

Section 8 Department

St. Clair County Housing
Authority (618) 277-3290

Briefing Packet



If there is anyone with
a disability which
requires assistance,
please let us know
before we proceed

Welcome To St. Clair County Housing Authority's (SCCHA) Section 8 Rental Assistance Program



We are pleased to offer you Section 8 Rental Assistance. The Section 8 Program is designed to assist you with rental assistance payments, while assuring that you are in decent, safe and well-maintained housing. In this meeting, we explain important information about the Section 8 Program and answer questions before you begin your search for housing.

The Housing Authority (HA) will:

- Establish your portion of the rent, which is based on 30% of your income.
- We will assure well-maintained and safe assisted housing by inspecting the unit initially and annually.

You Will Be Responsible For:

- Searching for your housing
- Paying your security deposit
- Cleaning your unit
- Reporting needed repairs to the owner
- Paying your portion of the rent to the owner

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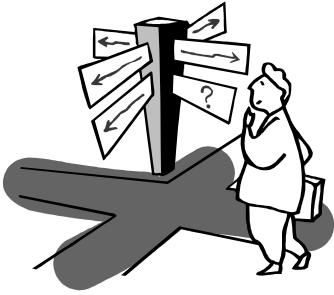
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The Land Lord Packet

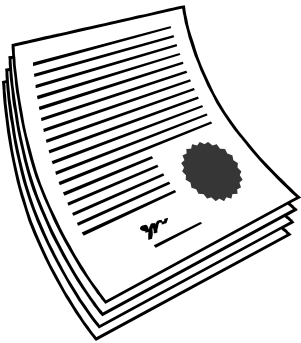
The Landlord Packet contains documents that need to be completed by the family and the owner before we can assist you with your housing payment. The landlord packet contains the following documents:

- Directions for completion of the forms
- Request for Lease Approval - owner and tenant to complete
- Lease Addendum- owner and tenant to complete
- Contract Part A - owner to complete
- Contract Part B - owner to complete
- Owner Information Sheet - owner to complete
- W-9/ Internal Revenue form- owner to complete
- Lead Paint Disclosure - owner and tenant to complete
- Pre-inspection Form- optional for completion by tenant and owner





Wondering who is Responsible For What? Read General Information about Section 8



Want to know about your Voucher? Read Voucher



Are you ready to start your search for housing? Read Search for Housing for suggestions.

General Information about Section 8

Here we have outlined your basic responsibilities, as well as those of the landlord and the SCCHA. Please make yourself familiar with this section.

SCCHA Responsibilities

- To inspect and approve your unit
- To annually review family size
- To issue payment to the landlord

Tenant Responsibilities

- To Search for Housing
- To Provide complete, accurate, and truthful income/family info

To pay the tenant portion of rent

Tenant Responsibilities cont....

- Adhere to lease
- Cooperate with annual inspection and recertification
- Keep appointments with SCCHA**
- Landlord Responsibilities**
- Comply with HUD/PHA requirements
- Screens and selects tenants (SCCHA only determines program eligibility)
- Maintains Property in compliance with HQS

Voucher

This document tells you:

- The number of bedrooms you are assigned,
- The dates you can search for housing
- The rules you must follow to continue participation in the Section 8 Program (additional rules from federal regulations may apply)

A family must submit a competed request for lease approval (RFLA) prior to the expiration of the voucher.

Once the RFLA has been submitted, the time on the voucher stops, or is suspended. If the unit is unacceptable for the program, the family will be given the remaining time on the voucher for when it was suspended to look for

Search For Housing

The St. Clair County Housing Authority includes the following areas:

- Alorton, Belleville, Brooklyn, Carondelet, Caseyville, Centreville, parts of Collinsville, Cahokia, Dupo, Fairview Heights, Fairmont City, Fayetteville, Freeburg, Lebanon, Lenzburg, Marissa, Mascoutah, Millstadt, New Athens, O'Fallon, Smithton, St. Libory Summerfield, Swansea, and Washington Park.

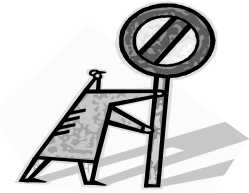
You can search for housing in any of these cities. An updated list of available units is posted every Monday at the SCCHA near the front desk after 1:00.

We recommend that you begin your search as soon as possible.

Restrictions on Renting to Relatives

The Housing Authority **cannot** approve a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother or any member of the

family, unless the HA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with a disability.



*Thinking of renting from someone you know?
Read Restrictions on Renting to Relatives first.*

Portability

You may consider searching for housing in areas outside of the St. Clair county jurisdiction. Portable means you may choose to move to another area that is not within the St. Clair County Housing Authority jurisdiction.

A list of housing Authorities located in the Metro East area is included in this packet. You are not, however limited to living within the Metro East.



*Thinking of living outside of St. Clair County?
Read Portability first.*

Grounds For Termination

The Housing Authority may terminate assistance to a family for reasons including the following:

- If a family violates any family obligation as stated in the voucher and/or federal regulations
- If any member of the family has ever been evicted from public housing
- If any family member commits drug-related criminal activity, or violent criminal activity
- If the HA determines that any family member is illegally using a controlled substance
- If the HA determines that any family member's abuse of alcohol interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
- If any family member commits fraud, bribery, or another corrupt or criminal act regarding any federal housing program
- If the family has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior towards personnel
- If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to the HA of another HA in connection with Section 8 or public housing programs
- If the family has not reimbursed any HA for amounts paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages or other amount owed by the family under the lease
- If the family breaches an agreement with the HA to pay amounts to the HA,



Have questions about a SCCHA decision?
Read Informal Hearings

Informal Hearings

The HA must provide program participants with the opportunity for an informal hearing to consider whether certain HA decisions are in accordance with the law, HUD regulations and HA policies. An opportunity for a hearing is required for HA decisions regarding the following:

- Determination of annual adjusted income to compute Housing Assistance Payment
- Determination of appropriate utility allowances for tenant paid utilities from HA utility allowance schedule
- Determination of bedroom size under the HA subsidy standards
- Determination that a certificate family is over-housed or that the family is denied an exception to the subsidy standards
- Determination to terminate assistance for participant family because of family's action or failure to act.
- Determination to terminate assistance because the family has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than HUD rules of HA policy allow.



Want to Request a Hearing?
Read Request for Informal Hearing Procedure

Request for an Informal Hearing Procedure

A participant in the Section 8 program has the right to request an informal hearing solely for the purpose of determining whether or not a decision to terminate assistance was in compliance with HUD regulations or HA

policies. The request for an informal hearing must be submitting in writing and must be received by the Housing Authority within 10(ten) days from the date of the notification of determination.

Need an accessible unit?
Read Notice to a Family w/ a disabled member



Notice to Family with a Disabled Member

A family with a disabled member has a right to reasonable accommodations.

The family may request a current listing of accessible units known to the Housing Authority.



Expecting a Change in family Size?
Read Notice of Changes to Family Composition....

Notice of Changes to Family Composition During the Search for Housing.

If you are searching for housing when a change in family composition occurs, you must report the change within 14

days of the occurrence of the change. This rule also applies when you become a participant family.

What Information will SCCHA share with prospective landlords?

Read Privacy Reporting



Privacy Reporting

We are required to provide information to prospective landlords about your previous

and/or current tenancy if this information is requested by a prospective landlord.

Security Deposits

You must be prepared to pay the security deposit; the Housing Authority does not assist with security deposits payments. The HA does not set or

establish the security deposit amount which the owner may charge. The rule states that the owner cannot charge any more than he would for a tenant on the open market.



*Questions about your Security Deposit?
Read Security Deposits*

Subsidy Standard

The HA has assigned the number of bedroom based on your family size. To avoid overcrowding, vouchers are issued

in accordance with the subsidy standards set forth below:

<u>No. of Bedrooms</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>	
	Minimum	Maximum
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8
5	5	10
6	6	12



*Have questions about the bedroom size on your voucher?
Read Subsidy Standard*

Our general policy indicates that a bedroom may be expected to be shared by at least two children of the same gender. Units will be viewed as not to require use of the living room for sleeping purposes. A separate bedroom will be provided for an

elderly dependent residing with a younger family. Exceptions to the occupancy standard are considered a physician or other qualified professional has provided documentation of the need for a separate bedroom or when city or local codes dictate a different occupancy standard.

Instructions for the Family

Begin your search for housing immediately. You may look for a house, duplex, or an apartment. There is valuable information in the booklet entitled "A Good Place to Live".

