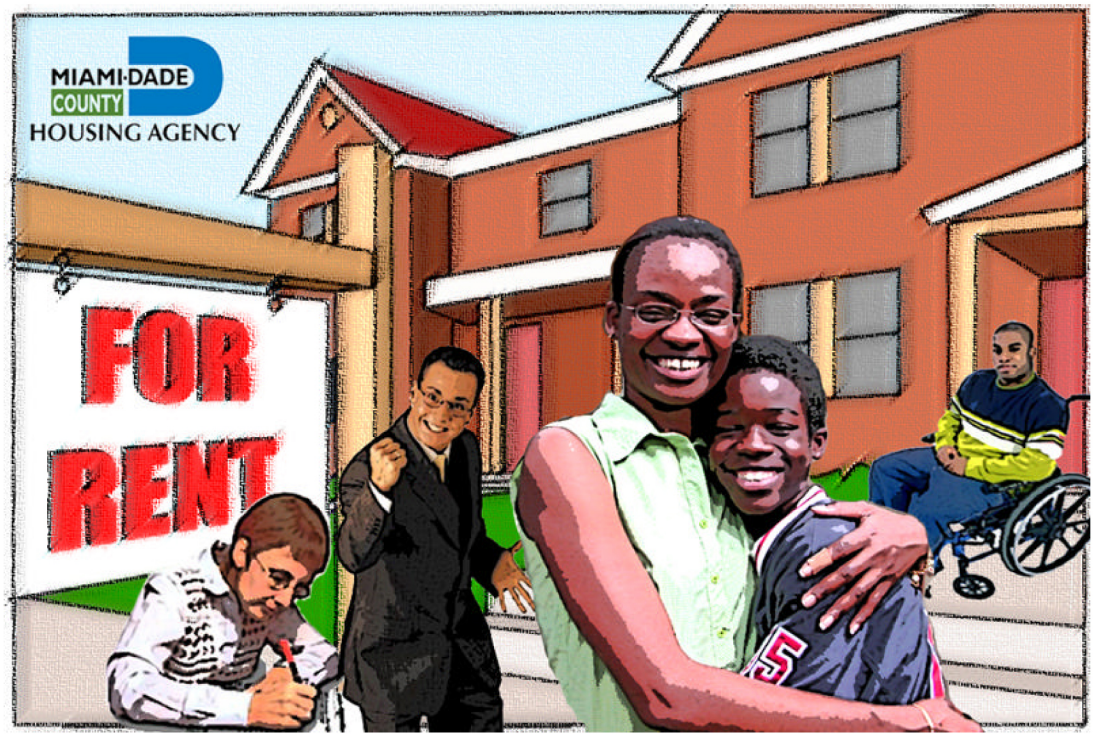
Landlord Outreach Unit Guide

SECTION 8



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HOUSING AGENCY

PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING DIVISION
2153 Coral Way, Miami, FL 33145
305 250-5250
305 250-5101 (fax)

MDHA LANDLORD OUTREACH UNIT GUIDE

LANDLORD OUTREACH UNIT

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is administered by Miami-Dade Housing Agency (MDHA) through its Private Rental Housing (PRH) Division and is funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD). The program provides rent subsidies to eligible low and very low-income families, presently over 13,000 families. In addition, over 7,500 landlords participate in the Miami-Dade Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program under different housing programs.

The Miami-Dade Housing Agency (MDHA) is committed to fostering partnership with landlords to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing to Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher participant families throughout Miami-Dade County. The Landlord Outreach Unit provides Section 8 families with a wide range of housing choices while serving as an economic base to the landlord community.

What are the benefits for a participating Landlord?

- Steady Monthly Cash Flow **--** The rent subsidy or the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) check is mailed directly to the landlord on or about the first of every month. Direct deposits will be offered to landlords in a near future.
- Additional Pool of Tenants **--** There are over 13,000 families holding vouchers in Miami-Dade County. Additionally, hundreds of families move every month making the voucher program a significant pool of potential tenants.
- Less Turnover **--** Once Section 8 families that find a good place to live, they tend to stay, which translates to less turnover. As a result, landlords have fewer operating costs and are able to make more of a profit.
- Rental Advertising **--** Landlords properties are listed through the MDHA's "Owners Referral List," which is available on the agency's website (www.miamidade.gov/housing/owner_referral list.asp.) Make sure to check this web site regularly since MDHA updates the list twice a month.

