



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS**

### **Voucher Extensions**

The initial term of a voucher is sixty (60) days. Requests for extensions must be made in writing and submitted to THA at least five (5) days prior to the stated expiration date. The request must state the reason(s) the extension is needed. You will receive an extension approval/denial response by mail.

### **Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA)**

This is the packet that you and your landlord complete and submit to your Housing Coordinator in order to receive an inspection for the unit you have chosen. The RFTA must be complete and submitted prior to your voucher expiration. It takes 10 – 15 business days to process an RFTA and your **landlord** will then be contacted with an inspection date and time. You will not be notified of the inspection date – stay in contact with your landlord for this information. Once your inspection is complete and the RFTA is approved you will need to take possession (receive the keys) of the unit from the landlord. THA will not return phone calls to confirm that your paperwork was submitted by your landlord or when your inspection will be prior to the 15 business days.

THA will begin paying assistance on your behalf once the unit passes inspection or you move into the unit, whichever date is later. If you move in prior to the unit passing inspection, you will be responsible for the entire rent until the unit does pass the inspection.

If you need a new RFTA please leave a voice mail indicating that you need one mailed to you and indicate the mailing address you wish for it to be sent to. A new packet will be sent to you within 24 hours.

### **Inspections**

You will not be contacted for your inspection. The inspectors will contact your landlord within 10-15 business days to schedule your inspection. If your unit fails the first inspection, the landlord will be given a list of repairs which must be completed, and they must contact the inspector and pass the 2<sup>nd</sup> inspection within 15 days. THA will not return phone calls requesting status of an inspection.

### **Income Changes**

Income changes must be submitted in writing. However, any income change will not be processed until after your move in and your file is complete. Your file will then be

transferred to a Housing Coordinator and you will be contacted in writing to process your income change.

### **Your Portion of Rent**

You and your landlord will receive **written** notification indicating what portion of rent THA will pay and what portion you will pay once the RFTA is processed and approved. We are unable to determine your portion of rent prior to the approval. We will not return phone calls requesting your portion of the rent amounts; you will receive a letter indicating these amounts.

### **Portability**

**You must have a Tulsa address at the time of your original application to be considered for portability.** If you choose to exercise the portability option of your voucher you will need to submit a written request for portability to THA that includes the following information for the housing authority you wish to transfer to:

- Name of housing authority
- Contact name
- Mailing address
- Phone number
- Fax number

Once the completed written request is received and approved, your paperwork will be sent (faxed and mailed) to the requested housing authority within 10 – 20 business days. It will be your responsibility to contact the receiving housing authority for an appointment there. **Please know that once your voucher is transferred to the new housing authority, THA can no longer assist you with your housing needs unless your voucher is returned to us from the other housing authority.**

### **Utility Allowance**

A Utility Allowance is the Housing Authority's estimate of the average monthly utility bills for an energy conscious household. If all utilities are included in the rent, there is no utility allowance. The utility allowance will vary by unit size and type of utilities. A utility allowance is not necessarily a check you receive in the mail. Most tenants will not receive a utility reimbursement payment. You will be notified in writing if you are to receive a utility reimbursement payment every month.

### **Public Housing Residents**

We are unable to pay your new landlord until you have been removed from the Public Housing system. You will need to give your manager written notice of your intention to vacate and then once you have been given the keys to your new section 8 unit, you will need to quickly remove your items and return your keys to the Public Housing manager AND provide a copy of the 50058 or 50059 to your Housing Coordinator showing that

you have moved out of your current public housing unit so we may issue payment for your new unit. THA will not pay until you submit the documentation that you have been moved out of public housing.