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Office of Housing Choice Vouchers & Occupancy

# CONTACT US

If you need further information about becoming a Housing Choice Voucher landlord, please send inquiry to:

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Produced by DHA Communications

# ABOUT DHA

The goal of the Housing Authority is to provide safe, decent housing for Durham's low to moderate income citizens. Funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and rental income from residents, DHA manages an operating budget of approximately \$44 million.

Since 1949, the Housing Authority of the City of Durham has endeavored to increase its housing stock in order to better help those requiring housing assistance. The Housing Authority, through its various programs, which include Conventional Public Housing, Homeownership (Turnkey III) and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8), is providing housing assistance to approximately 4,000 households, with a total of nearly 10,000 persons.

For more information about the Durham Housing Authority, please visit our website at [www.durhamhousingauthority.org](http://www.durhamhousingauthority.org).

# PAYMENT STANDARDS

## 2009 PAYMENT STANDARDS

	SRO	O BR	1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR	5BR	6BR
Payment Standard	\$444	\$592	\$812	\$910	\$1,189	\$1,282	\$1,474	\$1,665

## 2009 INCOME LIMITS

Number of Persons	Extremely Low Income	Very Low Income	Low Income (80% of Median)
1	\$15,700	\$26,200	\$41,950
2	\$17,950	\$29,950	\$47,900
3	\$20,200	\$33,700	\$53,900
4	\$22,450	\$37,450	\$59,900
5	\$24,250	\$40,450	\$64,700
6	\$26,050	\$43,450	\$69,500
7	\$27,850	\$46,450	\$74,300
8	\$29,650	\$49,450	\$79,050

# HQS CHECKLIST

Below is a partial list of some of the conditions that must be verified by the Housing Inspector. All rooms should be free of electrical hazards, defective paint and broken windows. Windows that are accessible from outside should be lockable. There should be an approved smoke detector on each level.

## LIVING ROOM

- Are there at least two working outlets or one working outlet and one light fixture?
- Is there at least one window and are windows and doors free of deterioration?
- Are the walls & ceilings in good condition and free of hazardous defects?

## KITCHEN

- Are there at least one working outlet and one working, permanent light fixture?
- Are the walls & ceilings in good condition and free of hazardous defects?
- Is there a refrigerator that works and maintains a temperature low enough to avoid food spoilage?
- Is there a working sink with hot and cold running water?
- Is there space to store, prepare and serve food and a working oven?

## BATHROOM

- Is there at least one permanent light fixture?
- Is there a working toilet for the exclusive, private use of the tenant?
- Is there a working, permanently installed wash basin with hot and cold running water?
- Is there a working tub or shower with hot and cold running water?

## BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Are all these areas free of hazards?
  - Foundation
  - Roof, gutters & downspouts
  - Exterior surfaces
  - Chimney
- If the unit is a manufactured home, is it properly placed and tied down?

## HEATING & PLUMBING, GENERAL SAFETY

Heating & plumbing equipment will be inspected for health and safety (proper installation, ventilation). The property will also be inspected for elevator function, sufficient fire exit and pest control.

## MOST COMMON FAIL CONDITIONS

Non-functioning smoke detectors  
Missing or cracked electrical outlet coverplates  
Railings not present where required  
Peeling paint  
Tripping hazards caused by permanent floor coverings (carpet/vinyl)  
Cracked or broken window panes  
Inoperable stove burners or range hoods  
Missing burner range knobs  
Inoperable bathroom fan/no ventilation  
Leaking faucets or other plumbing  
No temperature/pressure relief valve on water heaters

# OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES

## TO THE TENANT

All rental property owners are subject to state and federal law that prohibit discrimination in housing against persons due to their age, sex, ethnicity, race, color, familial status, because they have children or due to disability. Violations of Fair Housing and non-discrimination laws will result in denial of participation in the Housing Choice Voucher program and could result in civil penalties. DHA will provide you with information related to Fair Housing requirements.

Owners are obligated to make reasonable modifications, at the tenant's expense, to housing units in order to accommodate persons with disabilities. Notify DHA if you have units that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

## TO DURHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY

The owner is required to notify DHA if the property is sold. The owner may not assign the Housing Assistance Payment contract to a new owner without previous approval from DHA.

