



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



How long am I eligible for assistance?

You will continue receiving Section 8 assistance as long as your income remains within the program limits and you meet all program obligations. These obligations include recertifying annually, permitting Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections, allowing your property owner to make any needed repairs, and meeting the terms of your lease.

What is the Voucher Payment Standard (VPS)?

The VPS is the maximum allowable housing assistance payment NYCHA can pay on your behalf to the Section 8 property owner.

How many bedrooms will be listed on my voucher?

The number of bedrooms on your voucher is based on the total number of authorized household members approved by NYCHA and NYCHA's occupancy standards. Generally, it is two people of the same sex per living/sleeping area.

Can I rent a unit that is larger than my voucher bedroom size?

Yes. You may rent a unit that is larger than your voucher bedroom size. However, the portion of rent you pay to the owner cannot exceed 40% of your total household income. NYCHA will conduct a rent reasonableness evaluation to determine whether the proposed rent is reasonable compared to the rent for similar unsubsidized units in the area.

How much will my rent be per month?

You will typically pay 30% of your monthly adjusted income toward rent and utilities. However, if the gross rent (rent and utilities) is more than the VPS, you may have to pay more.

Can I be terminated from the Section 8 program?

Yes. If you violate your obligations under the Section 8 program, you can be terminated. Reasons for termination from the program include:



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



- failing to complete the annual recertification;
- failing to allow access to HQS inspectors for a unit inspection;
- failing to give the owner of your Section 8 unit access to complete needed repairs;
- allowing unauthorized people to live in the apartment; and
- committing any serious or repeated violations of the lease.

ANNUAL RECERTIFICATIONS

When will I receive my annual recertification package?

You will receive your annual recertification package approximately 5 months before your next recertification date. All Section 8 tenants must recertify their income and family composition on time each year to remain eligible to receive Section 8 assistance.

Who will assist me with completing my annual recertification package?

If you are unable to complete the forms in the annual recertification package and need a reasonable accommodation, call the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, for more information.

Can I continue to receive public assistance while participating in the Section 8 program?

Yes. You may continue to receive public assistance while participating in the Section 8 program. However, NYCHA will include your reported public assistance income to determine your Section 8 rent share.

Do I have to report Social Security Income (SSI) payments for my annual recertification?

Yes. You are required to report SSI income for all household members. NYCHA includes all SSI income to calculate your rent share.



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



Will NYCHA include my child's part-time job as income when conducting the annual recertification?

If your child is 18 years of age or younger, you must report his/her part-time employment income, but NYCHA will not include it in your rent calculation. If your child is over the age of 18, part-time employment income is included in your rent calculation. If your child is over the age of 18 and is a full-time student, only a portion of the income will be included in your rent calculation.

Do I have to report all assets, including bank accounts in my child's name, as part of the annual recertification?

Yes. You are required to report all household assets, including any bank accounts in your child's name.

Why do I need to complete a "Third Party Verification - Consent to Release Information" form with my annual recertification package?

You must sign the "Third Party Verification - Consent to Release Information" form at admission and every year during the annual recertification process. NYCHA needs this form in order to perform required income verification. Failure to sign and return this form may result in termination of your Section 8 benefits.

Does Section 8 allow tenants to own rental property?

Yes, Section 8 does allow you to own rental property for investment purposes only. However, the rental property cannot be your family's primary residence (except for Section 8 co-op owners). We will consider the value of your property and any income you earn when determining your continuing eligibility for the Section 8 program.

What happens if a Section 8 tenant does not complete the annual recertification?

A tenant who does not complete the annual recertification or fails to provide necessary documentation by the deadline risks termination from the program.

If NYCHA does not receive a completed annual recertification and all required



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



documentation by the deadline, NYCHA will send the tenant notices about possible termination of their Section 8 subsidy. A Section 8 tenant has the right to request an informal conference and/or an impartial hearing to contest the termination of his/her Section 8 subsidy. Information regarding this process is provided on the termination notices.

RENTALS

Do I need an appointment to return my rental packet?

No. You can bring your completed package from 8am -12pm, Monday – Friday, to the Walk-In Center at 787 Atlantic Ave, Brooklyn or 1 Fordham Plaza, Bronx.

TRANSFERS

How can I transfer to another Section 8 unit?

You may request a transfer after your initial lease term with the owner expires. You must submit the "Voucher Holder's Request for Transfer" form. You may not move until NYCHA approves your request. If you are adding someone to your household, you should do so before you request a transfer. Contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, to request the form.

What is an emergency transfer?

