

**SECTION 8 PROGRAM GUIDE  
FOR  
PROPERTY OWNERS AND LANDLORDS**



**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND  
35 WEST BALTIMORE STREET  
HAGERSTOWN, MD 21740**

**(301) 733-6911  
FAX (301) 745-4894**

**EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY**





THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE  
CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SEAN GRIFFITH

Dear Owner,

Thank you for your interest in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. We welcome your participation as a partner to provide safe and affordable housing to lower-income families in the Hagerstown community.

We hope you will find this publication useful as a guide to increase your understanding of the program. If you decide to participate, we will make every effort to make your enrollment and continued participation a smooth process. We will also keep you informed of any program changes as they occur, and welcome your suggestions for improvements.

Quality features of the program include timely rental payments and your ability to apply private rental market practices. Also, many new and innovative programs have been developed in recent years to help families become self-sufficient. We invite you to join us in our efforts to promote these programs.

Should you have any questions after reviewing the materials, please feel free to contact any member of the Section 8 staff at 301-733-6911. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

*Holly Hooper*

Holly Hooper  
HCV Program Supervisor

G:\HOUSING\Section8\Form letters\Section 8 Program Guide-Cover Letter.doc

## SECTION 8 FLOW CHART for LEASE-UP PROCESS

---

Family issued Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher for 120 days to shop for housing – or family may stay in place.



Family finds unit and landlord willing to participate, and family completes owner application.



Owner screens family and performs background check. If owner selects family, owner and family complete "*Request for Tenancy Approval*" (RFTA) form. Owner may collect security deposit from family to hold unit.



Owner or Family returns RFTA form and other enrollment forms (including copy of lease) to the Housing Authority Office.



Unit is scheduled for initial inspection ASAP or within 15 business days. Following inspection, landlord completes any repairs. Inspector completes final inspection.



Appointment scheduled for Family and Owner to sign Section 8 Contract and Lease.



## Information for Landlords

### *Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program*

---

**How does participation in Section 8 benefit the landlord?** Landlords receive timely and direct program payments, are assisted in the screening process, and partner with the local housing agency in the provision of decent safe, and sanitary housing to lower-income families. Many owners experience reduced vacancy and turnover expense due to the potential for long-term stable tenancies.

**How does a landlord participate?** Landlords become involved by agreeing to rent to a family that has Section 8 assistance. Families contact the landlord directly, or landlords may list available rental properties on the Landlord Referral Listing, which is maintained by the Housing Authority. From the listing, eligible families contact landlords and landlords screen and select a family. The property is then inspected for compliance with HUD standards. After the unit passes the inspection, a Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract is executed between the landlord and the Housing Authority to begin subsidy payments, and a lease is executed between the landlord and the tenant.

**What standards must the property meet?** General health and safety standards specified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), known as Housing Quality Standards (HQS), and Property Maintenance Code. Initial and annual inspections are made of all properties, which may be duplexes, apartments, single family dwellings, or mobile homes.

**How does a family apply?** A family may complete an application in person at the Housing Authority office, located at 35 West Baltimore Street, or through the mail. Applicant names are placed on a wait list according to date of application and need. *The waiting period is for funds to become available to subsidize the next family on the wait list, not for the availability of a unit.*

**How may a landlord obtain information about the suitability of an applicant?** Prior to leasing the unit, the Housing Authority provides landlords with the name and address of the family's current and prior landlords. Landlords are encouraged to conduct landlord-reference checks and to visit the family's current residence. Landlords may also wish to contact utility companies and other creditors. Landlords are encouraged to screen families with regard to: 1) payment of rent and utility bills; 2) caring for a unit; and 3) respecting the rights of others to peaceful enjoyment of their housing.

**Are there any restrictions in the selection of a family?** Yes, owners (including a principal or other interested party) may not rent to a relative, which includes the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother of any member of the family, unless the Housing Authority has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving rental of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.

**What is the term of the assisted tenancy?** The term of the assisted tenancy is based on the beginning date of the HAP Contract, which begins when the dwelling passes the inspection and the lease is executed. The initial term of the lease must be for at least one year and must provide for automatic renewal for successive terms (e.g., month-to-month or year-to-year).

**May a landlord use a private-market lease?** Yes, because the Housing Authority does not provide the lease. The lease must contain terms consistent with federal and state requirements. A "Model" lease may be obtained by contacting *Community Housing Resources* at 301-797-0900.

