

## Housing Choice Voucher Dept.

at

Greater Metropolitan Area Housing Authority  
Of Rock Island County

309-755-4527



If there is anyone with a disability which requires assistance, please let us know before we proceed.

# BRIEFING HIGHLIGHTS

## Welcome To Greater Metro Area Housing Authority of Rock Island County Housing Choice Voucher Program

We are pleased to offer you Rental Assistance through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. The HCV Program is designed to assist you with rental assistance payments, while assuring that you are in a decent, safe and well-maintained housing unit. In this meeting, we explain important information about the HCV Program and answer questions before you begin your search for housing.

### The Housing Authority (HA) will:

- Establish your portion of the rent, which is based on 30-40% of your income.
- We will assure well-maintained and safe assisted housing by inspecting the unit initially and annually.

### YOU Will Be Responsible For:

- Searching for your housing.
- Paying your security deposit
- Cleaning your unit
- Reporting needed repairs to the owner
- Paying Your portion of the rent to the owner
- Follow the terms of your Lease

## The Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) Packet

The RTA Packet contains documents that need to be completed by the family and the property owner **before we can inspect the unit you have selected.**

The packet contains the following documents:

- Instructions for completing the Request for Tenancy Approval Packet

- Request for Tenancy Approval Form – owner and tenant to complete

- Right to conduct Landlord Reference Waiver Form

- W-9/ Internal Revenue Form owner to complete

- Lead Paint Disclosure - owner and tenant to complete

- HCV Landlord Certification – owner to complete

- Direct Deposit Agreement – owner to complete

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# General Information about HCV



Wondering who is Responsible For What?

Here we have outlined your basic responsibilities, as well as those of the landlord and the GMAHA. Please make yourself familiar with this section.

**GMAHA Responsibilities:**

- To inspect and approve your unit
- To annually review family size
- To annually review family Income
- To issue payment to the landlord

**Tenant Responsibilities:**

- To search for housing
- To provide complete, accurate, and truthful income/family verification

To pay the tenant portion of rent

Adhere to lease

Cooperate with annual inspection and recertification

**\*Keep appointments with GMAHA\***

**Landlord Responsibilities:**

- Comply with HUD/PHA requirements
- Screens and selects tenants (GMAHA only determines program eligibility)
- Maintains Property in compliance with HQS
- Enforce the Lease



Want to know about your Voucher?

# Housing Choice Voucher

This document tells you:

- The number of bedrooms you are assigned
- The dates you can search for housing
- The rules you must follow to continue participation in the Section 8 Program (additional rules from federal regulations may apply)

A family must submit a completed request for tenancy approval (RTA) prior to the expiration of the voucher.

Once the RTA has been submitted, the time on the voucher stops, or is suspended. If the unit is unacceptable for the program, the family will be given the remaining time on the voucher from when it was suspended.

# Search For Housing



Are you ready to start your search for housing?

**The Greater Metro Area Housing Authority jurisdiction for S-8 includes the following areas:**

Andalusia, Barstow, Buffalo Prairie, Carbon Cliff, Castle Junction, Coal Valley, Cordova, Coyne Center, East Moline, Edgington, Ginger Hill, Hampton, Hillsdale, Illinois City, Joslin, Milan, Oak Grove, Osborn, Poplar Grove, Port Byron, Rapids City, Reynolds, Silvis and Taylor Ridge.

You can search for housing in any of these cities. An updated list of available units is available at the S-8 office.

NOTE: We do not assist in the cities of Moline or Rock Island as they have their own S-8 Programs.

**We recommend that you begin your search as soon as possible.**

Also-Read the classified ads in the local newspaper!

## Restrictions on Renting to Relatives

The Housing Authority cannot approve a unit if the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother or any member of the family, unless the HA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with a disability.



*Thinking of renting from someone you know?*

## Portability

You may consider searching for housing in areas outside of the Rock Island county jurisdiction. Portable means you may choose to take your voucher to another area that is not within the Rock Island County Housing Authority jurisdiction.

