

# SHOULD YOU ACCEPT HOUSING VOUCHERS?



## *Housing Choice Voucher Program Landlord Benefits*

- You receive **timely and dependable payments** from the RHA, a public housing authority (PHA).
- **You will get your full rental payment.** When a HCV tenant's income permanently changes, the portion of rent paid by the PHA and the tenant is adjusted. This provides financial protection to you because the RHA recalculates its formula and ensures the landlord is still made whole.
- **You will receive regular inspections.** Many landlords appreciate RHA's professional, routine inspections because it provides an opportunity to check on the unit's condition. It can identify maintenance needs that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. Landlords that own or manage properties across wide geographies in particular tend to appreciate the value in having a routine, objective inspection of their rental units.
- **You may request annual reasonable rent increases.** Landlords may request a rent increase once every 12 months.
- **You have the opportunity to help** low-income elderly, disabled, and veteran households, as well as families with children by providing affordable housing. In Washoe County, more than 60 percent of vouchers serve elderly or disabled households.
- Landlords have a **single point of contact** at RHA to make communication a breeze.

### ⇒ **Myth-Busting** ⇐

***“Landlords can’t charge HCV participants the same rent amount as every other tenant.”***

False. Landlords can charge the full rent no matter who the tenant is. The RHA must determine that the proposed rent is reasonable and is not higher than units in that area with similar amenities.

***“HCV tenants are problem tenants.”***

False. Actually, HCV tenants are typically long-term tenants, living in a unit for 7-8 years on average. There are no documented statistics showing that HCV participants are any more likely to damage units or not pay rent than non-HCV tenants. Landlords use their own screening criteria and screen HCV tenants as they would any other tenant.

***“It’s difficult to evict an HCV tenant if they violate the lease.”***

False. HCV tenants are bound by the terms of their rental agreements and are subject to eviction as is any non-HCV tenant.

***“If you accept one HCV tenant, then all your units must be rented to HCV program tenants.”***

False. Renting unit(s) to HCV tenants does not further obligate you to rent to other HCV tenants. For each vacancy, follow your established policies for screening prospective tenants.

# Housing Choice Voucher Background

A HUD-regulated, locally issued Housing Choice Voucher is designed to assist low-income households by paying a portion of the fair-market rental cost of an apartment, duplex or single-family home.

A client's portion of rent/utilities is based on 40% of their adjusted monthly income, so someone with a monthly income of \$3,000 would pay about \$1,000/month toward rent. The Housing Choice Voucher covers the rest.

More than 60% of voucher holders are people with disabilities or aging Nevadans who live on fixed incomes.

There's a constant and rising need for housing in Washoe County and the long waitlists are a somber reminder of the unmet need for safe, stable, affordable housing. Between all waitlists and through natural attrition, about 350 new households move into the Housing Choice Voucher program or into public housing each year.

Though the waitlists are constantly moving, hundreds of people remain on them awaiting relief. If more landlords accepted Housing Choice Vouchers, RHA could more easily assist people each year.



## Other Landlord Benefits

The Reno Housing Authority Landlord Incentive Program protects landlords and their investments.

Landlords still get to screen and approve each and every applicant with a Housing Choice Voucher. What you can be assured of through RHA, though, is that we've already completed a background check. HCV clients will not have a violent or drug-related criminal activity within the last three years, and any of those activities older than three years are subject to an RHA review board.



- When a tenant vacates without providing proper notice
- When a tenant causes damage to the unit in excess of the security deposit
- When an eviction for cause is filed and executed through the courts
- When the RHA terminates housing assistance for violating program rules and/or family obligations
- When a tenant passes away while still under lease