

Housing Choice
Voucher Program

Briefing Booklet



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you the information you need to understand the Housing Choice Voucher program. To be successful in the program, it is important to understand how the program works and your rights and responsibilities.

More detailed information about subjects in this booklet can be found in EHA's Administrative Plan on our website at

http://www.evha.org/sites/default/files/page_attachments/final_admin_plan_effective_7.1.19.pdf

How to contact Everett Housing Authority

Main Office
3107 Colby Ave
Everett, WA 98201

Fax: 425-303-1175
Phone: 425-258-9222
Email info@evha.org

Website: www.evha.org

Everett Housing Authority uses a Rent cafe portal for all voucher wait lists and recertifications. The portal is online at <https://housing.evha.org/> Be sure to save your username and password for future use.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview	4
The Voucher.....	6
Voucher Size and Term.....	8
Leasing a Unit.....	10
How your Rent is Set.....	16
Request for Tenancy Approval and Move In.....	19
After you move in.....	20
Your Rights.....	21
Attachments.....	24
Talking to Property Owners	
Build your Rental Portfolio	
Rental Resume	
Are you a Victim of Housing Discrimination?	
A Good Place to Live	
Protect your Family from Lead in your Home	
Is Fraud Worth it?	
VAWA Notice	

Housing Choice Voucher Program Overview

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program provides rental assistance to eligible low-income individuals and families. The HCV program allows you to choose housing in the private rental market. You pay a portion of your income for rent to the landlord and Everett Housing Authority (EHA) pays the rest of the rent to the landlord. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) establishes rules and regulations for the program.

When you are determined eligible for the HCV program, you are invited to attend a briefing. The purpose of the briefing is to explain the program, issue the voucher and provide the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) packet. Receiving a voucher does not guarantee that you will be able to participate in the HCV program. You become a participant in the HCV program when your unit is approved by EHA and EHA enters into a Housing Authority Payment (HAP) contract with your landlord.

You are responsible for finding your own housing unit. Most landlords will require you to complete an application and have criteria for accepting or denying an applicant. Landlords may charge screening fees, holding fees or security deposits. The HCV program does not pay for fees or deposits, or limit how much landlords can charge.

Once you have found the unit you want to live in, you will give the RFTA packet to the landlord. The RFTA packet will be returned to EHA by you or the landlord. EHA will determine if the unit is eligible to be assisted by the HCV program, including conducting a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection. After the inspection has passed and EHA has determined that the unit is eligible to be assisted, you may move in and sign your lease.

The HCV program is a partnership between EHA, you and your landlord. We each have a set of responsibilities under the HCV program.

FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide all information requested by EHA
- Find suitable housing
- Take good care of your housing unit
- Abide by the terms of your lease
- Comply with the family obligations of the HCV program

EHA'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determine your family's eligibility
- Issue your voucher
- Explain the program to you
- Approve your tenancy
- Pay assistance payments to the landlord
- Make sure landlords and families comply with the program rules

LANDLORD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Screen families and determine their suitability as renters
- Comply with fair housing laws
- Make repairs to your unit and maintain the units to HQS
- Comply with the HAP contract between EHA and the landlord
- Collect the family's portion of the rent, security deposit and any other fees
- Abide by the terms of your lease including paying for utilities and services agreed upon in the lease
- Enforce the lease
- Not collect side payments from the family or charge more than approved by EHA

THE VOUCHER

Obligations of the Family

By signing your voucher and accepting housing assistance from EHA, you are agreeing to follow the rules of the program as listed in Section 4 of your voucher. If you do not, your housing assistance may be terminated.

The family must:

1. Supply any information that the PHA or HUD determines to be necessary including evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status, and information for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim examination of family income and composition.
 2. Disclose and verify social security numbers and sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
 3. Supply any information requested by the PHA to verify that the family is living in the unit or information related to family absence from the unit.
 4. Promptly notify the PHA in writing when the family is away from the unit for an extended period of time in accordance with PHA policies.
 5. Allow the PHA to inspect the unit at reasonable times and after reasonable notice.
 6. Notify the PHA and the owner in writing before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease.
 7. Use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be family's only residence.
 8. Promptly notify the PHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child.
 9. Request PHA written approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit.
 10. Promptly notify the PHA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit.
 11. Give the PHA a copy of any eviction notice.
 12. Pay utility bills and provide and maintain any appliances that the owner is not required to provide under the lease.
- B. Any information the family supplies must be true and complete.
- C. The family (including each family member) must not:
1. Own or have any interest in the unit (other than in a cooperative, or the owner of a manufactured home leasing a manufactured home space).
 2. Commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.
 3. Commit fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program.

4. Engage in drug-related criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents and persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.
5. Sublease or let the unit or assign the lease or transfer the unit.
6. Receive housing choice voucher program housing assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or a different unit under any other Federal, State or local housing assistance program.
7. Damage the unit or premises (other than damage from ordinary wear and tear) or permit any guest to damage the unit or premises.
8. Received housing choice voucher program housing assistance while residing in a unit owned by a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless the PHA determined (and has notified the owner and family of such determination) that approving rental of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.
9. Engage in abuse of alcohol in a way that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the other residents and person residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.

Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is a change or exception to a rule, policy, practice, or service that may be necessary for a person with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling or to fulfill their program obligations. In other words, reasonable accommodations eliminate barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from fully participating in housing opportunities.

All persons with disabilities have a right to request or be provided a reasonable accommodation at any time. EHA is entitled to get information to evaluate if a requested reasonable accommodation is necessary because of a disability. EHA may only request information that is necessary to evaluate the disability and/or disability-related need for the accommodation.

EHA can only deny a request for a reasonable accommodation if there is no disability-related need for the accommodation or if providing the accommodation would impose an undue financial and administrative burden on EHA or fundamentally alter the nature of the HCV program. You have the right to request an informal hearing if you disagree with the decision made by EHA about your reasonable accommodation request.

Common types of reasonable accommodation requests are noted throughout this booklet.

Adapted from

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/reasonable_accommodations_and_modifications

Voucher Size

The size of your voucher is determined by how many people are in your household. EHA is required to establish rules for determining voucher size. These rules are called occupancy standards.

Generally, EHA's occupancy standard is two people per bedroom. One bedroom is awarded for the head of household and spouse/co-head. Live in aides will be awarded one bedroom. Families where all members are unrelated disabled adults will be awarded one bedroom per adult.

Reasonable Accommodation

EHA may grant an exception to these standards if your family needs an additional bedroom for medical equipment or a family member needs a separate bedroom for reasons related to a disability, medical or health condition.

Voucher Size	Average persons in household	<i>Min-Max persons in household</i>
1 bedroom	2	1-3
2 bedrooms	4	2-5
3 bedrooms	6	3-7
4 bedrooms	8	4-9
5 bedrooms	10	5-11
6 bedrooms	12	6-13
7 bedrooms	14	7-15
8 bedrooms	16	8-17

Voucher Term

When you are determined eligible to receive a Housing Choice Voucher, EHA issues the voucher for a term of 120 days. The voucher states the beginning and end dates of the voucher term. You must submit a RFTA before the end of the 120 days.

If you do not submit a RFTA within the 120 days, one extension of 60 days may be granted. You must request the extension in writing before the expiration date of the voucher or the extension will be denied. If you do not submit the RFTA on or before the end date of the voucher, your voucher will expire.

EHA's decision to deny a request for an extension of the voucher term is not subject to informal review.

Reasonable Accommodation

EHA may grant extensions to the voucher as a reasonable accommodation if additional search time is needed to make the program accessible and usable by a person with disabilities. The extension period must be reasonable for the purpose.

Extenuating Circumstances

EHA may grant extensions to the voucher if it is necessary due to circumstances beyond the family's control. Examples of circumstances that may be considered are serious illness or death in the family, obstacles due to employment, and whether family size or other special circumstances make it difficult to find a suitable unit. You must make requests for voucher extensions in writing before the expiration date of your voucher.

LEASING A UNIT

EHA Jurisdiction

You may use your EHA voucher to lease a unit anywhere in Snohomish county. If you are interested in leasing a unit outside of Snohomish county, refer to the section on Portability.

Your Right to Fair Housing

Fair Housing is the right of all people to be free from discrimination in the rental, sale or financing of housing. The Federal and Washington state protected classes include:

- Sex
- Race
- Color
- Disability
- Marital Status
- Family status
- Religion and Creed
- Military and Veteran Status
- National Origin and Ancestry
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Examples of possible discrimination:

- A person is denied a rental and believes it's because of their sexual orientation, national origin, or family size.
- A person is told over the phone that an apartment is available. When they arrive to see it, they are told it is no longer available.
- After making a reasonable accommodation request to have a service animal, the tenant receives a termination of tenancy notice.

Fair Housing complaints must be filed with an enforcement agency. If you wish to file a complaint, contact your Certification Specialist and refer to the “Are you a Victim of Housing Discrimination” attachment.

Adapted from <https://www.voaww.org/fairhousing>

Source of Income Discrimination

On September 30, 2018 a new state law made it illegal for landlords in Washington state to discriminate against tenants based on their source of income including rental subsidies like the Housing Choice Voucher. That means a landlord cannot:

- Refuse to rent to you because you have a voucher
- Charge you more rent than someone who does not have a voucher (*unless it is a tax-credit property*)
- Tell you the unit is not available when it is

A landlord who uses the amount of your household income in deciding whether to rent to you can only count the portion of rent you are responsible for paying.

Adapted from the Northwest Justice Project 2018

Lead Based Paint

Many homes built before 1978 contain lead-based paint, which is poisonous if eaten. Children under the age of 6 are at the highest risk for lead-poisoning. Pregnant women, infants and children under the age of 6 should have their blood-tested for lead. The Community Health Center of Snohomish County (425-258-1830) offers blood-screening on an income-fee based schedule.

Refer to Lead attachment for more information and contact EHA immediately if testing shows that your child has a high level of lead in their blood.

Selecting a Neighborhood

The HCV program helps low-income families have more choice in where they live. Innovative research shows that where people live matters, especially for young children. Families who use their voucher to move to low-poverty, high-opportunity areas experience the following benefits:

Children...