*Continued on reverse*

**May a landlord collect a full security deposit?** Yes. Landlords may collect a deposit not to exceed amounts charged to unassisted families and in accordance with Maryland State Law.

**How may the lease terminate?** After the initial term, the owner and family may terminate without cause. During the initial term the lease may be terminated on grounds of serious and repeated lease violations.

**What are the major responsibilities of participating families?** 1) comply with the lease and the *Family Obligations* as specified by HUD regulations; 2) maintain the unit; 3) pay rent portion and utilities when due; 4) report changes in income and family size within 14 days to the Housing Authority; 5) not engage in drug or criminal activity; 6) not allow unauthorized persons to live in the unit.

**What are the major responsibilities of the Housing Authority?** 1) Determine family eligibility and who may live in the unit; 2) approve unit rent to owner and determine subsidy and family portion; 3) make subsidy payment to the landlord each month; 4) conduct required inspections and family certifications; and 5) determine whether to terminate assistance to a participant family for violation of family obligations.

**What are the major responsibilities of the landlord?** 1) screen the family for suitability; 2) collect the security deposit and rent portion from the family; 3) maintain the unit and provide utilities, appliances, and services as specified in lease; 4) notify the Housing Authority of any known condition that would affect the amount of subsidy;

**How is the rental subsidy amount determined?** The subsidy for most families is the difference between 30 percent of the family's adjusted monthly income and a "payment standard" that is based on the HUD-published Fair Market Rents (FMRs). If the rent is more than the payment standard, the family pays a larger share. A family may not pay more than 40% of their adjusted monthly income for rent when the family first receives Section 8 assistance, or when a family moves to a new unit.

No cap exists on the rent. However, the unit rent, plus any utility allowance for *family-paid* utilities, must be reasonable in relation to comparable units on the local rental housing market. The following are HUD-published Fair Market Rents and Housing Authority Payment Standards for the local housing market:

---

<b>0 BR-\$568</b>	<b>1 BR-\$676</b>	<b>2 BR-\$871</b>	<b>3 BR-\$1238</b>	<b>4 BR-\$1529</b>	<b>5 BR-\$1758</b>
-------------------	-------------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------------------	--------------------

Fair Market Rents Effective 10/01/19, Federal Register

---

<b>0 BR-\$621</b>	<b>1 BR-\$742</b>	<b>2 BR-\$958</b>	<b>3 BR-\$1342</b>	<b>4 BR-\$1681</b>	<b>5 BR-\$1933</b>
-------------------	-------------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------------------	--------------------

Payment Standards Effective 12/01/19

Rents may be increased at any time after the initial term of the lease. Landlords must give a 60-day notice to the family and to the Housing Authority. Generally, families pay for any increase.

---

**For further information, interested parties may call or visit the Hagerstown Housing Authority office at:**

**Hagerstown Housing Authority  
35 West Baltimore Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
301- 733-6911**

## How the Housing Choice Voucher Program Works

The *maximum* subsidy for families participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program is the difference between 30 percent of the family's adjusted monthly income and a "payment standard" that is based on HUD-published Fair Market Rents (FMRs). If the rent is more than the payment standard, the family pays a larger share. A family may not pay more than 40% of their adjusted monthly income for rent and utilities when the family **first receives** Section 8 assistance, or when a family **moves to a new unit**.

The unit rent, plus any utility allowance for *tenant-paid* utilities, must be reasonable in relation to comparable units on the local rental housing market. The following are the *payment standards* for the local housing market:

**0 BR-\$621    1 BR-\$742    2 BR-\$958    3 BR-\$1342    4 BR-\$1681**

Payment Standards effective 12-01-19, based on FMRs published in the 2019 Federal Register

### SAMPLE SUBSIDY CALCULATION FOR A 2 BEDROOM VOUCHER

Payment Standard for a two bedroom unit	\$958.00
30% of the family's adjusted monthly income	<u>\$343.00</u>
<b><u>Maximum</u></b> amount of subsidy paid to owner by HA	\$615.00

40% of the family's adjusted monthly income:	\$ 446.00
Estimated Maximum Subsidy	<u>\$ 615.00</u>
Maximum <b><u>Gross</u></b> rent of unit rented	\$1,061.00

	Unit A	Unit B*
Rent (2BR) <i>(Plus tenant furnished utilities)</i>	\$958.00	\$1,070.00
Family Portion	\$343.00	\$ 455.00
HA Subsidy	\$615.00	\$ 615.00

\*Unit B exceeds the FMR for a two-bedroom unit. The HA would determine if unit is acceptable based on comparable units.