A list of neighboring Housing Authorities is included in this packet. More information about portability is included in your briefing packet.



*Thinking of living outside of Rock Island County?*

## Grounds For Termination

The Housing Authority may terminate assistance to a family for reasons including the following:

- If a family violates any family obligation as stated in the voucher and/or federal regulations
- If any family member commits drug related criminal activity, or violent criminal activity
- If the HA determines that any family member is illegally using a controlled substance
- If the HA determines that any family member's abuse of alcohol interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents

• If any family member commits fraud, bribery, or another corrupt or criminal act regarding any federal housing program

• If the family has engaged in or threatening, abusive, or violent behavior toward personnel.

• If the family currently owes rent or other amounts to the HA of another HA in connection with Section 8 or public housing programs

• If the family has not reimbursed any HA for amounts paid to an owner under HAP contract for rent, damages, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease

• If the family breaches an agreement with the HA to pay amounts to the HA



*Please follow the rules and avoid Termination!*

## Informal Hearings

The HA must provide program participants with the opportunity for an informal hearing to consider whether certain HA decisions are in accordance with the law, HUD regulations and HA policies. An opportunity for a hearing is required for HA decisions regarding the following:

- Determination of annual adjusted income to compute Housing Assistance Payment
- Determination of appropriate utility allowances for tenant paid utilities from HA utility allowance schedule

- Determination of Bedroom size under the HA subsidy standards
- Determination that a Voucher family is over-housed or that the family is denied an exception to the subsidy standards
- Determination to terminate assistance for participant family because of family's action or failure to act.
- Determination to terminate assistance because the family has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than HUD rules of HA policy allow.



Have Questions about a GMAHA decision?



Submit in writing!

## Request for an Informal Hearing

### Procedure

A participant in the Section 8 program has the right to request an informal hearing solely for the purpose of determining whether or not a decision to terminate assistance was in compliance with HUD regulations or HA Policies.

The request for an informal hearing must be submitting in writing and must be received by the Housing Authority within ten days from the date of the notification of determination.

## Notice to Family with a Disabled Member

A family with a disabled member has a right to reasonable accommodations.

The family may request a current listing of accessible units known to the Housing Authority.

## Notice of Changes to Family Composition &/or Income During the Search for Housing

If you are searching for housing and a change in family composition and/or income occurs, you must report the

changes in writing within 10 days of the occurrence of the change. This rule also applies when you become a participant family.

## Privacy Reporting

We are required to provide information to prospective landlords about your previous

and/or current tenancy if this information is requested by a prospective landlord.

Need an accessible unit?



Expecting a change in family size?



What information will GMAHA share with prospective landlords?



## Security Deposits

You must be prepared to pay the security deposit; the HA does not assist with security deposit payments. The HA does not set or establish the

security deposit amount which the owner may charge. The rule states that the owner cannot charge any more than he would for a tenant on the open market.



*Questions about your Security Deposit?*

## Subsidy Standard

The HA has assigned the number of bedroom based on your family size. To avoid overcrowding, vouchers are

issued in accordance with the subsidy standards set forth below:

Number of Persons

No. of Bedrooms	Minimum	Maximum
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8
5	5	10
6	6	12



*Have questions about the bedroom size on your voucher?*

## Instructions for the Family

Begin your search for housing immediately. You may look for a house, duplex or an apartment.

There is valuable information in the booklet entitled **“A Good Place To Live”**

**When selecting your unit, consider the following:**

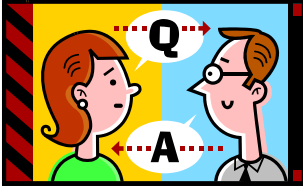
- The condition of the unit
- Utility responsibilities
- The location of the unit
- Public transportation accessibility, convenience for employment, schools and doctors
- The security deposit
- All utilities must be on at the time of the initial inspection
- All routine maintenance must be complete
- The stove and refrigerator must be in the unit to pass inspection.

