea for the landlord to have his or her own application process for the applicants to go through, in order to have an accounting of who will be living in the unit, income status, criminal history, and to verify previous tenancy.

Basic Procedure

When an applicant's name comes up on the waiting list and the HACN has funding in place, a **Housing Choice Voucher** will be issued (*vouchers expire 60 days from the date of issuance*). At the time of the voucher issuance, the applicant is given a **Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA)** form to be completed by the landlord of the rental unit the applicant is interested in renting. A copy is enclosed.

Once we have verified the tenant has enough income to pay rent & utilities, and the unit passes a Rent Reasonable test, the Housing Authority inspector will do an initial survey of the unit and either pass or fail it based on the minimum housing quality standards. Once a unit "passes", the contracts can be drawn up. Once each year the tenant will undergo a recertification. This process involves another inspection; verification of income, and new rental agreement will be signed.

When a landlord decides to participate in the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, he or she will be required to sign a **Housing Authority Payment Contract (HAP Contract)** with the Housing Authority for each tenant. This states that the landlord is providing a unit for a tenant who will be receiving rental assistance through the Housing Authority Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, and that the landlord knows who will be residing in the unit. Landlords are expected to maintain rental units at or above the minimum housing quality standards for the duration of a Section 8 tenant's contracted occupancy.

There are 3 contractual agreements involved in each Section 8 Program tenancy;

1. The rental agreement between the Housing Authority, landlord and the tenant,
2. The HAP contract between the Housing Authority and the landlord,
3. The contract between the landlord and the tenant.

In the first year of a tenant's Section 8 Program residency in a unit, there can be no rent increases. After the first full year of a tenant's residency, reasonable rent increases are allowed;

- A) Only one per year,
- B) Only with a **60 day written notice** to the Housing Authority and tenant. Any rent increases must be approved by the Housing Authority prior to implementation.

Enclosed forms;

W-9 as required by the Internal Revenue Service for tax purposes,
Rental unit information sheet to describe the rental unit(s) to the Housing Authority.

Both forms will need to be completed and returned to this office along with **proof of ownership** such as a copy of the deed or a title insurance policy before any contract can be executed.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Housing Authority City of Natchitoches office.



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Quick Reference Information to Prospective Landlords

The Housing Authority does not “put a unit on” the Section 8 Program until a voucher holder is “justified” (found eligible for this particular unit) and actively seeks to transfer.

The landlord/owner **MUST** provide the following documents to the Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches (HACN) before any HAP contracts can be executed;

Completed W-9 Tax form *(included in packet)*

This information is necessary due to IRS reporting requirements regarding the total amount of rent paid to the landlord.

Rental Unit Information Sheet *(included in packet)*

Provides the HACN with unit information as to who is authorized to manage the property, the type, construction, bedroom size, utilities and services of the unit.

Proof of Ownership

This consists of both a copy of the deed and the Tax Assessor’s Parcel List page. The name on these documents must match the W-9 form.

Copy of Lease

This should be the same lease that would be used with other tenants who do not receive HUD assistance for rental. HAP contract and lease dates must match. Initial leases are for 1 year. Term of renewal should be included in lease with either a yearly lease or rolls over month-to-month after first year.

The unit must also pass HUD’s Minimum Housing Quality Standards before it can be used for an assisted family. This inspection is done after the family has been found income eligible for assistance in a particular unit.

If you do not live within a reasonable distance from Natchitoches, you may have a local agent or manager authorized to take care of your unit’s maintenance issues and authorized to sign any/all contract paperwork.

If you choose this option, please submit a letter along with the required paperwork indicating who will be your designated agent/manager, that they have your permission to sign any and all documentation and maintain the unit, and include that person’s mailing address and contact phone number(s).

The HACN is often asked by landlords “How much rent can I charge?” The HACN cannot “tell” an owner how much rent should be requested. You have the right to ask for a rent that is reasonable and comparable to similar unassisted private market unit in the same neighborhood. HACN may not approve a higher rent for an apartment if similar apartments in the building are charged lower rents or if similar houses/manufactured units in the neighborhood are charged lower rents.

Owners are encouraged to research similar type units in the area to see what the average local rents are to help determine the requested rent. Interested families will give a prospective landlord the HUD form: **Request for Tenancy Approval**. Once the landlord completes this form and it is returned to the housing manager, it can be determined if the family is income eligible to be assisted in a particular unit.

If you have any questions regarding placing a unit that you own on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, please contact a Section 8 manager at (318) 352-9774.

Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

**Give Form to the
requester. Do not
send to the IRS.**

Print or type See Specific Instructions on page 2.	Name (as shown on your income tax return)	
	Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above	
	Check appropriate box for federal tax classification (required): <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/sole proprietor <input type="checkbox"/> C Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> S Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Trust/estate	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited liability company. Enter the tax classification (C=C corporation, S=S corporation, P=partnership) ▶	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (see instructions) ▶	
Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.)		Requester's name and address (optional)
City, state, and ZIP code		
List account number(s) here (optional)		

Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on the "Name" line to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the Part I instructions on page 3. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see *How to get a TIN* on page 3.

Social security number									

Note. If the account is in more than one name, see the chart on page 4 for guidelines on whose number to enter.

Employer identification number									

Part II Certification

Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:

1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me), and
2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding, and
3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below).

Certification instructions. You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return. For real estate transactions, item 2 does not apply. For mortgage interest paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, contributions to an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), and generally, payments other than interest and dividends, you are not required to sign the certification, but you must provide your correct TIN. See the instructions on page 4.

Sign Here	Signature of U.S. person ▶	Date ▶
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General Instructions

Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.

Purpose of Form

A person who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) to report, for example, income paid to you, real estate transactions, mortgage interest you paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, or contributions you made to an IRA.

Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN to the person requesting it (the requester) and, when applicable, to:

1. Certify that the TIN you are giving is correct (or you are waiting for a number to be issued),
2. Certify that you are not subject to backup withholding, or
3. Claim exemption from backup withholding if you are a U.S. exempt payee. If applicable, you are also certifying that as a U.S. person, your allocable share of any partnership income from a U.S. trade or business is not subject to the withholding tax on foreign partners' share of effectively connected income.

Note. If a requester gives you a form other than Form W-9 to request your TIN, you must use the requester's form if it is substantially similar to this Form W-9.

Definition of a U.S. person. For federal tax purposes, you are considered a U.S. person if you are:

- An individual who is a U.S. citizen or U.S. resident alien,
- A partnership, corporation, company, or association created or organized in the United States or under the laws of the United States,
- An estate (other than a foreign estate), or
- A domestic trust (as defined in Regulations section 301.7701-7).

Special rules for partnerships. Partnerships that conduct a trade or business in the United States are generally required to pay a withholding tax on any foreign partners' share of income from such business. Further, in certain cases where a Form W-9 has not been received, a partnership is required to presume that a partner is a foreign person, and pay the withholding tax. Therefore, if you are a U.S. person that is a partner in a partnership conducting a trade or business in the United States, provide Form W-9 to the partnership to establish your U.S. status and avoid withholding on your share of partnership income.

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Office Use Owner #

Rental Unit Initial Information Sheet

Owner's Name: _____ SSN or Tax ID # _____

Phone #: _____ Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Local Agent Name (if applicable) _____

Contact Phone #: _____ Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Unit Information

Address: _____
Street City St Zip

Amount of Rent: \$ _____ # of Bedrooms: _____ Year built: _____ Sq. ft.: _____

Unit type: Single Family Detached Semi-detached/Row house Manufactured / Mobile home Low-rise High-rise

Unit construction: Brick / block Wood Frame

UTILITIES, SERVICE & AMENITIES		PAID FOR BY: OWNER (O) OR TENANT (T)	
Heating	a. Natural Gas	a	
	b. Bottle Gas	b	
	c. Oil/Electric	c	
	d. Coal/Other	d	
Cooking	a. Natural Gas	a	
	b. Bottle Gas	b	
	c. Oil/Electric	c	
	d. Coal/Other	d	
Other Electric			
Air Conditioning			
Water Heating	a. Natural Gas	a	
	b. Bottle Gas	b	
	c. Oil/Electric	c	
	d. Coal/Other	d	
Water			
Sewer			
Trash Collection			
Handicapped Accessible		YES	NO
WHO PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING (O) OR (T);			
Air Conditioning	a. Central Air	a	
	b. Window Unit	b	
Range/Microwave			
Refrigerator			
Other;			

Comments;

Date: _____

 Owner / Agent Signature

Proof of Ownership

Attached: Copy of Deed

or

Copy of Tax Assessor's Parcel Listing

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The Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches (HACN) is hereby authorized to list the name and contact information for me and/or my property rental company in any Housing Choice Voucher materials and briefings.