The **Gross Rent** (unit rent + tenant furnished utilities) cannot exceed the total of the estimated subsidy plus 40% of the family's adjusted income.



## SECTION 8 INSPECTION CHECKLIST

---

Initial and annual inspections are required of all Section 8 properties. The following checklist is designed to be used as a guide to help understand the requirements used during a Section 8 physical inspection of a property. This is a basic guide, and does not guarantee that the property will pass an inspection conducted by a Section 8 Inspector.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

#### LEAD PAINT

For buildings built prior to 1978. If the property is to be rented to a family with a child under the age of 6 and/or a pregnant person, there can be no chipping or peeling paint anywhere on the exterior of the building (includes any out buildings), or on any part of the interior of the building that the tenant has access.

#### SMOKE DETECTORS

Smoke detectors are required on all habitable levels, basements and in compliance with all city and fire codes. ([www.hagerstowncode.org](http://www.hagerstowncode.org) or [www.hagerstownmd.org](http://www.hagerstownmd.org) then click on government for city code)

#### EMERGENCY EXITS

All sleeping areas (living room, dining room and bedroom) are required to have a minimum of 2 separate means of egress. Egress windows have to have a minimum of 5.7 square feet of openable window space.

### PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

#### EXTERIOR

- Handrails are required for all stairs with 4 or more steps
- Guardrails around any porch over 30" above grade
- All outbuildings are in good repair and are safe
- All fences and gates are intact and in proper working order
- All walkways are free of tripping hazards
- Spouting is in good working condition
- Yard is free of trash, debris and noxious weeds

#### INTERIOR

##### WINDOWS

- All glass and glazing material has to be intact-small cracks in the window glass can be caulked using clear silicone caulking
- Need to open and hold open using window hardware-can not be propped open
- All 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows have to be lockable
- All windows with access from the outside have to be lockable
- A minimum of 1 intact window screen is required per room in which a window is present. All screens must be in good condition. (No holes or tears.)

##### DOORS

- Need to shut and latch
- No double keyed deadbolts
- No locks on the outside of an interior door
- All door hardware must be intact and functioning as intended

##### WALLS AND CEILINGS

- Surfaces are to be free of holes and cracks
- All wall and ceiling covering material has to be secure and in good repair

## **FLOORS**

- All floors are to be free of holes and cracks
- All floor covering material has to be clean and in good repair
- Bathroom and Kitchen floors have to be impervious to water

## **ELECTRICAL**

- All habitable rooms must have a minimum of 2 separate and remote receptacles
- Kitchen and bathrooms must have a permanently installed light fixture.
- Bathrooms have to have a minimum of 1 receptacle. All receptacles in the bathroom have to be Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected receptacles
- All receptacles within 6 feet of the kitchen sink have to be GFCI protected
- Light fixtures designed to have a globe or shade, must have a globe or shade
- All light bulbs need to be in place and functional
- Floor mounted receptacles have to have an exterior cover
- All exterior receptacles have to be GFCI protected and have an exterior cover
- Receptacle covers and switch plates have to be free from cracks and/or breaks
- No missing knock-outs or circuits in the panel box
- Exposed electrical connections/splices must be in approved junction boxes

## **ROOMS**

### **KITCHEN**

- Sink and all hardware has to be properly installed and free from leaks and/or obstructions
- Range hood, if present, has to work properly-filter needs to be clean and intact

#### **Refrigerator**

- Maintains a constant proper temperature
- Has all door bars and brackets
- Has all shelves and drawer
- Door gaskets are free from tears and/or splits
- Must be clean

#### **Stove**

- Maintains proper cooking temperature
- All burners must work as intended
- Oven door gasket is intact
- Must be clean

### **BATHROOM**

- Sink, toilet, bathtub/shower and all hardware have to be properly installed and free from leaks and/or obstructions
- Stoppers or stopper mechanisms are required for bathtub and sink
- Bathtub faucet has to be above the flood rim level of the tub
- Must have a window that opens to the outside, or a mechanical vent that exhaust to the outside

### **LIVING ROOM-BEDROOM-DINING ROOM**

- A window with screen
- 2 separate and remote receptacles
- Ceiling light fixture and/or switch controlled outlet
- If the room is a pass through to another room, then the doors have to open into the farthest room

## **UTILITIES**

- If a utility is to be paid by the tenant, then that utility can only serve the unit occupied by the tenant, and the utility has to be separately metered. All tenant paid utilities must be put in tenants name prior to unit passing inspection.

