

METRO HOUSING | BOSTON SECTION 8 RENT APPROVALS - Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the process for rent increase requests?

A: If you are using the Section 8 Model Dwelling Lease, property owners must submit a written request for an increase at least 60 days (2 calendar months) prior to the lease renewal date on which the increase will take effect. Requests must be submitted in writing to the appropriate Metro Housing Boston Program Representative. An increase will be approved ONLY for the lease renewal date.

Q: Do I need to notify the tenant of the proposed increase?

A: Yes. As a party to the lease, the tenant must be notified of the proposed increase, and must be in agreement with any proposed contract rent increase. The tenant's agreement is indicated by having them sign the request for an increase.

Q: How much of an increase can I ask for, and will it be approved?

A: Any new rent amount that is requested and/or approved must be "reasonable" in comparison with rents of similar units in the private, unassisted (non-subsidized) rental market. Criteria guidelines include, but are not limited to; condition and rating of unit, location (neighborhood), bedroom size, amenities available, renovations. The full amount of the increase requested may or may not be approved.

Q: How will a rent increase affect the tenant?

A: If a rent increase is approved, the tenant's share may go up and may affect the tenant's ability to pay their portion.

Q: What can I do if the tenant does not accept the increase?

A: If a tenant chooses not to accept the proposed amount, you may continue the tenancy under the current lease terms, *or* terminate the tenancy by giving notice under the terms of the lease, *or* negotiate a lower amount that is acceptable to both parties. If a lower amount is negotiated, Metro Housing Boston must be notified in writing before that amount can be implemented.

Q: When will an approved rent increase take effect?

A: If you are using the Section 8 Model Dwelling Lease, the increase will not take effect until at least two full calendar months have passed since the date the request was received by Metro Housing Boston, and will not take effect until the lease renewal date. For example, if an increase request was received by Metro Housing Boston in January, and the lease renews April 1st, the increase would not take effect until April 1st. If the request for an increase is received in March, and the lease renews April 1st, the increase could not take effect until April 1st of the following year, since the request has to be submitted at least 60 days prior to the lease renewal date.

Q: Are there any special requirements in regard to inspections for rent increases?

A: Yes, rent increases will not be approved until any failed items identified by the most recent HQS inspection have been corrected..

Q: What is the difference between the Lease renewal date and the Annual Inspection date?

A: The Lease renewal date is the date the Lease agreement and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract is entered into. This date will stay the same until the Lease is terminated. The Annual Inspection date is based on the last full HQS Inspection regardless if the unit passed or failed inspection. Because HUD requires a full inspection be conducted annually and/or biennially the date of the next annual or biennial inspection will change from year to year.