

PENDER LANDLORD LINK

Information for Landlords Working with the Housing Choice Voucher Program



Compliance Corner: Fair Housing Applies to YOU

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act), as amended, prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under the age of 18), and disability.

No matter how many rental units a landlord has, one or 100, ALL residential rental units are subject to Fair Housing Requirements. The only exception to this law are owner-occupied dwellings in which the owner is renting a room.

Why is this important? You could be investigated, sued and even fined if violations are confirmed. Educate yourself on Fair Housing requirements in order to avoid

situations that might cause an applicant or tenant to file a complaint.

Know the questions that you are NOT allowed to ask. Know who is a Protected Class. Protect yourself from fair investigations by knowing your responsibilities and always conducting yourself in a business-like manner.

Make sure you consistently screen applicants for suitability as tenants. You must review all applicants and manage tenants the same way, so all policies and procedures should be written down. Make sure your rules and requirements are written down for all applicants and tenants to read. Finally, make sure you have a good lease that is clear and concise.

Questions? Call us for help!

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Quality Assurance Inspection Notice

The Housing Director will conduct Quality Assurance inspections quarterly as part of our required inspection and reporting process for HUD. Do not be surprised if your unit gets chosen for a QA inspection soon after its regular annual inspection or a recent move-in inspection.

We will send notices to tenants and landlords for those properties that are chosen for the QA inspection.

Communication: "Did you put that in writing?"

"I called the Landlord to tell him about a dripping faucet, but he didn't do anything"

"I called Ms. Smith about the rent, but she still hasn't paid. She is always late."

Phone calls are great ways to stay in touch with a tenant or landlord. Unfortunately, they are no substitute for the written word.

We get phone call complaints from both tenants and landlords. Frequently, our first response is to ask, "did you put that in writing?" In the case of the landlords, that question is usually followed up with another one. "Did you send us a copy?"

In the age of quick communication, there are times when you still have to do things "Old School". Usually that means with pen and ink in a "certified, return-receipt requested" letter.

Text should **NEVER** be used to communicate with a tenant. E-mail is fine, because you can track e-mails for deliver...and even to see if they were opened. Just remember, if you opt for an e-mail, then you must still be business-like in your communication.

You cannot text the Housing Authority. If you have a concern, it is your responsibility

to make sure you have communicated properly with the tenant AND with the Housing Authority.

Your lease is your lease to enforce. However, you are also in a contract with us. That contract requires that you keep us in the communication loop when lease violations occur or if you suspect non-compliance.

We are always here to help and we are glad to give you guidance by phone. However, when issues arise, remember it is your responsibility to "Put it in writing".

Pender County Housing Department



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The Pender County Housing Authority provides rental assistance to low-income families based on household income. The program assists eligible families renting in the private rental market from private owners who have available units and who are willing to work with the program.

The goal of any rental assistance program is not to pay all of the families rent, but rather to help eligible families afford better quality housing than the family could afford without assistance.

PCHA is not a property management company and does not manage property for private landlords.

*Do you have a question about
the program rules?*

Please call 910.259.1370 for help

How much can I charge in rent?

We get this call a lot? How much is the voucher worth? How much can I charge in rent?

Landlords may never charge an assisted tenant more in rent than an unassisted tenant (market rate tenant) would be charged.

When pricing your unit, your price should be based on its market value in the rental market. Market value of a unit is influenced by unit age and overall condition as well as size, type, location and amenities.

If you advertise a dishwasher or a washer/dryer combo in the unit, then those items must work as designed to work. Including good quality, working appliances such as these can boost your market value. However, you are also responsible for maintaining them and you cannot remove them later or fail to repair them.

Some landlords think that there is no limit to the amount of rent they can request for a unit being rented by an assisted family. That is wrong. Further, on paper a unit may appear to have a high market value, but then we do an inspection and find it is in poor to fair condition, which lessens its value.

With overall market values in the Cape Fear region increasing, landlords must understand that the quality of the unit impacts its actual value.

If we do not approve your asking rent, for whatever reason, you have an opportunity after 12 months to request a rent increase. However, the increase requested must be based on market information. Landlord costs for taxes and insurance are not a factor considered in rent pricing.

Changes in the rent amount must be approved by the Housing Authority before they can be implemented. Generally, we re-

quire that rent changes coincide with the annual renewal date, which is the 1st day of anniversary month that the tenant moved-in. If the tenant moved into your unit on April 10, 2016, the annual renewal date is April 1st each year.

As always, you are not permitted to collect more than the approved rent amount from anyone (including the tenant, the Housing Authority or a third party payer). You can not charge assisted tenants for services, such as lawn care, as a way to make up a higher rent amount.

Some types of changes will require you to execute a new lease. Therefore, any proposal to change the rent, change utility responsibilities or make other substantial changes in the lease terms must be coordinated with the Housing Authority.