Increased voucher payment standards in high-cost areas overview

The maximum rent subsidy that a household in the Housing Choice Voucher program may receive is determined by the voucher payment standard.

Payment standards are set by the local public housing agency (PHA) for each unit size based on the Fair Market Rents (FMRs) published by HUD each year. PHAs have a substantial amount of discretion to vary the voucher payment standard and may establish different payment standards for different parts of their jurisdiction. By increasing payment standards in high-cost areas, PHAs can make it more feasible for voucher-holders to rent housing in resource-rich areas that typically have higher rents.