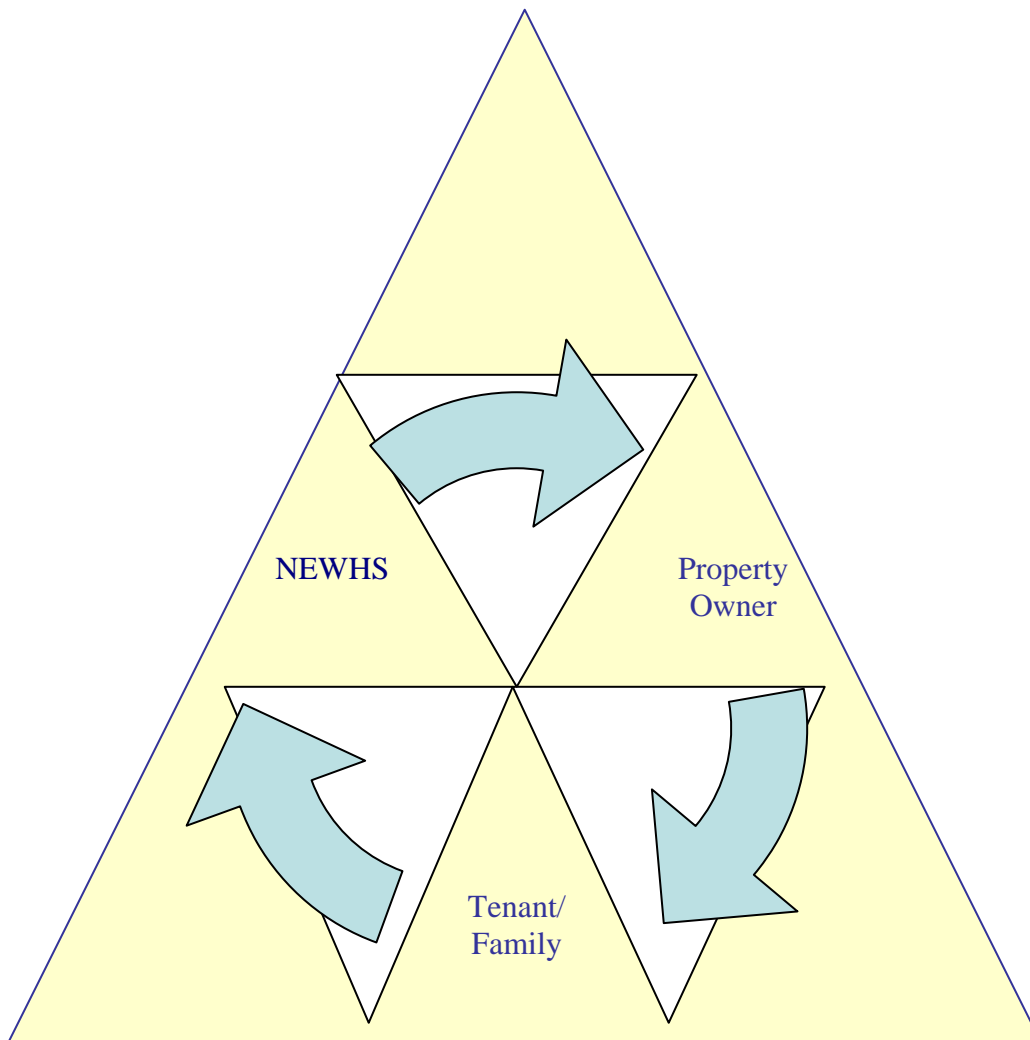


Northeast Washington Housing Solutions

Guide for Property Owners

Triangle of Partners



A Brief Description on
How to Participate in
Section 8 Rental Assistance Programs



WHAT IS NORTHEAST WASHINGTON HOUSING SOLUTIONS?