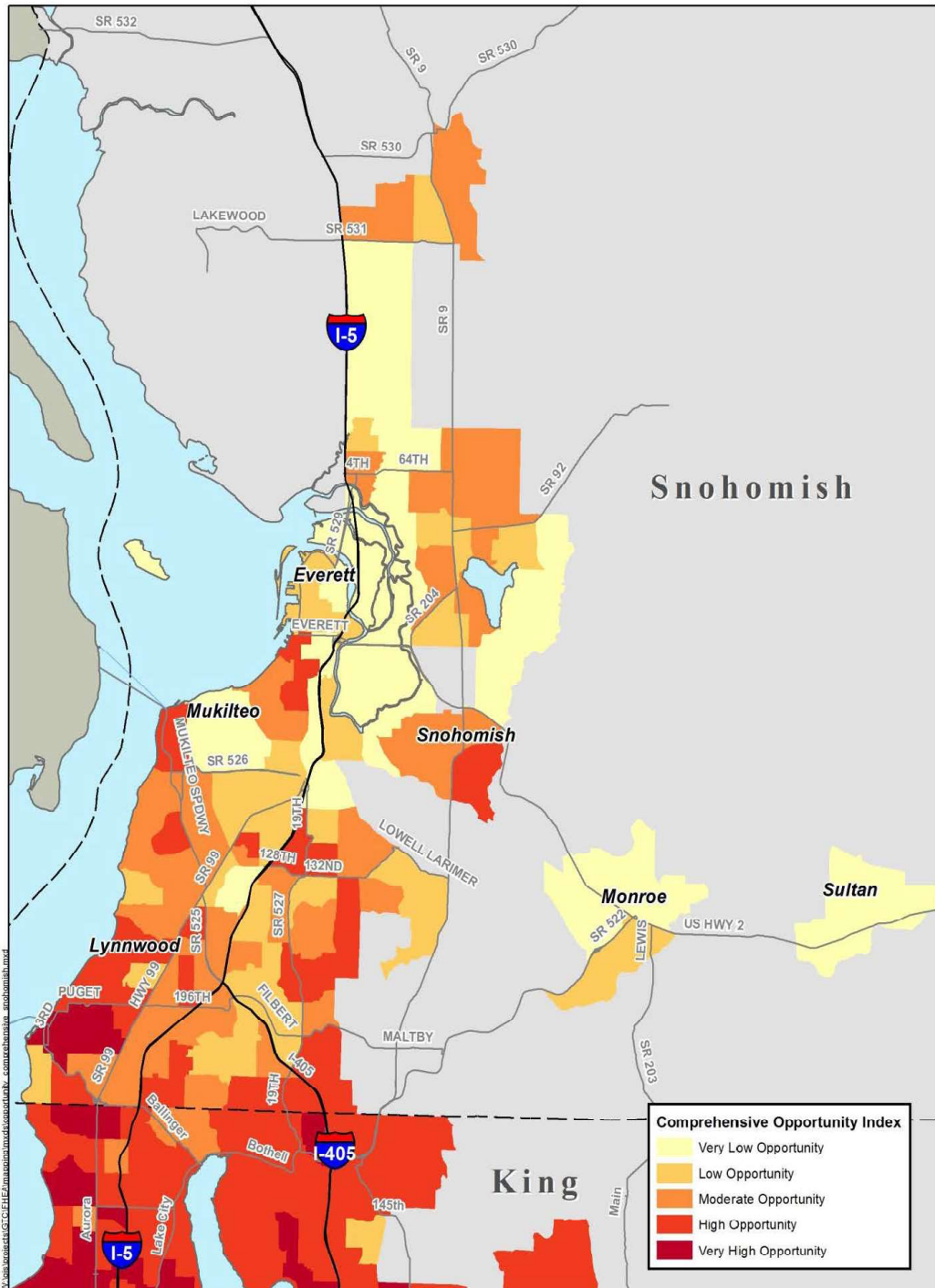
- Improve in reading and math
- Are more likely to attend college
- Earn more as adults
- Are less likely to become single parents

Adults...

- Experience fewer instances of major depression
- Experience greater happiness
- Have lower rates of obesity and diabetes
- Complete more of their educational goals

Adapted from <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/federal-policy-changes-can-help-more-families-with-housing-vouchers-live-in-higher>

Opportunity Map



Where to Start

Finding a unit to rent with your voucher can be an overwhelming process. EHA is committed to providing you with information and tools to help you use your voucher before it expires.

Online

EHA encourages landlords who accept the voucher to list their units on www.affordablehousing.com



You can also try using general housing search websites like:



www.apartments.com



www.craigslist.com



www.hotpads.com



www.trulia.com



www.zillow.com

Watch out for scams online! If a listing looks too good to be true, it probably is!

In Person

Many properties put up "For Rent" signs to advertise homes available to rent. You can look for signs when you walk, drive, or take the bus through neighborhoods and call the number on the sign to contact the landlord.

Adapted from CMTO in Seattle/King County

Contacting Landlords

Landlords want to know that you will pay your rent on time and take good care of their property. It's important to put your best foot forward anytime you contact a potential landlord.

Try the following tips for making a good impression:

- **Be prepared.**
Have the information and documentation you will need to fill out your rental application. See 'Build your Rental Portfolio' attachment for a full list of the information you may need.
- **Be on time.**
Showing up on time sends the message that you are reliable. If you are running late, give the landlord a call to let them know.
- **Dress to impress.**
Treat meeting a landlord like a job interview. Your clothes should be neat and tidy. Avoid clothes with rips and tears, pajamas and exercise clothes. If you are driving to meet the landlord, think about how your car looks. A messy car might make a landlord think you will be a messy tenant.
- **Sell yourself.**
Be pleasant and courteous whenever you talk to a landlord. Be prepared to talk about any issues on your credit or background. Have personal or rental references ready to give to the landlord. See 'Talking to Property Owners' handout for scripts to use when calling or emailing landlords.

Attachments: Phone script, Rental portfolio, Rental Resume

Landlord Screening

Landlords are responsible for screening tenants for their units. Most landlords will screen for credit, rental history and criminal background.

HUD requires EHA to give potential landlords families' current or prior addresses and the name and address of the owner at the families' current and prior addresses. EHA will not give any additional information to potential landlords, such as rental history or criminal history.

Security Deposits and other Fees

Landlords may charge screening fees, holding fees or security deposits. EHA cannot pay for fees or deposits. If you need assistance with funds for fees or deposits, contact 2-1-1 to find out which agencies may be able to help you.

To protect your security deposit, complete a move-in checklist and thoroughly document the unit's condition. Make sure that you and your landlord both sign the checklist and that you receive a copy. During your tenancy, make all requests for repairs in writing and keep a copy. At move-out, you can request a move-out inspection from your landlord or document your unit's condition by taking photos.

Your Rent to the Landlord

The portion of rent that you will pay in the HCV program is based on your gross income. Based on the income that you report and EHA verifies, EHA will determine the minimum amount you must contribute towards rent and utilities. This amount is called your Total Tenant Payment (TTP).

Your TTP will be the higher of the following:

- 10% of your gross monthly income
- 30% of your adjusted monthly income
- Minimum rent of \$50

Generally, the rent you pay to the landlord will be the difference between the Payment Standard and your TTP.

Hardship Exemption

If your TTP is the minimum rent of \$50, you may request an exemption from the minimum rent if you are unable to pay because of a financial hardship. You must submit the request for hardship exemption in writing and explain the nature of the hardship and how it has affected your ability to pay minimum rent.

Refer to Briefing Estimate for your family's minimum rent.

Payment Standard

EHA establishes the maximum amount of monthly assistance it will pay by unit size. These maximums are known as Payment Standards. Payment Standards are determined based on Fair Market Rents published by HUD.

Refer to the Payment Standard on your Briefing Estimate.

Utility Allowance

The voucher subsidizes your rent and your utilities (heating, cooking, electric, water, sewer and garbage). For each unit, a utility allowance is calculated. The allowance is based on average use of each utility. These allowances are reviewed once a year and adjustments are made to reflect current costs. The amount of your allowance is based on which utilities you are responsible for paying, the size of your unit, the type of your unit, the type of utilities and your voucher size.

The utility allowance is used when calculating your portion of rent to the landlord and in determining the maximum rent allowed for a unit. If your TTP is less than the utility allowance for your unit, you will receive a utility reimbursement payment from EHA each month.

Refer to Utility Allowance chart attachment.

Gross Rent

Gross rent is the rent for the unit plus the utility allowance.

Unit Size

You can rent a unit that is a different size than your voucher. The unit must be affordable with your voucher and must not cause overcrowding based on HQS standards. HQS allows for no more than two people per bedroom, plus two per sleeping area.

For unit affordability, EHA must use the Payment Standard and Utility Allowance for the lower of:

- Your voucher size or
- The actual unit size

Maximum rent

When you first move into a unit with your voucher, HUD requires that your portion of rent be less than 40% of your adjusted monthly income. If you choose a unit with a gross rent that is more than EHA's Payment Standard, EHA can only approve it if your portion of the rent and utilities is 40% of your adjusted monthly income or less.

If you turn in a RFTA with a rent that is not affordable, your Certification Specialist will negotiate with the landlord to see if they will lower the rent. If the landlord does not agree to an affordable rent, your RFTA must be denied.

Remember, selecting a unit with a gross rent that is more than EHA's Payment Standard means that your portion of the rent will be more.

Refer to the Maximum rent on your Briefing Estimate for your family's maximum.

Rent Reasonable

HUD rules require that EHA not approve a rent for a unit that is more than is charged for comparable unassisted units. EHA uses a program called GoSection8 to make this determination.

If EHA determines that the rent is not reasonable, your Certification Specialist will negotiate with the landlord to see if the rent can be lowered. If the landlord does not agree to a reasonable rent, your RFTA must be denied.

Lease terms

EHA will not approve an initial lease term of less than one year. After the initial lease term, the lease term does not need to be approved by EHA and can be any term that you and your landlord agree to (including month-to-month).

Portability

Portability in the HCV program refers to the process through which you can transfer or "port" your voucher when you move to a location outside EHA's jurisdiction (Snohomish county). You may port your voucher anywhere in the United States that has an HCV program.

If your family did not live in EHA's jurisdiction at the time of your application, you must reside in EHA's jurisdiction for one year before you can port.

If you port your voucher, you will be subject to the occupancy standards, payment standards and voucher term limits of the other housing authority, which may be different than EHA's. The other housing authority may also re-screen you using their own policies, which may be different than EHA's and could cause them to deny your request to move.

A list of neighboring housing authorities is available upon request.

Request for Tenancy Approval and Move In

When you find the unit you want, you must give the RFTA packet to the landlord. The landlord must fill out the packet completely and provide it and a draft copy of the lease to EHA. When EHA receives the complete RFTA packet, they must determine if the unit is eligible to be assisted by the HCV program.

What makes a unit eligible?

- The **owner** is eligible to participate in the program.
- The **unit size** is appropriate for the number of persons in the household.
- The rent is **affordable** for the participant, meaning that the participant's share of the rent does not exceed 40% of their adjusted monthly income
- The unit is in **decent, safe and sanitary** condition as verified by an HQS inspection conducted by EHA.
- The rent is **reasonable**, meaning it is not more than is charged for comparable, unassisted units in the area.

EHA will make its determination within 10 business days of receiving all required information.

When EHA determines that a unit is eligible, they notify the landlord and you that you can move in and sign your lease. The landlord will provide a copy of the signed lease to EHA, and EHA will sign a HAP contract with the landlord so that subsidy can be paid on your behalf.

You are responsible for paying your portion of the rent to the landlord each month, and for paying any utilities you are responsible for under the lease. EHA will pay your subsidy directly to your landlord through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Refer to 'A Good Place to Live' for more information about HQS Inspections.

