

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

Section 8 -Family Self Sufficiency Program ***ACTION PLAN***

It is anticipated that families of very low income will participate in the FSS Program based on current participants and the Section 8 Waiting List.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Family Self Sufficiency Program's objective is to enable participating families to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency by combining both private and public resources to provide supportive services needed by the family. To bring participants into the economic mainstream through a comprehensive program, counseling, job training, education and job placement services. Another goal is to assist under employed in obtaining better jobs and become free of housing subsidies through education in money management and home ownership.

PROGRAM START-UP ACTIVITIES

The FSS Program has adopted its Program Co-ordinating Committee (PCC), who are representatives of both private and public sectors, to assure that all support services needed are available to the participants. The Biloxi Housing Authority and the Long Beach Housing Authority will share the PPC.

A needs assessment of Section 8 Program participants will be conducted by telephone.

Education as well as Job Training Programs, are already being offered.

To assure that the needs of the program participants are met, the Biloxi Housing Authority will obtain letters of intent and support from both private and public sectors. We will have commitments from representatives of child care services, remedial education, GED, job preparation and counseling, JTPA, substance abuse treatment and counseling, local Realtors for counseling in home ownership responsibilities, job development and placement, counseling in opportunities available for rental and home ownership in the private housing market, health care, money management, grooming skills, head start services, job referral, vocational training and counseling, housekeeping tips, and legal aide. An application form for the FSS participant has been developed, (a copy is included with this plan...see attachment).

HUD Form: 9886 will be used to release any information needed on any participant. The Biloxi Housing Authority has incorporated a support services needs survey and checklist in its application (see attachment). This checklist will be used to identify needed services. Once needed services are identified, the Section 8 or Community Services Co-ordinator will contact the representatives of the available services and setup any needed confrontations between the participant and the service representative. (CONTINUED)

If at any time the family who wants to participate, cannot, because of unavailability of supportive services, after consulting with the family, that missing service(s) is key to the family needs, the PHA will skip that family, (and other similar families) and offer the FSS slot and Section 8 assistance to the next family for which there are available services. If the PHA finds this being a constant problem it will locate resources to deliver the missing services. If the services are not determined key to the families needs, the PHA will not address that need.

Letters will be mailed to program participants as they are leased. It is anticipated that the first family for FSS will be added effective January 1995. All certificates/vouchers will be issued immediately and as there are turnovers, FSS participants will be added.

SCREENING AND SELECTION OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The PCC will establish guidelines for screening and selecting program participants. Section 8 recipients will be offered the opportunities of FSS first. If all participants are not found, the Section 8 Waiting List will be exhausted. After the waiting list is exhausted, any person wanting to participate and qualifies for the program, will be offered participation. All persons participating in the Section 8 Program will be informed by mail about the FSS Program giving them 10 days to respond. All interested persons will come to the office and have an Intrust Interview with the Section 8 or Community Services Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will allow the participant to complete an FSS application and do a need assessment checklist with the family.

Interested participants will be selected based on bedroom distribution, services available and slots needed. FSS Preferences will be given to families who are skipped because the supportive service that is the key to the families needs was missing at the time the families name appeared at the top of the waiting list. Once the missing service becomes available, the family will be assisted, depending on the availability.

If the PHA offers a FSS slot to a family on its waiting list and the family on the top of the waiting list declines participation in the FSS Program, the skipped family will stay at the top of the waiting list but will not be offered assistance until a non FSS unit is available. Program participants who decline will remain on the program. If the PHA has closed its waiting list and there are insufficient families on the list willing to participate in the FSS Program the PHA will open up the waiting list only to applicants willing to participate in the FSS Program, Federal Preferences first. Program participants will be selected based on seniority, that is, persons who have been on the Section 8 Program the longest, and persons on the waiting list in order of preference. If a family after cashing out its escrow, reapplied for assistance after two years or continued to receive housing subsidies, after being terminated from the capital FSS Program even though the family did not meet its FSS obligations, the PHA may refuse to select that family for participation in the FSS Program a second time.

To assure that all sectors of the population are informed of the FSS Program, a letter to all participants of the Section 8 Programs will be sent.

(CONTINUED)

If any slots are left, a letter to all applicants on the Section 8 Waiting List will be sent. Providing any remaining slots are available to assure that both minorities and non-minorities are informed, an ad will be run in the local newspaper, and posters will be posted in local public service buildings, such as the Human Resources Office, Department of Public Health, Libraries and Courthouses. Advertisement will be done through locally owned and operated media facilities as well.