#### **Required utilities are:**

- Heat
- Hot Water
- Electric
- Water-sewer-trash



### **CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSES**

- Any building built pre-1950 has to have a Maryland Department of the Environment Lead Paint Inspection certificate - must be done between tenants
- A City of Hagerstown rental license - Check with the City of Hagerstown

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Furnace emergency shut off switch has to be at a remote location away from the furnace - Top of basement stairs
- The discharge relief pipe on the water heater has to extend to within 4-10" of the floor, and be the size as the pressure relief valve.
- House numbers have to be 4" in height and visible from the street, and are also required in the rear if the unit backs to an alley.
- Dryer must be vented to the outside

*Website for City Code & Compliance is [www.hagerstowncode.org](http://www.hagerstowncode.org) for forms and general information or [www.hagerstownmd.org](http://www.hagerstownmd.org) then click on government for city code.*

**At time of inspection, please have utilities turned on and provide access to plumbing and heating facilities. Owners may provide access by having the area unlocked or by leaving a key with the tenant.**

**For further information, contact the Hagerstown Housing Authority, 35 West Baltimore Street, by calling 301-733-6911.**

---

**IT IS THE POLICY OF THE HAGERSTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY IN THEIR SELECTION OF APPLICANTS, ASSIGNMENT OF DWELLING UNITS, AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES, NOT TO DISCRIMINATE ON GROUNDS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, SEX, HANDICAP, FAMILIAL STATUS, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN.**

---





THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE  
CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SEAN GRIFFITH

Dear Landlord:

This is to inform landlords participating in the Section 8 Housing Programs of federal lead paint disclosure requirements. HUD Notice 96-92, issued December 11, 1996, requires landlords to provide specific materials and information to their tenants. The following is a summary of the items you must supply:

- 1) The EPS/HUD/CPSC pamphlet titled "Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home".
- 2) Any available information on the presence of known lead-based paint and/or hazards.
- 3) A standard warning statement regarding lead-based paint hazards.
- 4) Wording in the lease or a lease addendum regarding the disclosure requirements.

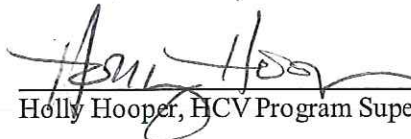
If you wish, we will be glad to provide you with a copy of the HUD notice, which details the above requirements.

For your information, the Housing Authority also supplies the pamphlet, "*Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home*" and we do so as part of the enrollment process.

On the reverse of this letter is a form entitled "*Disclosure of Information on Lead-Based Paint and Lead-Based Paint Hazards*", which contains the required disclosure wording and may also serve as a lease addendum. To meet the federal requirements, you and your tenant should complete this form, and return it to this office. It is a good idea to return it with the *Request for Tenancy Approval* form.

Should you have any questions regarding this notice, please feel free to call us at 301-733-6911.

Sincerely,



\_\_\_\_\_  
Holly Hooper, HCV Program Supervisor

\*\*\*\*\*

Please acknowledge receipt of the above information on federal lead paint disclosure requirements and the sample Disclosure of Information on Lead Based Paint Hazards (on the reverse) by signing below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lessor or Lessor's Agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

G:\HOUSING\Section8\FORMS\Landlord\Lead Paint Disclosure Cover Ltr.doc 04/23/2013

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

*Disclosure of Information  
On Lead-Based Paint and Lead-Based Paint Hazards*

**FEDERAL DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS**

**Lead Warning Statement:** *Housing built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint. Lead from paint, paint chips and dust can pose health hazards if not taken care of properly. Lead exposure is especially harmful to young children and pregnant women. Before renting pre-1978 housing, landlords must disclose the presence of known lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards in the dwelling. Tenants must also receive a federally approved pamphlet on lead poisoning prevention.*

**Lessor's Disclosure:** (initial)

\_\_\_\_\_ (a) Presence of lead-based paint hazards (check one below):

Known lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards are present in the housing (explain below).

