



Are you interested in Renting to a Section 8 Participant?

Thank you for your interest in the Metro Housing|Boston Rental Assistance Program. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) is a federally funded rental assistance program designed to help low-income families, senior citizens, and people with disabilities afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. The program provides subsidies to qualified households for use in private housing in the community of their choice. Under the Section 8 program, households initially pay 30%-40% of their income towards the rent plus utilities and the federal government pays the difference between that amount and the approved contract rental amount.

Attached is the HUD's Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) form. This RFTA form must be **filled out completely and signed by both the prospective tenant and the property owner** in order to initiate the rental process for participation in the HCVP.

Submitting the RFTA to Metro Housing|Boston

Step 1: Tenant Selection Screening

- The owner must approve the family as a suitable renter, even though a family is determined by Metro Housing|Boston to be eligible for the HCVP program. Therefore, the owner must initiate his/her own tenant selection screening as they would for any non-subsidized rental applicant. When a RFTA form is submitted, Metro Housing|Boston knows the owner has approved a family for tenancy.

Step 2: Security Deposits

- **Metro Housing|Boston has no responsibility for damages to the unit or unpaid rent.** As in the private market, the owner may collect a full month security deposit (not to exceed the amount of the monthly contract rent) from the tenant. The owner must comply with all state statutes and regulations covering security deposits. The tenant's Section 8 voucher does not cover security deposits.

Step 3: Submitting the RFTA to Metro Housing|Boston

When you have completed your screening process, and are ready to move forward, you and your prospective tenant must completely fill out a RFTA. Incomplete forms will be returned to you and could delay the rental process. The following documents must be submitted:

- RFTA form** (attached) signed by both property owner and prospective tenant



- IRS W-9 Form** (attached) confirming owner's Tax ID number- please note, that this Tax ID number must be verified with the IRS by Metro Housing|Boston before an inspection can be scheduled. This IRS approved Tax ID number will be used to issue the property owner the required 1099 IRS Tax Forms for rental income at the end of the year.
- Direct Deposit Form** (attached) – Metro Housing|Boston requires all owners to receive payment via direct deposit. A copy of a voided check must be attached to the completed form. For accounts without paper checks, please submit either a bank statement or a letter from bank that indicates the account name, account number, and routing information.
- Notice Concerning the Violence against Women Act (VAWA)** (attached) signed by the owner. Metro Housing|Boston must have this on file before payment can be made.
- Proof of Ownership** in the form of a copy of your deed or a recent tax bill. Metro Housing|Boston must have this on file before payment can be made.
- Letter of Lead Compliance (LOC)** - If the building was built prior to 1978 and is to be occupied by a family with children less than 6 years of age, you must provide a Letter of Compliance from a licensed de-leading inspector. It must state that the unit and relevant common areas are in compliance with the Massachusetts Lead Law, M.G.L., c.111, and s.190-191]. If the building was constructed after 1978, a copy of the original building permit is required. **You MUST submit an LOC or copy of the building permit to Metro Housing|Boston before an inspection can be scheduled.**
- Water Sub-Metering** - If the tenant is going to pay for water the property owner must submit a Sub-Metering of Water and Sewer and Certification Form. In order to eligible to charge for water, appropriate meters and low flow devices and toilets must be present. It must be signed by the installing plumber, the owner and the Local Board of Health. The form is available on Metro Housing Boston's website.
- Certificate of Fitness (COF)** - A COF from the local Board of Health is required for any new rental unit in **Chelsea, Everett, Lexington, Malden, Revere or Stoneham** in addition to Metro Housing|Boston's inspection. The COF inspection is completed by the local Board of Health and must be scheduled by the Property Owner. The approved COF must be submitted to Metro Housing|Boston in order to complete the required inspection process.
- Lease** – Metro Housing|Boston provides a standard lease (available for review on our website) to be used for any property owner who wishes. If you would like to use your own lease, it must be submitted at the same time as the RFTA. More information on leases can be found in Step 6 of this document



At the time you submit all documentation, a Program Specialist will review the requested contract rent to ensure that it would not result in the tenant paying more than 40% of their income if approved. If it would, you will be contacted and offered a rent that would be affordable for the tenant. This offered amount is based solely on the tenant's income and payment standard and is non-negotiable. For more information, please review the attached rent ranges document.