Among the most common reasons that owners find themselves in violation of their HAP agreements are:

**Failing to maintain the unit** - Make sure that repairs are made in a timely manner.

**Accepting payments for a vacant unit** - If a family moves in violation of the lease, be sure to notify DHA immediately.

**Demanding or accepting side payments** - Only those payments agreed to in your HAP and the lease agreement can be accepted.

# TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

## THE LEASE AGREEMENT

The tenant's obligation to the owner is outlined in the lease agreement. Tenants are required to pay the rent on time and take care of the housing unit. Landlords should take care to go over the lease agreement with tenants to make sure they understand their obligations clearly. This will help to avoid misunderstandings during the course of the lease. In general, the owner is required to do routine maintenance and make repairs on the housing unit, but if the unit fails to meet the Housing Quality Standards because of the following (utilities, appliances or damages by the tenant) Housing Assistance Payments may be discontinued until all violations are corrected.

## UTILITIES

The tenant is required to keep all utilities in service as the lease agreement states. If the tenant is expected to pay for gas, electricity or water and these are not kept in service, the unit will not meet Housing Quality Standards. The tenant will be given a short time to get service restored.

## APPLIANCES

The tenant must supply and maintain any appliances that are not provided by the owner. These might include a washer & dryer or microwave oven.

## DAMAGES

Except for normal wear and tear, the tenant is responsible for any damage to the housing unit that are caused on the premises by the tenant or any guest of the tenant. If such damages are not satisfactorily covered by the tenant in accordance with the lease agreement in place, the housing assistance provided by DHA may be terminated.

# BECOMING A LANDLORD

## STEP 1 - FINDING A TENANT

Through advertising (such as registering your property with GoSection8.com), listing with the Durham Housing Authority (DHA) or other referral, a tenant may come to you with a voucher, ready to lease a unit.

## STEP 2 - OWNER APPROVES TENANT

Although the individual or family has already been determined by DHA to be eligible for the program, the owner must approve them as suitable renters. DHA is notified of owner approval when the **Request for Tenancy Approval** form is received.

## STEP 3 - PHA APPROVES TENANCY AND UNIT

Once the individual or family has found a suitable unit and the owner approves, DHA will determine if the unit qualifies for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program. This step includes an inspection for "Housing Quality Standards." If the unit doesn't pass this first inspection, the owner will be given a reasonable time to complete repairs and have it re-inspected. A rent reasonableness assessment will be completed to determine if the rent you are requesting is comparable to other private market units considering the quality of your unit, amenities and neighborhood.

## STEP 4 - CONTRACT AND LEASE ARE SIGNED

When the unit meets the inspection requirements, DHA will enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract with the owner and the individual or family will enter into a lease agreement with the owner.

## STEP 5 - HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS MADE

With the HAP contract and signed lease agreement, DHA will make the monthly payments to the owner as long as the individual or family continues to meet the eligibility requirements under the program.

# PROGRAM GOALS & BENEFITS

## PROGRAM GOALS

In Durham, as in many communities, there is a shortage of decent and affordable housing. The Housing Choice Voucher program helps families to rent in many different neighborhoods, helping to avoid the concentration of families and neighborhoods impacted by poverty.

Participating families include elderly and disabled persons as well as working families whose earnings are not enough to meet the demands of rising costs in today's housing markets.

## BENEFITS TO OWNERS

Along with the benefit on contracted monthly income, owners and property managers often cite the value of inspection standards and maintenance requirements in describing their preference for Voucher recipients as tenants. For property owners who are new to the real estate management, the selection criteria for screening voucher recipients can serve as a valuable model in screening market rate applicants as well.

## BENEFITS TO FAMILIES

Matching families with neighborhoods and the type of rental unit they need is the key to the voucher program's success. With the voucher following the family, the purchasing power is in the hands of the customer, making a better fit more likely and mutual satisfaction an expected outcome. This flexibility supports those families that need to be near to new work or educational opportunities, live closer to family members whose support may be critical.