

Protect Your Valuable Voucher

To keep your voucher, you must **know & follow** the Section 8

Duty to Report Changes

Section 8 rules require you to report increased income within 10 days after you start receiving the new income.

- It is your job to report the income. It is Section 8's job to verify your income by getting documents from your employer or other income source. If you report an income change, take your documents to the office.
- If you report new income late, Section 8 can backdate your rent increase to when it would have started if you had reported it on time.

But

If you lose income and delay reporting, your lower rent will not be back dated. It should go down the month after you report.

Communicate

- Report all changes in your income & family composition within 10 days.
- Respond to Section 8 letters promptly. Provide requested information if you have it or explain why you can't provide it.
- **Put everything in writing — don't depend on phone messages.**
- Keep a copy of all papers you give to & get from Section 8.
- Keep appointments — and call ahead of time if you can't make it.

What NOT to Do

- Don't Miss a rent payment.
- Don't let persons live in your home if they are not listed on your voucher. This is called an "unauthorized occupant"
- Don't let friends or family "use your address" for any purpose
- Don't Damage the property
- Don't Do drugs or commit other crimes
- Don't Disturb your neighbors
- Don't disconnect your utilities

Crimes & Drugs

Like public housing, Section 8 has rules against crimes involving violence or drugs.

And even if your grandson or friend is the one who got the ticket, your voucher could be terminated if they either lived with you or did something illegal at your home.

Your landlord is not allowed to:

- Demand that you pay more than your Section 8 rent share or make other side payments
- Demand that you pay Section 8's share of the rent
- Fail to make repairs

Tell your housing specialist if the landlord does any of these things. If you need help to get these issues resolved, call Legal Aid at 513-241-9400.

Not Legal Advice. Legal Aid provides this information to help you understand Ohio laws and procedures.

Voucher Termination

When Section 8 believes you have broken the rules, it will send you a termination notice.

The notice must explain why you are being terminated and how to appeal if you want to fight the termination. If you appeal:

- Act fast. The termination notice will give you a deadline for appealing, usually only 10 days.
- If you appeal, Section 8 will schedule an “informal hearing”—which is like a trial.
- The hearing will generally be around a table at the Section 8 office. A housing authority “hearing officer” acts as judge, hears from both you and the Section 8 representative, and decides whether to terminate your voucher.
- Section 8 must continue paying your landlord until the hearing officer issues.

What happens when your Landlord fails a Section 8 inspection

Rent Abatement

Section 8 will pay your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) as long as the landlord maintains the premises in good condition.

Your landlord is legally responsible for making all repairs to your apartment. If you ask for a repair, and your landlord won't make the repair, you can call Section 8 or your local building or health department for an inspection. If your landlord fails the inspection, you may have to move.

Here's what should happen if the landlord fails a Section 8 inspection:

- The inspector gives the landlord a deadline to make repairs.
- If repairs aren't complete, Section 8 may suspend the rent payments. This is called “abatement.”
- Payments will resume only after your home passes another inspection. Section 8 will not pay

the landlord rent for months that have been abated.

- The landlord is not allowed to demand that you pay the Section 8 share of rent.
- You **MUST** continue paying your share of the rent to the landlord during the abatement process.
- If the landlord cannot pass an inspection, you will have to move with your voucher.

Contract Termination

If abatement does not work, the housing authority will terminate its contract with your landlord. This also terminates your lease.

- Section 8 should issue you a new voucher and give you a deadline to place it with a new landlord.
- If you stay in the home after the termination date, you may be responsible for paying the full market rent.

Rent Adjustments

Your share of Section 8 rent is usually about 30% of your income and should never be more than 40%. This includes an allowance for any utilities you are responsible for paying. When your income goes up, your rent should go up, and when your income goes down, your rent should go down.

Rent Adjustment Delayed or Rent Too High?

- Contact your Housing Specialist.
- If Not Resolved:
- Ask Section 8 for an Informal hearing.
 - Put your request in writing.
 - Collect all papers you need to document your income.
 - Call Legal Aid if you need help at 513-241- 9400