AFTER YOU MOVE IN

Annual Recertifications

Every year, EHA must complete an Annual Recertification of your family. You must report who is in your household and all income, assets and deductions. All information you provide must be true and complete. You also must provide documents to verify all income, assets and deductions that you report. If you do not complete your Annual Recertification by the deadline or provide verification documents, your housing assistance may be terminated.

Reporting Changes to your Family or Income

While you are receiving housing assistance, you are responsible for reporting changes to your income and household. All income changes must be reported in writing within 10 days. If you report a change in income, your Certification Specialist may also request documents from you to verify the change. You must provide any documents requested or communicate to your Certification Specialist if you cannot get the documents requested.

If you add a child to your household by birth, adoption or court-awarded custody you must report it to EHA in writing within 10 days and provide documents to verify the child's date of birth and social security number.

If you want to add anyone else to your household, you must make a request in writing and EHA must approve them before they can move in with you. If you allow people who are not approved by EHA to use your mailing address or live in your unit, your housing assistance may be terminated.

Not reporting changes to EHA in writing may cause your housing assistance to be terminated.

Refer to "Is Fraud Worth It?" attachment.

Changes to your Lease or Rent

After the initial lease term, if your landlord wants to change your rent or the utilities you are responsible for under your lease, they must make a written request to EHA at least 60 days before making the change. EHA must determine that the rent is reasonable before approving the change.

Anytime that the portion of the rent that you must pay changes, you will receive a letter from EHA with your new rent amount. If the landlord is trying to charge you more than is stated in your letter, talk to your Certification Specialist.

Inspections

You must allow EHA to inspect your unit. EHA is required to inspect your unit at least once every two years but may inspect it more often. You will be notified in writing when an inspection is scheduled. An adult household member must be home during the inspection. If the unit does not pass the first inspection, a reinspection will be completed. If your unit fails because of something that is your responsibility, you must correct it, or your housing assistance may be terminated.

If you need repairs to your unit, you must request the repairs from your landlord. If the landlord refuses to make repairs or you have serious concerns about the condition of your unit that the landlord does not address, you may request that EHA complete a special inspection.

Moving with your Voucher

Generally, you may move with your voucher at the end of your lease term. EHA recommends that you make your request to move in writing at least 60 days before the end of your lease, to allow time for the RFTA process. You must also give your landlord proper, legal notice when you plan to vacate your unit and give a copy of that notice to EHA.

Your Rights if you are a Victim of Domestic Violence

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protections are not only available to women but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. If you are receiving assistance from EHA, you may not be denied assistance, terminated from participation, or be evicted from your rental housing because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking

Refer to attachment VAWA 5380 for more information.

Your Right to an Informal Hearing

EHA has an informal hearing procedure for you to dispute certain decisions. You have the right to request an informal hearing to determine whether an EHA decision relating to individual circumstances of the family follow the law, HUD regulations and EHA's rules.

You may request an informal hearing for the following types of decisions:

- A decision to deny or terminate assistance.
- A determination of the family unit size under the PHA's subsidy standards
- A determination of the Tenant's annual or adjusted income, and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment
- A determination of the appropriate utility allowance (if any) for tenant-paid utilities from the PHA utility-allowance schedule
- A determination to terminate a family's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) contract, withhold supportive services, or propose forfeiture of the family's escrow account.

You may not request an Informal Hearing to do the following:

- Review discretionary administrative determinations by the PHA or to consider general policy issues or class grievances.
- Review the PHA's determination that a unit is not in compliance with HQS
- Review the PHA's decision not to approve a participant's request for an extension or suspension of a voucher term
- Review a PHA determination not to approve a unit or tenancy
- Review the PHA's schedule of utility allowances for families in the program.

You must request an Informal Hearing in writing within 20 business days of the notice of EHA's decision. If you do not request an Informal Hearing in writing within 20 business days, you will no longer be entitled to an Informal Hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

Talking to Property Owners

Email Script

Hello, my name is [your name], I am inquiring about your rental property located at [state address or identifying info or state where you saw the listing and any identifying info]. I am interested in your rental because [explain what you like about the features or location]. I have a few questions about the listing:

- Is the rental still available?
- What utilities are included?
- [List other questions you have]

I can provide verification of ability to cover the rent and can provide positive rental references. I would love to set up a time and date to view your rental. I can be reached at [phone number] or by email at [email]. I am generally available [state a time and days that you are free], but if those times do not work for you, I will try to accommodate your schedule. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
[Name]

Phone Script

Hi, my name is [your name] and I am calling about the [number of bedrooms] bedroom apartment that I found out about on [share where you saw the listing, such as on a website, from a vacancy sign, etc.]. I have a few questions about the listing [ask some questions from the list below or use your own questions]:

- Is the rental still available?
- How soon will it be available?
- What utilities are included?
- What is the screening criteria?
- Are you offering a lease signing deal?
- What amenities does the apartment offer?

I can provide positive rental references and verification of ability to cover rent. [This is a good time to ask about things not listed in the rental listing.]

Ending 1 [if you are NOT interested in the apartment]: Thank you! I will call you if I have any additional questions.



Ending 2 [if you are interested in the apartment]: Thank you! Can I schedule an appointment to view this rental unit? I am available [day and time, for example tomorrow after 2:30pm, or all day Sunday].

Leaving a Message

Hi, my name is [your name] and I am calling about the [number of bedrooms] bedroom apartment that I found out about on [share where you saw the listing, such as on Craigslist, from a vacancy sign, etc.]. I can provide positive references and verification of ability to cover the rent.

I would love to speak with you about this rental unit. Please call me at [phone number]. The best time to reach me is [day and time, for example on weekdays after 5pm, anytime on the weekends]. I look forward to hearing from you.

Build Your Rental Portfolio

A Rental Portfolio tells a landlord about you. Having all your documents and information in one place will prepare you for housing search. Let's start by identifying commonly requested information, organizing your documents and tips on how to talk about your rental history.

Documents (For every adult in the household):

- Social Security number
 - *This allows the landlord to run a background check.*
- Driver's license
 - *If you do not have a license you can use a passport or state ID.*
- Income Source (i.e. paystubs and/or social security award letter)
 - *How often and how much do you receive each month?*
- Rental history
 - *Where have you lived in the last 5 years?*
- Employment history
 - *Provide your work history; you can use your resume.*
- Professional & personal references
 - *Who can give you a good rental reference?*
- Bank statements
 - *Show the last two months of banking information.*
- Credit and criminal history
 - *If applicable, check your credit and criminal history.*
- Vehicle registration and proof of insurance
 - *May be requested if there is a parking spot with the rental unit.*

Organization:

- Print out or collected hard copies of your documents (listed above)
- Place all documents in a folder or binder
- Label all documents for easy reference
- Bring extra copies of documents to landlord (by request)

Presentation:

- Be familiar with your documents
- Practice explaining your documents and history

Rental Resume

NAME

[Street Address, City State ZIP Code] | [Email] | [Telephone]

LOOKING FOR

[Clearly state the number of bedrooms, bathrooms and rental amount you are looking for. State the number of people in your household and why you are interested in the unit.]

Example:

We are a family of three looking for a 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom rental for \$1,000-\$1150 a month with at least a 12 month lease in the Beacon Hill area. We have received a Housing Choice Voucher and would like to find a new home by January 8, 2017.

ABOUT ME

[Briefly list all members of the household and their basic personal information]

Example:

Your Name: Born and raised in XXX, has lived in Seattle for the past # years. Previously worked as a XXX at XXX. Currently works part-time as a XXX while earning \$\$ a month. She spends most of her time at home with her family on the evenings and weekends.

House Mate's Name: Born and raised in XXX, has lived in the Bell Town neighborhood for XX years. Has received a fixed Social Security income since 1995 in the amount of \$\$\$\$. Enjoys cooking and volunteering at local food bank and church.

Child's Name: Born and raised in XXX, a typical # year old, currently attends school at XXX. He spends his free time playing sports, playing Legos and coloring.

Pets: We do not have any pets

EMPLOYMENT/ INCOME

[JOB TITLE] [COMPANY NAME]

[DATES FROM - TO]

[JOB TITLE] [COMPANY NAME]

[DATES FROM - TO]

RENTAL HISTORY | [Location][Dates]
Rent Amount

[Location] [Dates]

Rent Amount

REFERENCES | [REFERENCE NAME], [TITLE]
[COMPANY]
[Contact Information]

| [REFERENCE NAME], [TITLE]
[COMPANY]
[Contact Information]

Rental Reference Tips

A rental reference can be written by anyone who you have stayed with. They do not need to identify themselves as a friend or family member. Anyone can attest to the fact that you took care of the place you were staying, that you did not damage the place that you were staying, or that you did not leave owing money.