The Section 8 Housing Assistance Program is a tenant-based rent subsidy program that is paid directly to the property owner/owner on behalf of the assisted family. Northeast Washington Housing Solutions (NEWHS) is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Northeast Washington Housing Solutions (NEWHS) is an independent public agency, established in 1972 through the Housing Authority Law of the State of Washington. NEWHS is governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners, appointed by the City of Spokane, City of Spokane Valley, and Spokane County. NEWHS provides tenant-based rental assistance in the following counties: Spokane, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln and Whitman.

There are numerous benefits to becoming a participating property owner:

- ❖ Dependable, timely monthly payment from NEWHS on or about the 1st of each month.
- ❖ If your tenants' income increases or decreases, NEWHS' subsidy is adjusted accordingly.
- ❖ Timely, consistent annual HQS inspections that help ensure that your property is being maintained by your tenant.
- ❖ Prompt and vigorous action by NEWHS to enforce the family's program obligations.
- ❖ Responsive customer service.
- ❖ You enforce your lease under the law just as you would with an unassisted tenant.
- ❖ You screen an assisted family just as you would an unassisted family.
- ❖ You select and approve a suitable tenant who receives a rental assistance subsidy.

NEWHS recognizes that as a participating owner, you are essential to the success of the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program.

NEWHS MISSION STATEMENT

Building communities in Northeast Washington by leading, advocating, and partnering in the creation of livable neighborhoods.

WHAT ARE TENANT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS?

NEWHS contracts with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Spokane and the State of Washington to provide various tenant-based rental assistance programs. The largest program is the HUD-funded Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. All of our rental programs provide subsidies to help individuals and families pay their rent. A portion of the contract rent is paid directly to the owner/agent by NEWHS on or about the first of each month.

The subsidy paid directly to the owner on behalf of the family is usually the difference between the current Payment Standard (PS) and 30 – 40% of the family's adjusted gross income. PS's are set between 90 and 110% of the HUD-established fair market rents (FMRs).

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The owner, the family and NEWHS comprise a triangle of "partners" in a tenant-based rental assistance program. NEWHS determines family eligibility for rental assistance. The owner and family enter into a lease. The owner and NEWHS enter into a Housing Assistance Payment Contract. In addition to other marketing resources, owners may list available rental units with NEWHS. Units can be listed on line at www.spokanehousing.org. NEWHS participants frequently use this listing to locate rental units. However, NEWHS may not refer applicants/participants to individual owners/agents or units.

A. Owner Obligation:

1. The unit must meet HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS). The HQS inspection will be scheduled once the owner has screened and selected an eligible family. If the unit does not pass at the initial inspection, the owner must complete repairs and schedule a re-inspection of the unit. Housing assistance payments begin when the unit passes inspection and the family has moved in. A lease with your tenant is executed after the unit passes inspection.
2. It is the owner's responsibility to collect the application fee, security deposit, and any other deposits or fees from the tenant that are normally associated with the rental of the unit.
3. It is the responsibility of the owner to enforce the terms and conditions of the lease and to provide NEWHS with copies of all notices served to the tenant.

4. The owner must not make "side agreements" or require any additional payments from the tenant.
5. At the time of each subsequent annual inspection, all HQS deficiencies must be corrected within a specified time to ensure that the Housing Assistance Payment is not suspended or terminated.
6. The owner must notify NEWHS of repeated and/or serious lease violations by the family, changes in tenant status, and if the tenant vacates the unit.

B. Family Obligation

Individuals and families of low income may apply for tenant-based rental assistance programs. When a family is selected from the Wait List, NEWHS staff verifies income/ program eligibility. Each family is subject to a Washington State Patrol background check of all adult family members. Though NEWHS may deny eligibility for assistance due to violent and drug-related criminal activity – NEWHS does not screen families for tenant suitability or behavior.

1. The family is responsible for paying any application fees relating to the owner screening process.
2. The family must comply with all terms and conditions in the lease.
3. The family is responsible for notifying the owner in writing of all needed repairs and providing NEWHS with a copy.
4. At the time of each annual inspection, all family caused HQS deficiencies must be corrected within a specified time for rental assistance to continue.
5. The family must notify the owner and NEWHS of changes in family member status and of their intent to vacate the unit.
6. The owner approves adding new family members to the lease. NEWHS determines the eligibility of any new member to receive rental assistance as a member of the family.