When you request a transfer by submitting the "Voucher Holder's Request for Transfer" form, NYCHA will determine if you are eligible to receive a transfer voucher. Transfer requests are reviewed and prioritized as an "emergency" or "non-emergency." Click [here](#) to access NYCHA's emergency transfer policy.

How long does it take for NYCHA to approve a transfer request?

NYCHA approves transfer requests on average between 3 and 10 business days. Briefings are scheduled for emergency and non-emergency transfers. Emergency transfer briefings are scheduled within 21 days of NYCHA approval. It takes longer to schedule non-emergency transfer briefings.



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



Does NYCHA have a listing of available Section 8 units for tenants to review?

Yes. NYCHA offers a listing of properties available to voucher holders seeking units in the private market. The listing is maintained by AffordableHousing.com— the largest rental listing service provider for the Section 8 housing market. Click [here](#) to access this information.

Should I give my Section 8 voucher to the owner of my Section 8 unit?

No. You are only required to show your voucher to the owner as proof you are authorized to search for a Section 8 unit. You should not give your Section 8 voucher to anyone. Vouchers are not transferable.

What documentation do I need to supply to qualify for one of the emergency priorities, like Victim of Domestic Violence (VDV) or Intimidated Witness (IW)?

You can find all the documentation requirements for emergency transfers on this website. If you qualify for one of these emergency priorities, you will need to obtain a new VDV/IW Personal Identification Number (PIN) at a NYCHA [Walk-In Center](#). Acceptable proof of identity to get a new VDV/IW PIN is a government-issued photo ID, such as a valid driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID. Click [here](#) to access NYCHA's emergency transfer policy.

INTERIM RECERTIFICATION

How do I add or remove a family member?

If you need to add a child because of a birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody, you must submit a copy of the birth certificate, Social Security card, and court order (if applicable).

To add other family members, you must request and obtain approval from NYCHA before the person moves into your unit. You will need to submit to NYCHA the "Permanent or Conditional Permission Request for a Family Member/Additional Person to Live with a Section 8 Family" form along with supporting documentation. If you would like to remove a family member, you must provide a written notice to NYCHA requesting removal of the household



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



member with your annual recertification package. If your annual recertification has been completed, you must provide a written notice using NYCHA Form 059.645 "Voucher Holder's Request for Interim Change."

Can a foster child be added to my Section 8 household?

Yes. A foster child may reside in your Section 8 unit. However, you must first request permission from NYCHA by filling out the "Permanent or Conditional Permission Request for a Family Member/Additional Person to Live with a Section 8 Family." Contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, to request this form.

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) INSPECTIONS

How often are units inspected?

NYCHA conducts an HQS inspection before a family moves into a Section 8 unit and periodically during occupancy. NYCHA may also conduct a quality control inspection at any time to ensure full HQS compliance.

What will happen if I miss or need to change my annual inspection appointment?

If you miss your scheduled inspection appointment, NYCHA will automatically reschedule an appointment and will mail a notice to you confirming the new date. If you need to reschedule prior to your scheduled inspection, contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, to reschedule your appointment.

Who is responsible for repairs in my unit?

Generally, the Section 8 property owner is responsible to make repairs in your unit to ensure it remains in compliance with HQS. NYCHA is not responsible for making repairs and/or paying for repairs to the unit. If NYCHA has determined that repairs are necessary because you or a family member caused damage to the unit, you will be responsible for making the repairs.

Will the owner get paid if my unit fails an HQS inspection?

The owner must make repairs within the required timeframe to continue



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



receiving Housing Assistance Payments (HAP). If the owner does not make repairs within the required timeframe, payments will be suspended. The owner must correct deficiencies and NYCHA must verify repairs were made, through NYCHA form 059.307 Certification of Completed Repairs or re-inspection, before NYCHA can resume payments.

How does NYCHA verify the owner has made the repairs?

NYCHA will verify the owner has made the required repairs, as listed in an HQS inspection, by re-inspecting the unit or through a written certification, signed by the owner and the tenant, verifying the completion of repairs. A certification of repairs is not accepted for any 24-hour life-threatening violations such as:

(1) fire; (2) gas leak; (3) dangerous structural hazards; (4) exposed sparking or smoking wires; and (5) inoperable smoke or carbon monoxide detectors.

How much time is given to an owner to correct HQS violations?

The time given to correct HQS violations depends on the nature of the violation. The owner must correct all life - threatening violations within 24 hours.

For all other violations, the owner must correct the condition(s) within 30 calendar days (or within any NYCHA-approved extension). The only exception is window guard violations, which the owner must correct within 21 calendar days.

What is a special inspection?

The fastest and most convenient way to schedule a special inspection is online, using the [Self-Service portal](#). To request a special inspection for your unit or the public space online, you must be the head of the household and be a registered user. To register for the portal, you will need a valid email address.