How do I become a Section 8 Landlord?

A landlord informs PRH of the availability of his/her property by calling the Landlord Outreach Unit (LOU) at 305-250-5054. The LOU facilitates and coordinates the dissemination of information between landlords and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher holders. The LOU also creates a listing of countywide rental units, available in the open market. Landlord information on new housing units is placed in the weekly referral list that is available at the following locations:

Landlord Outreach Unit (LOU)
2153 Coral Way
Miami, Florida 33142

Applicant & Leasing Center
2925 NW 18 Avenue
Miami, Florida 33132

What do I do to list my property with the LOU?

Landlords may contact the landlord outreach specialist by phone at 305-250-5054 or fax 305-250-5026 and provide the following information:

- Owner name and phone number(s)
- Management agent name, address, phone number
- Date unit will be available
- Number of bedrooms in the unit
- Amenities
- Rental amount expected
- Handicapped-accessible features

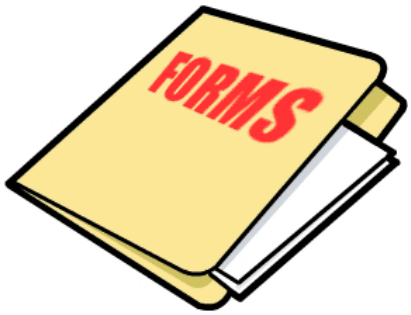
SECTION 8 OPERATION UNITS

How do I find a Section 8 Participant?

The Section 8 participant will contact you through the agency's bi-weekly owner's referral list, web site or through your marketing efforts. It is up to the landlord to screen potential tenants and make arrangements regarding the amount of rent and security deposit.

What forms/documents are required to lease a unit under the program?

Owners are required to complete the W-9 form and submit copies of the warranty deed, Social Security card and/or Tax ID Number for Corporation, and a copy of their driver's license. They must also fill out the following forms:



- Request for Tenancy Approval Form (RFTA). Provides basic information regarding the unit, including its location, size, the rent amount and utilities and appliances provided by the owner. *This form is executed by both owner and tenant.*
- Landlord or Authorized Agent Certification. Provides certification that the landlord will adhere to all federal guidelines and regulations. *This form is executed by owner only*.
- Subject Property Description. Provides information about the property including amenities. *This is executed by owner only.*
- Miami-Dade County Affidavits. Attests to the different disclosures required in dealing with Miami- Dade County. *This form is executed by owner and notarized.*

What happens after I have selected the prospective tenant(s) and completed the forms?

The above forms/documents must be submitted to MDHA. A Section 8 Contract & Leasing Specialist (CLS) starts the approval process and coordinates all documentation through the system.

When are the inspections for Housing Quality Standards (HQS) conducted and rents determined?

The CLS requests the HQS inspection once the required documentation is accepted. These inspections are conducted within 72 hours. Once the unit passes inspection, the request for rent survey is forwarded to the Real Estate /Survey Unit to determine if the rent is reasonable.

At what point do I know if a Section 8 client is approved to move-in?

