



**Obligations:** Once a PBHA approves an eligible family's housing unit, the family and the landlord sign a lease and, at the same time, the landlord and PBHA sign a housing assistance payments contract that runs for the same term as the lease. This means that everyone -- tenant, landlord and PBHA -- has obligations and responsibilities under the voucher Program.

**Tenant's Obligations:** When a family selects a housing unit, and PBHA approves the unit and lease, the family signs a lease with the landlord for at least one year. The tenant may be required to pay a security deposit to the landlord. After the first year the landlord may initiate a new lease or allow the family to remain in the unit on a month-to-month lease.

When the family is settled in a new home, the family is expected to comply with the lease and the program requirements, pay its share of rent on time, maintain the unit in good condition and notify PBHA of any changes in income or family composition.



**Landlord's Obligations:** The role of the landlord in the voucher Program is to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing to a tenant at a reasonable rent. The dwelling unit must pass the Program's housing quality standards and be maintained up to those standards as long as the owner receives housing assistance payments. In addition, the landlord is expected to provide the services agreed to as part of the lease signed with the tenant and the contract signed with PBHA.



**PBHA's Obligations:** PBHA administers the voucher Program locally. PBHA provides a family with the housing assistance that enables the family to seek out suitable housing and PBHA enters into a contract with the landlord to provide housing assistance payments on behalf of the family. If the landlord fails to meet the owner's obligations under the lease, PBHA has the right to terminate assistance payments. PBHA must reexamine the family's income and composition at least annually and must inspect each unit at least annually to ensure that it meets minimum housing quality standards.



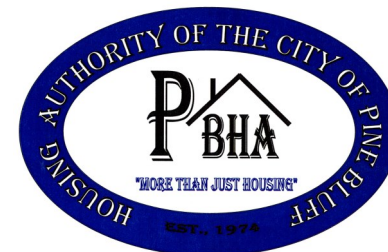
**HUD's Role:** To cover the cost of the Program, HUD provides funds to allow PBHAs to make housing assistance payments on behalf of the families. HUD also pays PBHA a fee for the costs of administering the Program. When additional funds become available to assist new families, HUD invites PBHAs to submit applications for funds for additional housing vouchers. Applications are then reviewed and funds awarded to the selected PBHAs on a competitive basis. HUD monitors PBHA administration of the Program to ensure Program rules are properly followed.

### **OTHER SECTION 8 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AMENITIES: FSS & HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS WHICH ASSIST IN THE FOLLOWING:**

**Secondary Education  
Resume / CV Preparation  
Job Skills Development  
Individual Counseling  
Parenting Skills  
Money Management  
Transportation  
Computer Skills Development  
GED/High School Preparation  
Career Planning & Job Search  
Family Counseling  
Credit/Debt Counseling  
Financial Planning  
Homebuyer Education**



# **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (SECTION 8)**



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**PBHA: "More Than Just Housing"**

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**Tynikka Fitzgerald.....Occupancy Specialist**  
**Lydia Grauel.....Interim Section 8 Manager**  
**Sean Thomas.....PBHA Inspector**  
**SanTisha Calhoun.....Section 8 Counselor**  
**Sherry Washington .....Section 8 Counselor**  
**Karen Lee.....Resident Services Director**

# PBHA HCV SECTION 8 PROGRAM



## What are housing choice vouchers?

The housing choice voucher (HCV) Program is the federal government's major Program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.

The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the Program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing developments. The Housing Authority of the City of Pine Bluff (PBHA) receives federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher Program. A family that is issued a housing voucher is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the Program. This unit may include the family's present residence. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by PBHA.

A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by PBHA on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the Program. Under certain circumstances, if authorized by PBHA, a family may use its voucher to purchase a modest home.

## Am I eligible?

Eligibility for a housing voucher is determined by PBHA based on the total annual gross income and family size and is limited to US citizens and specified categories of non-citizens who have eligible immigration status. In general, the family's income may not exceed 50% of the median income for the county or metropolitan area in which the family chooses to live. By law, PBHA must provide 75 percent of its voucher to applicants whose incomes do not exceed 30 percent of the area median income. PBHA can provide you with the income limits for this area and your family size. During the application process, PBHA will collect information on family income, assets, and family composition. PBHA will verify this information with other local agencies, your employer and bank, and will use the information to determine Program eligibility and the amount of the housing assistance payment.

If PBHA determines that your family is eligible, PBHA will put your name on a waiting list, unless it is able to assist you immediately. Once your name is reached on the waiting list, PBHA will contact you and issue to you a housing voucher.



## How do I apply?

If you are interested in applying for a voucher, PBHA accepts application on the second Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of each month (as long as the HCV Section 8 Program is not closed). Applicants must have a picture ID for all household members over the age of 18, a copy of a birth certificate for all household members and a social security card for each household member.

## Local preferences and waiting list - what are they and how do they affect me?

Since the demand for housing assistance often exceeds the limited resources available to HUD and the local housing agencies, long waiting periods are common. In fact, PBHA may close its waiting list when it has more families on the list than can be assisted in the near future. PBHA may establish local preferences for selecting applicants from its waiting list. For example, PBHA may give a preference to a family who is (1) continuously employed for 6 months or more working at least 25 hours per week or (2) disabled. Families who qualify for any such local preferences move ahead of other families on the list who do not qualify for any preference. PBHA has the discretion to establish local preferences to reflect the housing needs and priorities of its particular community.

## Housing vouchers - how do they function?

The HCV Section 8 Program places the choice of housing in the hands of the individual family. A very low-income family is selected by PBHA to participate is encouraged to consider several housing choices to secure the best housing for the family needs. A housing voucher holder is advised of the unit size for which it is eligible based on family size and composition.

The housing unit selected by the family must meet an acceptable level of health and safety before PBHA can approve the unit. When the voucher holder finds a unit that it wishes to occupy and reaches an agreement with the landlord over the lease terms, PBHA must inspect the dwelling and determine that the rent requested is reasonable.

PBHA determines a payment standard that is the amount generally needed to rent a moderately-priced dwelling unit in the local housing market and that is used to calculate the amount of housing assistance a family will receive. However the payment standard does not limit and does not affect the amount of rent a landlord may charge or the family may pay. A family which receives a housing voucher can select a unit with a rent that is below or above the payment standard. The housing voucher family must pay 30% of its monthly adjusted gross income for rent and utilities, and if the unit rent is greater than the payment standard the family is required to pay the additional amount. By law, whenever a family moves to a new unit where the rent exceeds the payment standard, the family may not pay more than 40 percent of its adjusted monthly income for rent.

## The rent subsidy

PBHA calculates the maximum amount of housing assistance allowable. The maximum housing assistance is generally the lesser of the payment standard minus 30% of the family's monthly adjusted income or the gross rent for the unit minus 30% of monthly adjusted income.



## Can I move and continue to receive housing choice voucher assistance?

A family's housing needs change over time with changes in family size, job locations, and for other reasons. The HCV Section 8 Program is designed to allow families to move without the loss of housing assistance. Moves are permissible as long as the family notifies PBHA ahead of time, terminates its existing lease within the lease provisions, and finds acceptable alternate housing.

Under the voucher program, new voucher-holders may choose a unit anywhere in the United States if the family lived in the jurisdiction of public housing authority issuing the voucher when the family applied for assistance. Those new voucher-holders not living in the jurisdiction of PBHA at the time the family applied for housing assistance must initially lease a unit within that jurisdiction for the first twelve months of assistance. A family that wishes to move to another public housing authority jurisdiction must consult with the public housing authority that currently administers its housing assistance to verify the procedures for moving.