

SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Tenant-based rental assistance. Household must have legal U.S. residency, meet income limits and pass criminal history review to be eligible.

Waiting list is open. Preference is given to households who currently live/work full-time in Gloucester. Current wait for a local applicant is approximately 5 years. Applications may be downloaded at www.ghama.com.

Households are issued a voucher once their name comes to the top of the waiting list and must find eligible unit within 120 days.

Eligible units:

- Contract rent must be deemed reasonable compared to similar unassisted units in the same geographic area and be within GHA Payment Standards (Contract rent plus estimated utility costs)
- Unit must pass HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection.
- Unit must have Board of Health Occupancy Permit if required by local ordinance.
- If household has children under age six, unit needs certification that it complies with State Lead Paint laws and cannot have chipping or peeling paint.
- Owner cannot be an immediate family member of the tenant.
- Owner must be current in all property taxes and water & sewer payments.
- Owner cannot have a history of drug related criminal activity.

Process:

- Owner and tenant complete "Request for Tenancy Approval" form (non-binding) and submit it to GHA.
- GHA conducts HQS (HUD Housing Quality Standard) inspection within 15 days of receiving request.
- If the unit passes inspection, GHA requests owner to submit a signed lease and executes the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with the owner. HAP Contract runs concurrent with term of the lease (month-to-month/year-to-year).
- If the unit does not pass inspection, GHA notifies owner of any necessary repairs for it to pass and denies the RTA at that time. The owner may also withdraw the request.
- If the owner wishes to make the repairs and participate in the program, once the unit is ready for another inspection the owner and tenant complete a new RTA form and submit it to GHA to schedule an HQS inspection.

Important tips:

- Owners should thoroughly screen Section 8 participants for suitability under the same standards they use for unassisted tenants.
- Owners may collect a Security Deposit from the tenant of up to one month's contract rent.
- Owners are required to supply their own lease agreement as the lease is between the owner and tenant.
- Unit may only be occupied by assisted family members. Owner & GHA must both approve anyone added to the lease.
- If a Section 8 participant becomes ineligible for the Section 8 program for any reason, the GHA will no longer provide financial assistance for the unit. Rent payments will then become the sole responsibility of the tenant.

The GHA's Section 8 Administrative Plan which outlines program rules and regulations can be found on our website at: www.ghama.com