You may also call the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, to schedule a special inspection.



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



When does heating season begin?

Heating season begins on October 1 and ends on May 31. During this period, if the outdoor temperature falls below 55 degrees Fahrenheit between 6am - 10pm, the temperature in the unit must be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit. From 10pm - 6am, the indoor temperature must be at least 62 degrees Fahrenheit regardless of the temperature outside. Hot water must be kept at a minimum temperature of 120 degrees year-round.

Who is responsible for changing the batteries in the carbon monoxide and smoke detectors?

The tenant is responsible for periodically changing the batteries in both the carbon monoxide and smoke detectors throughout the unit after the initial inspection.

What are the requirements for window guards?

In buildings with three or more units, owners are required to install and maintain window guards in the public spaces and units (including units on the first floor), where a child 10 years of age or younger resides.

LEASE RENEWALS

Do I have to renew my lease with the owner of my Section 8 unit?

No. You do not have to renew your lease. Generally, you can transfer once in a 12-month period. The only exception to this would be for emergency situations. If you have not moved in the last 12 months but the lease is still effective, you must refer to the terms of your lease. Breaking your lease could result in the owner bringing a court action against you.

What do I do if the owner of my Section 8 unit does not want to renew my lease?

If you are living in a unit owned by a private property owner and the unit is not rent stabilized, the owner does not have to renew the lease and you may transfer to another unit with continued Section 8 assistance. Contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



hours of 8am - 5pm, to request a transfer form.

If you are living in a rent-stabilized unit, with limited exceptions, the property owner is required by law to provide you with the option to renew your lease.

Are rent increases allowed?

During the initial term of the lease, the owner may not increase the rent. After the initial term of the lease, the owner may request an increase in the rent. The owner must notify NYCHA in writing of the proposed increase at least 60 days before the change would go into effect. In deciding whether to approve the owner's request for a rent increase, NYCHA will evaluate whether the rent as increased would be reasonable and in compliance with rent control limits under applicable state or local law.

Who pays the utilities?

The owner and the tenant must agree upon who will be responsible for the utilities. The lease agreement and HAP contract must indicate who will be responsible for paying which utilities.

What do I do if the owner of my Section 8 unit wants me to start paying for the utilities?

You and the owner must come to an agreement regarding payment for utilities. If you agree to assume responsibility for paying for utilities, you and the owner must execute a new lease reflecting that agreement. NYCHA must receive a copy of the new lease, perform a rent reasonableness evaluation, and execute a new HAP contract with the owner before your new obligation to pay for utilities goes into effect.

If you and the owner cannot reach an agreement on who pays for utilities, you may decide to transfer.

Will NYCHA pay for my utilities?

If you are responsible for paying for utilities, NYCHA will give you a "utility reimbursement" based on a [utility allowance schedule](#). The reimbursement



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



will be subtracted from your tenant share of rent.

PORTABILITY

Can I rent a unit outside of New York City with my Section 8 voucher?

Yes. You may rent a unit outside of New York City through a process called "portability." You may ask to "port" your Section 8 voucher to any other public housing authority in the United States or its commonwealths or territories (e.g., Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands) that administers a Section 8 program.

How can I start the portability transfer process?

You must first request a transfer in writing by submitting the "Voucher Holder's Request for Transfer" form and indicating that you would like to port outside of New York City.

For more information, contact the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday - Friday, between the hours of 8am - 5pm, to request a transfer form.

RENTING RESTRICTIONS

Can I receive Section 8 subsidy even though I own my co-op apartment?

Yes. You may receive Section 8 subsidy in your co-op. NYCHA will not pay for any outstanding loans or mortgages. The contract rent for your co-op will be equal to the maintenance fee charged by the building's co-op board. NYCHA will conduct a rent reasonableness evaluation to determine whether the proposed rent is reasonable compared to the rent for similar unsubsidized units in the area.

Can I rent my current unit with my Section 8 voucher?

Yes. You may be able to rent your current unit with a Section 8 voucher if the owner completes and signs the required documents in your rental packet and your unit passes an HQS inspection.



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



Will NYCHA allow me to rent a unit from a relative?

You are not allowed to rent a unit from a relative unless renting from that relative would provide a reasonable accommodation for you and/or a member of your Section 8 household who is a person with a disability. Relatives include, but are not limited to, a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother of any member of your family. You will need to request and obtain NYCHA's approval in such cases.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, or alteration in policy, procedure, practice, or program that provides a qualified individual with a disability the same opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, a program or activity that exists for individuals without a disability.

Who is eligible to apply for a reasonable accommodation?