Name of Owner
or the Company:

Mailing Address:

Contact Phone(s):
(For handout use)

Email *(office use only)*:

Authorized Signature of Property Owner or Agent/Manager

Date

Printed Name of Property Owner or Agent/Manager

OR

Please remove me/my company from any Section 8 landlord list provided by the HACN in any materials or briefings. I/my company no longer wish to be contacted for Section 8 housing.

Printed Name
or Company:

Authorized Signature of Property Owner or Agent/Manager

Date

Please return completed form as soon as possible. Form may be mailed, dropped off, faxed or emailed.

FAQs for Landlords

How does the Section 8 program work?

Note: Section 8 and Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) are two different names for the same program.

HCV is a federal assistance program to help low-income people pay their rent. People with HCV vouchers find their own housing and pay a percentage of their income for rent. The Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches (HACN) pays the landlord the rest of the rent.

These are the basic steps involved in renting to a HCV tenant:

- A family with a current HCV voucher views your unit and wants to rent it.
- The landlord should screen the tenants using credit reports, previous landlord and criminal background checks. The HACN does not do credit/previous tenancy checks.
- The voucher holder will give the landlord a HUD form; Request for Tenancy Approval, or “RTA” The landlord fills this form out and the family will return it to their housing manager.
- The housing manager will perform affordability calculations using the information provided on the RTA to determine if the unit is affordable for the family’s income, and that the rent requested is considered “reasonable” compared to similar units in the area.
- If the unit passes this first test, the unit will then be inspected. If it passes the Safety & Health inspection, then and only then will the voucher holder be instructed to pay the security deposit.
- If the unit fails the inspection, the landlord has the option of repairing the deficiencies so the voucher holder can be assisted in that unit, or the landlord may choose not to address the issues and just rent on the open market as is.
- Assuming the unit passes all tests, and the landlord agrees to lease to the voucher holder, the landlord will need to provide all documents necessary before the HAP contract is executed. Typically a lease, proof of ownership, W-9 form, rental information sheet on the unit and if applicable, an authorization letter giving signing authority for a non-owner manager.
- The housing manager will prepare a HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) contract for the landlord to sign.
- The landlord or designated agent will sign the contract with HCV and sign the lease with the tenants, and the family moves in.
- The family pays its portion of the rent and HCV pays the rest.

You can view the HCV program forms on the HUD web site:

- **Housing Choice Voucher** authorizes a family to look for an apartment and specifies the size of the unit
- **Request for Tenancy Approval** is submitted to the HCV office to determine affordability for tenant.
- **Tenancy Addendum** must be attached to the lease
- **Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract** is the contract between the landlord and the HCV office

How do I let voucher holders know I accept HCV Vouchers?

If you would like to rent to HCV tenants, contact one of the HCV Housing managers to let them know. You may also advertise on your own. If you place an ad, include a notice stating that you welcome HCV tenants, or accept Section 8 vouchers.

Does the housing agency screen HCV tenants?

The housing agency does not screen HCV tenants other than the initial background check at admission. This may not be current at the time the applicant views a unit. Landlords should do, at a minimum, a credit report, previous tenancy and current background checks. Landlords may 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.

Upon request, the housing agency will tell you the number of people in the family, current and previous address, and current and previous landlord. Some housing agencies will also share any other information they have. However, the housing agency's main concern is checking that the applicant meets the income limits and other 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 HCV 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.

Note: There is no current HUD HCV rule about collecting last month's rent in advance. If you do collect the last month's rent, you should only collect the tenant's portion because the housing agency will pay the rest when due.

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(s)
- address of the rental unit
- term of the lease and how it will be renewed (yearly, or month to month after initial year)
- monthly rent amount
- which utilities are paid by the tenant
- which appliances will be provided by the tenant/landlord
- Tenancy Addendum

You must include the Tenancy Addendum exactly as it appears on the HUD web site.

You may include any other conditions that you normally include in your leases, as long as they do not violate any laws or HUD regulations.

What kind of inspection is done?

Your unit will be inspected to make sure that it meets the housing standards of the HCV program. The inspector will examine the exterior of the building, the plumbing and heating systems, the exits and hallways, and each room in the apartment to make sure the unit is safe, clean, and in good condition. The unit may be vacant at the time of the first inspection, but **all utilities must be turned on**. The inspector must have access to the unit itself, the basement, and all common areas.

The inspector uses a checklist form provided by HUD, the federal agency in charge of the HCV program. For each item on the list, the inspector marks if the unit passes or fails (or not sure). If repairs are needed, the inspector indicates the discrepancies.