Example

Sally Joe, Windermere Property Manager

Current Residence: 1475 S Queen Anne Way Unit 2, Seattle WA 98452

Dates of Residence: December 2000 - November 2014

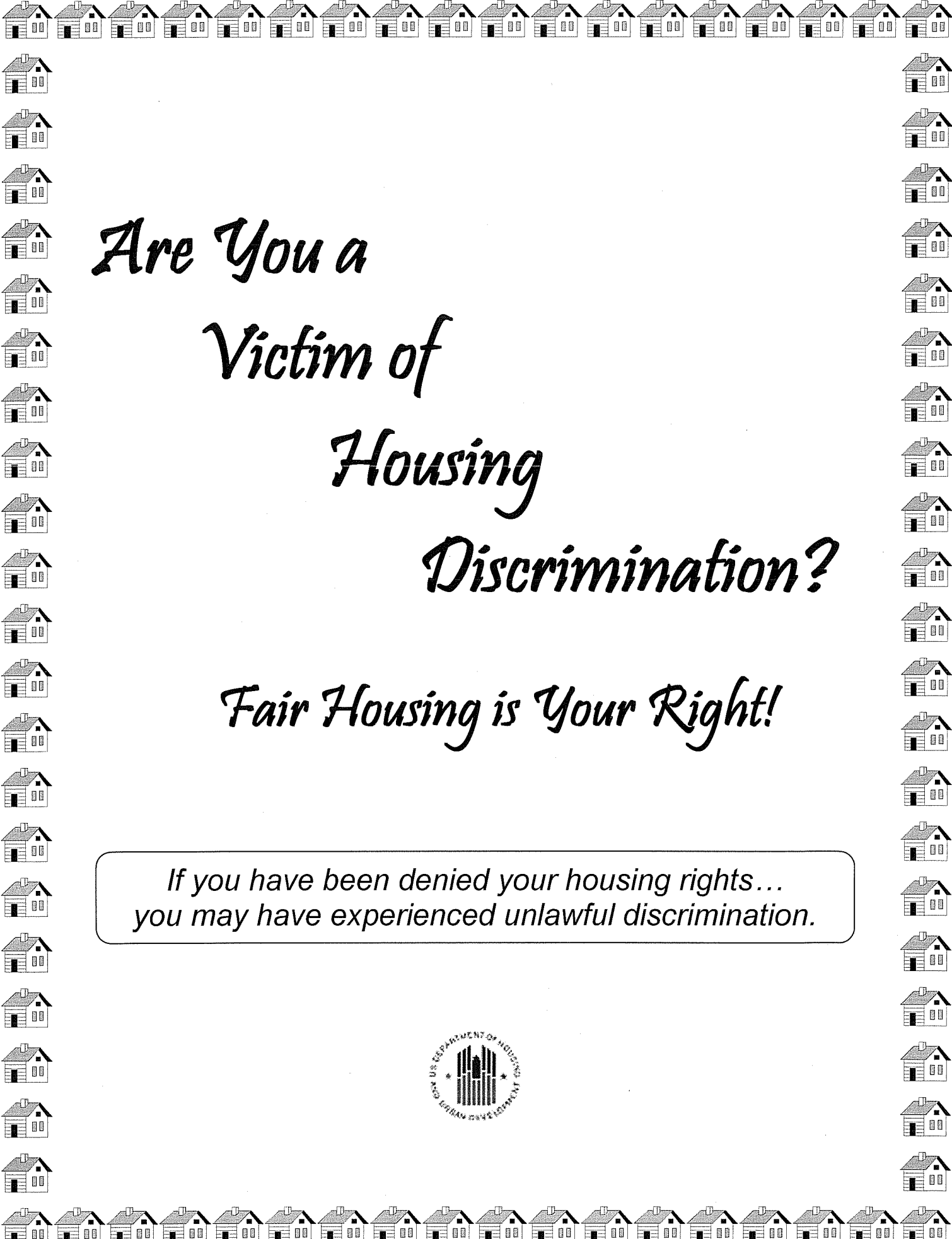
Landlord Phone Number: 206-777-1234

Billy Schmoe, Landlord

Previous Residence: 111 Second Ave Unit 2, Seattle WA 98441

Dates of Residence: December 2014 - November 2019

Landlord Phone Number: 206-888-1234



*Are You a
Victim of
Housing
Discrimination?*

Fair Housing is Your Right!

*If you have been denied your housing rights...
you may have experienced unlawful discrimination.*



WHERE TO MAIL YOUR FORM OR INQUIRE ABOUT YOUR CLAIM

**For Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts,
New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont:
NEW ENGLAND OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building
10 Causeway Street, Room 321
Boston, MA 02222-1092
Telephone (617) 994-8320 or 1-800-827-5005
Fax (617) 565-7313 • TTY (617) 565-5453
E-mail: Complaints_office_01@hud.gov

**For New Jersey and New York:
NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
26 Federal Plaza, Room 3532
New York, NY 10278-0068
Telephone (212) 264-1290 or 1-800-496-4294
Fax (212) 264-9829 • TTY (212) 264-0927
E-mail: Complaints_office_02@hud.gov

**For Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland,
Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia:
MID-ATLANTIC OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
The Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone (215) 656-0663 or 1-888-799-2085
Fax (215) 656-3419 • TTY (215) 656-3450
E-mail: Complaints_office_03@hud.gov

**For Alabama, the Caribbean, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Missis-
sippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee:
SOUTHEAST/CARIBBEAN OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Five Points Plaza
40 Marietta Street, 16th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303-2808
Telephone (404) 331-5140 or 1-800-440-8091
Fax (404) 331-1021 • TTY (404) 730-2654
E-mail: Complaints_office_04@hud.gov

**For Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota,
Ohio, and Wisconsin:
MIDWEST OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Ralph H. Metcalfe Federal Building
77 West Jackson Boulevard, Room 2101
Chicago, IL 60604-3507
Telephone (312) 353-7776 or 1-800-765-9372
Fax (312) 886-2837 • TTY (312) 353-7143
E-mail: Complaints_office_05@hud.gov

**For Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas:
SOUTHWEST OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
801 North Cherry, 27th Floor
Fort Worth, TX 76102
Telephone (817) 978-5900 or 1-888-560-8913
Fax (817) 978-5876 or 5851 • TTY (817) 978-5595
E-mail: Complaints_office_06@hud.gov

**For Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska:
GREAT PLAINS OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Gateway Tower II
400 State Avenue, Room 200, 4th Floor
Kansas City, KS 66101-2406
Telephone (913) 551-6958 or 1-800-743-5323
Fax (913) 551-6856 • TTY (913) 551-6972
E-mail: Complaints_office_07@hud.gov

**For Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota,
Utah, and Wyoming:
ROCKY MOUNTAINS OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
1670 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202-4801
Telephone (303) 672-5437 or 1-800-877-7353
Fax (303) 672-5026 • TTY (303) 672-5248
E-mail: Complaints_office_08@hud.gov

**For Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada:
PACIFIC/HAWAII OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
600 Harrison Street, Third Floor
San Francisco, CA 94107-1300
Telephone (415) 489-6524 or 1-800-347-3739
Fax (415) 489-6558 • TTY (415) 436-6594
E-mail: Complaints_office_09@hud.gov

**For Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington:
NORTHWEST/ALASKA OFFICE**

Fair Housing Hub
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Seattle Federal Office Building
909 First Avenue, Room 205
Seattle, WA 98104-1000
Telephone (206) 220-5170 or 1-800-877-0246
Fax (206) 220-5447 • TTY (206) 220-5185
E-mail: Complaints_office_10@hud.gov

***If after contacting the local office nearest you, you still have ques-
tions – you may contact HUD further at:***

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
451 7th Street, S.W., Room 5204
Washington, DC 20410-2000
Telephone (202) 708-0836 or 1-800-669-9777
Fax (202) 708-1425 • TTY 1-800-927-9275

To file electronically, visit: www.hud.gov

PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

MAIL TO:

Public Reporting Burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes 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.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is authorized to collect this information by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, (P.L. 100-430); Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (P.L. 88-352); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (P.L. 93-112); Section 109 of Title I- Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L. 97-35); Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, (P.L. 101-336); and by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. 6103).

The information will be used to investigate and to process housing discrimination complaints. The information may be disclosed to the United States Department of Justice for its use in the filing of pattern and practice suits of housing discrimination or the prosecution of the person(s) who committed that discrimination where violence is involved; and to State or local fair housing agencies that administer substantially equivalent fair housing laws for complaint processing. Failure to provide some or all of the requested information will result in delay or denial of HUD assistance.

Disclosure of this information is voluntary.



HOUSING DISCRIMINATION INFORMATION

Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano Oficina de Derecho Equitativo a la Vivienda
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

Instructions: (Please type or print) Read this form carefully. Try to answer all questions. If you do not know the answer or a question does not apply to you, leave the space blank. You have one year from the date of the alleged discrimination to file a complaint. Your form should be signed and dated.

Your Name

Your Address

WA

City

State

Zip Code

Best time to call

Your Daytime Phone No

Evening Phone No

Who else can we call if we cannot reach you?

Contact's Name

Best Time to call

Daytime Phone No

Evening Phone No

Contact's Name

Best Time to call

Daytime Phone No

Evening Phone No

1 What happened to you?

How were you discriminated against?

For example: were you refused an opportunity to rent or buy housing? Denied a loan? Told that housing was not available when in fact it was? Treated differently from others seeking housing?

State briefly what happened.

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION INFORMATION

Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano Oficina de Derecho Equitativo a la Vivienda
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

2 Why do you think you are a victim of housing discrimination?

Is it because of your:

· race · color · religion · sex · national origin · familial status (families with children under 18) · disability?

For example: were you denied housing because of your race? Were you denied a mortgage loan because of your religion? Or turned down for an apartment because you have children?

Briefly explain why you think your housing rights were denied and circle the factor(s) listed above that you believe apply.

3 Who do you believe discriminated against you?

For example: was it a landlord, owner, bank, real estate agent, broker, company, or organization?

Identify who you believe discriminated against you.

Name

Address

4 Where did the alleged act of discrimination occur?

For example: Was it at a rental unit? Single family home? Public or Assisted Housing? A Mobile Home?

Did it occur at a bank or other lending institution?

Provide the address.

Address

City

State

Zip Code

5 When did the last act of discrimination occur?

Enter the date

___ / ___ / ___

Is the alleged discrimination continuing or ongoing?

Yes No

Signature

Date

Send this form to HUD or to the fair housing agency nearest you. If you are unable to complete this form, you may call that office directly. See address and telephone listings on back page.



It is Unlawful to Discriminate in Housing Based on These Factors...

- Race
- Color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sex
- Familial status (families with children under the age of 18, or who are expecting a child)
- Handicap (if you or someone close to you has a disability)

If You Believe Your Rights Have Been Violated...

- HUD or a State or local fair housing agency is ready to help you file a complaint.
- After your information is received, HUD or a State or local fair housing agency will contact you to discuss the concerns you raise.

Detach here. Fold and close with glue or tape (no staples)

Keep this information for your records.

Date you mailed your information to HUD:

____/____/____

Address to which you sent the information:

Office

Telephone

Street

City

State

Zip Code

If you have not heard from HUD or a State or local fair housing agency within three weeks from the date you mailed this form, you may call to inquire about the status of your complaint. See address and telephone listings on back page.

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION?

“The American Dream of having a safe and decent place to call ‘home’ reflects our shared belief that in this nation, opportunity and success are within everyone’s reach.

Under our Fair Housing laws, every citizen is assured the opportunity to build a better life in the home or apartment of their choice — regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, family status or disability.”

Alphonso Jackson
Secretary

HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE HOUSING DISCRIMINATION?

Under the Fair Housing Act, it is Against the Law to:

- Refuse to rent to you or sell you housing
- Tell you housing is unavailable when in fact it is available
- Show you apartments or homes only in certain neighborhoods
- Set different terms, conditions, or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Advertise housing to preferred groups of people only
- Refuse to provide you with information regarding mortgage loans, deny you a mortgage loan, or impose different terms or conditions on a mortgage loan
- Deny you property insurance
- Conduct property appraisals in a discriminatory manner
- Refuse to make reasonable accommodations for persons with a disability if the accommodation may be necessary to afford such person a reasonable and equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.
- Fail to design and construct housing in an accessible manner
- Harass, coerce, intimidate, or interfere with anyone exercising or assisting someone else with his/her fair housing rights

A Good Place to Live!

Introduction

Having a good place to live is important. Through your Public Housing Agency (or PHA) the Section 8 Certificate Program and the Housing Voucher Program help you to rent a good place. You are free to choose any house or apartment you like, as long as it meets certain requirements for quality. Under the Section 8 Certificate Program, the housing cannot cost more than the Fair Market Rent. However, under the Housing Voucher Program, a family may choose to rent an expensive house or apartment and pay the extra amount. Your PHA will give you other information about both programs and the way your part of the rent is determined.

Housing Quality Standards

Housing quality standards help to insure that your home will be safe, healthy, and comfortable. In the Section 8 Certificate Program and the Housing Voucher Program there are two kinds of housing quality standards.

Things that a home must have in order approved by the PHA, and Additional things that you should think about for the special needs of your own family. These are items that you can decide.