CONTRACT OF PARTICIPATION

All families accepted into the FSS Program must sign a "Contract of Participation" with the Biloxi Housing Authority. This contract will spell out all the supportive services needed by the participating family during the time that the family is receiving assistance under the FSS Program. The contents of the Contract of Participation is HUD Form 52650. Each participating family must fulfill its obligation under this contract or the PHA may with-hold or terminate FSS supportive services and participating family will forfeit any escrow account funds. The participating family may be terminated by the PHA if all obligations are not fulfilled under the Contract of Participation.

For good cause, such as serious illness, involuntary loss of employment, death, sickness of a child, etc., the PHA shall, at the request of the participating family, extend the period of fulfillment of the family obligation under the Contract of Participation for a maximum of two years beyond the original five-year term.

The "Contract" will require the head of the participating family (a person designated by the family), to seek and maintain suitable employment, that is, employment that reflects the persons training and available job opportunities during the term of the contract and any extensions. The Biloxi Housing Authority will do counseling in home ownership and money management to participating families through co-ordination with local Realtors, Financial Institutions and special service providers.

If a family participating in FSS Program is found to be in violation of its Contract of Participation, the family will be called in for conference promptly by the Section 8 and Community Service Coordinators. The family will be counseled on the problem and issued a written warning. If a second offense occurs, depending on the severity, the Section 8 and Community Service Coordinators will again counsel the family issuing a second warning. A third noncompliance is grounds for termination. At each conference the family will be briefed on grievance procedures.

FOLLOW-UP AND EXIT

All Program participants will be given a progress session each week to discuss any problems that are occurring. At the session, guidance will be given to assist the family. The family will be referred to other services when appropriate. When the family has completed all obligations of the Contract of Participation and program requirements, the Biloxi Housing Authority will issue the family any escrow account balance due.

AMENDMENT 06/18/2004

PROGRAM SIZE

The Biloxi Housing Authority will maintain a minimum Family Self-Sufficiency Program size of twenty-five (25) FSS Slots regardless of the number of participants completing their Contracts of Participation and graduating from the FSS Program.

Biloxi Housing Authority

FY2013 FAIR MARKET RENT AND PAYMENT STANDARDS

Bedroom Size	1	2	3	4
Fair Market Rent	\$714	\$857	\$1102	\$1174

2013 ACCEPTABLE RENTS BY BEDROOM SIZE

Bedroom Size	1	2	3	4
Rent for Apartment	\$625	\$750	\$975	\$1015
Rent for House	\$590	\$715	\$920	\$955

2013 UTILITY ALLOWANCES (ALL ELECTRIC)

Bedroom Size	1	2	3	4
UA Apartment	\$88	\$106	\$127	\$156
UA House/Mobile Home	\$120	\$141	\$181	\$216

SECTION 8 FACTS

- **YOU MUST USE YOUR VOUCHER IN THE CITY LIMITS OF BILOXI FOR THE FIRST YEAR (NO EXECPTIONS)**
- **IF YOU LIVE IN PUBLIC HOUSING YOU MUST GIVE THEM A WRITTEN 30 DAY NOTICE THAT YOU ARE MOVING**
- **IF YOU CURRENTLY LIVE IN PUBLIC HOUSING, YOU MUST CLEAR YOUR ACCOUNT WITH THEM BEFORE YOU CAN BE MOVED INTO THE SECTION 8 PROGRAM**
- **AS FUNDING IS LIMITED, PLEASE STAY WITHIN THE BEDROOM SIZE OF YOUR VOUCHER**
- **ACCEPTABLE RENTS BY BEDROOM SIZE:**

1BR APT.=\$625	HOUSE=\$590
2BR APT.=\$750	HOUSE=\$715
3BR APT.=\$975	HOUSE=\$920
4BR APT.=\$1015	HOUSE=\$955
- **YOU MUST REPORT ANY INCOME/HOUSEHOLD CHANGES WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE CHANGE**
- **NO ONE CAN LIVE WITH YOU THAT IS NOT ON YOUR LEASE AND YOUR CASE WITH SECTION 8**