C. Northeast Washington Housing Solutions Obligations

1. NEWHS ensures that the unit complies with HQS requirements.
2. NEWHS enters into a Housing Assistance Payment Contract with the owner. NEWHS pays the subsidized portion of rent directly to the owner/agent and is responsible for informing the owner/ agent of any changes of household status and/or rent portions. The owner / agent have the option of direct deposit of the monthly HAP.

LEASE/ADDENDUM

The Owner provides an executed lease. A HUD addendum to the lease is furnished by NEWHS. If there is any conflict between the lease and the addendum, the addendum prevails. The term of the lease begins when the unit has passed an HQS inspection and the family has moved in, and continues until terminated under one of the following circumstances:

A. Family Termination – after the initial term of the lease, the family may terminate the lease at the end of a calendar month upon 20 days advance written notice to the owner and NEWHS.

B. Mutual Termination – with prior approval from NEWHS, the family and owner may mutually agree to terminate the lease. The agreement must be in writing on a form provided by NEWHS.

C. Owner Termination – During the initial term of the lease the owner may only terminate tenancy for “good cause”. Good cause includes:

1. Serious or repeated lease violation;
2. Violation of federal, state, or local law in connection with the use or occupancy of the unit;
3. Criminal activity or alcohol abuse;
4. Disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, or damage to the unit or premises.

Prior to the lease anniversary date, the owner and family should discuss and decide on one of the following options:

1. Continuation of the existing lease;

2. Termination of the current lease agreement;
3. Execution of a new lease agreement;
4. Written termination of the lease by the family;
5. Written termination of the lease by the owner.

After the initial term of the lease, good cause includes the family's failure to accept the owner's offer of a new lease or revision; the owner's desire to use it for personal use; or a business or economic reason, such as sale of the property.

D. Termination of the Family from the Program

When a family is no longer eligible for rental assistance, the owner will no longer receive payments from NEWHS. Generally, an owner receives 30 days notice of the rental assistance termination. Upon notification, the Owner has two options:

1. Allow the tenant to remain in the unit paying full rent;
2. Terminate the tenancy following the requirements of State Law.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT (HAP) CONTRACT

NEWHS executes a HAP contract with the owner to begin concurrently with the lease. The initial Housing Assistance Payment is processed as quickly as possible. Subsequent checks will be issued and mailed or deposited in the owner/agent's bank account the first working day of the month.

Termination of the contract may occur when:

- A. the family has failed to meet program eligibility requirements, or
- B. HQS deficiencies have not been corrected, or
- C. the family violates program rules, or
- D. the family vacates the unit, or
- E. The family is no longer income eligible for the program.

A sample Housing Assistance Payment Contract is available in the Spokane County office lobby and on our web-site at www.spokanehousing.org.

EIGHT EASY STEPS TO BECOME A PARTICIPATING PROPERTY OWNER

- A. Owner may list rental unit with NEWHS.
- B. Owner screens the prospective tenant (our participant) to determine if they meet tenancy criteria.
- C. Owner and family complete a "Request for Tenancy Approval" (RFTA) form.
- D. The family returns the RFTA to NEWHS office to schedule an inspection.
- E. A NEWHS HQS Specialist conducts an inspection to ensure that the rental unit is safe, decent, and sanitary.
- F. If the unit does not initially meet HQS, a second inspection is scheduled.
- G. After the unit has met HQS, the owner submits an executed lease to NEWHS office and signs a Housing Assistance Payment Contract with NEWHS.
- H. Once the above steps are completed, NEWHS processes the family file and begins subsidy payments.

JOIN THE PROPERTY OWNER ADVISORY GROUP!

Contact one of the Assisted Housing Managers to find out the date of the next meeting.

For a complete description of owner participation in NEWHS' tenant-based rental assistance programs contact:

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