Any Section 8 applicant, voucher holder, or participant with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation for themselves or a household member who has a disability.

What is a disability?

A disability is a physical, medical, mental, or psychological impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A mobility, breathing, hearing or vision impairment and chronic health problems are some examples of disabilities.

What kinds of reasonable accommodations does NYCHA provide?

NYCHA provides several kinds of reasonable accommodations including, but not limited to, the following:

- **A larger voucher size for a currently rented apartment** that is larger than the voucher size and requires paying more than 40% of the monthly adjusted income towards the rent to meet the needs of a household member with a



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



- disability and allow the household to remain in the apartment.
- **A larger voucher size for a new apartment** to meet the needs of a person, who requires a separate bedroom, because of a disability.
 - **Extension of the time on the Section 8 voucher** because of a disability-related issue.
 - **An increase in the Voucher Payment Standard** if the person with a disability needs an accessible apartment or access to health care providers and other sources of community support (e. g., family and friends).
 - **Permission to rent from a landlord who is a relative** if the existing characteristics in the proposed apartment and/or building provide relief from the disability through better accessibility, mobility, or the provision of medical care.
 - **Alternative communications** when the household head/co-head is blind or has a visual impairment
 - **Alternative communications** when the household head/co-head is deaf or has a hearing impairment
 - **Other reasonable accommodations** reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Where should I return the Disability Status and Notice of Reasonable Accommodation Request, Medical Verification form, and Transfer Request forms?

Please return all the forms, together in one package, to the address printed at the top of the forms or submit the forms to one of the Walk-In Centers. Do not submit the forms separately. If the required documentation is not received in a complete package, NYCHA's response to the reasonable accommodation request may be delayed.

What if I am unable to complete the Disability Status and Notice of Reasonable Accommodation Request form myself?

If you are unable to complete the form, or submit an online request, please call the Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771 or go to a Walk-in Center for assistance.

I would like to transfer to a first-floor apartment, an apartment in a building with an elevator, or an area outside of the five boroughs to accommodate a disability. What forms are required to submit the request?



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



Please submit NYCHA Form 059.004 Voucher Holder Request for Transfer or NYCHA Form 059.723 Voucher Holder Request for Portability and any related medical verification, to move outside of the five boroughs.

What will happen to my reasonable accommodation request if I do not provide the required documentation within the period of time allotted?

If the documentation needed to review the reasonable accommodation request has not been submitted within the time allotted, the request will be denied. You may submit a new request, along with the required documentation, at any time.

Can NYCHA help me make my unit or building accessible?

NYCHA does not make physical modifications, such as installing bathroom grab bars or railings, to the apartments or common areas of privately owned buildings. Participants may request that the homeowner make the modifications or allow the participant to make the modifications at the participant's expense. The apartment would have to be restored to its original state once the participant moves out.

Project Open House, which is administered by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, is a program that may provide help with the cost of accessibility modifications. The program provides grants for homeowners to make physical modifications to rental units and common areas. More information can be obtained on the [Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities website](#).

How long after a reasonable accommodation request is submitted can a decision be expected?

A decision will generally be made within five business days of receiving all documentation necessary to process the request.

How will I know whether the request is approved or disapproved?

NYCHA will notify you of whether your reasonable accommodation request was approved or disapproved using NYCHA Form 059.664 Reasonable



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



Accommodation Request: Review and Determination. The form contains information about the option to request an impartial hearing for disapproved requests.

Is NYCHA required to approve my reasonable accommodation request?

No. The decision to approve or disapprove a reasonable accommodation request is based upon several factors, such as the likelihood that the accommodation would provide relief from the disability and whether it would cause a fundamental change in NYCHA's operations. NYCHA may suggest an alternative accommodation to the one you requested.

How much time is allowed for the submission of an impartial hearing request?

An impartial hearing request must be received within 30 calendar days from the receipt of NYCHA Form 059.664 Reasonable Accommodation Request: Review and Determination.

What course of action can I take if I have a complaint about the handling of my reasonable accommodation request?

NYCHA has a Section 8 reasonable accommodation coordinator that handles complaints and issues surrounding the reasonable accommodation process. You may contact the Customer Contact Center for more information. You may also file a complaint orally, or in writing, with NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity. A complaint must be filed within three months of receiving the disapproval notice.

What role does NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity play?

NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity investigates complaints of disability discrimination for failure to provide a reasonable accommodation. If appropriate, NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity will attempt to negotiate a resolution of the complaint.

How long does it take to learn the results of NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity investigation?

NYCHA's Department of Equal Opportunity provides its findings within 90



Section 8 Tenants Frequently Asked Questions



calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, unless additional time is warranted.