A family will not be assisted in your unit until you have made any needed repairs and the unit passes the inspection.

The unit will be re-inspected every other year. If problems are found, you must make repairs within the time allotted or else HCV will hold or abate HAP payments.

How much rent can I charge?

The rent you charge must be reasonable compared to other units of similar size in your community. The HCV office will compare your rent to their payment standards, which are based in part on the fair market rents in your city or town. 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 HCV 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. NOTE; It is illegal for tenants to make “side payments” to increase the amount of total rent above the contracted lease amount.

There can be no rent increases within the initial first year of a lease. If you want to increase the rent when you renew the lease, you must make a written request at least 60 days prior to rent increase start. An approval from HCV will be required for any HCV tenant. The rent must remain reasonable and within the family's ability to pay, or else HCV will not approve it.

How do I get paid?

HCV will send you a check for their portion of the rent each month. They will continue to do so as long as the tenant remains eligible for HCV and your unit meets the HCV program standards. You are responsible for collecting the tenant portion of the rent each month.

May I evict a HCV tenant?

You may evict a HCV tenant in the same way you would evict a non-HCV tenant. The same laws apply. HCV cannot evict tenants – if required by circumstances, HCV can terminate rental assistance provided to tenants, but does not participate in physical removal from the unit.

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Minimum Housing Quality Standards for Subsidized Housing

In order for a housing unit to be placed under a subsidized housing program, it must meet minimum housing quality standards. Below are some of the basic minimum requirements.

Space

Requirements specify the presence of a living room, kitchen area and bathroom in addition to one sleeping room (or living/sleeping room) for each two persons.

Structure

The unit must be structurally sound with no severe defects. The approach to the unit must not present a danger of tripping. All necessary structures shall be in maintainable condition.

Access

Access to the unit must not be through unauthorized use of other private properties. In addition, the building must provide an alternate means of egress in case of fire.

Environment

The site and neighborhood must not be subject to serious adverse environmental conditions (i.e., flood, fire, disturbing noise, vermin or rodent infestation, sewerage hazards, excessive accumulations of trash).

Kitchens

Kitchens must have a stove and refrigerator in good operating condition (may belong to tenant or landlord at landlords option) and adequate storage, preparing and serving space. There must be a kitchen sink with hot and cold running water.

Heating Facilities

Adequately vented heating facilities are necessary. The dwelling unit shall have and be capable of maintaining a thermal environment healthy for the human body. The dwelling unit shall contain safe heating facilities which are in the proper operating condition and can provide adequate heat to each room in the dwelling unit to assure a healthy living environment. An un-vented room heater, which burns gas, oil or kerosene, is unacceptable. Electric portable heaters are also considered to be an unacceptable form of heat.

Foundation

The building foundation walls, piers or other structural elements such as floor joists, sills, etc., shall be maintained in a safe manner and capable of supporting the load which normal use may cause to be placed thereon.

Exterior and Trim

The exterior walls shall be substantially weather tight, watertight, and shall be made impervious to the adverse effects of weather and be maintained in sound condition and good repair (including paint, broken asbestos siding, etc.).

Roofs

Roofs shall be maintained in a safe manner and have no defects which might admit rain or cause dampness in the walls or interior portion of the building.

Windows & Doors

Every exterior door and window shall be substantially weather tight, watertight, rodent proof and lockable, have proper hardware and be maintained in good condition (including painting). Windows shall be properly glazed and be maintained in good condition (including painting). Windows shall be properly glazed and be maintained without cracks or holes in window panes. If no air conditioning in unit, at least one window in each room shall have a screen in good condition to allow insect-free ventilation.

Screens

If present on an exterior door, a screen door must have a self-closing device and hardware must be in good working order, no rips/tears/holes in screen. Every window used or intended to be used for ventilation shall likewise have proper screens free from defects.

Interior Walls and Ceilings

All interior walls and ceilings shall provide a finished surface without noticeable irregularities or cracking. No unfinished walls are acceptable (i.e. wafer board). A waterproof hard surface should be provided in spaces subject to moisture and should be reasonably durable and economically durable for maintenance (bathroom walls shall be lined with a non-absorbent material to a height of four feet above floor level and around and behind all fixtures). All surfaces should be free of mold.

Floor Finish

Every floor shall be kept in sound condition and good repair. Habitable rooms (other than kitchen and bathrooms) shall be wood flooring, resilient tile, sheet material or carpeting. Kitchen and bathroom floors shall be of a durable, waterproof, non-absorbent material, such as vinyl plastic, rubber or ceramic tile. Wood finished flooring shall not be used for the bathroom or kitchen.

