

- Advocating for People with Vouchers -

The Emergency Housing Voucher program offers resources to quicker issuance of housing vouchers, but . . .

there is a huge shortage of available units to rent.



There are stigmas, misinformation, and discrimination related to landlords renting to tenants with housing vouchers.

For every 100 families needing housing, there are only 24 units available.

Today we will discuss how we can collaborate to sourcing more units to rent by reviewing the barriers to the acceptance of housing vouchers.



VOUCHER BACKGROUND

The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program is available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).



In Los Angeles County, HUD is providing 6,806 housing choice vouchers to local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs)

to assist individuals and families who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, or were recently homeless or have a high risk of housing instability.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program - Tenants pay 30% of their income for rent, with the local housing authority using HUD funds to pay the balance. Units must rent below the area Fair Market Rent, updated each year by HUD. There is a 8-10 year waiting list for Section 8 vouchers.



Emergency Housing Vouchers

In the 8 months since the program began, the issuances have been slow. The program was rolled out quickly, so the timing should evolve and improve.

Here is the data as of 2/27/2022 as shown on the LAHSA EHV Dashboard:

Housing Authority	Total EHV Awards	Active Issuances	Current Vouchers Leased
County of LA	3,928	1,261	173
City of LA	6,730	1,187	46
Inglewood	182	25	1
Redondo Beach	58	3	-
Torrance	66	6	5
Hawthorne	134	27	2
EHVs became available July 1, 2021, and all EHV's must be leased up by September 2023.			



WHAT DO LANDLORDS WANT?

- ☐ Rent to be paid on time
- ☐ Property to be respected
- ☐ Tenants to be good neighbors
- ☐ Property to not suffer from vacancies or damages

Currently there are landlord signing incentive bonuses for accepting housing vouchers, the amount varies by housing authority.

For example, HACLA is offering a \$2,500 signing bonus for each leased unit and up to two times the rental amount for a security deposit.



MYTH

*“Section 8 tenants are problem tenants;
most are unemployed and don’t want to work”*

FACTS

Bad tenants come in all shapes, sizes, income groups, and professions.

Most Section 8 tenants live in the same place over a long period of time (7-8 years on average).

By conducting thorough and consistent screening, landlords are less likely to end up with a problem tenant, Section 8 or otherwise.



MYTH

“The landlord is responsible for a lot of paperwork”



FACTS

Most of the paperwork the landlord is required to complete is at the beginning of a new lease.

The Housing Authority may assist with completion of these documents

This paperwork includes the following:

Request for Tenancy Approval form, W-9 form, Lead Warning Statement and Lease Agreement.

From time to time, the landlord will receive letters, amending the rent portions, inspection reports, newsletters, and other program materials.



MYTH

“Landlords cannot evict a housing voucher tenant”

FACTS

If a housing voucher tenant has violated your lease agreement, a landlord may evict the tenant in accordance with State law.

If a landlord wants a tenant to move without stating the cause for termination of tenancy, the landlord must give the tenant a 90-day written notice.

When a notice without cause is issued, the Housing Authority can provide the tenant with a new voucher to relocate.

Most first episodes of homelessness begins with eviction – either legal or illegal

Source: Gary Blasi, Professor of Law Emeritus, UCLA presented January 2022



MYTH

“The Housing Authorities have very tough inspection requirements”

FACTS

The Housing Authority inspects the unit for standard health and/or safety problems before a contract is signed with the landlord and annually or bi-annually thereafter.

The Housing Authority checks the working order of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, water heaters, appliances, exits, window and door locks, fans, outlets, plumbing fixtures, heaters, and light fixtures. The presence of trip and fall hazards, structural defects, rodents, or roaches, peeling paint, excessive dirt or clutter, broken windows and the like are also checked.

These are all items that most landlords would want to inspect themselves before renting a unit.



MYTH

“Landlords do NOT have to accept a housing voucher for rent”

FACTS

NOT TRUE - Refusal by a landlord to accept voucher payments is ILLEGAL

Notwithstanding the legal provisions in place, it is believed that the practice of discriminating against voucher holders is widespread.