\_\_\_\_\_

Lessor has no knowledge of lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the housing.

\_\_\_\_\_ (b) Records and reports available to the lessor (check one below):

Lessor has provided the lessee with all available records and reports pertaining to lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the housing (list documents below).

\_\_\_\_\_

Lessor has no reports or records pertaining to lead-based paint and/or lead-based paint hazards in the housing.

**Lessee's Acknowledgement:** (initial)

\_\_\_\_\_ (c) Lessee has received copies of all information listed above.

\_\_\_\_\_ (d) Lessee has received the pamphlet Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home.

**Agent's Acknowledgement:** (initial)

\_\_\_\_\_ (e) Agent has informed the lessor of the lessor's obligations under 42 U.S.C. 4852(d) and is aware of his/her responsibility to ensure compliance.

*Certification of Accuracy: The following parties have reviewed the information above and certify, to the best of their knowledge, that the information provided by the signatory is true and accurate.*

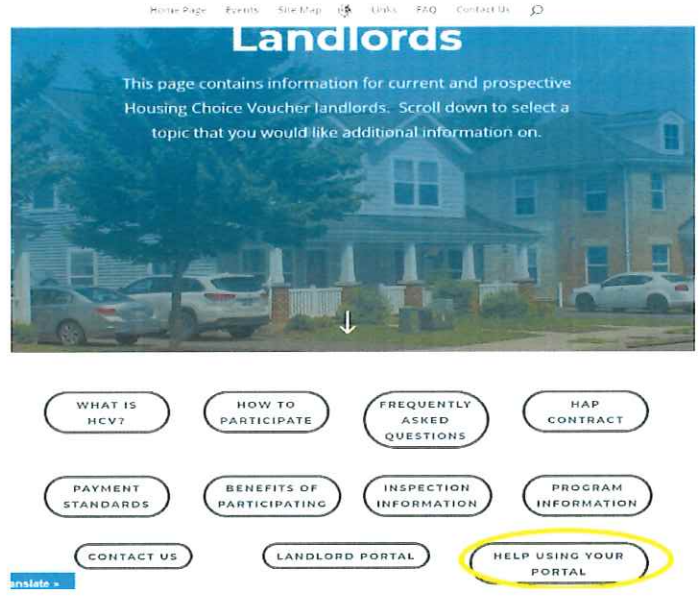
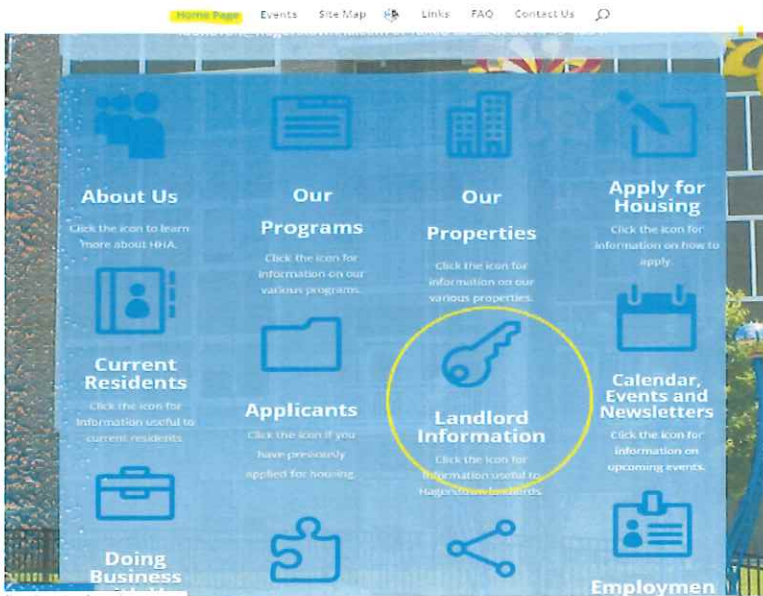
\_\_\_\_\_  
LESSOR OR LESSOR'S AGENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
LESSEE