The Section 8 Certificate Program and Housing Voucher Program

The Section 8 Certificate Program and Housing Voucher Program allow you to choose a house or apartment that you like. It may be where you are living now or somewhere else. The *must have* standards are very basic items that every apartment must have. But a home that has all of the *must have* standards may still not have everything you need or would like. With the help of Section 8 Certificate Program or Housing Voucher Program, you *should* be able to afford a good home, so you should think about what you would like your home to have. You may want a big kitchen or a lot of windows or a first floor apartment. Worn wallpaper or paint may bother you. Think of these things as you are looking for a home. Please take the time to read A Good Place to Live. If you would like to stay in your present home, use this booklet to see if your home meets the housing quality standards. If you want to move, use it each time you go to look for a new house or apartment, and good luck in finding your good place to live.

Read each section carefully. After you find a place to live, you can start the *Request for Lease Approval* process. You may find a place you like that has some problems with it. Check with your PHA about what to do, since it may be possible to correct the problems.

The Requirements

Every house or apartment must have at least a living room, kitchen, and bathroom. A one-room efficiency apartment with a kitchen area is all right. However, there must be a separate bathroom for the private use of your family. Generally there must be one living/sleeping room for every two family members.

1. Living Room

The Living Room must have:

Ceiling

A ceiling that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Walls

Walls that are in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging or leaning, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Electricity

At least two electric outlets, or one outlet and one permanent overhead light fixture.

Do not count table or floor lamps, ceiling lamps plugged into a socket, and extension cords: they are not permanent.

- Not acceptable are broken or frayed wiring, light fixtures hanging from wires with no other firm support (such as a chain), missing cover plates on switches or outlets, badly cracked outlets.

Floor

A floor that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes, missing or warped floorboards or covering that could cause someone to trip.

Window

At least one window. Every window must be in good condition.

- Not acceptable are windows with badly cracked, broken or missing panes, and windows that do not shut or, when shut, do not keep out the weather.

Lock

A lock that works on all windows and doors that can be reached from the outside, a common public hallway, a fire escape, porch or other outside place that cannot be reached from the ground. A window that cannot be opened is acceptable.

Paint

- No peeling or chipping paint if you have children under the age of seven and the house or apartment was built before 1978.

You should also think about:

- The types of locks on windows and doors
 - Are they safe and secure?
 - Have windows that you might like to open been nailed shut?
- The condition of the windows.
 - Are there small cracks in the panes?
- The amount of weatherization around doors and windows.
 - Are there storm windows?
 - Is there weather stripping? If you pay your own utilities, this may be important.
- The location of electric outlets and light fixtures.
- The condition of the paint and wallpaper
 - Are they worn, faded, or dirty?
- The condition of the floor.
 - Is it scratched and worn?

2. Kitchen

The Kitchen must have:

Ceiling

A ceiling that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Storage

Some space to store food.

Electricity

At least one electric outlet and one permanent light fixture.

Do not count table or floor lamps, ceiling lamps plugged into a socket, and extension cards; they are not permanent.

- Not acceptable are broken or frayed wiring, light fixtures hanging from wires with no other firm support (such as a chain), missing cover plates on switches or outlets, badly cracked outlets.

Stove and Oven

A stove (or range) and oven that works (This can be supplied by the tenant)

Floor

A floor that is in good condition.

Not acceptable are large cracks or holes, missing or warped floorboards or covering that could cause someone to trip.

Preparation Area

Some space to prepare food.

Paint

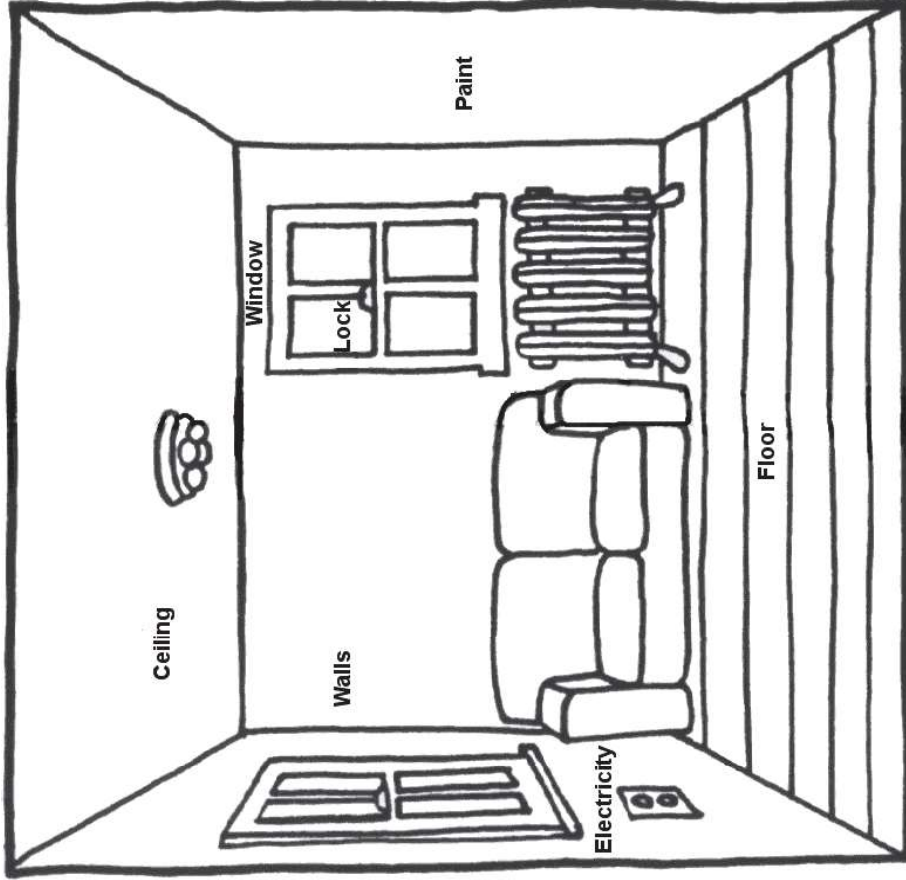
No peeling or chipping paint if you have children under the age of seven and the house or apartment was built before 1978.

Window

If there is a window, it must be in good condition.

Lock

A lock that works on all windows and doors that can be reached from the outside, a common public hallway, a fire escape, porch or other outside place that can be reached from the ground. A window that cannot be opened is acceptable.



Walls
Walls that are in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging or leaning, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Serving Area
Some space to serve food.

- A separate dining room or dining area in the living room is all right.

Refrigerator

A refrigerator that keeps temperatures low enough so that food does not spoil. (This can be supplied by the tenant.)

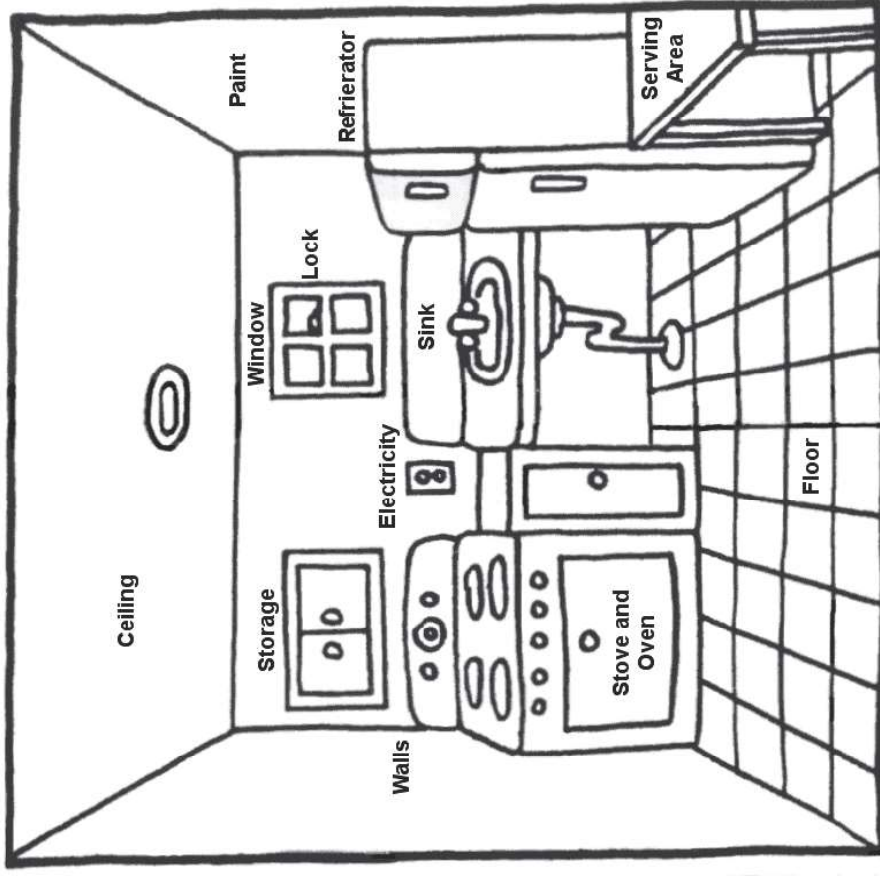
Sink

A sink with hot and cold running water.

- A bathroom sink will not satisfy this requirement.

You should also think about:

- The size of the kitchen.
- The amount, location, and condition of space to store, prepare, and serve food. Is it adequate for the size of your family?
- The size, condition, and location of the refrigerator. Is it adequate for the size of your family?
- The size, condition, and location of your sink.
- Other appliances you would like provided.
- Extra outlets.



3. Bathroom

The Bathroom must have:

Ceiling

A ceiling that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Window

A window that opens or a working exhaust fan.

Lock

A lock that works on all windows and doors that can be reached from the outside, a common public hallway, a fire escape, porch or other outside place that can be reached from the ground.

Toilet

A flush toilet that works.

Tub or Shower

A tub or shower with hot and cold running water.

Floor

A floor that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes, missing or warped floorboards or covering that could cause someone to trip.

Paint

- No chipping or peeling paint if you have children under the age of seven and the house or apartment was built before 1978.

Walls

Walls that are in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging or leaning, large amounts of loose or falling surface such as plaster.

Electricity

At least one permanent overhead or wall light fixture.

- Not acceptable are broken or frayed wiring, light fixtures hanging from wires with no other firm support (such as a chain), missing cover plates on switches or outlets, badly cracked outlets.

Sink

A sink with hot and cold running water.

- A kitchen sink will not satisfy this requirement.

You should also think about:

- The size of the bathroom and the amount of privacy.
- The appearances of the toilet, sink, and shower or tub.
- The appearance of the grout and seal along the floor and where the tub meets the wall.
- The appearance of the floor and walls.
- The size of the hot water heater.
- A cabinet with a mirror.

4. Other Rooms

Other rooms that are lived in include: bedrooms, dens, halls, and finished basements or enclosed, heated porches. The requirements for other rooms that are lived in are similar to the requirements for the living room as explained below.