The Rand Corporation reports that 75% of landlords do discriminate against vouchers.



MYTH

“Rental costs for housing vouchers are pre-set and/or controlled by the housing authority”



FACTS

Rental costs for housing vouchers are set by the housing authority based on a calculated algorithm however the rental costs are negotiable.

Landlords and tenants can contact the Housing authority for more information.



MYTH

“Payments from the Housing Authority can stop without warning”

FACTS

As a rule, housing vouchers do not "quit" or "fail to pay" without reason or notice.

A housing provider who experiences problems receiving a housing voucher payment should contact the local housing authority to determine if or when payment should be made.



MYTH

“The rent will not be paid on time”



FACTS

NOT TRUE and this happens to be **one of the best benefits** as the voucher payment will come directly from those that administer the program.

If the tenant fails to pay their assigned portion on time, the landlord can notify the voucher administrator who will follow up with the tenant to rectify the situation.



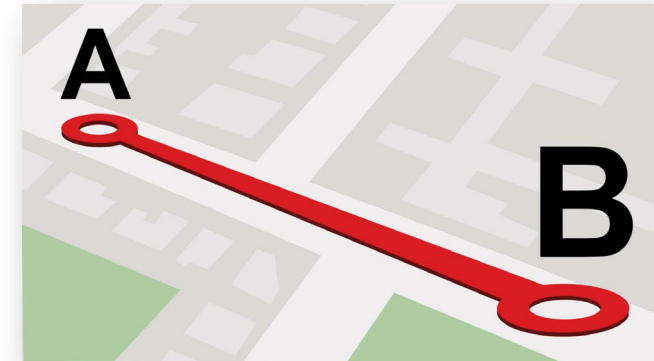
MYTH

“Housing vouchers can only be issued to clients in the city where they are unhoused”

FACTS

NOT TRUE

Housing vouchers can be used across jurisdictions offering more options.



Contact your local housing authority to learn more about the “portability” of housing vouchers.



MYTH

“Credit scores are a good barometer for tenant’s ability to pay rent”

FACTS

NOT TRUE for several reasons

- Credit reports do not include past rental payment track record
- Credit scores are inherently racially biased *
 - 1 in 5 Black people have credit scores below 620
 - 1 in 9 Hispanic people have credit scores below 620
 - 1 in 19 White people have credit scores below 620



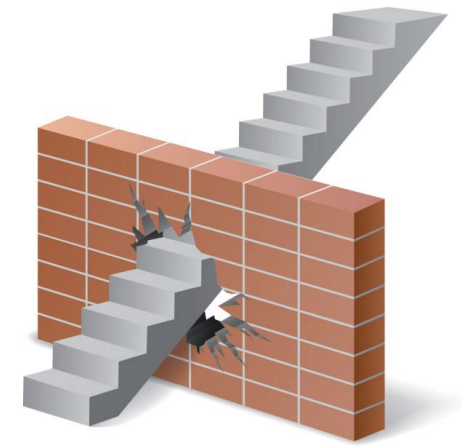
- Forbes 2021 Data Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/credit-cards/from-inherent-racial-bias-to-incorrect-data-the-problems-with-current-credit-scoring-models/>



Additional barriers to acceptance of housing vouchers

- Accepting pets in a housing voucher unit.
Not being able to include the family pet can be traumatic.
- Slow security deposit payments. Landlords accept the tenant who pays first.
- Need for appliances such as refrigerator and oven/stove as this is a requirement in some cities



RESOURCES

1. **Problem Solving Funds*** can pay for furniture, appliances, and security deposits
2. **Client Aid** is a last resort source of funding

*Problem-Solving Assistance Funds (PSAF) is a limited financial assistance program administered by LAHSA to help participants in the event of minimal financial need to resolve their housing crisis or homelessness rapidly.



This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for vouchers.

Goal is 100% lease up.
Otherwise, HCV waitlist is 8+ years.



PATH LeaseUp can help with Landlord negotiations and acquisitions.
LeaseUp addresses the concerns of property owners and managers with a dedicated team of professionals to navigate the process.
Please use as a resource. <https://path-tech.org/>

We all need to be advocates for people with vouchers

