

# Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority HCV Section 8 Landlord Handbook



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Landlord Handbook Approved on 05/26/2026

## *INTRODUCTION*

### **SECTION 8 HOUSING PROGRAMS**

We appreciate your interest in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program's Rules and Regulations are determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with some local discretion. This brochure will give you the information necessary to participate in this program. If you are unsure of anything, please don't hesitate to ask a Section 8 representative listed on page 4.

The Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority is interested in contracting with property managers and rental property owners who have decent, safe, and sanitary rental properties. We want landlords to be informed about the Section 8 program, state laws, and applicable city housing codes and good management practices for this to be a successful partnership.

Thank you for participating in our program.

Tiffany Crosby  
Executive Director

#### **AMHA Board of Commissioners**

Jonathan Nichols, Board Chair  
Carla Thompson, Vice Chair  
Phyllis Montrose, Commissioner  
Sheri Gary, Commissioner  
Shannon Tyler, Commissioner

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## *SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) CURRENT STAFF*

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Inspection Scheduling	Sean Walt	swalt@allenmha.com
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### **Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority Office Hours:**

Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm (closed daily from 12:30pm to 1:30pm)

### **Acronyms used in this handbook:**

HCV – Housing Choice Voucher  
HAP – Housing Assistance Payments  
RFTA OR RTA – Request for Tenancy Approval  
HQS – Housing Quality Standards

## **LANDLORD RESOURCES**

### **AMHA WEBSITE**

Visit the agency website at [www.allenmha.com](http://www.allenmha.com) for additional landlord resources and information.

Under the title “HCV Section 8” there is a section for landlords titled “Information for Landlords”.

#### Landlord Resources listed under HCV Section 8 Forms:

HQS Inspection Checklist	Direct Deposit Form
Property Information Form	Current Payment Standards
Change of Ownership Packet	

### **MY HOUSING PORTAL**

My Housing Portal (in upper right-hand corner of the AMHA website) is the link for the landlord portal, which is <https://myhousing.allenmha.com/>

The landlord portal is only available to current participating landlords. New participating landlords will receive a housing registration code to access the portal.

## **HCV LANDLORD RESOURCES**

### **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

Visit the HUD website <https://www.hud.gov/helping-americans/housing-choice-vouchers-landlord> for further landlord resources or sign up to receive the HCV Landlord Newsletter.

Resources on HUD’s website include:

- Landlord Factsheet
- Mythbusting and Benefits to Participating in the HCV Program
- PHA’s Role in the HCV Program
- General Lease-Up Process
- HQS Initial Inspection Flowchart
- HQS Biennial Inspection Flowchart

## *HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES*

### **AMHA Responsibilities:**

- Determine family eligibility for Section 8 HCV Program participation.
- Approve units and leases.
- Review and approve rental amount for each unit.
- Determine family eligibility annually.
- Inspect units at least biennially according to contract anniversary.
- Conduct special inspections. For example, AMHA receives a report of a life-threatening condition requiring repair within 24 hours.
- Ensure owners and families comply with HCV program rules and regulations.
- Calculate family share of the rent and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)
- Issue Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) to owners.
- Establish utility allowances and issue Utility Reimbursement Payments (URP) to qualifying families.

### **Owner Responsibilities:**

- Screen families who apply to determine suitability as renters.
- Comply with fair housing laws.
- Maintain the housing unit by making necessary repairs in a timely manner.
- Comply with the terms of the Lease and Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract.
  - **NOTE:** Once a lease and HAP Contract is in place, a new lease should not be offered. Initiating a new lease will nullify the HAP Contract and payments will not be issued.
- Collect the rent due from the family and comply with and enforce the lease.
- Notify AMHA and the family if there is a change in property ownership, property management, business address, or details for receiving rent or HAP.
- Provide copies to AMHA of any notices given to families (eviction, notice to move etc.).