- Convenience for employment, schools and doctors
- The security deposit

When selecting your unit, consider the following:

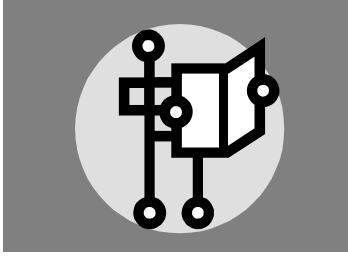
- The condition of the unit
- Utility responsibilities
- The location of the unit
- Public transportation accessibility

After you have found a unit you must:

1. Have the owner complete the landlord packet. The owner must provide a lease that contains word for word the lease addendum provisions. The Housing Authority does not provide a lease. In situation where there is a conflict between the... (continued on next page)



*What suggestions on what to look for?
Read instructions for the family.*



Instructions for the family continued?

owner's lease and the HA lease addendum, the HA lease addendum prevails.

2. Obtain a certificate of compliance from the appropriate city department or ask the owner for the copy. Monies paid for an occupancy permit are non-refundable.

3. Return the landlord packet and the certificate of compliance or occupancy permit to the Housing Authority office.

4. Once we receive your landlord packet, we will contact the owner to set up an inspection within 7 to 10 working days. At the time of the inspection:

*All utilities must be on at the time of the initial inspection and all routine maintenance must be complete.

*The Stove and refrigerator must be in the unit to pass inspection.

5. If the unit passes the inspection you may move into your new home.

* If the unit does not pass inspection, we will allow the owner 30 days to make the repairs.

* If the owner cannot make the need repairs, you may contact the office and begin the process again, provided there is time remaining on your voucher.



Still have questions?
Read Commonly Asked
Question for answers.

Commonly Asked Questions

These are not all-inclusive solutions, but merely suggests for how to handle various situations that may occur. The Section 8 staff is available to assist with additional concerns or problems.

Q: What should I do before signing a lease?

A: Conduct a personal inspection of the unit;

The inspector does not look for cosmetic beauty. Make sure you want to live there because the lease requires occupancy for one year.

Read the lease: make sure you understand your obligations.

Q: May I move into the unit as soon as I find one?

A: The Housing Authority cannot tell you and the owner what date you may move in. **But we can tell you when we will begin the contract.** If you are already in place, we will begin the contract and payment on the first of the following month. **If the unit has not passed this agency's inspection and you have moved into the unit, you are responsible for that rent.**

Q: What happens if I cannot pay my rent?

A: Always pay your rent. As much as we would like to end on that note, we realize there are times when situations may prevent you from complying. The decision as to what happens depends on the owner.

Some owners choose to evict immediately. **Contact your landlord and resolve the problem.** Serious or repeated violation of the lease such as eviction for non-payment of rent or utilities that are shut off, or damage to unit beyond normal wear and tear can result in termination of the assistance.

Q: What procedure should I follow if repairs are needed?

A: Contact the owner. If the owner has not responded in a timely manner, write a letter to the landlord that explains the problem and send a copy of that same letter to the Housing Authority Inspection Manager.

A word of caution: if you caused the damages, you are responsible for the repairs.

Never withhold rent based on needed repairs to the unit.

Q: What should I do if someone wants to move in with me?

(Continued on next page)

A: You must request approval to add any member to your unit. The Housing Authority **and** the owner must give you permission before anyone moves into your unit.

Promptly notify the HA in writing of the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child.

Q: What should I do if someone moves out of the home?

A: Promptly notify the HA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit. Documentation of the former member's new residence will be required.

Q: What should I do when my income changes?

A: A decrease in income should be reported, in writing, within 14 days of the change.

Q: What should I do if I want to move?

A: During the first year of the lease

you are obligated to the unit for one year. If problems develop, all parties (the owner, the tenant, and the Housing Authority) must agree to rescind or break the lease.

Q: What should I do in order to get my security deposit back when I move?

A: Return the unit to the owner in good condition; clean the unit thoroughly and return the keys.

Q: What must I do to keep my Section 8 Housing?

A: **Follow the rules and regulations of the housing program and adhere to the lease.** Each year, the Housing Authority is required to complete an annual reexamination. This is simply a review of your income and family size to determine that you are in the appropriate sized unit and to determine that your rent is consistent with your income. **It is essential that you keep scheduled appointments with our office and the inspector**

St. Clair County
Housing Authority
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(618) 355-4046

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.sccha.org

We hope the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program will be a great benefit to you and your family and that your experience with us will be a pleasant one. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call our office.

Section 8 Staff

General Phone Number

(618) 277-3290

Extensions

Extensions

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Queen Hoyle 3269

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Sameka Cross..... 3128
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Shanae Galliday..... 3421
Sheila Carr 3129

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Herman Gray 3236
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Inspection Manager

Charlie Herr 3240

Program Manager

Pamela Jackson..... 3126

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