

Landlord Link

Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

New Changes to Section 8 Program!

In an effort to improve its customer service to participating property owners and managers, the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara (HACSB) announces new changes to the Section 8 Program. In addition to the existing guaranteed monthly Housing Assistance Payments (HAP), periodic inspections, Section 8 Program compliance for tenants, maximum household size numbers for appropriate sized units, and security deposit loans for applicants, HACSB will implement the following new program features March 1, 2015 for all new HAP contracts and reminds property owners of some of the Section 8 Program benefits already in place. These features are specific to vouchers issued by the City Housing Authority.

- **Section 8 Unit Damage Protection NEW!** - reimbursement to the owner of up to \$2,000.00 for unpaid unit damages, rent, and related court costs in excess of the tenant's security deposit. The amount of this payment will be calculated using the higher of the actual security deposit amount paid -or- the equivalent of one month's contract rent (if the owner has collected a security deposit of less than one month's contract rent).
- **No-limit rent increases NEW!** – rent increases will not be limited to a maximum amount as long as the rent increase is based on rental market data and is considered rent reasonable (equal to non-subsidized housing rents in comparable units).
- **Finder's Fee NEW!** - \$500.00 incentive payment to property managers, agents or laypersons for the successful lease up of a Section 8 participant (HACSB employees, its contractors and property owners are not eligible to receive this benefit).
- **Housing Location Specialist NEW!** – We now have a contracted housing location specialist, Cristina Cardoso, to assist applicants in locating units and to facilitate a smooth transaction between applicant, housing provider, and the Housing Authority.
- **Friday move-in inspections NEW!** – Initial inspections on Fridays that HACSB is closed; inspections must be scheduled a minimum of 24 hours prior to the day that the Housing Authority is closed.
- **Special inspections** - owner requested inspections initiated by health & safety concerns; if it is determined the Section 8 participant is in violation of Section 8 regulations, a warning will be issued to the participant and follow-up inspection(s) scheduled as needed.
- **Home Care Program NEW!** – In the event a Section 8 tenant's housekeeping has regressed substantially, the Housing Authority will enroll the participant in "Home Care," a year-long program that includes six monthly inspections followed by two quarterly inspections.

On the Horizon...

The Grace Lutheran congregation has bequeathed one acre of land located at 3869 State Street to the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara. HACSB plans to demolish the existing A-frame church and build Grace Village, a three-story building with 60 rental apartments for low-income seniors, in accordance with the congregation's last wishes. The land alone for Grace Village is worth \$5.5 million and represents the largest private gift in the history of the Housing Authority, said Rob Pearson, executive director. The Housing Authority and Front Porch Communities, a nonprofit group based in Glendale, will build Grace Village. The project is under review by the city Architectural Board of Review, and construction on Grace Village is expected to begin in mid-2016.



WHO TO CONTACT

For Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) questions: Alicia Esparza, 897-1095 or aesparza@hacsb.org

For HAP contract/lease-up questions: Andrea Fink, 897-1034 or afink@hacsb.org

For inspection questions: Jerry Morales, 897-1049 or jmorales@hacsb.org

Ronnie Anderson, 897-1045 or randerson@hacsb.org

Director of Housing Programs: Veronica Loza, 897-1032 or vloza@hacsb.org

Changes to Section 8 Program

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- **Section 8 Program Termination** – Section 8 participants that do not cooperate with proper notice to vacate which leads to a court ordered lockout will receive a preliminary termination of Section 8 assistance.
- **Tenant Eviction History** – Property owners and managers may contact the Housing Authority to ask if an applicant being considered for an apartment, has been evicted in the past or has been given notice for non-payment of rent.
- **Initial Contract Rent Pre-approval** – Pre-approval of tenant's ability to pay rent before conducting an inspection.
- **Dedicated HACSB staff for Owners and Property Managers** – You are always welcome to directly contact your Section 8 tenant's housing case manager with any questions, however if you don't know who the assigned case manager is, the following persons may be contacted for information on any HACSB Section 8 client:
 - Jerry Morales (805) 897-1049 or jmorales@hacsb.org
 - Andrea Fink (805) 897-1034 or afink@hacsb.org
- **Section 8 Legal Information Sessions** – HACSB will sponsor legal information sessions on Section 8 regulations and how to properly serve notices for Section 8 participants.
- **New Beginnings Supportive Services Referrals** - HACSB has contracted with New Beginnings Counseling Center to provide its clients with referrals for supportive services for the elderly, disabled or families in need of such services. If you suspect one of your HACSB Section 8 tenants is in need of supportive services, please contact our Leasing Agent, Jerry Morales for assistance with a referral.

HACSB is committed to providing low-income households with the tools needed to succeed and become self-sufficient to the greatest extent possible as well as providing its participating property owners and managers with the necessary information and customer service for a successful Section 8 tenancy. If you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know!