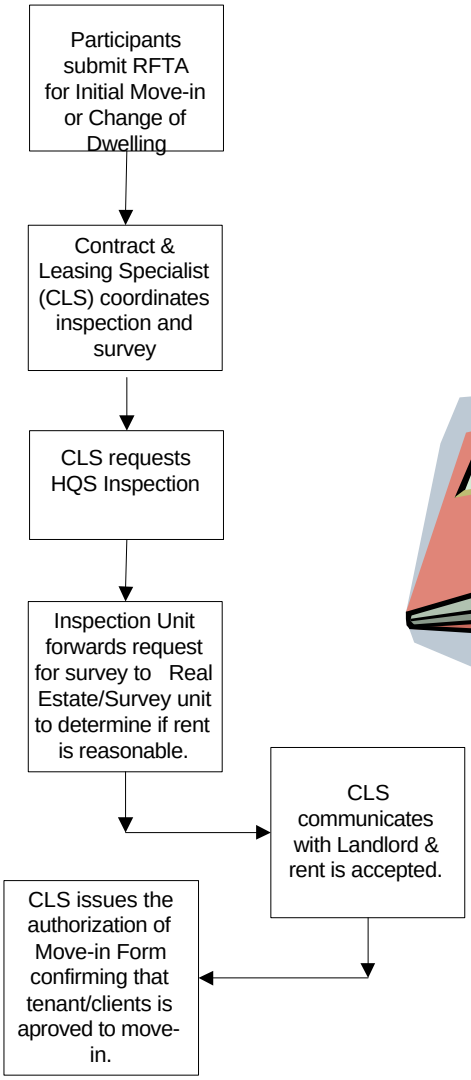
Once the unit passes HQS inspection, and the rent reasonableness is determined and accepted by the Real Estate/Survey unit and the landlord, the CLS will request that the following documents be executed:

- Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract (between Landlord and MDHA)
- Contract Lease (between Landlord and Tenant)

The CLS provides the landlord and tenant with an "Authorization to Move-in Form" confirming that the tenant is approved to move-in.

What are the major steps required for approval?

The following diagram shows the steps required for Section 8 participants to be approved for move-in:



When can we expect my first payment?

Once the landlord is informed of the move-in date, it will take approximately 30-45 days to process the file and issue the first HAP check. These checks will be paid retroactively to the authorized move-in date.

HQS/INSPECTIONS

Why does my unit have to pass inspection?

United States Housing and Urban Development (USHUD) regulations require MDHA to inspect all units to ensure that they are in safe, decent, and sanitary condition in accordance with federal Housing Quality Standards (HQS). **No unit is placed under contract until it is inspected and all the necessary repairs are completed.**

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How many types of inspections are there?

There are three types of HQS inspections performed by MDHA: initial, annual, and complaint.

What is an initial inspection?

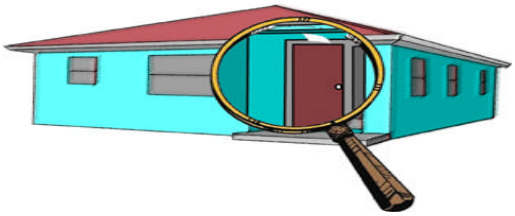
The initial inspection is conducted prior to the family moving into a unit or for a change of dwelling. An approval for move-in is not given until the unit passes inspection and the rent survey is conducted.

Who requests the initial inspection?

Once the request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) is accepted by the CLS, the CLS will schedule an inspection with the Inspection Unit.

What does an HQS inspector look for on an initial inspection?

The inspection focuses on, but is not limited to:



Interior

- Doors
- Ceilings
- Wiring
- Windows
- Flooring
- Smoke alarms
- Bedroom size
- Paint
- Installation of space heaters, water heaters, reverse cycle or central A/C units
- No spacers missing on electrical panel box

Exterior

- Address mandatory on property
- Screens/Cover spaces
- Window Bars
- Paint
- Physical Appearance
- Roofing

What is an annual inspection?

Each unit under contract must be inspected annually, prior to the expiration of the lease. The landlord and tenant will be notified by mail 90 days before the scheduled date of the inspection.

- Conditions presenting an immediate danger or threat to tenant health or safety are considered emergencies and must be corrected within 24 hours of notification. HQS inspectors perform a compliance inspection to confirm correction of these conditions within 24 hours of the initial inspection.
- Conditions which do not present an immediate danger to tenants must be corrected within 30 days of written notification. Extensions of time of up to 15 calendar days to correct violation(s) must be requested in writing and are approved on a case by case basis.

What is considered an emergency situation?

The following items are to be considered “emergencies” and must be corrected within 24 hours:

- Broken locks on first floor window or doors
- Smoking or sparking electrical outlet
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding
- Natural gas leak or fumes
- Electrical situation which could result in shock of fire
- No running water (regardless who’s responsible for the water bill)
- Utilities shut off (regardless who’s responsible for the electric bill)
- Broken glass where someone could get cut
- Obstacle preventing access to unit
- Plugged and overflowing toilet
- Overcrowded family

The inspection reports will note whether needed repairs are tenant's or the owner's responsibility. If the unit fails the compliance inspection, the housing assistance payment will be abated regardless of who is charged with the responsibility.

