



# RESIDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES



## OFFICE OF MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PROGRAMS

This brochure applies to assisted housing programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Office of Multifamily Housing Programs. This brochure does not apply to the Public Housing Program, the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Program or the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

# **AS A RESIDENT, YOU HAVE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT HELP MAKE YOUR HUD-ASSISTED HOUSING A BETTER HOME FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.**

This brochure is being distributed to you because the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which regulates the property in which you live, has provided some form of assistance or subsidy for your apartment. The brochure briefly lists some of the most important rights and responsibilities to help you get the most out of your home.

As part of its dedication to maintaining the best possible living environment for all residents, your local HUD office encourages and supports the following:

- Property management agents and property owners communicating with residents on any relevant issues or concerns
- Property managers and property owners giving prompt consideration to all valid resident complaints and resolving them as quickly as possible
- Your right to file complaints with management, owners, or government agencies without retaliation, harassment or intimidation
- Your right to organize and participate in certain decisions regarding the well-being of the property and your home
- Your right to appeal a decision made by the local HUD office to the Office of Asset Management and Portfolio Oversight at HUD Headquarters

Along with the owner/management agent, you play an important role in making your apartment, the grounds, and other common areas a better place to live.



# YOUR RIGHTS

As a resident of a HUD-assisted multifamily housing property, you should be aware of your rights.

## *Rights: Involving Your Apartment*

- The right to live in decent, safe, and sanitary housing that is free from deteriorating paint and environmental hazards, including lead-based paint hazards.
- The right to receive a lead disclosure form disclosing the landlord's knowledge of any lead-based paint or lead-based paint hazards, available records and reports, and a lead hazard information pamphlet before you are obligated under your lease.
- The right to have repairs performed in a timely manner, upon request.
- The right to be given reasonable notice, in writing, of any non-emergency inspection or other entry into your apartment.
- The right to protection from eviction except for specific causes stated in your lease.
- The right to request that your rent be recalculated if your income decreases.
- The right to access your tenant file.

## *Rights: Involving Resident Organizations*

- The right to organize as residents without obstruction, harassment, or retaliation from property owners or management.
- The right to provide leaflets and post materials in common areas informing other residents of their rights and opportunities to involve themselves in their property.
- The right to be recognized by property owners/management company as having a voice in residential community affairs.
- The right to use appropriate common space or meeting facilities to organize (this may be subject to a reasonable, HUD-approved fee).
- The right to meet without representatives or employees of the owner/management company present.



### **Rights: *Involving Nondiscrimination***

The right, under the Fair Housing Act of 1968 and other civil rights laws, to equal and fair treatment and use of your building's services and facilities, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status (having children under 18) or national origin (ethnicity or language). Residents with disabilities are also reserved the right to reasonable accommodations. In some cases, the prohibition against age discrimination under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 may also apply.

In addition, residents have the right, under HUD's Equal Access Rule, to equal access to HUD programs without regard to a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a resident of a HUD-assisted multifamily housing property, you also have certain responsibilities to ensure that your building remains a suitable home for you and your neighbors. By signing your lease, you, the owner, and the management company have entered into a legal, enforceable contract. You are responsible for complying with your lease, house rules, and local laws governing your property. If you have any questions about your lease or do not have a copy of it, contact your property management company or the local HUD office. You should be aware of the following responsibilities:

### **Responsibilities: *To Your Property Owner or Management Company***

- Complying with the rules and guidelines that govern your lease.
- Paying the correct amount of rent on time each month.
- Providing accurate information to the owner/management agent's company at the certification or recertification interview to determine your total tenant payment, and consenting to the release of information by a third party to allow for verification.
- Reporting changes in the family's income or composition to the owner/management company in a timely manner.

### **Responsibilities: *To the Property and Your Fellow Residents***

- Complying with rules and guidelines that govern your lease.
- Conducting yourself in a manner that will not disturb your neighbors.



- Not engaging in criminal activity in your apartment, common areas or grounds.
- Keeping your apartment reasonably clean, with exits and entrances free of debris, clutter or fire hazards and not littering the grounds or common areas.
- Disposing of garbage and waste in the proper manner.
- Maintaining your apartment and common areas in the same general physical condition as when you moved in.
- Reporting any apparent environmental hazards to the management company (such as peeling paint (which is a hazard if it is a lead-based paint) and any defects in building systems, fixtures, appliances, or other parts of the apartment, the grounds, or related facilities.