Ventilation

Bathrooms and kitchens without a window for ventilation must be equipped with mechanical ventilation.

Sanitary Facilities Required

Every dwelling unit shall contain not less than a kitchen sink, lavatory, bathtub or shower (all with hot and cold running water), and an inside toilet, all in good working condition and properly connected to an approved water and sewer system. Every plumbing fixture and water and waste pipe shall be properly installed and maintained in good sanitary working condition, free from defects, leaks, and obstructions. The interior air must be free of dangerous pollutants.

Water Heating Facilities

Every dwelling shall have a water heating facility which is properly installed and maintained in a safe and good working condition. Each water heating facility shall have a pop off valve and drain line properly installed to code specifications. The water heater must be fully enclosed and properly accessible.

Electrical, Lights and Outlets

Adequate illumination and electricity is required in each room. An approved light and wall-mounted switch for each room must be provided including bathroom, hallway and each outdoor entrance. There must be a minimum of two receptacles in each habitable room. Every outlet and fixture shall be properly installed, maintained in good and safe working condition and shall be connected to the source of electric power in a safe manner.

Paint

The owner must certify that he is in compliance with HUD lead-based paint regulations. In buildings constructed prior to 1950, the owner must provide the occupant family with information on the hazards of lead-based paint poisoning in accordance with the regulations mentioned above. No chipping, flaking, cracking shall be present.

Codes

The unit must meet City of State codes, where applicable. Check with the City of Natchitoches Inspection Department for required permits and safety inspections.

Safety

Smoke detectors must be installed in each sleeping area and check the operating condition of the smoke detector at least twice a year.

Note: Requirements for handicapped and/or elderly housing are not included in these minimum standards.

Common items that result in failed inspections:

1. **Exit doors needing weather-stripping.** If daylight can be seen with door(s) closed, replace weather-stripping.
2. **Smoke detectors fail to alarm.**
3. **Flooring in poor condition creating tripping hazards.** Carpet or vinyl torn with exposed edges.
4. **If bathroom(s) have no window, there MUST be a working exhaust fan.**
5. **For new move-ins, the utilities MUST be on for Housing Authority staff to conduct inspections.**
6. **All gas utilities (heater, water heater, etc.) MUST be vented properly.** Unvented or poorly vented will fail.

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Notice to Landlords - Fire Extinguishers

At the Board of Directors meeting in July 2015, the Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches adopted an amended Administration Plan that became effective immediately. This new Administrative Plan contained changes that addressed various issues and updates to the policies and regulations under which the Housing Authority operates.

Among the changes implemented was a more stringent fire extinguisher requirement similar to those adopted by other housing agencies as a proactive safety practice.

The new policy, excerpted from the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Administration Plan (page 49), follows with the update underlined;

“In addition to using HUD Housing Quality Standards in inspecting and approving units, the Authority requires the installation of smoke detectors on every floor (including basements) except crawl spaces and unfinished attics, per dwelling unit, and that a certified fire extinguisher (tagged yearly by a licensed company) be present in apartments, manufactured homes and multifamily dwelling units (duplex, triplex, etc.). A brand new fire extinguisher out of a box without a certified tag will “FAIL”. Failure to comply with this section will result in a failure of the unit for occupancy by a person/family receiving Housing Choice Voucher assistance.

Should you have any questions regarding the updated policy, you should contact the Housing Authority Administrator for clarification.

Thank you,
Housing Choice Voucher Program





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NOTICE TO LANDLORDS

Effective January 1, 2011, The Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program will be holding rent payments if the following conditions exist;

1. Tenants have not completed all required paperwork or have not signed their new contracts, recertification and /or Interim rent changes prior to the effective dates of the impending changes.
2. Landlords/owners have not provided the appropriate signatures and/or any required paperwork for any current Section 8 tenant files, including Inspection Repairs Summary & Completion notices.

Payments to landlords/owners will be abated until any required repairs noted during inspection to unit have completed - if the repairs have not been accomplished within the given time period (30 days from date of initial inspection).

Tenants will be sent a FINAL NOTICE letter specifying a date by which any missing information/signatures must be provided (*landlords will be sent a copy*). If a tenant fails to comply with the Final Notice letter, their Section 8 Housing assistance will be terminated.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program
Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches



U.S Warning to Landlords:

No SIDE PAYMENTS!

The Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches works successfully and cooperatively with many private landlord partners to house deserving families throughout the city. These landlords perform a great service to those housed and to society in general.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV / Section 8) landlords are occasionally caught obtaining "side payments" from tenants. These side payments are in addition to the normal rent from the tenants, combined with the 'Housing Assistance Payment' (HAP) that comes from the Housing Authority. This practice is considered fraud and it is directed at the very tenants who can least afford it.

On July 10, 2008, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued a warning to such landlords accepting side payments or excess rent:

"Improperly requiring tenants to pay rent in excess of what is authorized by the applicable HAP contract (the contract between the landlord and Housing Authority) represents both an actionable offense under the False Claims Act and deplorable behavior directed towards the very persons whom the HCV program was designed to serve."

This warning, written into the Federal Register, goes on to say that the Office of Inspector General "...will not tolerate such conduct, and...will cooperate with efforts to bring offending landlords to justice and to remedy their wrongs...[and]...depending on the intent, such an action may qualify as a criminal offense...."

The notice says that these practices of charging more rent than the HAP contract allows constitute false claims by the landlords against the U.S. government and therefore qualifies for

triple damages plus penalties under the "False Claims Act." Please - collect only rent as outlined in your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract, or you may go to jail or be severely penalized. Please see Federal Register Vol.73, No. 133 for more detail.



The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development warns that landlords who require "side payments" in addition to contracted rent may face severe penalties, including possible jail sentence.

Request for Tenancy Approval Housing Choice Voucher Program

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0169
(exp. 09/30/2017)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .08 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. This agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless that collection displays a valid OMB control number. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is authorized to collect information required on this form by Section 8 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f). Collection of the data on the family's selected unit is mandatory. The information is used to determine if the unit is eligible for rental assistance. HUD may disclose this information to Federal, State, and local agencies when relevant civil, criminal, or regulatory investigations and prosecutions. It will not be otherwise disclosed or released outside of HUD, except as permitted or required by law. Failure to provide any of the information may result in delay or rejection of family voucher assistance.

1. Name of Public Housing Agency (PHA) Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches 536 Culbertson Lane Natchitoches, LA 71457			2. Address of Unit (street address, apartment number, city, State & zip code) <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Street Address APT # (if applicable) </div>				
3. Requested Beginning Date of Lease	4. Number of Bedrooms	5. Year Constructed	6. Proposed Rent	7. Security Deposit Amt.	8. Date Unit Available for Inspection		

9. Type of House/Apartment

Single Family Detached
 Semi-Detached / Row House
 Manufactured Home
 Garden / Walkup
 Elevator / High-Rise

10. If this unit is subsidized, indicate type of subsidy

Section 202
 Section 221(d)(3)(BMIR)
 Section 236 (Insured or noninsured)
 Section 515 Rural Development

Home
 Tax Credit

Other (Describe Other Subsidy, Including Any State or Local Subsidy) _____

11. Utilities and Appliances

The owner shall provide or pay for the utilities and appliances indicated below by an "O". The tenant shall provide or pay for the utilities and appliances indicated below by a "T". Unless otherwise specified below, the owner shall pay for all utilities and appliances provided by the owner.

Item	Specify fuel type	Provided by	Paid by
Heating	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural gas <input type="checkbox"/> Electric		
Cooking	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural gas <input type="checkbox"/> Electric		
Water Heating	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural gas <input type="checkbox"/> Electric		
Other Electric			
Water			
Sewer			
Trash Collection			
Air Conditioning			
Refrigerator			
Range/Microwave			
Other (specify)			

Landlord/Owner; Indicate in the far right column who pays for the utility or service, O (owner) or T (tenant). If the Landlord provides and pays for the repair/replacement of any included appliance, mark as "O".

12. Owner's Certifications.

a. The program regulation requires the PHA to certify that the rent charged to the housing choice voucher tenant is not more than the rent charged for other unassisted comparable units. **Owners of projects with more than 4 units must complete the following section for most recently leased comparable unassisted units within the premises.**

	Address and unit number	Date Rented	Rental Amount
1.			
2.			
3.			

b. The owner (including a principal or other interested party) is not the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless the PHA has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving leasing of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

c. Check one of the following:

_____ Lead-based paint disclosure requirements do not apply because this property was built on or after January 1, 1978.

_____ The unit, common areas servicing the unit, and exterior painted surfaces associated with such unit or common areas have been found to be lead-based paint free by a lead-based paint inspector certified under the Federal certification program or under a federally accredited State certification program.