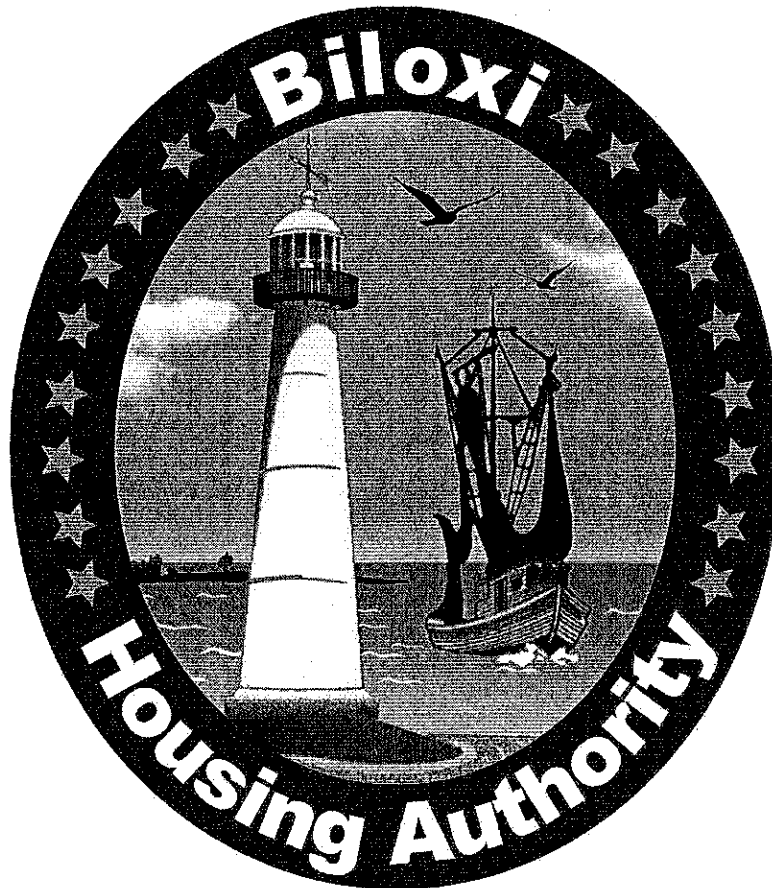
WELCOME TO THE SECTION 8 PROGRAM

VALERIE PURNELL/ HCV MANAGER

SHERYL KENNEDY/ ASSISTANT HCV MANAGER

**Biloxi Housing Authority
Housing Choice Voucher Program**

Briefing Handbook



**Biloxi Housing Authority
Housing Choice Voucher Program**

Briefing Handbook

The Biloxi Housing Authority and staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our great city. Our strongest commitment is to assist families like yours and find safe, decent, and affordable housing.

The purpose of this handbook and the briefing you are attending is to let you become familiar with how the Housing Choice Voucher Program works, the Rules and Regulations, Issue a Housing Choice Voucher to you and answer any questions you may have about the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Please hold all questions until the end of the briefing session, many of your questions will be answered throughout the briefing and this will help keep the session to the point and interesting.

You may retain this handbook for your personal use and records at home. It will be useful as a reference guide for you on matters concerning your Housing Choice Voucher assistance in the future.

Ms. Valerie Purnell, HCV Manager

Ms. Sheryl Kennedy, Assistant HCV Manager

Mr. Jack Hillensbeck, VASH Manager

1. Housing Choice Voucher - HUD 52646

Please find your Voucher in the Briefing Packet material. There should be two of them, one for you to keep and one to be retained in your housing file.

On line 5 (Name of Family Representative) your name should already be filled in, if for some reason another name is on the voucher, please notify the Housing Authority representative conducting the briefing so they can correct the error.

On line 6 - You will need to **sign both copies** of your voucher. After signing please return one copy to the instructor and keep one for yourself. This is a permanent record that you should keep filed at home for future reference along with the Briefing Handbook. It confirms that you are eligible to receive assistance on the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Do not give this form to any prospective landlords, instead, use it to verify your eligibility if you are asked to do so. You will be considered a Participant on the Housing Choice Voucher Program when the HAP Contract between the Housing Authority and the Owner/Landlord takes effect.

Your Voucher Number appears in the upper right box on the form. This number will be your number for as long as you participate on the Housing Choice Voucher Program. (Example: V-002-099) The first set of numbers is the Voucher Project Number, the second set of numbers is the actual voucher number issued.

On line 2 - (Date Voucher Issued) today's date should already be filled in.

On line 3 - (Date Voucher Expires) the date should already be filled in. Initially we allow 60 days to find a rental unit. Extensions for your voucher will be covered during the briefing session.

On line 7 - The name of the Housing Authority issuing the Voucher.