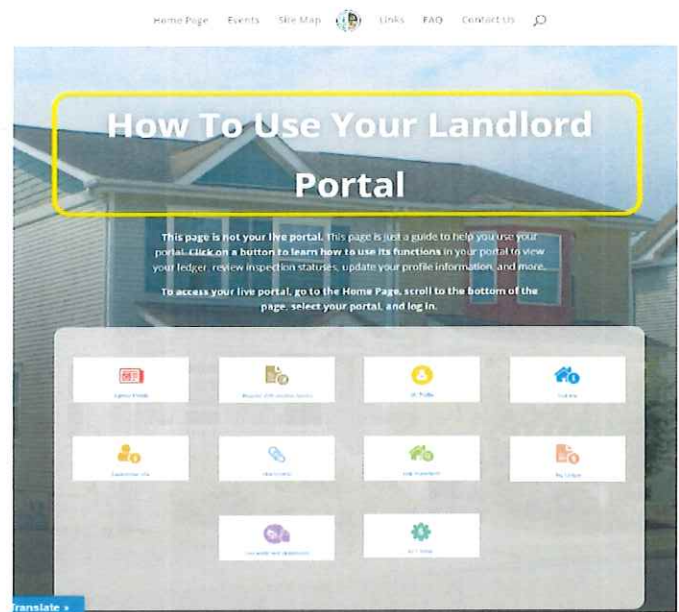
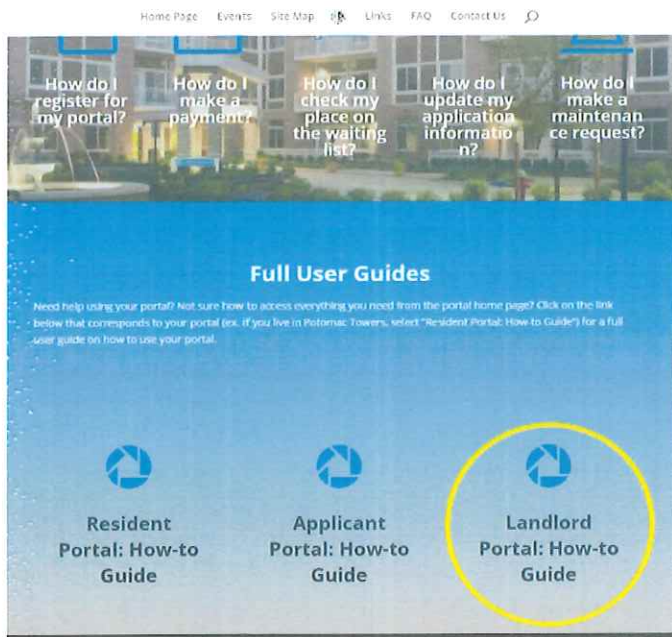
\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Hagerstown Housing Authority has implemented our New Online Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)/Section 8 Landlord Portal. This new online portal will allow landlords to access information relating to their unit and assistance with the Housing Authority. We encourage you to utilize these **NEW** services by following these simple instructions below:



1. From our website: [www.hagerstownha.com](http://www.hagerstownha.com)  
Click - "Landlord Information"

3. Next – Click "Help Using Your Portal"



3. Then click – "Landlord Portal: How-to Guide"

4. The final screen will show icons stating the capabilities. If you continue to scroll down the page, you will see the description of each icon.

- You will have access to the following:**
- Review and update your contact information
  - View payment transactions on your ledger
  - View your unit information
  - View unit inspection results and more.....
  - You will need your registration code, if you do not have this, please contact our office at 301-733-6911



# MARYLAND

**MDHOUSINGSEARCH.ORG**



## FIND A PLACE TO LIVE

- Search up-to-date listings of rental housing
- Find housing according to your specific needs
- Interactive map tools and photos
- Assistance available by toll-free phone and fax, mail and email

## LIST RENTAL HOUSING FOR FREE

- Detailed listings let you advertise amenities and neighborhood features such as schools, shopping and public transit
- Add up to 10 photos
- Toll-free, bilingual call center helps you manage listings and helps tenants find your listings

For more information, go to  
**MDHOUSINGSEARCH.ORG**  
 or call 1-877-428-8844

Martin O'Malley  
 Governor  
 Anthony G. Brown  
 Lt. Governor  
 Raymond A. Skinner  
 Secretary  
 Clarence J. Snuggs  
 Deputy Secretary

*A service of Maryland  
 Department of Housing and  
 Community Development*



Powered by **socialserve.com**  
 a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation

