Housing Choice Voucher Program Orientation
Welcome!

Your path to housing begins today, and we’re here to help!
Follow this presentation to complete your orientation to the Housing Choice Voucher program.

It should take about 20 minutes to view the entire presentation, but you may go at your own pace and stop and come back.
Orientation Topics

- Voucher Program Information
- Housing Search
- Seattle Landlord/Tenant Law
- Leasing a Unit!
For Your Information

If you require an accommodation to a policy or the way we communicate, let SHA know and we will review your request.

SHA will also provide language interpretation upon request at no charge to you.
Orientation Packet

As part of your voucher issuance, you will receive an orientation packet including:

- This presentation
- SHA’s policies and participant program obligations
- SHA contact information
- Community resources
- Tenant rights and responsibilities
- Lease addendum
- Benefits of the program for landlords
Housing Choice Voucher Topics

- How does the voucher program work?
- What price range should I look for in a rental?
- How much in rent and utilities will I have to pay?
- Can I rent a smaller or larger unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?
How the Voucher Program Works

- SHA will issue you a Housing Choice Voucher allowing you to rent a unit from any landlord.

- You are not restricted to certain buildings or neighborhoods.

- Once you locate a unit you want to rent, it will need to be reviewed and inspected by SHA to ensure its rent is reasonable, affordable and passes Housing Quality Standards.
How a Voucher Works

SHA sends Housing Assistance Payment directly to landlord

Tenant pays rent portion directly to landlord

Tenant may also pay utilities to provider

Rent

Utilities
What Price Range Should I Look For?

To answer this question you will need to know three things:

1) SHA will determine the unit size your voucher can be used to rent based on your household size.

2) The maximum that SHA can provide as a subsidy is called the Voucher Payment Standard (VPS). As you’ll see in the next slide, the VPS varies by unit size and whether the unit is in the private rental market (Market Rate) or owned by an affordable housing organization (Affordable).

3) Your rent portion is based on 30-40% of your income.

You cannot rent an apartment if the rental price exceeds the total of the VPS and your portion.
Voucher Payment Standards

▶ The maximum SHA will pay towards rent

▶ The amounts are not the maximum rent you can be charged

▶ Your subsidy level ultimately depends on your income, rent, and utilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bedrooms</th>
<th>Market Rate</th>
<th>Affordable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>$1,363</td>
<td>$1,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,529</td>
<td>$1,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$1,878</td>
<td>$1,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$2,719</td>
<td>$1,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$3,219</td>
<td>$2,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$3,702</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+</td>
<td>$4,185</td>
<td>$2,679</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Much Rent/Utilities Will I Pay?

- Tenants pay 30-40% of their adjusted income to their landlord, with a minimum of $50 a month.

- The remaining portion, called the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), is calculated using the total rent for the unit plus an average for cost of utilities. It is paid by SHA to the landlord.

- The HAP varies by whether the tenant or landlord pays utilities.
How Much Can I Afford?

With your voucher you will also receive an Estimated HAP (example below). This provides key information such as the maximum rent you can afford depending on utilities and if the unit is owned by a private or affordable landlord.

### Estimated HAP Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private for-Profit Building</th>
<th>Affordable Housing Building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(non-profit, tax credit, government, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Totals for Rent and Utilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Estimated Totals for Rent and Utilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedrooms: 2</td>
<td>Bedrooms: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voucher Payment Standard</strong></td>
<td><strong>Voucher Payment Standard</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,878</td>
<td>$1,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30% Minimum Family Portion</strong></td>
<td><strong>30% Minimum Family Portion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 59</td>
<td>$ 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Assistance Payment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Housing Assistance Payment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,819</td>
<td>$1,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>40% Maximum Family Portion</strong></td>
<td><strong>40% Maximum Family Portion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 79</td>
<td>$ 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Rent Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Maximum Rent Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you pay No Utilities</td>
<td>If you pay No Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,898</td>
<td>$1,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you pay Heat and Electricity</td>
<td>If you pay Heat and Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,858</td>
<td>$1,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you pay All Utilities W/S/G</td>
<td>If you pay All Utilities W/S/G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,743</td>
<td>$1,218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Can I rent a smaller unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?

You may choose a smaller unit, however this will lower the utility allowance that SHA factors into determining your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).
Can I rent a larger unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?