On line 8 - The name and title of the Housing Authority Official conducting the Briefing Session you are attending.

On line 9 - The signature of the Housing Authority Official and date signed.

Due to time limitations we will not extensively cover all instructions on the form HUD-52646, just the ones mentioned above.

Please take the time to read the entire form HUD-52646 after you return home from the Briefing Session.

A. The Housing Choice Voucher Program and How it Works

The Housing Choice Voucher Program allows eligible families to search and find rental units near schools, their place of employment, hospitals or any other areas that may be beneficial to them. The units can be a single family dwelling (house) or an apartment of some type and assistance can be received for a mobile home, provided that it is properly setup and secured with anchor straps and meets all other safety requirements.

Here is a brief outline of how the program works.

- 1) Family Head of Household applies for Housing Choice Voucher assistance when applications are being accepted.
- 2) Their income is verified and calculated and the families eligibility is determined.
- 3) Provided the family is eligible, they are placed on a Waiting List for the program based on the date and time they applied and under what preference status they apply under.
- 4) When Housing Choice Vouchers become available, the applicant's names are selected from the waiting list and an appointment is scheduled for a briefing session to issue important documents and educate the applicant about the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- 5) The family locates a rental unit based on the number of bedrooms they are certified for and submits the Request For Tenancy Approval (provided) to the Housing Authority, completed and signed by the landlord and Housing Choice Voucher holder.
- 6) Housing Authority determines if the rent requested is reasonable by using its Rent Reasonable Testing System, comparing the rent requested to other rents established in the Market Area that are unassisted. If it passes the test...
- 7) The Housing Authority schedules an appointment with the owner/landlord to inspect the unit to determine if it meets Housing Quality Standards.
- 8) If the unit passes the inspection, the Housing Authority will request a copy of the Owners Lease to see that it complies with state and local laws.
- 9) If the rent is not reasonable, the unit fails HQS Inspection and the owner will not make necessary repairs to bring the unit up to standards and is not willing to negotiate the rent amount, another Request for Tenancy will be given to the family to use for another rental unit and the first request will be denied.
- 10) If the Owners lease is approved, the unit passed inspection and the rent is reasonable, the housing documents will be drafted and an appointment setup to sign the housing with the Owner, Housing Choice Voucher holder and Housing Authority Official. The assistance will begin the date all of the above have been approved if there were discrepancies or the date the RTA was submitted if there were none.
- 11) The first payment will be made to the Owner on the 1st of the month. If the effective date is on the 2nd of the month or later, that month will be prorated and an amount for the number of days will be adjusted from the Contract Rent. The prorated amount will be paid with the next check processing period and be included with that months payment. In some instances, an Owner may request and receive a check for the prorated rent amount prior to the 1st of the month. This process is determined solely by the Housing Authority and if they determine that the Owner would be financially burdened not to receive the payment until the established check processing date.
- 12) The Contract Rent (amount Owner is requesting for unit) less the HAP or Housing

Assistance Payment, equals the Tenants Rent Contribution. The rent on Housing Choice Voucher is based on 30 % of the participants gross adjusted income, less the Utility Allowance given to the family for the unit. The UA is based on the Bedroom size and what utilities are paid by the family. The participants rent contribution deducted from the Contract Rent, equals the HAP. The total of the Tenants contribution and HAP should equal the Contract Rent.

That is basically how the Housing Choice Voucher Program works, however there is still more you need to know.

Please keep in mind that your Housing Choice Voucher Representative is available and can be reached by calling during normal operating hours or through correspondence using the U. S. Mail Service available to everyone.

The Biloxi Housing Authority
P.O. Box 447
Biloxi, MS 39533

Physical Address of the Beatrice Brown Community Center 330 George Quint Circle
Biloxi, MS 39530

Phone Number (228) 374-7771

HCV Department – Extensions 245-253
VASH Manager – Extension 243

B. Family and Owner Responsibilities

All participants of the Housing Choice Voucher Program have certain responsibilities that make the program work. The Housing Authority has responsibilities as well. One is to inform you of what is required for your participation with the program and additionally, let the Owner/Landlord know what their responsibilities are.

