

onpagetwo

- Change to the Inspection Process
- New Move Process Effective May 1, 2019
- Utility Allowance Change
- Renting from Relatives

hcvpmission

To provide safe, decent and sanitary housing conditions for very low-income families and to manage resources efficiently.



Housing Authority

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

MAY 2019



Program Updates

- **Service is by appointment only.** Walk-ins to the lobby will be required to submit a request for service if they need to see a caseworker or manager.
- All Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program participants are required to report increases in household income within 10 days. OCHA staff will calculate a rent adjustment to include the new income. Participants can also report decreases in their income and will receive a rent adjustment.
 - Income changes must be verified. To help avoid delays in processing your income change, submit written verification of the income with your request. Written verification can include benefit letters, check stubs, employment separation letters, new hire letters, and child support print-outs.
 - If a family has reported zero income, the OCHA will review the family's zero income status every six months. To verify the household income, the OCHA will require all participants to certify their income status. We will also request from the third-party sources to verify any information. All families claiming zero income are required to report any new sources in income to the OCHA within 10 days of the start of the new income.
 - Income changes must be reported in writing, and you can utilize a *Change of Income and/or Family Composition Form* to report your income change. The Change of Income form and income verifications can be submitted in person, via email at hcvparticipantinquiries@orangecountync.gov, via fax at 919-644-3056, or by mail. Please allow up to 30 days for OCHA staff to process income changes.

Annual Recertifications

Effective May 1, 2019, the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) will no longer conduct face-to-face annual recertification appointments.

The OCHA must conduct a review of all participants' income, assets, expenses and family composition each year. An annual recertification checklist is provided in the annual recertification packet. The checklist must be reviewed by all members in the household who are 18 years of age or older. The key to successfully completing this process is to provide documentation listed on the checklist and/or documentation requested by the Recertification Specialist by the deadline date.

The recertification packet must be returned to the OCHA on or before the return date printed on the packet, or within thirty (30) days calendar days of receipt by the household. The receipt of date is deemed by the OCHA to be five (5) calendar days after mailing the recertification packet.

If a participant fails to complete an annual recertification and/or does not complete or return documents by the deadline date, the OCHA will begin the process to propose termination of a participant's voucher. Upon receipt of a propose termination letter, participants will have 14 days from the date of that letter to request an informal hearing or provide the missing documents.

If the requested documentation is not received by the deadline date and/or the participant does not request a hearing within 14 days, the assistance will be terminated as

of the date indicated on the letter.

All participants are responsible for meeting their family obligations in order to remain on our HCVP.

Important Change to the Inspection Process



More than 20% of all first-time inspections never happen. Why? The utilities are **OFF** or the unit is not ready for inspection.

Effective May 1, 2019, the following changes will be implemented for Initial Inspections.

- Included in the Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) is a Rent Ready Checklist for participants and owners to use to ensure the unit is ready for inspection along with the Acknowledgement of Initial Inspection Form.
- The Acknowledgement of Initial Inspection Form must be signed by both the participant and owner prior to scheduling an inspection.
- If the utilities are off or the unit is not ready to be inspected when the inspector arrives, the owner must contact the housing authority in three (3) business days or the initial inspection will be canceled unless otherwise stated by the HCV Inspector. The applicant/participant will be issued a new RTA to continue the housing search process.

Utility Allowance Change

Effective October 1, 2018, the OCHA conducted a new utility allowance study for Mobile Homes, Single family homes and Multifamily units. The new utility allowance could possibly affect the tenant's rental portion at the participant's annual recertification. If a participant rental portion increases at the annual recertification, a thirty (30) day notice will be provided to the participant and the owner. However, if the participant rental portion decreases at the annual recertification, the decrease will be effective the first day of the following month.

New Move Process

Effective May 1, 2019, participants requesting to move will be required to complete a Notice to Vacate Form. The owner or agent will be required to complete, sign, and date the bottom portion of the form prior to submission to the OCHA.

Once completed, the participant will return the form to the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program lobby. The OCHA will review the form and the participant file to determine if the participant is eligible to move.

Within 30-days, each participant will receive either a denial letter or an approval letter stating when their voucher will be available for pickup.

It is the responsibility of the owner or agent to enforce the terms of the lease. If the participant is currently in violation of the lease, the request to vacate may be denied until the participant has cured the lease violations. Such lease violations include but are not limited to: *non- payment of rent, damages, and unauthorized people living in the unit who are not on the lease.* If eviction is pursued, both participants and owners must provide the OCHA with a copy of the writ for the OCHA to begin the termination to process.

HCV Participants cannot Rent from Relatives



The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prohibits families receiving Housing Choice Voucher assistance from renting from relatives. This means a participant who rents a unit owned by a relative is in violation of the Family Obligations and can be terminated from the HCV Program and/or required to repay assistance. The owner of the unit would also be in violation of the Housing Assistance Payment Contract.

The HUD defines relatives as immediate family members including parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, sisters, brothers, or any member of the assisted family.

Contact Us		
Mailing Address	Main Office	Satellite Office
PO Box 8181 Hillsborough, NC 27278	300 W. Tryon Street Hillsborough, NC 27278	2501 Homestead Chapel Hill, NC 27516
Telephone (919) 245 – 2490 • Fax (919) 644-3056 • TDD (919) 644-3045		
www.co.orange.nc.us		