You may choose a larger unit as long as the total rent does not exceed your portion plus SHA’s portion, as explained in previous slides.
Housing Search
Housing Search Topics

- How soon do I have to use my voucher?
- Where can I live using my voucher?
- What neighborhoods should I choose if I qualify for the Family Access Supplement?
- How do I search for housing?
- Housing search tips and assistance
Time Limit

You have 120 days to use your voucher.

However, you may request a 60-day extension in writing before your voucher expires.
Where Can I Live?

**North Boundary:**
N 145th St

**Your voucher can be used anywhere in Seattle!**

**South Boundary:**
SW Roxbury St
You must rent a unit in Seattle for your first year in the voucher program.

After one year, you may use your voucher in another city or state.
Family Access Supplement (FAS)

The Family Access Supplement provides an additional subsidy for families to reduce their rent portion to 40 percent of monthly income. To qualify a household must:

- Have at least one child under 18 years old and
- Lease a unit in one of the neighborhoods on the following slide

### Maximum FAS by Unit Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voucher Size</th>
<th>1 Bedroom</th>
<th>2 Bedroom</th>
<th>3 Bedroom</th>
<th>4 Bedroom</th>
<th>5 Bedroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Subsidy</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>$700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SEATTLE

- Broadview
- Green Lake
- Interbay
- Magnolia
- Maple Leaf
- North Ballard
- N. Queen Anne
- Northgate
- Ravenna
- University District
- Wallingford
How Should I Search for Housing?

You can find housing search tips and links to rental listings at SeattleHousing.org/Find-Rental-Listings. Additionally, the following websites offer free online rental listings:
Other Ways to Search for Housing?

- Walk or drive around neighborhoods.
- Look through apartment guides.
- Ask friends or relatives about available units.
- Check community bulletin boards for listings.
Sample SHA Rental Listing Site

Link - seattleha.gosection8.com/Tenant/tn_Results.aspx
Sample Craigslist Rental Listing

Link - seattle.craigslist.org/
Housing Search Tips: Know the Law

Landlords cannot refuse unit rental because you have a voucher.

Landlords must include all sources of income (i.e. housing assistance payments) in their income screening criteria.

First in Time - Landlords must offer tenancy to the 1st qualified applicant.

If you believe you’ve been discriminated against call Seattle Office of Civil Rights at 206-684-4500 or visit seattle.gov/civilrights/
Housing Search Tips: Know the Law

In Seattle it is illegal to discriminate in the rental or sale of housing due to:

- Age
- Ancestry
- Breastfeeding in a public place
- Color
- Creed
- Disability
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- National Origin
- Parental Status
- Political Ideology
- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Use of a Section 8 voucher
- Use of a service animal
- Military status or Veteran

If you believe you’ve been discriminated against call Seattle Office of Civil Rights at 206-684-4500 or visit seattle.gov/civilrights/
Need Housing Search Help?

SHA’s Housing Counselor Team is here to help!

- 1-on-1 appointments
- Emails with affordable units
- Limited security deposit assistance

Call or email us anytime at 206-239-1739 or HCVHousingCounselors@seattlehousing.org
Leasing a Unit
Once your rental application is accepted, *Don’t* sign a lease before following the steps below!

- Complete and submit Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) to SHA
- SHA determines if rent is reasonable & affordable
- SHA inspects unit to ensure it meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- Once unit is approved and passes inspection, sign a lease and move in!
Signing a Lease

You must initially sign a 1-year lease with your landlord.

SHA and the landlord will sign a separate contract related to our portion.
Your Responsibilities

- Pay your rent portion to your landlord on time each month
- Be a good tenant
  - Tell your landlord if a repair is needed
  - Send SHA copies of any notices you give to your landlord
- Complete regular income reviews and unit inspections
- Report all changes in your income and household in writing within 2 weeks
- Request approval from SHA before you:
  - Let someone move in with you
  - Move out of your home
Additional Resources
SHA’s JobLink program connects tenants to employment, education and resources. Any adult 18+ is eligible for services.

JobLink can help you:

- Find a job right away
- Enroll in training and education; then find a job
- Get a better job
- Start a small business

Visit [seattlehousing.org/joblink](http://seattlehousing.org/joblink) to complete a JobLink interest form.
Services from Other Organizations

You may be contacted by selected community service agencies about free benefits and opportunities for your household.

If you have any questions about this or would rather not be contacted, call 206-239-1524.

Opting out will not impact your housing assistance in any way.
Congratulations!

You’ve completed the orientation.
Your path to housing begins NOW