Housing Choice Vouchers overview

The Housing Choice Voucher program helps participants afford to live in privately owned rental housing of their choice.

Administered by HUD and managed at the local level by public housing agencies (PHAs), it is the largest HUD rental assistance program. Participating households are responsible for finding a rental unit that meets program standards and has an owner who has agreed to accept the voucher. The household then contributes a share of its income (approximately 30 percent) towards rent and utilities while the PHA pays the balance due directly to the landlord, up to a locally determined maximum based on HUD’s established Fair Market Rents. Income guidelines and other broad eligibility criteria for the voucher program are established by federal rules; however, PHAs have some discretion to use the program creatively to address local needs and policy goals, such as ending homelessness or improving access to resource rich neighborhoods.