

Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin

Participant Press

A resource for tenant's participating in HACSJ Section 8 program

1942 - 2015

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Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin announces new Executive Director

I am very happy to be joining the HACSJ family and want to update you on some exciting things that will be happening with the agency that will help you in meeting HUD administrative processes. If you've called our offices, I hope you've noticed our new phone menus and live operators that will provide better customer service to our callers. It is my intention to treat you as a valued customer, and we will work hard to meet the needs of our residents. In 2016, you will see exciting changes to our website that will allow you to conduct more business with HACSJ online if you prefer. I am hoping that with 24/7 access to online systems you get the help you need when you need it. For those residents who visit our administrative offices, we will be renovating our lobby and intake areas to provide a more comfortable and service oriented experience. Finally, we will be reviewing our HUD mandated Administrative plans to give our voucher holders every opportunity we can provide to ensure the best possible housing outcomes. Stay tuned for some exciting news in 2016!

Thank You,
Peter Ragsdale
Executive Director

Caseload Changes

Periodically, the Section 8 department undergoes changes with new employment, retirements, and promotions. These changes bring about Caseworker reassignment. Effective May 1, 2015, the caseworker assignment changed. To access the new assignment, log onto:

<http://www.hacsj.com/housing/HCV/LS052015.pdf>



Housing Authority
of the County of San Joaquin

448 S. Center Street
Stockton, CA 95203
209-460-5000



Section 8 HCV Participant's Responsibilities

Your Responsibilities: An important responsibility is to always keep the HACSJ up-to-date on your household composition, income, and assets. In other words, the HACSJ must be notified whenever there is a change.

Failure to report a change within 30 calendar days of its occurrence, in writing, may result in termination of your Section 8 rental assistance.



Read your voucher and the Family Obligations form for a complete list of your responsibilities as a Section 8 participant.

Reporting Procedures: You must report changes in writing to your assigned Leasing Specialist at the HACSJ office located at 448 S. Center Street in Stockton. You may also mail the written change request to P.O. Box 447, Stockton, CA 95201. You must include your full name, address, and contact phone number.

Notice to Move



If your landlord provides you with a notice to move or if you provide your landlord a notice to move, you must also provide a copy to your assigned Leasing Specialist. If you believe your notice is deficient or you intend to not comply with the notice, you should seek legal advice and notify the HACSJ of your intention. The HACSJ does not provide expert advice on tenant-landlord law.

Things to remember when you are moving:

- Make sure all of your belongings are removed from your unit by the end of the notice period.
- Leave the unit clean and in good condition.
- Never allow yourself to be evicted because you will lose your voucher assistance.
- Request a final walk through with the landlord and take pictures if necessary.
- Turn in the keys at the close of the walk through.
- Do not attempt to enter the unit once the keys have been turned in.

Housing Choices

Participants of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program are encouraged to lease up in areas that are low in poverty. One advantage of the Section 8 program is that it gives voucher participants the flexibility in choosing housing types and locations. The HACSJ provides maps that are designed to provide participants with information that will assist in making "informed choices" regarding areas within San Joaquin County. The informational map includes locations of schools, parks, hospitals, and transportation routes. The map has areas marked in San Joaquin County that identifies areas that are low in poverty. The voucher program also allows participants to move anywhere in the United States that administers a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.



Voucher Payment Standards and Utility Allowance Schedules

Voucher payment standards and utility allowance schedules are the maximum amount of subsidy that the HACSJ will pay to the owner on behalf of a voucher participant. The HACSJ's payment standard schedule is based on the Fair Market Rent established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for each unit size. Depending on the



rental market, the payment standards may decrease or increase and could affect the tenant portion of rent. Please view the [voucher payment standards and utility allowance schedules](#) for the most up-to-date information. The 2016 payment standards will be reviewed once published by HUD.



Reporting Fraud

Committing fraud is a violation of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program's rules and responsibilities. The HACSJ will take action against applicants, program participants, and owners who commit fraud, bribery, or other corrupt or criminal acts. Program participants who commit fraud may be required to repay all overpaid rental assistance, arrested, fined and/or imprisoned, and/or have their Section 8 assistance terminated.

If you know someone who commits fraud, bribery, or other corrupt or criminal acts, you may make an anonymous complaint by calling the HACSJ fraud hotline at (209) 460-5002.

Utility Reimbursement Payments

The HACSJ is currently in the process of amending the Section 8 Administrative Plan to reflect that the Utility Reimbursement Payment (URP) will no longer be paid by mail to the tenant, but will be sent directly to the gas and electric company. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Participants have an opportunity to comment on this change by December 16, 2015. You may send your comments to HACSJ URP—Changes, Attention: Kara Maguire P.O. Box 447 Stockton, CA 95201

How Rents are Established

Each year, the HACSJ assesses the rental market within the San Joaquin County to determine how to establish the payment standards by bedroom size. The payment standards are the maximum subsidy that the HACSJ could provide and are used to calculate the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to the owner on behalf of the voucher participant. In conducting the assessment, the Housing Authority considers similar unassisted units in the area. This causes the payment standards to be established higher in some areas and lower in others. The payment standards are located at http://www.hacsj.com/home/news/Income_Limits_03062015-PS_052015%203%203.pdf



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Housing Quality Standards Inspections



Inspections are changing. In accordance with Section 220 of the 2014 Appropriations Act, the HACSJ may conduct biennial inspections in lieu of annual inspections. Once the HACSJ has conducted a complete inspection under a Housing Assistance Payment Contract, it may not re-inspect until the lapse of 24 months following the last inspection. This does not apply to initial inspections for units that are not yet under a Housing Assistance Payment Contract. Initial inspections are still required. The HACSJ will continue to conduct special inspections on an as needed basis. The HACSJ may conduct more frequent inspections on units under Housing Assistance Payment Contract that are suspected of detrimental failed items.

These changes will aid in improving customer service and enhance the tenant/landlord relationship.

Tenant-Commissioner Vacancy

A tenant-commissioner position for the HACSJ Board of Commissioners is vacant. If you are interested in becoming a tenant-commissioner, please contact the San Joaquin County Clerk of the Board at (209) 468-2350 or log onto <http://www.sjgov.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6722> to obtain the application for appointment to the HACSJ Board of Commissioners.