### **Family Responsibilities to the Owner and the AMHA:**

- Abide by the terms of their lease with the landlord/owner.
- Pay rent on time
- Maintain and take care of the housing unit.
- Provide and pay any utilities that are not furnished by the owner.
- Provide and maintain any appliances that are not furnished by the owner.
- Keep all utility accounts current.
- Be responsible for damages to the unit or premises beyond normal wear and tear.
- Abide by all AMHA Family Obligations, rules and regulations.

## ***INTERESTED IN BECOMING A LANDLORD WITH THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM?***

The role of the owner/landlord is to lease decent, safe, and sanitary housing to families at an affordable and reasonable rent.

As a participating owner with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, you are required to maintain your rental unit in compliance with local housing codes as well as HUD's Housing Quality Standards (HQS). It is the owner's responsibility to screen and select a tenant, execute the lease, execute the Housing Assistance Contract (HAP), and collect the family's portion of the rent.

### ***STEPS TO BECOME A LANDLORD WITH THE HCV PROGRAM***

- 1. Select a tenant**
  - a. Owner finds a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program tenant known as a "Voucher Holder".
  - b. Owner screens and approves tenant based on their own criteria, and abiding by fair housing laws.
- 2. Complete a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) Packet**
  - a. Given to you by the potential tenant (voucher holder)
  - b. AMHA processes the RTA to determine if the proposed contract rent amount is reasonable compared to other unassisted units in the area.
- 3. Lease Approval**
  - a. Proposed (prior to signing) lease will be reviewed by AMHA staff to ensure all required HCV program information is included
- 4. Schedule an Initial Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection**
  - a. AMHA Inspection Department will reach out to landlord to schedule the inspection for earliest available date/time.
  - b. An AMHA inspector will conduct the inspection and the unit must pass the inspection or pass a reinspection not more than 30 days later.
- 5. Sign Approved Lease and HAP Contract**
- 6. Start Receiving Payments**
  - a. Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is scheduled to be sent to Owner/Landlord on the 3<sup>rd</sup> business day of each month.

## ***ADVERTISING AVAILABLE UNITS***

If you have one or more rental units that are vacant or soon to be vacant, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority can help provide the information to current voucher holders.

1. Bulletin Board in lobby at AMHA
  - a. Contact the front desk at 419-228-6065 for assistance with posting information on the bulletin board
2. Affordable Housing Website, <https://www.affordablehousing.com/>
  - a. Create a free account to list your available properties
3. Advertise how and where you prefer

Potential renters will contact you. These individuals will have a Housing Choice Voucher that permits them to find a unit within 60 days of issuance. Remember, your job is to screen them for suitability. The Voucher Holder will ask you to complete a Request for Tenancy (RTA) packet. When the RTA packet is returned to AMHA, we will review the information to make sure that the family still qualifies for the program, the rent is within HUD guidelines and other criteria before scheduling an inspection.

## ***HCV ASSISTANCE AREA***

Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority can provide assistance to a current voucher holder in any of the following Ohio counties: Allen, Auglaize, Hardin, Mercher, Putnam, and Van Wert.

## *HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) INSPECTIONS*

### **WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE INSPECTION?**

A Section 8 Housing Inspector, trained in HUD's Section 8 Housing Quality Standards and other local requirements, will determine if your rental property meets appropriate criteria. See pages 11-12 for a checklist. If possible, walk through the rental property prior to the inspection to help ensure it will pass in all aspects. Address and repair any deficiencies before we arrive to help prevent a failed inspection result.

Take advantage of the opportunity to meet our Inspector and discuss any inspection concerns you may have at the scheduled appointment. This may help you become more familiar with inspection requirements. You will be notified of any deficiencies and given a reasonable time to make required repairs. You or the tenant should contact us to schedule a re-inspection when all repairs have been completed.

AMHA's payments will not begin until after the unit passes the initial inspection or the reinspection and there is a signed HAP Contract. For inspections of units already under HAP Contract, failed inspections may eventually lead to delayed HAP payments, abatement, or HAP contract termination.

