

REALITIES OF SECTION 8

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE HOUSING
CHOICE VOUCHER PROCESS

FUTURE

PAST

PRESENT

WELCOME TO REALITIES OF THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER

Private Landlords

Be Prepared and Plan in advance

Unit Search

Renting in the Private Market

What are the Steps to Assistance

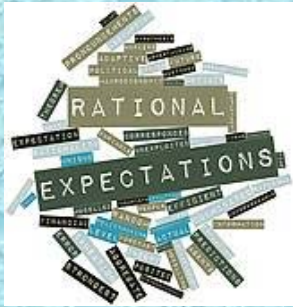
Inspections

Private Landlords

By renting to voucher holders, landlords help provide quality and affordable housing opportunities for families in our community.

A landlord is perfectly entitled, and even encouraged, to conduct a credit check on the tenant(s) and to contact past landlords for references in order to consider such background factors as bill payment history, respect for landlord property, relations with co-tenants, compliance with essential conditions of the tenancy, and involvement in drug-related activity or other criminal conduct.

You will have to comply with the rules and regulations of the HCV program as well as the terms of your LEASE.



What Should I expect renting in the Private Market

- ■ Landlord must be willing to enter into a contract with the housing agency and comply with the program rules.
- ■ Landlords will screen for rental history, credit check, and criminal background.
- ■ Landlords may request an application fee per adult.
- ■ Deposits charged may be up to one month's rent.
- ■ Updated photo ID's may be required.
- ■ Pet Deposits may be required.
- ■ Lawn and pool maintenance maybe required.
- ■ Utility costs maybe higher.
- ■ Landlords may conduct their own quarterly inspections.
- ■ Landlords will charge late fees for each day the rent is late.
- ■ Consideration of neighbors (e.g. section 8, market renters, owners, etc...)



How Should I Prepare for the Housing Choice Voucher Program

- **Most importantly stay in lease compliance with your current unit.**
- **Know what is on your credit report. www.freecreditreport.com**
- **Pay off bad debts.**
- **Maintain utilities in your name or adult member of household.**
- **Start researching areas where you want to move or best suits your family needs.**
- **Gather important documents such as social security cards, birth certificates, marriage license, divorce decrees, etc....**
- **Start deciding what goes with you, what stays, and what to give away.**
- **Ask questions and communicate with your Housing Counselor or Case manager.**

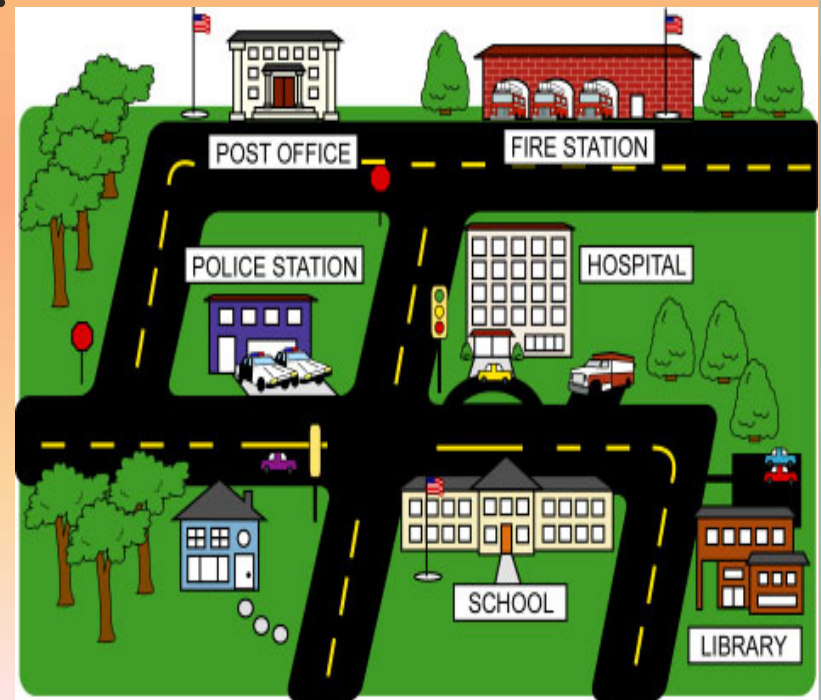
How to Locate Suitable Housing

- The THA refers all landlords to post units on www.floridahousingsearch.org
- Check the classified section of all local newspapers.
- Check the apartment guide.
- Check flyers.
- Drive through neighborhoods where you may want to live and look for yard signs.
- Check bulletin boards in laundromats and supermarkets
- Check with real estate offices or rental agencies. Some may charge a fee.
- Ask friends or neighbors.
- Bottom line is **YOU CHOOSE!!**



What should I look for in a neighborhood

- Is the area or building well lighted at night?
- Is there a place for children to play outside safely?
- What are the general conditions of neighborhood?
- Is there adequate parking for you and your guest?
- Is there public transportation nearby?
- Are you close to your job?
- Are the schools close?
- Are you close to shopping areas?
- Are you close to medical services?
- Is there a library nearby?
- Is there a church nearby?
- Is there a park nearby?