Family Responsibilities:

- Notify the Biloxi Housing Authority of any changes in Household Income or changes in Family Composition within ten (10) days.
- Keep your Utilities (Gas, Water and Electricity) ON at all times because your unit will not comply with Housing Quality Standards if any or all are out of service. These necessities assure your unit will remain Safe, Sanitary and Healthy for your family.
- Pay the Owner/Landlord your portion of the rent on time and maintain a good channel of communication with them. They are your landlord, not the Housing Authority's.
- Report any repair problems with your unit to the Owner/Landlord.
- Abide by the Terms of the Dwelling Lease Agreement you signed with the property Owner/Landlord.
- Do not allow unauthorized person(s) to live in your unit that are not on your application and have not been processed through The Biloxi Housing Authority Housing Choice

Voucher Department.

- Do not engage in Drug Related or Violent Criminal Activity and abide by the Housing Authority Rules and Regulations for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the agencies “One Strike and You’re Out!” policy. This includes all family members of the Housing Choice Participants Household Composition, not just the Head of Household. As the Head of the Household, you are responsible for the actions of all members of your family and guest, regardless if you committed the act or not.
- Pay for any Tenant Inflicted Damages or Rental Assistance Overpaid on your behalf due to Misrepresentation of your Income or Family Composition.
- Be prompt for any scheduled appointments for your Annual Re-examination and return any Housing Authority issued forms within ten (10) days.
- Practice Good Housekeeping and refer to the manuals and booklets you received at your briefing. They will be useful as a reference guide for you in the future.

Owner/Landlord Responsibilities:

- Make needed repairs to the rental unit and respond to tenant requests of problems they may encounter during the term of the lease.
- Keep any Furnished Utilities ON at all times. The unit does not pass an inspection and no Housing Assistance Payments will be made on a Sub-Standard Unit.
- Do not charge the tenant more rent than is determined to be their portion by the Housing Authority.
- If the rental property was constructed prior to 1978, responsible to sign a Lead Base Paint Certification. (Included in the Briefing Packet).
- Notify the Housing Authority of any hazardous conditions or situations that may arise during the term of the lease.
- Inform the Housing Authority of any “Skip Outs” that leave before the end of the lease so that the assistance can be stopped in a timely manner. This should be done as soon as the rental unit is discovered vacant.
- Abide by the terms of the Housing Assistance Payments Contract signed with the Biloxi Housing Authority.
- Do not engage in any Drug Related or Violent Criminal Activity and abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the “One Strike You’re Out!” policy.
- Turn in any Rent Increase Requests no earlier than 90 Days no later than 60 Days before the expiration of the current lease agreement with the Housing Choice Voucher Participant. This will allow enough time for the Housing Authority to review all factors

and process the request in a timely manner.

- Keep your tenant informed of what is expected on their part to maintain the grounds and interior of the unit they lease from you.
- Report any un-appropriate activities discovered on or around your property to the Housing Authority.

Important Phone Numbers:

Biloxi Housing Authority HCV Department	(228) 374-7771 Extensions 245/253
Biloxi Housing Authority VASH Manager	(228) 374-7771 Extension 243
Biloxi Housing Authority Investigations	(228) 374-7771 Extension 222

C. Where the Family may Lease a Unit (Please see Jurisdiction/Non-Impacted Area Maps)

The Biloxi Housing Authority is authorized to assist Housing Choice Voucher Program Participants within the City Limits of Biloxi, Mississippi and in un-incorporated areas no more than five (5) miles outside of the city limits. This includes newly annexed areas that are North of the Biloxi Bay (Woolmarket and Cedar Lake areas). If you have doubts about the boundaries for the City of Biloxi, please refer to a map of the city or call your Housing Choice Voucher Manager.

You can lease outside of the jurisdiction of the Biloxi Housing Authority utilizing Portability with your Housing Voucher. This will be covered more extensively later during the Briefing Session.

D. The Term of the Voucher

The Voucher you receive is initially valid for a 60 Day period after which you may request that an extension be granted. The Housing Authority can extend the term for a reasonable amount of time and that is determined by The Housing Choice Voucher Manager.

E. How to Request an Extension

You must request an extension for your Voucher in writing and then submit it to the Biloxi Housing Authority – Housing Choice Voucher Manager no less than ten (10) Days before the initial term of 60 Days expires. You must include the reason you are making the request for an extension. This will be considered in the decision to grant the extension or not. If approved, a new expiration date will be entered for the first extension field on the voucher and a new copy will be mailed to your current address. A Searching Form must be returned to show that you are active searching for a unit.

F. Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) and How it is Determined

The Amount of Rent that is paid by the Housing Authority to the Owner/Landlord is known as HAP or Housing Assistance Payment. It is determined after the participant payment is calculated and is the balance left after subtracting the portion paid by the Housing Choice Voucher Family from the Contract Rent Amount.