What is a complaint inspection?

These are inspections which develop from complaints, which may be originated from written or oral complaints from the landlord, the tenant/client, neighbors or other agencies (Team Metro, Miami Net, etc.) made to the inspections unit. Complaint violations must be corrected within 30 days for non-emergency conditions. For emergency conditions, violations must be corrected within 24 hours of notification.

RENT REASONABLENESS

REAL ESTATE SURVEY UNIT

How much may I charge for my unit?

MDHA Real Estate/Survey unit's responsibility is to ensure that rents charged by owners are reasonable in relation to rents currently being charged for comparable units in the private unassisted market. The location, quality, size, unit type, and age of the contract unit as well as any amenities, housing services, maintenance and utilities that are provided by the owner in accordance with the lease are considered. Reasonable rent is a rental amount that is not greater than the rent that is charged for a unit with the same size and amenities in the private market.

How will my rent be determined?

Once the unit passes the HQS inspection, the request for survey is forwarded to the Real Estate Survey unit. The Real Estate and Appraisal Specialists (REAS) conducts the valuation according to appraisal standards and determine the reasonableness of the rent following USHUD guidelines.

How are rents determined?

The following are considered in determining rent:

Types of Housing:

- High-rise (9 + stories)
- Mid-rise (4-8 stories)
- Garden (1–4 stories)
- Townhouse
- Duplex/Triplex/Fourplex
- Single Family Detached

Types of Amenities:

- Elevator
- Window AC/RC unit
- Space heater
- Dishwasher
- Central A/C
- Carpeting
- Garbage disposal
- Washer/dryer
- W/D Connections

What are the sources utilized in determining reasonable rents?

Upon review of the above criteria, a comparison of the unit is made to the high/low rental range in the market for unassisted units. When determining a reasonable rent for a program unit, the unit uses the following sources to evaluate comparable units and reach fair values:

- Multiple Listing Services (MLS) of the local Board of Realtors that handle current rental information in Miami-Dade County
- Field visits, which gather information on actual market rent when information is not readily available

The results of the rent reasonableness analysis are sent to Section 8 Operations where a CLS will notify you of the approved rent amount.

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What happens if I don't agree to the rent amount approved?

When a landlord does not agree with the rent amount approved by the Real Estate/Survey unit staff, the CLS returns the Rent Negotiation form back to the Real Estate/Survey Unit, at which time unit staff will contact the landlord to obtain additional information. (Ex. appraisal, information on other comparable units in the area, etc.) and renegotiate the rent.

What are landlords' responsibilities for making their rental units accessible to persons with disabilities?

Federal regulations require landlords to "…permit, at the expense of a handicapped person, reasonable modifications of existing premises, occupied or to be occupied by a handicapped person, if the proposed modifications may be necessary to afford the handicapped person full enjoyment of the premises of a dwelling. In the case of a rental, the landlord may, where it is reasonable to do so, condition permission for a modification on the renter agreeing to restore the interior of the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, reasonable wear and tear excepted." (24 CFR 100.203) Landlords are also required to "…make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford a handicapped person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling unit, including public and common use areas." (24 CFR 100.204).

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

UNIT	CONTACT	TELEPHONE
Landlord Outreach	William L. Pupo	305-250-5054
Fax Listing		305-250-5026
HQS/Inspection	Frank McCrink	305-250-3235
Section 8 Operations	Maritza Zuaznabar	305-250-5239
Team A Portability	Herve Moise	305-250-1732
Team B Landlord/Vendor (L thru Q)	Giovanni Padron	305-250-4456
Team C Landlord/Vendor (R thru Z)	Aundrea Curtis	305-860-5551
Team D Landlord/Vendor (A thru D)	Teky Geagea	305-860-5574
Team E Landlord/Vendor (E thru K)	Olga Asencio	305-250-5248
Team F Leasing	Gail Smith	305-860-5548