Evaluating a Unit

- Can you Afford the unit?
- Location? Are you close to work, school, family or transportation?
- What utilities are included?
- Is there an Homeowner's Association?
- Does the landlord provide pest control?
- Who maintains the yard?
- Is the unit clean and ready to move in?
- Are there restrictions on pets?
- Are there amenities and facilities for your family?
- Is there evidence that the unit has not been maintained or in foreclosure?



Be Prepared When you Apply for a Rental Unit

- Be prepared to ask and answer questions.
- Go early and look around the neighborhood.
- Don't prematurely ask, "Do you take Section 8?"
- Be prepared to furnish information about your rental history.
- Make sure present unit in good condition, so that your present landlord can provide a good reference.
- Language barriers, take a translator to the appointment with you.
- Make sure that you have your housing documents with you. Owners may ask to see your housing voucher.
- Check with Teco and/or water service for average billing amounts
- Sell Yourself!!!!

BY FAILING TO
PREPARE
YOU ARE PREPARING TO FAIL

Benjamin Franklin

Facts Related to Inspections



- An adult must be present for all inspections
- Initial inspections can take up to 15 days upon receipt of Request for Tenancy (RTA)
- Initial Inspection **MUST** pass prior to moving in
- Landlords may require their own quarterly inspections
- With proper notice, landlords have the right to enter a unit for repairs whether you are at home or not.
- Inspections are not rescheduled, unless you are hospitalized and or death in family (documentation required)
- You may have to move unexpectedly or choose another unit if your landlord fails to fix the deficiencies in a timely manner and unit is abated.
- Tenant failed items must be corrected to avoid termination from program

How to Keep the Housing Choice Voucher

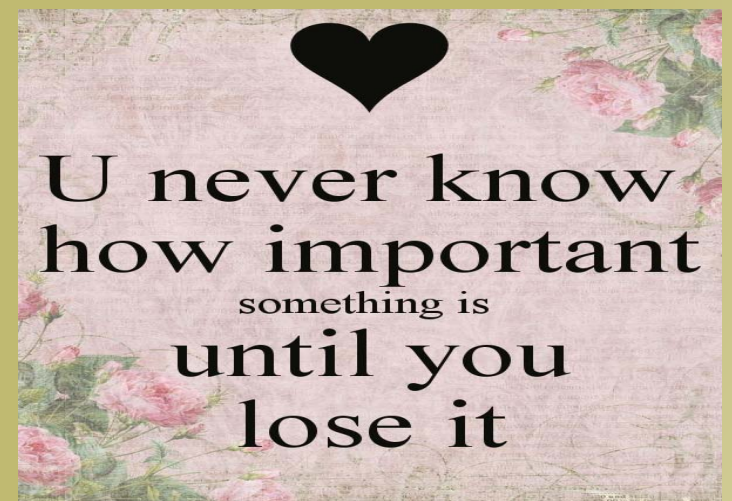
- **Comply with Family Obligations**
- **Provide complete and accurate information for all household members. Report EVERYTHING.**
- **Supply documents when needed, and attend scheduled appointments**
- **Find Suitable unit that is affordable**
- **Comply with lease**
- **Take care of unit**



**DON'T
EXPECT
DIFFERENT
RESULTS
IF YOUR
HABITS
ARE THE
SAME**

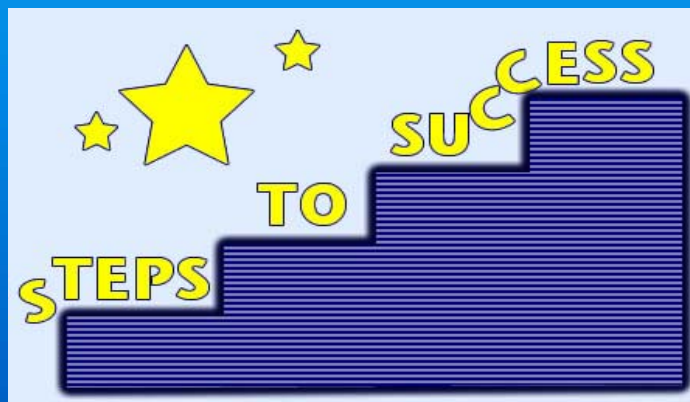
Ways to Lose Your Housing Choice Voucher

- **Unauthorized household Members**
- **Under reporting income or not reporting income at all.**
- **Subleasing the unit**
- **Not providing information or documents**
- **Not reporting changes in family composition or income.**
- **Not maintaining utilities**
- **Housing Quality Standard (HQS) violations**
- **Lease Violations (Pay Rent on Time)**



What are the Steps to Assistance

- **THA determines family's final eligibility**
- **Voucher briefing and voucher issuance**
- **Family decides where to live**
- **Owner approves family**
- **THA approves tenancy and unit (includes inspection)**
- **Contract and lease signed**
- **Housing Assistance Payments made**



Any Questions???