Other Rooms Used for Living must have:

Ceiling

A ceiling that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster,

Walls

Walls that are in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes that allow drafts, severe bulging or leaning, large amounts of loose or falling surface material such as plaster.

Paint

- No chipping or peeling paint if you have children under the age of seven and the house or apartment was built before 1978.

Electricity in Bedrooms

Same requirement as for living room.

In All Other Rooms Used for Living: There is no specific standard for electricity, but there must be either natural illumination (a window) or an electric light fixture or outlet.

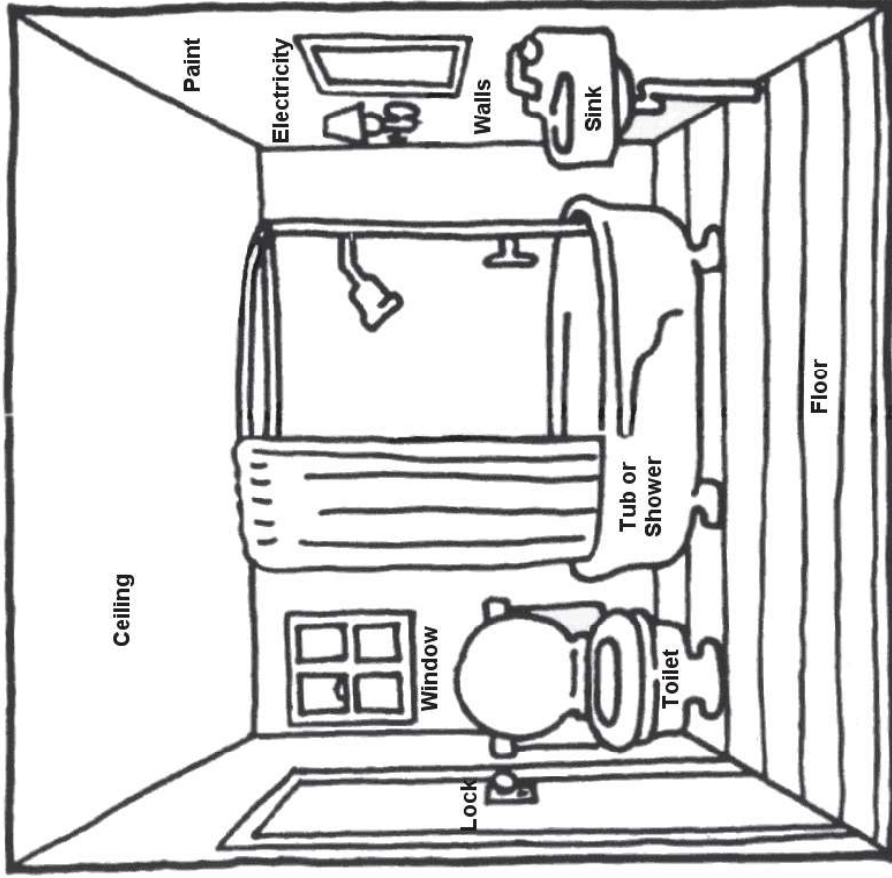
Floor

A floor that is in good condition.

- Not acceptable are large cracks or holes, missing or warped floorboards or covering that could cause someone to trip.

Lock

A lock that works on all windows and doors that can be reached from the outside, a common public hallway, a fire escape, porch or other outside place that can be reached from the ground.



Window

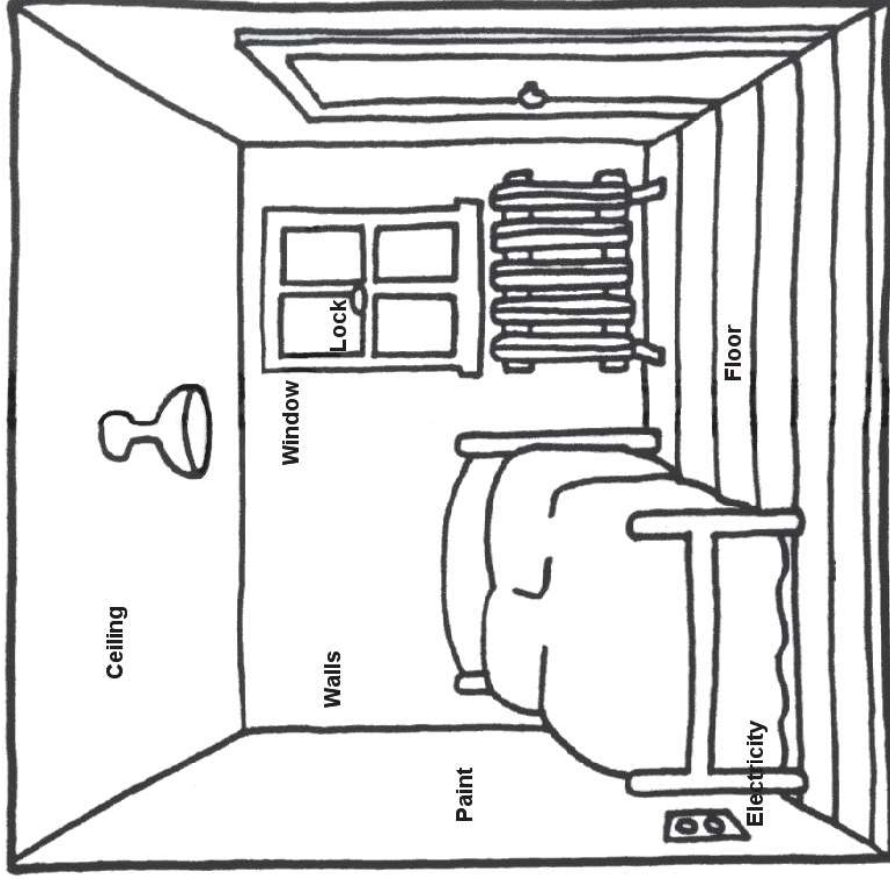
At least one window, which must be operable if it was designed to be opened, in every room used for sleeping. Every window must be in good condition.

- Not acceptable are windows with badly cracked, broken or missing panes, and windows that do not shut or, when shut, do not keep out the weather.

Other rooms that are not lived in may be: a utility room for washer and dryer, basement or porch. These must be checked for security and electrical hazards and other possible dangers (such as walls or ceilings in danger of falling), since these items are important for the safety of your entire apartment. You should also look for other possible dangers such as large holes in the walls, floors, or ceilings, and unsafe stairways. Make sure to look for these things in all other rooms not lived in.

You should also think about:

- What you would like to do with the other rooms.
 - Can you use them the way you want to?
- The type of locks on windows and doors.
 - Are they safe and secure?
 - Have windows that you might like to open been nailed shut?
- The condition of the windows.
 - Are there small cracks in the panes?
- The amount of weatherization windows.
 - Are there storm windows?
 - Is there weather-stripping? If you pay your own utilities, this may be important.
- The location of electric outlets and light fixtures.
- The condition of the paint and wallpaper
 - Are they worn, faded, or dirty?
- The condition of the floors.
 - Are they scratched and worn?



5. Building Exterior, Plumbing, and Heating

The Building must have:

Roof

A roof in good condition that does not leak, with gutters and downspouts, if present, in good condition and securely attached to the building.

- Evidence of leaks can usually be seen from stains on the ceiling inside the building.

Outside Handrails

Secure handrails on any extended length of stairs (e.g. generally four or more steps) and any porches, balconies, or decks that are 30 inches or more above the ground.

Walls

Exterior walls that are in good condition, with no large holes or cracks that would let a great amount of air get inside.

Foundation

A foundation in good condition that has no serious leaks.

Water Supply

A plumbing system that is served by an approvable public or private water supply system. Ask the manager or owner.

Sewage

A plumbing system that is connected to an approvable public or private sewage disposal system. Ask the manager or owner.

Chimneys

No serious leaning or defects (such as big cracks or many missing bricks) in any chimneys.

Paint

No cracking, peeling, or chipping paint if you have children under the age of seven and the house or apartment was built before 1978.

- This includes exterior walls, stairs, decks, porches, railings, windows, and doors.

Cooling

Some windows that open, or some working ventilation or cooling equipment that can provide air circulation during warm months.

Plumbing

Pipes that are in good condition, with no leaks and no serious rust that causes the water to be discolored.

Water Heater

A water heater located, equipped, and installed in a safe manner. Ask the manager.

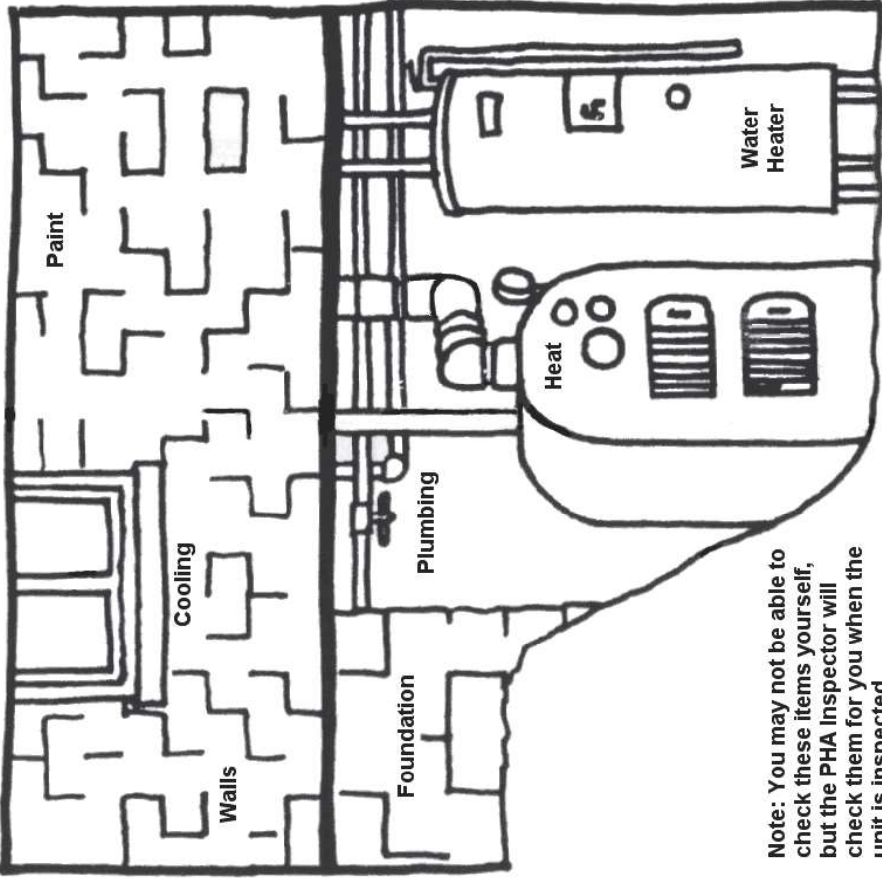
Heat

Enough heating equipment so that the unit can be made comfortably warm during cold months.

- Not acceptable are space heaters (or room heaters) that burn oil or gas and are not vented to a chimney. Space heaters that are vented may be acceptable if they can provide enough heat.