### **COMMON FAIL ITEMS**

*All smoke and carbon monoxide detectors must be hard-wired or have a 10-year sealed battery beginning February 2027.*

- Non-working smoke detectors on every floor and inside each bedroom
- Non-working carbon monoxide detector in or near each sleeping area(s)
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet covers
- Missing or broken railings for 3 or more steps
- Peeling paint (interior or exterior)
- Broken window panes
- Inoperable stoves or refrigerators
- Missing stove burner control knobs
- Leaking faucets or other plumbing
- No discharge pipe on water heater pressure relief valve
- Inadequate flooring that presents a trip hazard
- Utilities not on at time of initial inspection

## **CAN A TENANT MOVE IN PRIOR TO RECEIVING A PASSED INSPECTION?**

If you allow a tenant to move in prior to receiving a passed inspection:

1. AMHA does not encourage this happening. Exercise extreme caution.
2. Generally, it is best that the lease start date and the HAP Contract start date are the same date.
  - The HAP Contract cannot be effective prior to the passed inspection date.
3. If a lease starts without the HAP Contract starting, then the tenant will be responsible for the full amount of rent for any days prior to the intended HAP Contract start date.
  - If the unit does not pass the inspection, or if AMHA does not approve the proposed lease, there will be no HAP Contract offered.

AMHA does not caution against allowing the tenant to move in prior to the full execution of the HAP contract:

1. The RTA Procedure implies the good faith agreement that all parties are willing and able to enter into the HAP contract, provided the requirements are satisfied. As long as AMHA remains properly informed during this time period, AMHA should be able to provide further guidance, if needed
2. AMHA processing may not happen as fast as the intended lease start date. However, the HAP Contract start date can be set for a recent past date, effective no earlier than the lease start date.
3. The HAP Contract must be fully executed no more than 60 days after its start date.

***AMHA's payments will not begin until after the unit passes the initial inspection or the reinspection and there is a signed HAP Contract.***

## ***HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST***

The unit must be “DECENT, SAFE, AND SANITARY!” Make sure your unit will pass inspection guidelines. Check off problem items as you inspect your unit so repairs can be completed prior to AMHA inspection. Below is a partial list of relevant questions to consider as you prepare your unit for an inspection.

All smoke and carbon monoxide detectors must be hard-wired or have a 10-year sealed battery beginning February 2027.

### **BASIC BUILDING EXTERIOR**

1. Are foundation, stairs, rails, gutters, roofs, and porches sound and free from hazards and deterioration?
2. Is there a handrail where there are three (3) or more steps?
3. If it is a mobile home, is it tied down?
4. Are the chimney and other brick structures free of loose bricks and mortar?
5. Is the paint chipping, peeling, or cracking?
6. Does it have a working smoke detector on every level?
7. Do all operable windows have locks and screens for summer use?

### **LIVING ROOM**

1. Are there two working electrical outlets or one outlet and one permanent overhead light fixture?
2. Are ground floor windows lockable and are all windows and their frames in good condition?
3. Are walls, ceilings, and floors free from defects and clean?
4. Is there any peeling, chipping, or cracking paint in the room?

### **KITCHEN**

1. Are all appliances working properly?
2. Is the plumbing working properly and free from leaks?
3. Is there one working outlet and one permanent overhead light fixture?
4. Are all windows lockable and free from defects?
5. Are all walls, ceilings, and floors free from defects and clean?
6. Is there any peeling, chipping, or cracking paint in the room?

### **BATHROOM**

1. Are tub, sink, shower, and toilet working properly and in good condition?
2. Is there an operable and lockable window or a working exhaust fan?
3. Are walls, ceilings, and floors free from defects and clean?
4. Is there any peeling, chipping, or cracking paint in the room?
5. Is there a permanent overhead or wall light fixture?