Example:

Contract Rent (amount Owner/Landlord is asking per month in rent)	= \$500.00
Less Family Contribution (30% of MAI minus the Utility Allowance)	= <\$123.00>
Equals the Housing Assistance Payment	= \$377.00

G. Fair Market Rents/Payment Standards for Vouchers

The Fair Market Rent amounts are published in the Federal Register each year and are used by the Biloxi Housing Authority to establish the Voucher Payment Standard amounts. The Biloxi Housing Authority Voucher Payment Standards equal 110% of The Fair Market Rents.

Current Fair Market Rents and Voucher Payment Standards:

Bedroom Size	0	1	2	3	4
Fair Market Rent		\$714	\$857	\$1102	\$1174

Note: Effective Date of FMR's – 2013+

H. Utility Allowances - Please refer to the Utility Allowance Schedule that is provided in your Briefing Packet for review at this time.

I. Maximum Rent and How it is Determined

The Maximum Amount of Rent that the Housing Authority can approve is based on a comparison and Rent Reasonable Test, The amount of Contract Rent the Owner/Landlord is requesting and the Utility Allowance Amount that is given to the Family for the unit. The Contract Rent plus the Utility Allowance given to the Family for the Utilities they are responsible to pay equal the GROSS RENT and it cannot be in excess of the amount of the Payment Standard for the size bedroom unit they are authorized to receive assistance for.

There are exceptions under the Voucher Program that state the participant can pay in excess of the determined amount if the excess amount is not over 40% of the Families Monthly Adjusted Income, otherwise it would create a burden upon the family and would be unacceptable. This exception will take in to consideration the Amenities included in the Rental property and its location in reference to Educational Facilities, Medical Facilities and Commercial Outlets. In addition Public Transportation access and Neighborhood Conditions will also be a factor in the approval of the exception.

J. Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Booklet - "A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE"

It is the Housing Authority and the Participants responsibility to ensure that the Family Dwelling is Safe, Decent and Sanitary. The Housing Authority will perform an Inspection of the property to confirm that it meets all of the requirements and it is helpful for the participant to know what to look for when searching for a unit to rent. By reviewing the booklet provided in your Briefing Packet we hope you will read the entire booklet after the briefing and keep it for future reference.

K. Portability - What is That? An Explanation

Portable means you can take it with you and that is what portability is all about. It means that you can use your Housing Voucher to move to any area, city or state that has an active Housing Choice Voucher Program. You can make a request for Portability by filling out the Family Request for Portability form and turning it in to the Biloxi Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher

Program Manager.

All Housing Authorities have their own policies concerning Portable Vouchers and how they are handled. Other Authorities will bill the Initial Authority (the one that issued the voucher originally) allowing that PHA to still count the voucher on its statistical data and program utilization reports. In other words, they are basically just another Landlord renting a unit to a Housing Choice Voucher Participant and receiving a monthly HAP payment on behalf of the participant.

L. Biloxi Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Landlord Listing

A current list of Owners/Landlords that accept Housing Choice Voucher Program Participants is provided in your Briefing Packet along with other Booklets.

M. Handicapped Accessible Units in our Area

A current list of Handicapped Accessible Rental Units in our area is provided in your Briefing Packet along with other Booklets.

N. Housing Authorities in our Area - Who and How to Contact

A current list of Housing Authorities in our area is provided in your Briefing Packet along with other Booklets. It contains information on who you should contact, their telephone number and mailing address for each agency.

O. Biloxi Housing Authority -Who, How and Why to Contact

HCV Manager – Valerie Purnell @ (228) 374-7771 Ext # 245

All matters concerning HCV Housing Assistance, Landlord and Tenant Fraud, Portability Issues, HAP Checks, Tenant Utility Allowance Checks.

Assistant HCV Manager – Sheryl Kennedy @ (228) 374-7771 Ext # 253

All matters concerning Applications, Change in household size or income, Income Verification Forms and Re-certification.

VASH HCV Manager – Jack Hillensbeck @ (228) 374-7771 Ext #243

All matters concerning VASH housing, change in household size or income.

