

**Thank you** for your interest in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV).

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) within 149 of the state's 159 counties. The 10 counties which DCA does not administer are: Clayton, Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb, Muscogee, Bibb, Glynn, Chatham, Sumter, and Richmond. These counties are served by their own respective housing authorities. The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides timely rental assistance payments directly to owners of private rental property that support decent, safe, and affordable housing for qualifying low income families.

If you have internet access, please go to [www.GeorgiaHousingSearch.org](http://www.GeorgiaHousingSearch.org) . This site provides up-to-the-minute information on our tax credit, Housing Choice Voucher, and affordable housing units across the state. Our Housing Choice Voucher Program is a tenant-based program, which requires that you have identified a voucher holder interested in renting your property before an inspection can be requested. Listing your property on our website is one way to identify a voucher holder. Additional suggestions are listed below.

**Following are general answers to some landlords' most frequently asked questions:**

- **Q: What does DCA do if the rental property is located within one of the 10 counties for which your agency does not administer the Program?** **A:** If you wish to become involved with the Housing Choice Voucher Program as a landlord, but your property is located within any of those 10 counties, you must contact the housing authority which is responsible for that specific location within Georgia.
- **Q: How does a landlord get their property “approved” or “pre-inspected” for use in the program?** **A:** There is not a “pre-inspection” done by DCA for new landlords. Our program is tenant-based. DCA does not inspect any property until a program participant with a valid voucher chooses to rent the property. Therefore, the property inspection to be done by DCA is first initiated by the eligible voucher holder seeking a desirable place to live. The voucher holder must submit a completed ‘Request for Inspection Form.’ Other choices made by the voucher holder include: the location of the housing selected, the landlord, and the type of dwelling (single family, multi family, or manufactured housing).
- **Q: If DCA does not directly refer prospective tenants to landlords, or does not conduct “pre-inspections,” what are some methods that a landlord can pursue in order to make participating families aware of their property?** **A:** Our website now allows for landlords to list their properties themselves making this information available to voucher holders looking for Housing Choice Voucher rental properties in their county. Again, that website address is: [www.GeorgiaHousingSearch.org](http://www.GeorgiaHousingSearch.org) Secondly, to further attract voucher holders, a new landlord might wish to advertise their property (local/regional newspapers, flyers, bulletin boards) and in doing so may state that “Housing Choice Voucher holders are welcome.”
- **Q: Who is responsible for the security deposit of a rental-housing unit being paid to the landlord?** **A:** In the Housing Choice Voucher Program, the participating family is responsible for the entire security deposit payment to the landlord.
- **Q: Who is responsible for any unpaid portions of tenant rent, or for any tenant damages to the unit, if the property is rented to an eligible Voucher holding family?** **A:** Just as in the private market, the responsibilities for any unpaid tenant rent or any incurred damages to the unit would be the responsibility of the tenant. The landlord would have the same option to attempt recovery of monetary losses in court. DCA would not be liable.

- **Q:** How is the maximum allowable contract rent (total) determined for a specific rental housing unit if placed under the program? **A:** The DCA Regional Office serving the specific county shall utilize several variables including (but not limited to) other non assisted comparable rental units with similar amenities/similar geographic location, HUD Payment Standards, family certification size, and family adjusted gross monthly income in order to determine the rental range for a new housing unit.
- **Q:** How is the monthly portion of the rent, which is paid on behalf of the participating family, actually delivered to the landlord? **A:** For distribution of landlord Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) funds, DCA offers a highly efficient electronic direct deposit system that insures timely payments into a landlord account of their choosing at the requested financial institution.
- **Q:** How is the participating family portion of rent paid to the landlord? **A:** The family portion of rent is payable to the landlord on the first day of each month and is the sole responsibility of the participating family.
- **Q:** Who conducts any required background checks of the participating family prior to their being allowed to rent the landlord's property? **A:** The landlord must assume full responsibility for any background checks for voucher holders, just as he would for any conventional or "unassisted market" renters.
- **Q:** How does a landlord get his property inspected after an eligible voucher family has approached him? **A:** The landlord will complete the Request for Tenancy Approval form (RFTA) and return it to the appropriate DCA Regional Office. The RFTA is a one page document requesting details for the housing unit, and this form is given to each participating family when they receive their voucher. This completed form will result in the appointment for unit inspection being done in approximately two weeks.
- **Q:** How is the landlord affected when a participating family provides proper notice to vacate the property, both to the landlord and to DCA, as required? **A:** The relationship between a participating landlord and the DCA ceases (for that specific property) when an assisted family gives proper notice and moves from the property.
- **Q:** Should the landlord be present at the initially requested inspection? **A:** While it is not required, it is certainly preferred and highly recommended. Landlord presence at the initial inspection is beneficial for the prospective tenant, DCA as well as the prospective landlord. While it is an investment of time, it serves to maximize communication and expedite the process.

If you have remaining DCA questions or comments, please feel free to contact us at 1 (888) 858-6085.

**We appreciate your interest and the opportunity to be of service.**