## **BEDROOM**

1. Is there a window present and in good condition? Does it lock if it is accessible from the outside?
2. Are there screens?
3. Are there two electrical outlets or one working electrical outlet and one light fixture?
4. Are walls, ceilings, and floors free from defects and clean?
5. Is there any peeling, chipping, or cracking paint in the room?
6. Is there a door for privacy?
7. Is there a closet present?
8. Is there a working smoke detector on every floor with a bathroom and one inside each bedroom?

## **OTHER ROOMS AND AREAS**

1. Is the furnace operable? Not acceptable are heaters that burn oil or gas and are not vented to a chimney.
2. Is the water heater operable and in good condition? Does it have a pressure relief valve and discharge line?
3. Are all rooms well-lit and free from trash and other debris?
4. Is the house and yard free from trash and other debris?
5. Is there a handrail for stairs with three or more steps, including the basement?

## **LEAD BASED PAINT**

You will need to become familiar with lead-based paint concerns if your rental unit was built prior to 1978 and there is a child under the age of 6 in the household. If the Section 8 Inspector makes a visual observation of flaking, peeling, or otherwise un-secure paint surfaces, he/she will fail the inspection. You or an approved contractor will be required to encapsulate or abate the surfaces using safe work practices. Next, an approved clearance test must be provided to AMHA before we can conduct a re-inspection or sign the HAP Contract.

## ***LEASE AND HAP CONTRACT***

### **SECURITY DEPOSITS**

Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority does not assist with security deposits. Also, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority does not guarantee a HAP Contract will be implemented upon receipt of the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA).

We suggest that you become familiar with state law regarding the use and the return of the family's security deposit.

### **LEASE AND HAP CONTRACT**

We are required to review the lease you propose to use and any additional rules for the occupancy. If the lease meets program requirements and if the inspection passes, the lease is executed and tenant moves in, then AMHA will ask you to sign a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract. If the lease does not meet the program requirements, then AMHA will ask you to revise as necessary.

You and the tenant will enter into a lease agreement that will be valid even without connection to the HAP Contract. The HAP Contract is between Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority, the tenant family and the owner. The HAP contract is the agreement that AMHA will issue part of the monthly contract rent to the Owner/Landlord, on behalf of the participating tenant family, pursuant to the program guidelines.

### **RENT REASONABLENESS**

AMHA will approve a contract rent based on the owner's proposed rent, the quality of the unit, comparable rent for a similar unassisted unit in the immediate market area, and the fair market rent ceiling established for the area by HUD. Rent Reasonableness is completed when a new HAP Contract is being proposed and when a rental increase has been requested. AMHA may request the proposed rent to be lowered in order to meet this standard.

### **RENT AFFORDABILITY**

Prior to the start of a NEW HAP Contract, the proposed unit must pass the above rent reasonableness test and the affordability test. When executing a NEW HAP Contract, the family portion of rent can't exceed 40% of their adjusted gross income. AMHA may request the proposed rent to be lowered in order to meet this standard. The Rent Affordability test is not conducted if/when the Owner/Landlord requests a rent increase to an existing HAP contracted unit.

## **HAP CONTRACT PAPERWORK**

A Section 8 Occupancy Specialist will work with landlords/owners and families to ensure all paperwork is completed properly. Be sure you have reviewed and understand the HAP Contract and all affiliated paperwork. Contact the assigned Occupancy Specialist if you have any questions or need further explanation.

## **RENT**

The family's share of the contract rent is based on their income and utility allowance. Tenant rent is normally between 30 to 40 percent of their adjusted monthly income less the utility allowance. The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is the difference between the contract rent and the family's portion of the rent. You will need to make arrangements with your tenant for when and how they pay their portion of the rent. Your Housing Assistance Payment will be direct deposited to your account on the **third business day of each month** as long as the family and unit meet housing assistance criteria.

There are circumstances that allow for payments to be issued other than the third business day of the month. Such alternative pay dates are sometimes called "mid-month" payments. Each month, AMHA chooses one or two dates later in the month on which to issue new payments that could not be issued at the time of the most recent third business day of the month, but are effective for previous months. Typically, mid-month payments occur in order for AMHA to issue initial payments for a new HAP Contract or to pay adjusted HAP due to retroactively approved HAP/tenant rent changes.