**After you have found a unit you must**

1. Have the owner complete the forms in the Request for Tenancy Approval Packet (RTA) and return to the S-8 office.
  2. Once we receive your RTA packet, we will contact the owner to set up your inspection within 10 days.
- If the unit passes the inspection the S-8 Case Manager will process your move-in paperwork and HAP contract.
  - If the unit does not pass inspection, we will allow the owner 30 days to make the repairs.
  - If the owner cannot make the needed repairs, you may contact the office and begin the process again, provided there is time remaining on your voucher.

At the time of the inspection;

## Commonly Asked Questions



These are not all-inclusive solutions, but merely suggest how to handle various situations that may occur. The Section 8 staff is available to assist with additional concerns or problems.



### Q: What should I do before signing a lease?

**A:** Conduct a personal inspection of the unit; The inspector does not look for cosmetic beauty. Make sure you want to live there because the lease requires occupancy for one year. **Read the lease:** make sure you understand your obligations.

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### Q: May I move into the unit as soon as I find one?

**A:** The Housing Authority cannot tell you and the owner what date you may move in. **But we can tell you when we will begin the contract.** If you are already in place, we will begin the contract and payment on the day after the unit passes inspection. **If the unit has not passed this agency's inspection and you have moved into the unit, you are responsible for that rent.**

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### Q: What happens if I cannot pay my rent?

**A:** Always pay your rent. As much as we would like to end on that note, we realize there are times when situations may prevent you from complying. The decision as to what happens depends on the owner. Some owners choose to evict immediately. **Contact your landlord and resolve the problem.** Serious or repeated violation of the lease such as eviction or non-payment of rent or utilities that are shut off, or damage to unit beyond normal wear and tear can result in termination of the assistance.

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### Q: What procedure should I follow if Repairs are needed?

**A:** Contact the owner. If the owner has not responded in a timely manner, write a letter to the landlord that explains the problem and send a copy of that same letter to the HA Case Manager.  
**A word of caution:** if you caused the damages, you are responsible for the repairs. **Never withhold your rent based on needed repairs to the unit.**

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### Q: What should I do if someone wants to move in with me?

**A:** You must request approval to add any member to your unit. The Housing Authority **and** the owner must give you permission before anyone moves into your unit. Promptly notify the HA in writing of the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child.

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### Q: What should I do if someone moves out of the home?

**A:** Promptly notify the HA in writing if any family member no longer lives in the unit. Documentation of the former members new residence will be required.

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### Q: What should I do if my income changes?

**A:** Changes in income should be reported in writing within 10 days of the change. An appointment will be necessary to sign the appropriate paperwork.

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**Q: What must I do to keep my Section 8 Housing?**

**A: Follow the rules and regulations of the housing program and adhere to the lease.** Each year, the Housing Authority is required to complete an annual reexamination. This is simply a review of your income and family size to determine that your rent is consistent with your income. **It is essential that you keep scheduled appointments with our office and the inspector.**

**Q: What should I do if I want to move?**

**A:** During the first year of the lease you are obligated to the unit for one year. If problems develop, all parties (owner, tenant, and HA) must agree to rescind or break the lease.

**Q: What should I do in order to get my security deposit back when I move?**

**A:** Return the unit to the owner in good condition; clean the unit thoroughly and return the keys.

**Need More Information**

**For further information in regards to employment/job opportunities, schools local transportation and other services to assist you in your search for housing, please contact your HCV Case Manager.**

**We hope the Housing Choice Voucher Program will be a great benefit to you and your family and that your experience with us will be a pleasant one. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call our office.**

# Hcv staff



**General Phone Number**

**309-755-4527**

**Fax Number**

**309-751-4944**

**TDD**

(for hearing impaired)

**1-800-545-1833 X820**

HCV Specialist I : Lindsay Fonseca 309- 281-7710  
HCV Specialist II : Dana Munson 309- 281-7711  
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(voice or text)



**Program Finance Manager: Ali Debus Ext. 408**  
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