## YOUR RIGHT TO BE INVOLVED

### In Decisions Affecting Your Home

As a resident in HUD-assisted multifamily housing, you play an important role in decisions that affect your community. Different HUD programs provide for specific resident rights. You have the right to know under which HUD program your building is assisted. To find out if your apartment building is covered under any of the following programs, contact your management company, Section 8 Contract Administrator, or the HUD office nearest you. If your building was funded or currently receives assistance under HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), Section 236 (including the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), Section 221(d) (3)/below market interest rate (BMIR), Section 202 Direct Loan, Rent Supplement, Section 202/811 Capital Advance programs, 811 (Project Rental Assistance), or is assisted under any applicable project-based Section 8 program (except for the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation program), you have the right to be notified of or, in some instances, to comment on the following:

- Nonrenewal of a project based Section 8 contract at the end of its term
- An increase in the maximum permissible rent
- Conversion of a project from project-paid utilities to tenant-paid utilities
- A proposed reduction in tenant utility allowance
- Conversion of residential apartments in a multifamily housing property to nonresidential use or to condominiums, or the transfer of the housing property to a cooperative housing mortgagor corporation or association



- Transfer of the project-based Section 8 contract in your property to one or more buildings at other locations
- Partial release of mortgage security
- Capital improvements that represent a substantial addition to the property
- Prepayment of mortgage (if prior HUD approval is required before owner can prepay)
- Other actions identified by the Uniform Relocation Act that could ultimately lead to involuntary, temporary or permanent relocation of residents
- If you live in a building that is owned by HUD and is being sold, you have the right to be notified of and comment on HUD's plans for disposing of the building.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR ENHANCED VOUCHERS**

If your apartment is assisted under a project-based Section 8 contract that is ending, and if the owner decides not to renew it, the owner is required by law to notify you in writing of that decision at least one year before the contract expires. Under these circumstances, you may be eligible for an Enhanced Voucher (EV), which would give you the right to remain in an apartment at your property, provided that you are in compliance with your lease and the property remains as rental housing. HUD will select a local Public Housing Agency (PHA) to provide an EV for eligible families who decide to remain at the property and to administer this assistance.

If you decide to remain at your property using an EV, a higher payment standard will be used to determine the amount of Section 8 assistance that is paid on your behalf, if the gross rent for the apartment is more than the PHA's payment standard. However, the PHA must determine that the rent the owner charges for your apartment is reasonable, and you must continue paying at least the amount of rent that you were previously paying.

If you are eligible for an EV, you can instead choose to move out of the property and use the voucher to rent an apartment anywhere in the United States where the owner will accept the voucher and the rents are in an allowable range, subject to approval. If you move out, however, the voucher is no longer "enhanced," and the amount of Section 8 assistance that is paid on your behalf will be based on the PHA's normally applicable payment standard.



## ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

### For additional help or information, you may contact:

- Your property owner or the management company
- The Account Executive for your property in HUD's Multifamily Regional Center or Satellite Office. Refer to on-line resources for contact information
- HUD's National Multifamily Housing Clearinghouse at 1-800-685-8470 to report maintenance or management concerns
- HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at 1-800-669-9777, if you believe you have been discriminated against
- HUD's Office of Inspector General Hot Line at 1-800-347-3735 to report fraud, waste, or mismanagement
- HUD's Housing Counseling Service locator at 1-800-569-4287 for the housing counseling agency in your community
- The HUD-EPA National Lead Information Center 1-800-424-LEAD
- Your local government tenant/landlord affairs office, legal services office, or tenant organizations to obtain information on additional rights under local and state law

If appealing a local HUD Office decision, you may contact the Director of the Office of Asset Management and Portfolio Oversight in Washington, DC at 202-708-3730.

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may reach the numbers above through the Federal Relay (FedRelay) teletype (TTY) number, 800-877-8339, or by other methods shown at [www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay).

### ON-LINE RESOURCES:

- Department of Housing and Urban Development website: [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)
- The local HUD Field Offices: <http://www.hud.gov/local> *Note: To locate your local field office, select: Contact My Local Office (under the I Want To section)*



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This brochure about your rights and responsibilities as a resident of HUD assisted multifamily housing is available in 13 alternate languages in addition to English and Braille. To determine if your language is available, please contact HUD's National Multifamily Housing Clearinghouse at 1-800-685-8470 or visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/ftheo/lep.xml>