As the tenancy continues, owners will be notified in writing of any changes in the family's portion of the rent and the HAP payment, usually at least 30 days in advance if possible.

## ***ANNUAL RECERTIFICATION***

Each year AMHA will verify the family's eligibility for the Section 8 program. Landlords and tenants receive notification of their upcoming recertification approximately 90 days in advance, allowing ample time to complete the necessary paperwork. When the annual recertification is completed, you will be notified in writing of any changes in the family's portion of the rent and the HAP payment, usually at least 30 days in advance.

## ***BIENNIAL INSPECTION***

A biennial (every two years) inspection will be scheduled and you will be notified of the date and time for the inspection. If you have been conducting periodic inspections of the property, you could know and address aspects of the unit that need repaired in advance of our inspection. You may also want to attend the inspection to ask or answer any questions.

You will be sent a letter informing you of any items that failed the inspection. All items must be repaired no later than 30 days after notification in accordance to HUD guidelines. If repairs have not been made in timely manner, Housing Assistance Payments will be abated, which means payments will be stopped and not payable. Abatements start the first of the month following the given deadline. Deadlines are usually 30 days, but are only 24 hours when the failed item(s) is life-threatening.

HAP and URP are not payable for each day during abatement. "HAP" money is forfeited during abatement. The Owner/Landlord is not permitted to seek unpaid HAP from the tenant family. The tenant family's portion of the rent is not affected by the abatement. If/when abatement ends due to a passed reinspection, the HAP and URP that was not paid for the month will be issued for the month, but only for the days in the month after the abatement ended. Abatement periods usually last no more than a full month. If the abatement period ends with no passed reinspection, the tenant may be offered a voucher and RTA, unless the tenant is responsible for the failed inspection or unless the tenant is otherwise ineligible for a voucher.

## ***TENANT MOVE***

Generally, the HAP Contract runs concurrent with the lease. The family may move out only after the initial lease term, unless the owner agrees to release the household from the lease early and AMHA approves. At all times, the family must notify, in writing, AMHA and the owner usually 30 to 60 days in advance (depending on their lease requirements) prior to moving out.

## *OWNER TERMINATION OF THE LEASE*

The owner may terminate the Lease for the following:

- Serious or repeated violations of the terms and conditions of the Lease
- Violations of Federal, State or Local law that imposes obligations on the tenant in connection with occupancy or the use of the unit and the premises
- Other good cause, including
  - Failure to accept the offer of a lease addendum
  - Family history of disturbance of neighbors or destruction of property
  - Living/housekeeping habits resulting in damages to the unit
  - The Owner's desire to use the unit for personal or family reasons
  - Business or economic reasons, such as a sale of property, renovation of the unit or desire to lease the unit at a higher rent.

Please review the HAP Contract for further information. **Owners are expected to provide AMHA with a copy of any notices (examples: lease violations, notices to move, eviction, money owed to owner) given to the tenant.**

## *EVICTION*

We encourage all Landlords to become familiar with the Ohio Landlord Tenant Laws. If you have not been involved in the eviction process before, consider obtaining legal advice.

## *AMHA TERMINATION OF THE FAMILY*

Owners and tenants will be notified at least 30 days (typically) in advance when a family no longer qualifies to receive assistance through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. There are circumstances that could prevent AMHA from providing a 30-day notice of termination.

The following are examples of when the contract termination date could provide less than a 30-day notice:

- Tenant voluntarily removes themselves from the HCV program. The termination would be effective for the date the tenant removed themselves from the program.
- Head of household passes away and no one 18 years or older is in the household and eligible to become the new head of household. The termination would be effective for the last day of the month that the head of household passed away.
- Tenant vacated the property without having provided a notice that they were moving out of the unit. Their termination would be effective for the date the tenant vacated the unit.
- Tenant is set-out after a court eviction rules in favor of the plaintiff. The termination date would be same as the set-out date.