HACLA WAIVERS SET TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2021

In response to the COVID-19 Emergency, HACLA adjusted program operations, as approved by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), where necessary to continue program operations while preventing the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating the risks posed to HACLA staff, applicant/participant families, and landlords.

Effective January 1, 2022, HACLA will resume its program operations pre COVID-19 in the following areas:

1) **Inspections: Initial and Complaint**

   Effective January 1, 2022 the Housing Authority will no longer accept landlord’s self-certification that the unit complies with Housing Quality Standards (HQS).

   For any assisted unit for which HACLA accepted a landlord’s self-certification, HACLA must conduct an HQS inspection as soon as reasonably possible but no later than June 30, 2022.

2) **Inspections: Annual/Biennial**

   HACLA must resume biennial inspections by December 31, 2021. HACLA must conduct all delayed biennial inspections from Calendar Year (CY) 2020 as soon as reasonably possible but no later than June 30, 2022 and must conduct all delayed biennial inspections from CY2021 as soon as reasonably possible but no later than December 31, 2022.

3) **Voucher Term**

   Effective January 1, 2022 the Section 8 Administrative Plan policies for initial voucher term and extensions apply.

   As a reminder, the initial voucher can be extended up to 180 cumulative calendar days. To make the program accessible to a family member who is a person with a disability, the voucher can be extended but not to exceed 240 calendar days.

4) **Income Verification**

   Effective January 1, 2022 you will need to provide original documents to verify your income information. These are listed as part of your packet instructions for annual reexaminations. Income self-certification will be used as a last resort.

   Continued on page 2...
NEW VOUCHER PAYMENT STANDARDS (VPS)

Effective January 1, 2022, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) will change the Voucher Payment Standards (VPS). The VPS is used to determine your portion of the rent.

How Will the Voucher Payment Standard Affect Your Family’s Share of Rent?

If the gross rent (rent plus utility allowances) for your unit is higher than the VPS, your portion of rent will increase.

When will the New Voucher Payment Standard take effect?

- If your Voucher Bedroom Size changes, the new Voucher Payment Standard will be used at your upcoming annual reexamination, starting with reexaminations effective January 1, 2022, or later.

  You will be notified of the decrease in your Voucher Payment Standard at your upcoming annual reexamination.

- If there is no change to your Voucher Bedroom Size and you stay in your current unit, your rent will not be affected by the new Voucher Payment Standard until your second annual re-examination, beginning in 2023.

If you use a voucher to move on October 1, 2021, or later, the new Voucher Payment Standard will be effective for your new unit.

### VOUCHER PAYMENT STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voucher Bedroom Size</th>
<th>SRO</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voucher Payment Standard</td>
<td>$1,141</td>
<td>$1,522</td>
<td>$1,764</td>
<td>$2,248</td>
<td>$2,962</td>
<td>$3,226</td>
<td>$3,709</td>
<td>$4,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless of its location, or whether the unit is providing a reasonable accommodation, the unit’s rent can never be higher than the comparable rents determined by the Housing Authority.

5) Absence from Unit

After January 1, 2022, if the participant family has been absent from the assisted unit for more than 180 consecutive calendar days for any reason, the Housing Authority will not make payments beyond December 31, 2021, and the HAP contract will terminate on that date if the family is still absent from the unit.
ONLINE REEXAMINATIONS

To ensure that Section 8 is using technology platforms to improve customer service and better assist participant families as required by HACLA’s Vision Plan Strategy No. 5, the Section 8 Program implemented a free online service system called MyHousing. The Housing Authority will conduct Annual Reexaminations online using the MyHousing website available at http://hacla.myhousing.com/Account/Login.

MyHousing will allow you to complete your annual reexamination 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from any smartphone, mobile device, or computer with Internet access. You will need to register on MyHousing to complete your annual reexamination. Only the head of household needs to register to MyHousing.

You can also watch a video posted online at https://vimeo.com/438655964 with instructions on how to register. YOU WILL RECEIVE AN ANNUAL REEXAMINATION NOTICE FROM THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING DUE DATES, WHEN IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO START YOUR ONLINE REEXAMINATION.

Before you begin your MyHousing registration process, please make sure that you have:

- A valid email address. You must have a valid e-mail address to complete your annual reexamination using MyHousing.

  To create an email account, go to gmail.com or yahoo.com or get help at your local library. HACLA does not endorse these email services. You can access these sites through any smartphone, mobile device or computer with Internet access.

  If you do not have Internet access, you may complete your MyHousing registration at locations throughout the City, such as your local public library, that offer free use of their computers.

- The name of the head of household, his/her date of birth, and his/her HACLA Client ID.

SOURCE OF INCOME: SECTION 8 PROTECTIONS

“Source of Income” (SOI) laws protect the rights of tenants to use income from public assistance, or other sources, that may be viewed as non-traditional, to pay rent. Housing providers cannot lawfully reject rental applicants because they receive, or will receive, assistance in paying their rent when they are otherwise qualified for the housing. Housing providers must include all sources of lawful income in determining whether a rental applicant is able to pay the rent.

Lawful sources of income include regular paychecks, social security, supplemental security income (SSI), disability income, CalWORKs, child support, spousal support, public assistance, savings, unemployment benefits or wages from lawful employment.

Section 8 as a source of income is included in the City of Los Angeles source of income protection laws. It is illegal for a housing provider to deny a rental applicant because the applicant has a Section 8 voucher. It is also illegal for the housing provider to deny a current tenant’s request to use a Section 8 voucher to pay for rent.

Property owners may screen and reject any applicant, including those with a Section 8 voucher, for past conduct and ability to pay rent, as long as the screening is applied equally to all applicants.
INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS

Six informational videos were produced regarding the various aspects and processes of the Section 8 program for applicants, participant families, and landlords. These videos are intended to provide brief and basic overview about Section 8:

- What is Section 8?
- Finding a Rental Unit
- How Rent Is Calculated
- Submitting Your Section 8 Documents
- Creating an Email Address
- How to Get in Touch with HACLA

You can watch these videos online at:

http://hacla.org/Housing-Programs/Section-8-Housing/Section-8-Videos

CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTER (CCC)

To improve the quality of service received by the Housing Authority, on April 25, 2019, the Board of Commissioners approved the replacement and expansion of the telephone and contact center system to manage the high volume of calls received by the Housing Authority. This included the implementation of a centralized Customer Contact Center (CCC) that went live March 2021. The CCC has a single telephone number (833) HACLA-4-U or (833) 422-5248 for use by all applicant and participant families and the general public.

The role of the CCC is to provide general assistance and explain Section 8 program requirements and policies. The first phase of the CCC included calling participant families to remind you about your upcoming annual reexamination.

The second phase of the Customer Contact Center was implemented by releasing new features to improve customer satisfaction:

- Call backs. Callers can request a call back if they do not want to be placed on hold.
- Marquee. Callers can enter their client entity identification number or vendor number, as applicable, to better route their call.
- The CCC supports multiple languages. These languages include Spanish and Armenian. Non-English speakers will have the option to select Spanish, Armenian, or other languages to speak with a CCC agent.

Effective March 12, 2020, the HACLA offices closed to walk-in traffic until further notice to protect our clients and staff. We will be conducting all business by email, phone or mail, including annual reexaminations. If you need to submit documents, please email or mail them. Drop boxes are also available at all offices.