Housing Inspector - Mark Harville & Robert Nelson @ (228) 374-7771 Ext # 223

Questions about scheduling inspection dates and times concerning all Initial, Annual or Complaint Inspections for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

2. Request For Tenancy Approval

The Requests For Tenancy Approval (Form HUD-52517) is provided to you in your Briefing Packet. It is the document that you will present to the Owner/Landlord of the rental unit you want to lease on the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

When you find a rental unit and the Owner/Landlord and yourself agree to sign a lease, the first step is to have the lessor (Landlord) fill out the REQUEST FOR TENANCY APPROVAL. Be

sure that all portions pertaining to the location (Street Address, City, State and Zip Code) are filled in. The date the Lease will begin (Month/Day/Year). The number of Bedrooms, the Year it was constructed, the Proposed Rent and Security Deposit amount.

Note: If the building was constructed prior to **1978**, the Owner/Landlord must fill out **The Lead Base Paint Certification** Form provided in this Briefing Packet.

What type of House/Apartment it is. We need to know what utilities are furnished (Paid or Provided by Owner/Landlord) and which ones you will be responsible to pay. This will be used in determining your Utility Allowance and calculating your portion of the rent. Be sure the Owner/Landlord completes all sections of the Part-9 grid.

The next step the Owner/Landlord needs to fill in the amount they charged the last Tenant that occupied the rental unit. If the amount they are requesting currently is higher than they charged the last Tenant, they need to explain why they need to charge more rent now.

The Owner/Landlord needs to fill the bottom left side of the Request For Tenancy Approval exactly the way they want their Housing Choice Voucher HAP Check to be made out. They also need to sign the form, give a current phone number where they can be reached, the address where they want to receive their check and other letters from The Housing Authority and at the very bottom their Federal Tax ID Number or Social Security Number must be included on the form.

Once all of the above has been completed, it is your responsibility to fill in the right side at the bottom of the form and return the form to The Biloxi Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Program Manager for scheduling. Once received it will be reviewed checked for Rent Reasonableness, and turned over to the Housing Inspector to schedule an inspection of the property within ten (10) Days.

It is your responsibility to make sure the form is completely filled out and turned in to the Housing Choice Voucher Manager (Not the Owner/Landlord of the rental unit).

If the unit fails the Inspection, a list of the failed items will be provided to the Owner/Landlord and they will be given the opportunity to bring the unit up to Standard. If not you will be issued another Request For Tenancy Approval and the process will start all over again.

3. Housing Choice Voucher Program Tenancy Addendum to the Lease

A copy of the Tenancy Addendum is provided in your Briefing Packet. It should be attached to the Owner/Landlords Lease Agreement. It covers the Family and the Owner/Landlord Responsibilities pertaining to the Housing Choice Voucher Program. It is an addition to the terms of the Lease signed by both parties. It is a copy for you to use when discussing the possibility of renting a unit from someone, so you have it available for their review prior to the signing of a Lease, HAP Contract and other documents. Please review the Addendum at home in your spare time so you will become more familiar with the form and what is expected of you and your potential Owner/Landlord.

4. Lead Base Paint Information

In your Briefing Packet you will find a booklet on Lead Base Paint that is titled "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home". Please take time to read it.

Included in your Briefing Packet is The Biloxi Housing Authority Lead Base Paint Addendum. These forms will need to be filled out and signed by you and your Owner/Landlord and returned to the Housing Choice Voucher Program Manager so it can be placed permanently in your file. The Owner/Landlord part should be filled out, signed and then returned along with the Request For Tenancy Approval when you return it to the Housing Choice Voucher Office. Your Housing cannot be processed without the form on file.

5. Fair Housing Booklet - Housing Discrimination Complaint - HUD Form 903

The booklet "Fair Housing -It's Your Right" is included in your Briefing Packet and should be reviewed and kept for future reference.

A copy of the form HUD 903 is also provided in your packet should you need to file a Housing Discrimination Complaint.

If you have access to the Internet you can review additional material on this subject at: www.hud.gov/hdiscrim.html the sight covers Housing Discrimination and other related topics.

6. Tenant and Owner Fraud and Related Manuals/Flyers

Please find a copy of "Things You Should Know", "Fraud Waste and Abuse" and a copy of The Biloxi Housing Authority Statement on Tenant/Owner Fraud included in the reference materials provided to you in the Briefing Packet.

7. The Biloxi Housing Authority's "ONE STRIKE AND YOU'RE OUT" Policy

"Zero Tolerance" is The Biloxi Housing Authority position on this subject. Please read and sign the "One Strike and You're Out" form and return before leaving. We will review the form now during this briefing. After we are finished with the details concerning this subject you need to turn your signed copy over to the Housing Authority Representative conducting the Briefing.