You should also think about:

- How well maintained the apartment is.
- The type of heating equipment.
 - Will it be able to supply enough heat for you in the winter, to all rooms used for living?
- The amount and type of weatherization and its affect on utility costs.
 - Is there insulation?
 - Are there storm windows?
 - Is there weather-stripping around the windows and doors?
- Air circulation or type of cooling equipment (if any).
 - Will the unit be cool enough for you in the summer?



Note: You may not be able to check these items yourself, but the PHA Inspector will check them for you when the unit is inspected.

6. Health and Safety

The Building and Site must have:

Smoke Detectors

At least one working smoke detector on each level of the unit, including the basement. If any member of your family is hearing-impaired, the smoke detector must have an alarm designed for hearing-impaired persons.

Fire Exits

The building must provide an alternate means of exit in case of fire (such as fire stairs or exit through windows, with the use of a ladder if windows are above the second floor).

Elevators

Make sure the elevators are safe and work properly.

Entrance

An entrance from the outside or from a public hall, so that it is not necessary to go through anyone else's private apartment to get into the unit.

Neighborhood

No dangerous places, spaces, or things in the neighborhood such as:

- Nearby buildings that are falling down
- Unprotected cliffs or quarries
- Fire hazards
- Evidence of flooding

Garbage

No large piles of trash and garbage inside or outside the unit, or in common areas such as hallways. There must be a space to store garbage (until pickup) that is covered tightly so that rats and other animals cannot get into it. Trash should be picked up regularly.

Lights

Lights that work in all common hallways and interior stairs.

Stairs and Hallways

Interior stairs with railings, and common hallways that are safe and in good condition. Minimal cracking, peeling or chipping in these areas.

Pollution

No serious air pollution, such as exhaust fumes or sewer gas.

Rodents and Vermin

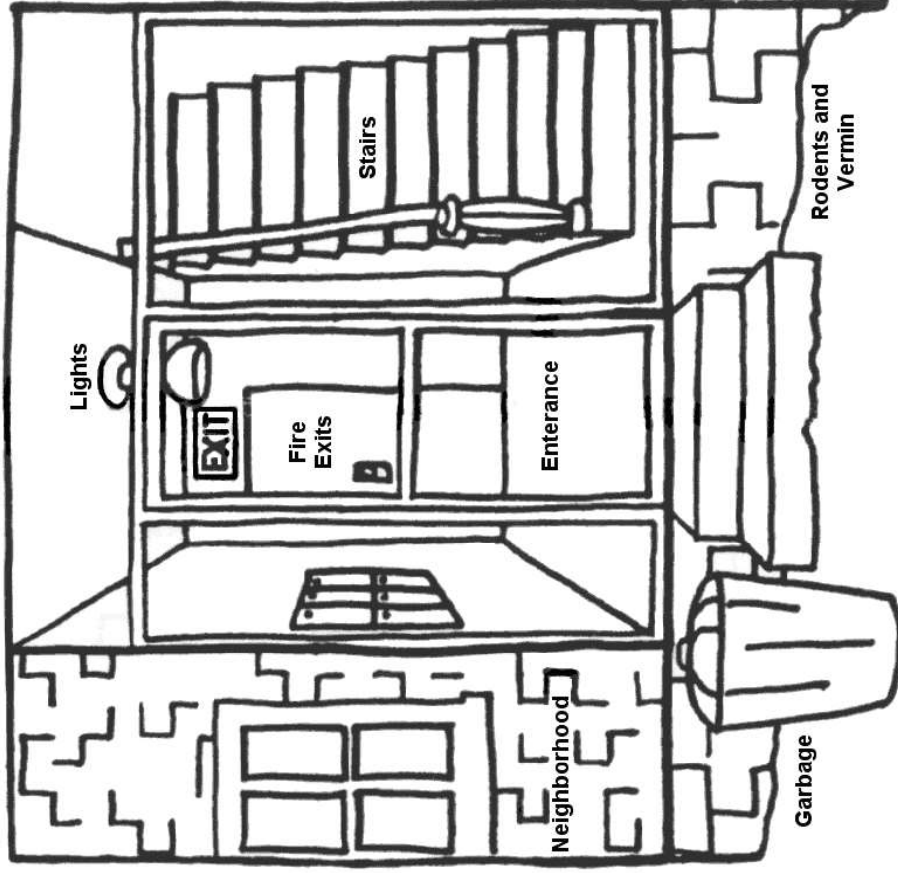
No sign of rats or large numbers of mice or vermin (like roaches).

For Manufactured Homes: Tie Downs

Manufactured homes must be placed on the site in a stable manner and be free from hazards such as sliding or wind damage.

You should also think about:

- The type of fire exit.
--Is it suitable for your family?
- How safe the house or apartment is for your family.
- The presence of screens and storm windows.
- Services in the neighborhood.
--Are there stores nearby?
--Are there schools nearby?
--Are there hospitals nearby?
--Is there transportation nearby?
- Are there job opportunities nearby?
- Will the cost of tenant-paid utilities be affordable and is the unit energy-efficient?
- Be sure to read the lead-based paint brochure give to you by the PHA or owner, especially if the housing or apartment is older (built before 1978).



Note: You may not be able to check these items listed here yourself, but the PHA Inspector will check them for you when the unit is inspected.

Now that you have finished this booklet, you know that for a house or apartment to be a good place to live, it must meet two kinds of housing quality standards:

- Things it must have in order to be approved for the Section 8 Rental Certificate Program and the Rental Voucher Program.
- Additional things that you should think about for the special needs of your family.

You know that these standards apply in six areas of a house or apartment.

1. Living Room
2. Kitchen
3. Bathroom
4. Other Rooms
5. Building Exterior, Plumbing and Heating
6. Health and Safety

You know that when a house or apartment meets the housing quality standards, it will be safe, healthy, and comfortable home for your family. It will be a good place to live.

After you find a good place to live, you can begin the *Request for Lease Approval* process. When both you and the owner have signed the *Request for Lease Approval* and the PHA has received it, an official inspection will take place. The PHA will inform both you and the owner of the inspection results.

If the house or apartment passed, a lease can be signed. There may still be some items that you or the PHA would like improved. If so, you and your PHA may be able to bargain for the improvements when you sign the lease. If the owner is not willing to do the work, perhaps you can get him or her to pay for the materials and do it yourself.

If the house or apartment fails, you and/or your PHA may try to convince the owner to make the repairs so it will pass. The likelihood of the owner making the repairs may depend on how serious or costly they are.

If it fails, all repairs must be made, and the house or apartment must be re-inspected before any lease is signed. If the owner cannot or will not repair the house or apartment, even if the repairs are minor, you must look for another home. Make sure you understand why the house or apartment failed, so that you will be more successful in your next search.

Responsibilities of the Public Housing Authority:

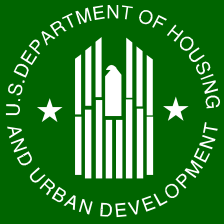
- Ensure that all units in the Section 8 Certificate Program and the Housing Voucher Program meet the housing quality standards.
- Inspect unit in response to Request for Lease Approval. Inform potential tenant and owner of results and necessary actions.
- Encourage tenants and owners to maintain units up to standards.
- Make inspection in response to tenant or owner complaint or request. Inform the tenant and owner of the results, necessary actions, and time period for compliance.
- Make annual inspection of the unit to ensure that it still meets the housing quality standards. Inform the tenant and owner of the results, necessary actions, and time period for compliance.

Responsibilities of the tenant:

- Live up to the terms of your lease.
- Do your part to keep the unit safe and sanitary.
- Cooperate with the owner by informing him or her of any necessary repairs.
- Cooperate with the PHA for initial, annual, and complaint inspections.

Responsibilities of the owner:

- Comply with the terms of the lease.
- Generally maintain the unit and keep it up to the housing quality standards outlined in this booklet.
- Cooperate with the tenant by responding promptly to requests for needed repairs.
- Cooperate with the PHA on initial, annual, and complaint inspections, including making necessary repairs.



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development • Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control

Lead



“Despite progress, lead poisoning remains one of the top childhood environmental health problems today.”

President’s Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children

Did you know...

- Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint?
- 24 million homes in the United States have peeling or chipping lead-based paint or high levels of lead in dust?
- Infants, children under six, and pregnant women should have their blood tested for lead?
- In the United States, children from low-income families are eight times more likely to get lead poisoned?

What is it?

Lead is a toxic metal used in a variety of products and materials. When lead is absorbed into the body, it can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs, like the kidneys, nerves, and blood. Some symptoms of lead poisoning may include headaches, stomachaches, nausea, tiredness, and irritability. Lead can also harm children without causing any obvious symptoms.

Both inside and outside the home, deteriorated lead-paint releases its lead, which then mixes with household dust and soil. Children can become lead poisoned by putting their hands or other lead-contaminated objects into their mouths, by eating paint chips found in homes with peeling or flaking lead-based paint, and from playing in lead-contaminated soil.

continued on back



Lead

In homes built before 1978, treat peeling paint as a lead hazard unless proven otherwise.



What can you do?

1. If your home was built before 1978:

- Mop smooth floors (using a damp mop) weekly to control dust.
- Vacuum carpets and upholstery to remove dust, preferably using a vacuum with a HEPA filter or a “higher efficiency” collection bag.
- Take off shoes when entering the house.
- Pick up loose paint chips carefully with a paper towel; wipe the surface clean with a *wet* paper towel.
- Take precautions to avoid creating lead dust when remodeling, renovating, or maintaining your home.
- Have it checked for lead hazards by a lead professional (including the soil).

2. For your child:

- Frequently wash your child’s hands and toys to reduce exposure.
- Use cold tap water for drinking and cooking.
- Avoid using home remedies (such as *arzacón*, *greta*, *pay-loo-ah*, or *litargirio*) and cosmetics (such as *kohl* or *alkohl*) that contain lead.
- Have your child’s blood lead level tested at age 1 and 2. Children from 3 to 6 years of age should have their blood tested, if they have not been tested before and:
 - They live in or regularly visit a house built before 1950;
 - They live in or regularly visit a house built before 1978 with on-going or recent renovations or remodeling; or
 - They have a sibling or playmate who has or did have lead poisoning.

For more information...

Visit HUD’s website at www.hud.gov/offices/lead for more information about addressing health hazards in homes or to learn if HUD has a Healthy Homes program in your community. From HUD’s website, you can download a copy of “Help Yourself to A Healthy Home” for more practical steps you can take to make your home a lead-safe home.

Other Federal Resources

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control
www.hud.gov/offices/lead or call (202) 755-1785

The National Lead Information Center
(800) 424-LEAD (5323)
www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/nlic.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
www.epa.gov/lead

U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration
www.osha.gov/SLTC/lead

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
www.cpsc.gov or call (800) 638-2772

Dust created by opening and closing windows is a common lead hazard.



Photo by: January E. Jones, Improving Kids’ Environment



APPLYING FOR HUD HOUSING ASSISTANCE?

