



Section 8 Information for Applicant



THE PROGRAM: The Section 8 Voucher Program, a voluntary program for both landlords and tenants, is a Federally Funded effort designed to assist eligible, very low-income families with their monthly rental housing payments.

INCOME LIMITATIONS In order to be eligible for this program tenants income cannot exceed the Low income requirements based on number of members in household. Please see Income Limitations Document.

PAYMENT STANDARDS BASED ON BEDROOM SIZE

The payment standard is the amount that HUD designates for rent and utilities for a unit based on bedroom size. Please see Payment Standards Document. It is important to note that the payment standard used for the household will be based on the household composition AND the actual number of bedrooms in the unit.

These limits include rent and tenant paid utilities. If the rent does not include utilities, tenant-paid utilities are calculated based on a schedule of monthly averages for Juneau County. Using this schedule we calculate the utility allowance for the unit.

The rent plus the utility allowance is the Gross Rent for the unit. If the gross rent exceeds the payment standard, the program participant pays up to 40% of the household's adjusted monthly income plus 100% of the amount over the payment standard for the Section 8 Program. For example,

- If the gross rent (rent plus utility allowance) is at or below the payment standard, the tenant pays up to 40% of the household's adjusted monthly income toward the gross rent.

The tenant cannot pay more than 40% of the household's adjusted monthly income or the unit will not qualify for the program.

Since each participant's share is the result of a unique calculation, it is impossible to quote a rental amount without applying required personal information to the formula.

PROCESSING STEPS

1. Stop by office and pick up an application
2. Fill-out application completely (if some questions don't apply to you, put N/A)

3. Return to the office via mail or in person (with copies of the social security cards of the members that are going to be in the household) and the housing authority will begin a background check. If the background check comes back ok, then the:
4. Application is then put on a waiting list (make sure that the housing authority is contacted and informed of any address changes while on the waiting list).
5. Name nears the top of the waiting list an update letter is sent to the applicant.
6. Fill out the update form completely and return to housing authority immediately (update forms not returned will be taken as the directive that the applicants is no longer in need of rental assistance and will be removed from the waiting list),
7. Upon receipt of the update form, the housing authority will send you a letter with a date on it to come in for a Section 8 Rental Assistance briefing and will send out verification letters to verify information on the update form from the applicant.
8. Applicant attends the briefing and will be given a packet with all the information and tools to locate decent and safe housing in the Juneau County area along with a voucher from the housing authority (that basically lets landlords know that based on funding this individual is eligible for housing assistance).
9. Once applicant finds a unit, they then will have the landlord fill out a tenancy of approval form and return the form back to the housing authority.
10. The housing authority will then take the form and use it in calculating whether or not the unit will work with the 40% income guideline set by HUD.
11. If the unit meets the 40% income guideline the housing authority will contact the landlord and set up an appointment for inspection of the unit.
12. The unit then will be inspected, and if it passes the housing authority will set up the applicant on the program and call in the landlord and the applicant to fill out the remaining leasing and contracts for assistance with the housing authority.
13. The housing authority will then issue a portion of the rent to the landlord each month and the tenant is responsible for the remainder, as well as utilities, and security deposits.

ASSISTANCE CALCULATIONS:

The rent calculations are based on gross income from child support, SSI, Social Security, employment, etc. Minus deductions such as the automatic deductions of \$480 for a child, a person considered disabled, or elderly individual. Other types of deductions are medical expenses and child care expenses.

Allowances are made for utilities not included in the rent; the HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) makes up the difference in total amount due.

REQUIREMENTS: A family may either remain in their present rental unit or move to another. The following guidelines are applicable:

- ✚ Under the Section 8 Voucher Program, the family's share of gross rent (rent to owner plus tenant-paid utilities) must not exceed 40 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income. This rent restriction will not apply to a family that rents a unit for a gross rent at or below the Payment Standard for the family. The City of Mauston Housing Authority will not approve a tenant for initial occupancy of a unit, if the family's share would exceed 40 percent of adjusted income.
- ✚ The unit must be in decent, safe and sanitary condition (meets relevant HUD housing quality standards).
- ✚ The minimum lease length is a one year lease (the majority of leases under the program are written for this length of time). Unless extenuating circumstances require a different amount of time.
- ✚ Owners determine the security deposit.
- ✚ Annual inspections and re-certifications are a requirement of the Section 8 Voucher Program.

PORTABILITY: Portability is a term used to describe a family's ability to rent a dwelling unit outside the jurisdiction of the City of Mauston Housing Authority and receive Section 8 tenant-based assistance.

A voucher holder or the participant family has the right to lease a unit outside of City of Mauston Housing Authority jurisdiction or anywhere in the United States in the jurisdiction of a housing authority with tenant-based assistance. As long as the following guidelines are met:

1. A tenant has been on the program with the City of Mauston Housing Authority for at least 1 year before the voucher can transfer to a new jurisdiction.
2. The payment standard in the new jurisdiction cannot create a financial hardship for the City of Mauston Housing Authority if the new housing authority intends on billing the Mauston Housing Authority for the tenant's residence in their jurisdiction.
3. If the other Housing Authority in the jurisdiction that the tenant is looking into moving to, will absorb the tenant into their jurisdiction. This means the new housing authority would issue a voucher to the tenant automatically and the City of Mauston Housing Authority would then remove the tenant from the Mauston Housing Authorities Section 8 program.

VOUCHER EXTENSIONS

If an applicant is submitting a tenancy of approval or has a unit in the process of obtaining and the voucher expires, the MHA may give the applicant a 30-day extension to their voucher.

To request an extension the applicant must contact the housing authority at least 24 hours before the voucher is set to expire.

DISCLOSING INFORMATION TO POTENTIAL LANDLORDS

The housing authority if contacted by the potential landlord for an applicant will advise the landlord to do a criminal back ground check. And will advise the potential landlord of the applicants past landlord, if the potential landlord would like a previous landlord contact reference on the applicant or applicants. Each applicant will be required to sign a release of information for the MHA.

APPLICANTS OBLIGATIONS

Applicants have the following obligation to get on the Section 8 Program and to stay on the Section 8 Program. They are as follows:

- An applicant or family member cannot have a drug charge or a battery charge that is less than 3 years old.
- Applicants are required to attend a Section 8 briefing.
- Applicants are to return all forms and verifications requested by the housing authority by the date the housing authority has requested.
- Applicants are to take care of their unit, pay their portion of the rent on time, and pay any utilities if required.

Failure to comply can result in termination of the applicant's rental assistance.

INFORMAL HEARING PROCEDURES

If an applicant or tenant disagrees with an action or decision by the housing authority the applicant or tenant has 10-days to put into writing the reason for the disagreement and submit it to the housing authority office.

Housing Choice Voucher Program

General Lease-Up Process for Landlords, Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and Tenants