8. Informal and Formal Hearing Procedures/ How to Request a Hearing

All requests for Informal are to be made in writing and mailed to The Biloxi Housing Authority Administration Building to the attention of the Housing Choice Voucher Program Manager. You will need to review the Grievance Procedures Manual provided to you in the Briefing Packet.

If you receive notice that your assistance will be terminated, this is the course of action you need to take in order to challenge the decision if you choose. It is your opportunity to tell your side of the story and could result in the decision being reversed if the Hearing Officer rules in your favor. Please read the Housing Authority Grievance Procedures completely so you will understand what you need to do should you ever have the need to file for a hearing.

9. Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program

The Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program is designed to promote employment and increase savings among families receiving Housing Choice Vouchers or living in Public Housing.

There are two main features to FSS: An Escrow Account and Case Management.

Escrow Account: Like most families in assisted housing, a participant in the FSS Program must pay higher rental payments if their income increases. Unlike most other tenants, however, the FSS participant can get a refund of some or all of their increased rental charges if they comply with program rules. If an FSS Participant increases their earnings from work, an amount equal to 30% of their net increase in income (or 30% of their increased earnings, whichever is lower) will be deposited into an Escrow Account. If the participant graduates successfully from FSS, they will receive all of the funds in the Escrow Account at the end of the contract period. If they fail to complete the program, the participant loses the funds in the Escrow Account.

Case Management: Each family in FSS is provided with a case manager. The case manager works with the family to develop an FSS Contract and help the family access supportive services in the community. The nature of the services varies from program to program. Among the services that families can access through some FSS programs are child care, transportation, credit and money counseling, and educational programs. The Biloxi Housing Authority FSS Program Coordinator will handle all case management tasks. They will perform a needs assessment on each family that applies to participate on the program.

Eligibility: Must be on the Housing Choice Voucher Program with the Biloxi Housing Authority. Your family does not have to be on welfare or any other type of income assistance to qualify.

Responsibilities of FSS Participants: Each family that wishes to participate in FSS must sign an FSS Contract. In addition, the head of the household and other interested family members must work with the housing agency to develop individual training and service plans. These documents spell out the responsibilities of the family and the housing agency during the course of the FSS Contract. Both the family and the housing agency must sign documents and agree to their contents. The family can request that changes be made to the contract and service plan prior to signing them.

The individual training and service plan must contain specific interim goals for the FSS participant, such as obtaining a job promotion or some form of job training. The plan must specify one or more long-term goals, such as certain salary level, a Job with benefits, or home-ownership. Plans can be modified if participants goals should change.

To successfully complete the FSS Program and obtain funds in the Escrow Account a Family must:

- Seek and maintain employment (after completion of any education or job training Programs listed in their FSS Contract).
- Become independent of “Welfare Assistance” and remain independent for at least the last twelve (12) months of the FSS Contract. In new rules issued in March of 2000, HUD defines “welfare assistance” as limited to income assistance under TANF or a state program of general assistance. The new rules are clear that a family’s continuing receipt of food stamps, medical assistance, child care assistance, work supports such as transportation assistance or short-term benefits under TANF, or disability benefits for another family member are not considered “welfare assistance” for purposes of this FSS requirement.
- Follow all other requirements of the FSS Contract and Individual Plan.

- Complete the Five (5) year Contract.

Social Services Contact:

Kenyatta Smith Thompson - Biloxi Housing Authority Community Services Coordinator, Phone:
(228) 374-7771 Extension 211.

Closing the Briefing Session

Please find the Briefing Certificate in your briefing packet and date and sign it at the bottom of the page. There are two (2) copies, one for you and one that must be kept in your file at the Section 8 Program Office.

Keep this certificate along with your other Housing Choice Voucher Documents, Booklets and Flyers you received today. The certificate is your proof that you attended and completed the briefing session and understand the rules, regulations and other policies presented to you. All parties know what their responsibilities are and know how the Housing Choice Voucher Program at the Biloxi Housing Authority works.

The staff at the Biloxi Housing Authority would like to thank you for attending this briefing session. We hope that you have a better understanding of the program. If you need assistance, please feel free to call during normal operating hours, Monday - Thursday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. Please refer to the contacts listed in your Briefing Handbook.

GOOD LUCK in your search for **SAFE, DECENT and AFFORDABLE HOUSING!!**

Please be certain that you have turned in all necessary forms, signed and dated, before leaving the building.

We cannot process your file for Housing Assistance unless all forms are returned.