**THINK ABOUT THIS...
IS FRAUD WORTH IT?**

Do You Realize...

If you commit fraud to obtain assisted housing from HUD, you could be:

- **Evicted** from your apartment or house.
- **Required to repay** all overpaid rental assistance you received.
- **Fined** up to \$10,000.
- **Imprisoned** for up to five years.
- **Prohibited** from receiving future assistance.
- **Subject** to State and local government penalties.

Do You Know...

You are committing fraud if you sign a form knowing that you provided false or misleading information.

The information you provide on housing assistance application and recertification forms will be checked. The local housing agency, HUD, or the Office of Inspector General will check the income and asset information you provide with other Federal, State, or local governments and with private agencies. Certifying false information is fraud.

So Be Careful!

When you fill out your application and yearly recertification for assisted housing from HUD make sure your answers to the questions are accurate and honest. You must include:

All sources of income and changes in income you or any members of your household receive, such as wages, welfare payments, social security and veterans' benefits, pensions, retirement, etc.

Any money you receive on behalf of your children, such as child support, AFDC payments, social security for children, etc.

Any increase in income, such as wages from a new job or an expected pay raise or bonus.

All assets, such as bank accounts, savings bonds, certificates of deposit, stocks, real estate, etc., that are owned by you or any member of your household.

All income from assets, such as interest from savings and checking accounts, stock dividends, etc.

Any business or asset (your home) that you sold in the last two years at less than full value.

The names of everyone, adults or children, relatives and non-relatives, who are living with you and make up your household.

(Important Notice for Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita Evacuees: HUD's reporting requirements may be temporarily waived or suspended because of your circumstances. Contact the local housing agency before you complete the housing assistance application.)

Ask Questions

If you don't understand something on the application or recertification forms, always ask questions. It's better to be safe than sorry.

Watch Out for Housing Assistance Scams!

- Don't pay money to have someone fill out housing assistance application and recertification forms for you.
- Don't pay money to move up on a waiting list.
- Don't pay for anything that is not covered by your lease.
- Get a receipt for any money you pay.
- Get a written explanation if you are required to pay for anything other than rent (maintenance or utility charges).

Report Fraud

If you know of anyone who provided false information on a HUD housing assistance application or recertification or if anyone tells you to provide false information, report that person to the HUD Office of Inspector General Hotline. You can call the Hotline toll-free Monday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Eastern Time, at 1-800-347-3735. You can fax information to (202) 708-4829 or e-mail it to Hotline@hudoig.gov. You can write the Hotline at:



HUD OIG Hotline, GFI
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

Everett Housing Authority

Notice of Occupancy Rights under the Violence Against Women Act¹

To all Tenants and Applicants

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) provides protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. VAWA protections are not only available to women, but are available equally to all individuals regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.² The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the Federal agency that oversees that **Everett Housing Authority** is in compliance with VAWA. This notice explains your rights under VAWA. A HUD-approved certification form is attached to this notice. You can fill out this form to show that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and that you wish to use your rights under VAWA.”

Protections for Applicants

If you otherwise qualify for assistance under **Everett Housing Authority**, you cannot be denied admission or denied assistance because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Protections for Tenants

¹ Despite the name of this law, VAWA protection is available regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

² Housing providers cannot discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. HUD-assisted and HUD-insured housing must be made available to all otherwise eligible individuals regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

If you are receiving assistance under **Everett Housing Authority**, you may not be denied assistance, terminated from participation, or be evicted from your rental housing because you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Also, if you or an affiliated individual of yours is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking by a member of your household or any guest, you may not be denied rental assistance or occupancy rights under **Everett Housing Authority** solely on the basis of criminal activity directly relating to that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Affiliated individual means your spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child, or a person to whom you stand in the place of a parent or guardian (for example, the affiliated individual is in your care, custody, or control); or any individual, tenant, or lawful occupant living in your household.

Removing the Abuser or Perpetrator from the Household

Everett Housing Authority may divide (bifurcate) your lease in order to evict the individual or terminate the assistance of the individual who has engaged in criminal activity (the abuser or perpetrator) directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If **Everett Housing Authority** chooses to remove the abuser or perpetrator, **Everett Housing Authority** may not take away the rights of eligible tenants to the unit or otherwise punish the remaining tenants. If the evicted abuser or perpetrator was the sole tenant to have established eligibility for assistance under the program, **Everett Housing Authority** must allow the tenant who is or has been a victim and other household members to remain in the unit for a period of time, in order to establish eligibility under the program or under another HUD housing program covered by VAWA, or, find alternative housing.

In removing the abuser or perpetrator from the household, **Everett Housing Authority** must follow Federal, State, and local eviction procedures. In order to divide a lease, **Everett Housing Authority** may, but is not required to, ask you for documentation or certification of the incidences of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Moving to Another Unit

Upon your request, **Everett Housing Authority** may permit you to move to another unit, subject to the availability of other units, and still keep your assistance. In order to approve a request, **Everett Housing Authority** may ask you to provide documentation that you are requesting to move because of an incidence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. If the request is a request for emergency transfer, the housing provider may ask you to submit a written request or fill out a form where you certify that you meet the criteria for an emergency transfer under VAWA. The criteria are:

- (1) You are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.** If your housing provider does not already have documentation that you are a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, your housing provider may ask you for such documentation, as described in the documentation section below.
- (2) You expressly request the emergency transfer.** Your housing provider may choose to require that you submit a form, or may accept another written or oral request.
- (3) You reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your current unit.** This means you have a

reason to fear that if you do not receive a transfer you would suffer violence in the very near future.

OR

You are a victim of sexual assault and the assault occurred on the premises during the 90-calendar-day period before you request a transfer. If you are a victim of sexual assault, then in addition to qualifying for an emergency transfer because you reasonably believe you are threatened with imminent harm from further violence if you remain in your unit, you may qualify for an emergency transfer if the sexual assault occurred on the premises of the property from which you are seeking your transfer, and that assault happened within the 90-calendar-day period before you expressly request the transfer.

Everett Housing Authority will keep confidential requests for emergency transfers by victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and the location of any move by such victims and their families.

Everett Housing Authority's emergency transfer plan provides further information on emergency transfers, and **Everett Housing Authority** must make a copy of its emergency transfer plan available to you if you ask to see it.

Documenting You Are or Have Been a Victim of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking

Everett Housing Authority can, but is not required to, ask you to provide documentation to “certify” that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Such request from **Everett Housing Authority** must be in writing, and **Everett Housing Authority** must give you at least 14 business days (Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal

holidays do not count) from the day you receive the request to provide the documentation.

Everett Housing Authority may, but does not have to, extend the deadline for the submission of documentation upon your request.

You can provide one of the following to **Everett Housing Authority** as documentation. It is your choice which of the following to submit if **Everett Housing Authority** asks you to provide documentation that you are or have been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- A complete HUD-approved certification form given to you by **Everett Housing Authority** with this notice, that documents an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The form will ask for your name, the date, time, and location of the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and a description of the incident. The certification form provides for including the name of the abuser or perpetrator if the name of the abuser or perpetrator is known and is safe to provide.
- A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial, or local law enforcement agency, court, or administrative agency that documents the incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Examples of such records include police reports, protective orders, and restraining orders, among others.
- A statement, which you must sign, along with the signature of an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider, an attorney, a medical professional or a mental health professional (collectively, “professional”) from whom you sought assistance in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or the effects of abuse, and with the professional selected by you attesting under penalty of perjury that he

or she believes that the incident or incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking are grounds for protection.

- Any other statement or evidence that **Everett Housing Authority** has agreed to accept.

If you fail or refuse to provide one of these documents within the 14 business days, **Everett Housing Authority** does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

If **Everett Housing Authority** receives conflicting evidence that an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has been committed (such as certification forms from two or more members of a household each claiming to be a victim and naming one or more of the other petitioning household members as the abuser or perpetrator), **Everett Housing Authority** has the right to request that you provide third-party documentation within thirty 30 calendar days in order to resolve the conflict. If you fail or refuse to provide third-party documentation where there is conflicting evidence, **Everett Housing Authority** does not have to provide you with the protections contained in this notice.

Confidentiality

Everett Housing Authority must keep confidential any information you provide related to the exercise of your rights under VAWA, including the fact that you are exercising your rights under VAWA.

Everett Housing Authority must not allow any individual administering assistance or other services on behalf of **Everett Housing Authority** (for example, employees and contractors) to have access to confidential information unless for reasons that specifically call for these individuals to have access to this information under applicable Federal, State, or local law.

Everett Housing Authority must not enter your information into any shared database or disclose your information to any other entity or individual. **Everett Housing Authority**, however, may disclose the information provided if:

- You give written permission to **Everett Housing Authority** to release the information on a time limited basis.
- **Everett Housing Authority** needs to use the information in an eviction or termination proceeding, such as to evict your abuser or perpetrator or terminate your abuser or perpetrator from assistance under this program.
- A law requires **Everett Housing Authority** or your landlord to release the information.

VAWA does not limit **Everett Housing Authority**'s duty to honor court orders about access to or control of the property. This includes orders issued to protect a victim and orders dividing property among household members in cases where a family breaks up.

Reasons a Tenant Eligible for Occupancy Rights under VAWA May Be Evicted or Assistance May Be Terminated

You can be evicted and your assistance can be terminated for serious or repeated lease violations that are not related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking committed against you. However, **Everett Housing Authority** cannot hold tenants who have been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking to a more demanding set of rules than it applies to tenants who have not been victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

The protections described in this notice might not apply, and you could be evicted and your assistance terminated, if **Everett Housing Authority** can demonstrate that not evicting you or terminating your assistance would present a real physical danger that:

- 1) Would occur within an immediate time frame, and
- 2) Could result in death or serious bodily harm to other tenants or those who work on the property.

If **Everett Housing Authority** can demonstrate the above, **Everett Housing Authority** should only terminate your assistance or evict you if there are no other actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate the threat.

Other Laws

VAWA does not replace any Federal, State, or local law that provides greater protection for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. You may be entitled to additional housing protections for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under other Federal laws, as well as under State and local laws.

Non-Compliance with The Requirements of This Notice

You may report a covered housing provider's violations of these rights and seek additional assistance, if needed, by contacting or filing a complaint with the **Seattle HUD field office**.

For Additional Information

You may view a copy of HUD's final VAWA rule at

<https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/5720-F-03VAWAFINRULE.PDF>.

Additionally, **Everett Housing Authority** must make a copy of HUD's VAWA regulations available to you if you ask to see them.

For questions regarding VAWA, please contact **Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County**.

For help regarding an abusive relationship, you may call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or, for persons with hearing impairments, 1-800-787-3224 (TTY). You may also contact **Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County**.

For tenants who are or have been victims of stalking seeking help may visit the National Center for Victims of Crime's Stalking Resource Center at <https://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>.

For help regarding sexual assault, you may contact **Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County**.

Victims of stalking seeking help may contact **Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County**.

Attachment: Certification form HUD-5382