_____ A completed statement is attached containing disclosure of known information on lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the unit, common areas or exterior painted surfaces, including a statement that the owner has provided the lead hazard information pamphlet to the family.

13. The PHA has not screened the family's behavior or suitability for tenancy. Such screening is the owner's own responsibility.

14. The owner's lease must include word-for-word all provisions of the HUD tenancy addendum.

15. The PHA will arrange for inspection of the unit and will notify the owner and family as to whether or not the unit will be approved.

Print or Type Name of Owner/Owner Representative		Print or Type Name of Household Head	
Signature		Signature (Household Head)	
Business Address		Present Address of Family (street address, apartment no., city, State, & zip code)	
Telephone Number	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Telephone Number	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
Email		Email	

Landlords – Instructions on How to Complete the HUD-52517 Request For Tenancy Approval form (RFTA)

The HUD-52517 form is required for Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to use in determining if the voucher issuee can be assisted in a particular unit based on unit type/size, rent and the applicable utility allowance. Each portion of the form must be completed in order for the proper rent calculations to be made. Failure to complete the form properly can cause delays in the PHA being able to determine the suitability of a unit. This form must be returned to the PHA prior to the tenants paying any security deposit.

Completing the RTA form does NOT obligate the landlord to rent to the voucher holder.

Note: The unit must be available for inspection at the time the form is completed. PHAs cannot “speculate” on units that “*may* be available in the future”.

Block 2 – Address of Unit

The complete physical address is required. If a multi-unit building, the exact unit number.

Block 3 – Requested Beginning Date of Lease

The date that the landlord/owner expects the new lease to start (typically this will be the first day of the month)

Block 4 – Number of Bedrooms

This is used to help determine if the unit is the proper size for the family and is a component of determining the Utility Allowance amount.

Block 5 – Year Constructed

Used to determine; if Lead-based paint may have been used, and the rent reasonableness comparison.

Block 6 – Proposed Rent

The amount of rent the landlord/owner is requesting for this particular unit.

Block 7 – Security Deposit Amount

The amount the landlord/owner requires for a deposit. If the landlord/owner chooses to waive the amount for a tenant, write “waived” in the block.

Block 8 – Date Unit Available for Inspection

The HQS Inspector must make a physical assessment of the unit listed in order to determine if the unit will pass HUD’s Minimum Housing Quality Standards. This assessment has to be completed and the unit passes before a PHA can enter into a contract to provide housing assistance to an applicant.

Block 9 – Type of House/Unit

This information is used to help determine the proper amount of the Utility Allowance.

Block 10 – Subsidized

Mark the appropriate box AS IT APPLIES. Not all units will be subsidized.

Block 11 – Utilities

This block seems to cause the most confusion. Each type of utility or service has been assigned by HUD a specific dollar value according to the bedroom size of the unit. The most important things the PHA needs to know is;

What **TYPE** of energy is used for Heating, Cooking, Water Heating,
And Who **PAYS** for each utility or service listed?

If the **landlord/owner** pays for any utility or service, place an “O” in the appropriate row in the far right column.

If the **tenant** is to pay for any utility or service, mark appropriate row with a “T”.

On reverse side of form

Block 12 – Owners Certification

Answer questions a. through c. as applicable.

Blocks 13, 14 & 15 – Please read these carefully!

Contact Information Block

Make sure that the landlord/owner information is provided – this generally will be the mailing address where the PHA sends all correspondence such as the rent payments, rental agreements and inspection reports, and the telephone number in case the PHA needs to contact the landlord/owner.

Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches

536 Culbertson Lane Natchitoches, LA 71458
Telephone (318) 352-9774 FAX Number (318) 357-8064

Our Housing Choice Voucher tenants and issuees must follow certain steps & procedures to receive rental assistance in any offered unit. When a currently assisted Section 8 tenant wants to move to a different unit, or an applicant is issued a voucher, he or she has to locate a suitable unit that will pass the following criteria;

Affordability & Rent Reasonable tests.

These tests are used to determine if a specific unit is affordable for the applicant family based on the family income, and if the unit's rent is reasonable based on comparisons of other similar units in the same area. Each unit must be considered individually, even if in the same multi-unit complex.

Affordability is determined by calculating the total income/allowable expenses of the applicant family with the information provided by the landlord on the **HUD Form HUD-52517**, the **Request for Tenancy Approval** (*commonly referred to as the "RTA"*).

