



TENANT PROGRAM CHANGES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's)

WHY HAS MY RENT PORTION INCREASED?

In March 2013, HUD funding for the Section 8 program was severely cut. To manage these funding cuts without having to terminate families from the program, the Housing Authority (HACSC) has made several changes to the program and two of them will affect program participants directly: (1) Participants may receive a reduction in their voucher size effective September 1, 2013 (see additional questions on voucher size and if/how it will affect you); and (2) Participants will now be required to pay an increased contribution to the rent (see additional questions on increased tenant contribution and how it will affect you). These changes will apply to all of our Moving to Work voucher programs, except where prohibited by law.

WHAT IS THE INCREASED TENANT CONTRIBUTION?

Effective September 1, 2013, tenants in the Section 8 program will now have their Total Tenant Payment (TTP) set at 35% of their gross monthly income or \$50, whichever is higher. The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to your owner will be paid as follows—HACSC will pay the contract rent of your unit or your applicable payment standard (whichever is lower) minus the TTP.

In addition to increasing the TTP from 30% to 35%, HACSC will no longer provide allowances for an elderly or disabled Head of Household or Spouse, for each dependent, or for tenant-paid utilities and tenant-provided appliances. HACSC will also no longer deduct out-of-pocket medical, disability or childcare expenses except in the case of certain hardship situations (see FAQ on hardship policy). Below is an example of how the new rent calculation will affect a typical household:

Example: Donna is a single parent with three children with a gross annual income of \$8,325. She has a three bedroom voucher and rents a house with a contract rent of \$2,200/month. Her current allowances are \$1,440 annually (which is deducted from her gross annual income) and her utility allowance is \$163. The current payment standard for a three bedroom voucher is \$2,274 (see Current HACSC Payment Standards chart below).

Traditional Rent Calculation Method (30%)	
Total Tenant Payment (30% of Adjusted Monthly Income)	\$172
Lower of the Payment Standard or Gross Rent (Contract Rent plus Utility Allowance)	\$2,274
Minus Total Tenant Payment	(\$172)
HAP to Owner	\$2,102
Household's Rent to the Owner	\$98

New Rent Calculation Method (35%)	
Total Tenant Payment (35% of Gross Monthly Income)	\$243
Lower of the Payment Standard or Contract Rent	\$2,200
Minus Total Tenant Payment	(\$243)
HAP to Owner	\$1,957
Household's Rent to the Owner	\$243

WHAT IS VOUCHER SIZE?

Voucher size is the number of bedrooms that a family qualifies for (also known as the family unit size or the subsidy size). The family voucher size does not dictate how large a unit the household can rent or who within a household will share a bedroom/sleeping room. However, the voucher size does affect the payment standard that is used in the rent calculation.

Current HACSC Payment Standards					
1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom	6 Bedroom
\$1,315	\$1,581	\$2,274	\$2,503	\$2,878	\$3,253

WHAT IS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S (HACSC's) NEW VOUCHER SIZE POLICY?

Under HACSC's new policy, voucher size is determined within the following guidelines:

- The head of household (with spouse, co-head, or Registered Domestic Partner, if any) will be assigned one bedroom.
- One additional bedroom is assigned to every two persons in the household (regardless of age or gender).
- A live-in aide (as an approved reasonable accommodation) will be provided a separate bedroom from other household members. The family of a live-in aide will not be provided any additional bedrooms.

If you are within a current lease term, you will not receive your new voucher size until the lease term expires. HACSC will also follow state law by ensuring that any approved foster children in the household aged 2 or older are assigned a bedroom separate from adults and any foster children aged 5 or older are assigned a bedroom separate from a child of a different gender.

WILL REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS BE AFFECTED?

No, reasonable accommodations requests will continue to be reviewed and processed without change to current policy. Exceptions to HACSC policies may be approved, on a case-by-case basis, for persons with disability due to medical needs.

HOW WILL THE CHANGE IN VOUCHER SIZE AFFECT ME?

HACSC has reviewed your current family composition and assigned your household a new voucher size, if necessary, based on HACSC’s new voucher size policy. If you received a new voucher size, it may change the payment standard used for the family—the payment standard is the maximum monthly assistance payment for a family assisted in the voucher program (before deducting the total tenant payment by the family).

If your voucher size has decreased, look at the payment standard for your new voucher size (see chart on the front of this flyer). If the contract rent of the unit you are living in is more than the payment standard amount for your new voucher size, your rent portion will be 35% of your gross income **plus** the difference between the payment standard and the contract rent. If you cannot afford that amount, you will probably want to move to a unit with a rent amount under your new payment standard. Please note that wherever you move, you will still have to pay a minimum rent amount of 35% of your gross monthly income or \$50, whichever is higher.

Example: Family Composition- Head of household, 2 female youths, 1 female adult, 1 male adult
35% of Family’s gross monthly income: \$200

	Old Voucher Size	New Voucher Size (No Change in Unit)	New Subsidy Standard (Moved to New Unit)
Voucher Size:	4	3	3
Payment Standard:	\$2503	\$2274	\$2274
Contract Rent:	\$2400	\$2400	\$2100
Housing Assistance Payment:	\$2200	\$2074	\$1900
Tenant Rent to Owner:	\$200	\$326 (\$200 plus the \$126 difference between the payment standard and contract rent)	\$200

WHAT IF I DON’T AGREE WITH MY NEW VOUCHER SIZE or RENT PORTION?

If you believe your new voucher size or rent portion was determined incorrectly, you may request a review of your voucher size and/or rent portion in writing within fifteen (15) days of the date of the attached letter. Your request letter must be mailed to the Housing Authority at P.O. Box 1930, San Jose, CA 95109-1930.

HOW CAN I REQUEST A HARDSHIP EXEMPTION FOR MY NEW RENT PORTION?

You are eligible if:

1. Your rent portion increases by \$50 or more; **and**
2. You are a household:
 - a. Whose Head of Household and/or Spouse is aged 62 or above or disabled, and pay out-of-pocket expenses for medical or disability expenses; **or**
 - b. That has children under the age of 13 and pay out-of-pocket expenses for childcare.

If you can answer yes to the above statements, you can submit a written request for a one-time hardship exemption. You must submit the request within fifteen (15) days of the date of the attached letter. Enclose proof of your expenses with your request. Your request letter must be mailed to the Housing Authority at P.O. Box 1930, San Jose, CA 95109-1930. If you are eligible for the hardship, HACSC will calculate your rent after deducting eligible expenses from your gross annual income for a period of 90 days. Your new rent portion will be effective after the 90-day hardship period.

(Tờ thông tin này có sẵn trong tiếng Tây Ban Nha và tiếng Việt tại trang web của HACSC tại www.hacsc.org.)
(Este folleto está disponible en español y vietnamita en la web de HACSC en www.hacsc.org.)