

Housing Authority of Jefferson Parish



Presentation to the
Terrytown Civic Association
January 7, 2015

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program



- This program provides financial assistance to enable families to afford to live in privately-owned housing
 - The HAJP selects and certifies the eligibility of applicants to receive rental assistance
 - HAJP issues the voucher to the applicant
 - The voucher-holder finds a suitable unit
 - The private Owner provides the housing, screens and approves the tenant
 - The HAJP inspects and approves unit (HQS and rent)
 - Owner leases unit to tenant and manages the unit
 - HAJP and Owner execute a Housing Assistance Pmt. contract
 - The HAJP pays a portion of the rent directly to the Owner
 - The tenant pays its portion of the rent directly to the Owner

HAJP Screening



- HAJP screens applicants and participants for drug-related, violent and other criminal behavior in the last 3 years
- HAJP does not screen for behavior/suitability
 - Screening for family behavior and suitability for tenancy is the OWNER'S responsibility
 - Owners are advised to screen applicants for history of:
 - Payment of rent and utilities
 - Caring for unit and premises
 - Respecting rights of other residents
 - Drug-related and other criminal activity
 - Compliance with other conditions of tenancy

Info Shared by HAJP with Owners

- HAJP **WILL** share applicant info with Owners:
 - Current and prior addresses on file
 - Name and address of current and prior landlords, if known
- HAJP **MAY** share other applicant info w/Owners:
 - Family's tenancy history, if documented
 - Drug activity and felony charges, if documented



MANDATORY HAJP Denial or Termination of Assistance

- **MUST** deny and/or terminate assistance for:
 - Producing methamphetamines on federally assisted property
 - Illegal drug use that threatens health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of the premises
 - Being subject to lifetime registration under State sex offender registration program
 - Eviction from federally assisted housing program for serious lease violation



Other Denial or Termination of Assistance



- HAJP **MAY** deny or terminate assistance for:
 - Violation of other program rules
 - Eviction from federally-assisted housing in last 5 years
 - Fraud, bribery or other corrupt or criminal act in connection with federally-assisted housing
 - Drug or alcohol abuse that interferes w/ health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of other residents
 - Drug-related or violent criminal activity
 - Felony arrest for violent criminal activity in last 3 years

Three Major Contracts Govern Section 8 Program Operation



- Each contract sets forth rights and responsibilities and conditions for termination
 - **Housing Voucher**
 - Contract between HAJP and Participant
 - **Dwelling Lease**
 - Contract between Owner and Participant
 - **Housing Assistance Payments Contract**
 - Contract between HAJP and Owner

Housing Voucher



- Is a contract between HAJP and Participant
- Family must not:
 - Commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease
 - Commit fraud, bribery, or other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program
 - Engage in drug-related or violent criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or right of peaceful enjoyment of persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises
 - Damage the unit or premises

Housing Assistance Payments Contract



- Is a contract between HAJP and the Owner
- Sets forth Owner and HAJP responsibilities
- Owner **MUST**:
 - Maintain unit to Housing Quality Standards
 - Not commit fraud, bribery or corrupt or criminal act related to federal housing assistance
 - Not engage in drug related or violent criminal activity
- Owner is strongly encouraged to screen families for behavior and suitability

Lease Addendum to HAP Contract

- Provides grounds for owner's termination of the lease if tenant commits:
 - Serious or repeated violation of the lease
 - Violation of laws and regulations related to use and occupancy of unit
 - Criminal activity that threatens health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of the premises by neighbors
 - Violent criminal activity on or near the property
 - Drug-related criminal activity on or near the property
 - Violation of conditions of probation



Other Causes that Allow Owner to Terminate Lease with Tenant

- Disturbance of neighbors
- Destruction of property
- Living or housekeeping habits that cause damage to unit or premises



What the HAJP Can Do



- Ensure effective applicant screening
 - Evaluate adequacy of current screening practices
 - Review and, if necessary, revise screening policies
- Place greater emphasis on Owner responsibility
 - Remind owners to screen potential tenants
 - Encourage owners to inspect properties frequently
 - Encourage owners to enforce the lease
- Maintain and strengthen liaison with JPSO and Communities
 - Seek and implement ways to speed flow of information and documentation
 - Monitor and act upon documented violations

Contact Information

- Juan Patterson
- Jefferson Parish Housing Authority
Executive Director
- If you have a Section 8 complaint, please forward it to Mr. Patterson by calling him at (504) 347-4381, faxing at (504) 347-9692 or emailing at jphaadm@hajp.org.