This form does not obligate a landlord/manager to give a preference to, or hold the unit for the voucher holder over anyone on the open market. **NO FEES CAN BE CHARGED FOR FILLING OUT THIS FORM.** The unit listed must be available for inspection and possible lease-up within 7 calendar days of the date the form was completed (*Housing Managers may extend this time for good cause*).

The information provided by the landlord on this form gives the Housing Manager the specifics on the actual unit regarding bedroom size, type of unit, type of energy used by appliances, who pays/provides for which utility/appliance and landlord/applicant contact information. It is very important that ALL information requested on the form be provided – forms with blank sections will not be accepted by the Housing Authority. Applicants must be able to inspect the unit prior to lease-up. (No HAP contract will be executed if the applicant hasn't inspected the unit).

Voucher issuees are also instructed **NOT to pay a Security Deposit until their Housing Manger has completed the Affordability test AND the unit has passed a Health & Safety Inspection.** Applicants are briefed that "losing" a unit to someone on the open market is a possibility, but if they pay a Security Deposit and for whatever reason fail to move in, according to Louisiana law, the Security Deposit might not be refunded.

Health & Safety Inspection.

Once the specific unit has passed the Affordability Test, the unit is then inspected to see if it complies with the HUD-mandated Health & Safety regulations. All applicable utilities must be on at the unit at the time of the inspection. All appliances present in the unit must be in good working order.

If the unit fails the inspection, no HAP contract will be executed until the unit deficiencies have been addressed. The landlord/manager will be provided a list of the deficiencies. If the landlord/manager chooses not to correct the failing items, the Housing Authority will not execute a HAP contract and will instruct the applicant to continue looking for a suitable unit.

If the unit has been found affordable, the rent reasonable and it has passed the inspection, the applicant will then be instructed to pay the Security Deposit, pay any fees for utilities to be turned on in their name, provide a copy of the lease and sign all associated paperwork at the Housing Authority.

Landlord requirements

Once the unit has been found affordable, reasonable and has passed the inspection, there are documents required before a HAP contract can be executed. If you are a new landlord (*you have not participated in the Housing Choice Voucher Program before*) you must provide a completed IRS W-9 form, proof of ownership and a Rental Information Sheet (these 3 items included in Landlord packet). You will also need to provide a copy of the lease – lease dates must match the HAP contract dates. Hap contracts will start on the first day of a month, and end on the last day of the month, and the term is for 1 year.

For landlords who are currently active in the Section 8 program, and are offering a new property (*has not previously been a Section rental unit*), proof of ownership and a Rental Information Sheet are required for each new property. A new W-9 should be provided at least every other year and when any of the information has changed. This form is how the Housing Authority determines who and where to send the HAP payments to and where.

Prior to any HAP contract execution, all required landlord documents and any inspection repair summaries must be submitted to the Housing Authority and all contract paperwork signed.

Please note that HAP payments may be held or abated (*no payment(s) for the applicable month(s)*) during the contract period if the landlord/manager fails to abide by HUD regulations and/or Housing Authority policies. The most common reasons of why payments are held/abated are; failure to provide signatures or required documentation prior to effective dates, failure to complete any noted deficiencies during inspections or to provide repair verification form by required date.

Leases between the landlord and tenant must adhere to HUD regulations, the HAP Contract and Tenancy Addendum (*blank copies of the HAP contract are available at the office should you desire a copy to compare*). If there are any contradictions, the HAP contract takes precedence over landlord leases.

Landlords/managers are expected to hold the tenants to their lease requirements and enforce any violations – the Section 8 program does not issue notices of violations of the landlord's lease or evict tenants. The Section 8 Program can terminate assistance for tenants on failures to abide by HUD and Housing Authority regulations and policies, or violations of HUD and Housing Authority regulations and policies by the landlord.

The Housing Authority will recoup any rent paid to landlords for the affected month(s) if the tenant or landlord is found to be in violation of HUD and Housing Authority regulations and policies and assistance is terminated. An example would be if the tenant moved without notice before the first day of the month. If the Housing Authority was not notified by either tenant or landlord, and the tenant was not dropped effective the last day of the month of move out, the rent check would be sent out. The amount of rent paid for that unoccupied month would be “held out” of the next check issued to the landlord.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Voucher process, please contact a Housing Choice Voucher Program manager at (318) 352-9774, or by email: natchitocheshousing@outlook.com

*Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)
Housing Authority of the City of Natchitoches.*