Step 4: The Inspection Process

After a family finds a suitable housing unit and the owner approves the family, Metro Housing|Boston will determine if the unit meets the **HUD and DHCD Housing Quality Standards (HQS)** for the Section 8 Program. Upon receipt of a RFTA including all of the required documents, the Program Specialist will submit the RFTA to the Senior Inspections Coordinator, who will contact you to schedule your initial HQS Inspection. Please note that this can take up to five business days upon receipt of your completed RFTA.

Metro Housing|Boston cannot make any subsidy payments prior to the unit being inspected and certified as being in compliance with HQS Inspections and **only a Metro Housing|Boston Inspector can perform the HQS inspections**. The unit must be completely vacant (unless the voucher holder currently resides in the unit), and there must be access to the basement and all common areas for the HQS Inspection to be scheduled. All utilities must be on at the time of the inspection even if the family will be responsible for the payment of the utilities in order to ensure they are in working order.

If the unit does not pass the initial HQS inspection, you will be provided a list of repairs that will need to be corrected prior to a re-inspection. When all of the repairs are complete, please notify the Senior Inspections Coordinator so that they can either cancel the unit or schedule a re-inspection. **We expect that any required work will be completed within 10 days of the initial inspection and need to hear from you within that timeframe.** If you are unable to make the required repairs, please contact the Senior Inspections Coordinator as soon as possible.

Step 5: Unit Rent Determinations

All new unit rents must be approved by a Metro Housing|Boston Market Analyst. Once the initial inspection is conducted, the inspector will rate each unit utilizing the Metro Housing|Boston Housing Quality Addendum grading form. The unit grade correlates with a rent range guide, provided in this packet. The rent range guide establishes ranges based on rents that are paid for similar private market units, taking into consideration unit size, utilities, condition of the unit, location, and amenities. You will be contacted and offered a lower rent if the Market Analyst determines the requested amount to be unreasonable. **Final contract rent amounts will be determined by the Market Analyst ONLY. Please note: tenants are NOT authorized to offer rent amounts to property owners above the contract rent authorized by Metro Housing|Boston.**



Step 6: The Lease and Contract Process

The Inspections Department will contact the Program Specialist once the unit has passed inspection and had a rent approved. At this time, the Program Specialist will review the documents the tenant has sent Metro Housing|Boston and schedule an appointment if anything further is needed. Once everything has been obtained, the Program Specialist will calculate the tenant rent share and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which is the amount Metro Housing|Boston will send every month.

You will then be sent a lease to be signed by you and the tenant and a HAP Contract to be signed by you. These must be signed and returned to Metro Housing|Boston before we will release the HAP Payment. If you do not return these documents within 60 days, the HAP Contract will be voided and the tenant will be issued a voucher for a new unit.

Additional Lease and Contract Information

In order to begin the subsidy payments, a Lease (with HUD lease addendum) and Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract must be executed. You may either use the Metro Housing|Boston Model Dwelling Lease or your own lease (i.e. Standard RHA Lease), but in either case, it must contain all of the provisions of the HUD tenancy addendum. **If you would like to use your own lease, it must be submitted with the RFTA. The minimum term for the lease is 12 months.** HAP Payments will be made after the HAP Contract and Lease are signed by both the owner and the tenant and returned to Metro Housing|Boston. Upon receipt of the signed HAP Contract and Lease, Metro Housing|Boston will make the initial payment and continue to make monthly payments to the owner.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE HAP PAYMENT:

ALL documents to the owner must be completed, signed and returned to Metro Housing|Boston by the 18th of the month in order to initiate payment by the first of the following month. (Payment will be retroactive to the start date to the HAP contract). If Metro Housing|Boston has not received the signed lease, HAP contract, and VAWA notice and acceptable proof of ownership by the 18th of the month, payment will be delayed! Metro Housing|Boston/HAP payments are only issued one time per month.