

# Dakota County Community Development Agency

## **PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK:**

# **Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)**



## **Dakota County Community Development Agency**

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*Serving People and Communities*

*An Equal Opportunity Employer*

10/2021

## Introduction

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (also known as Section 8) utilizes the existing private rental market in Dakota County to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing opportunities for low-income families, elderly and handicapped and disabled persons at an affordable cost. The CDA administers this Federal program for all of Dakota County and assists over 2,600 families and individuals through this program.

Program participants pay a minimum of 30% of their monthly adjusted income towards rent (and may not pay more than 40% of their monthly adjusted income when initially leasing a unit or moving with voucher assistance). The program provides rental assistance which is the difference between the participants rent portion and the contract rent. The maximum payment the housing authority would make is the difference between the payment standard and the participants 30% of monthly adjusted income. The rent assistance is paid directly to the property owner on the first of each month once the unit passes a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection, contact and leasing paperwork is in place.

Program participants choose a rental unit from the private rental market and the property owner must be willing to accept voucher assisted tenants. All assisted rental units must pass an annual inspection based on federally established Housing Quality Standards. If you are working with a landlord who has never worked with the program before and they have questions about the program they can contact the CDA at 651-675-4400. They can also find the program information and commonly asked questions on the CDA website [www.dakotacda.org](http://www.dakotacda.org).

It is important that you understand the information in this handbook. If you have any questions, contact your housing representative. If you need an interpreter to have this information translated to you, contact the CDA and interpreter services will be provided. In order for the Housing Choice Voucher Program to be successful it takes cooperation from you, the property owner/landlord, and the CDA staff.

# Dakota County CDA and the County

Although the name of our agency is the DAKOTA COUNTY CDA, we are not part of the County government system. We are not connected with the Dakota County Northern Service Center, Western Service Center, or Dakota County. We do not share information with the any of the county programs unless we have written permission from you. In order to provide any person or agency with information from your file or your status on any CDA program you would have to provide written authorization for us to do so.

All changes to your income, assets, expenses, and household composition must be reported to the CDA in writing. You would also need to report any changes to any and all programs that you work with or receive benefits from according to their program rules. You are responsible for reporting all changes to your household to the CDA in writing. Failure or refusal to do so could result in termination of housing benefits and require repayment of any benefits that were overpaid on your behalf.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) has different rules from the Dakota County programs regarding income and assets. CDA programs do not have limits regarding the value of your car and/or cash resources in your bank accounts. However, you must tell the CDA about all assets and income. Failure to do so is fraud and will result in termination of benefits or ineligibility for the program. If the CDA determines that you failed to disclose all income, assets, expenses, and household composition accurately we can determine that you must repay benefits paid on your behalf, terminate your housing benefits, and you could also be charged criminally.

## **CDA Owned Housing**

The CDA owns several senior buildings and is a partner in several family townhome developments throughout Dakota County. You can use your voucher in a CDA owned property or in other rental units throughout the county. You can select any unit that qualifies for the program. You are not required to live in CDA owned housing.

## **Additional information is Available**

If you would like further information not provided in this handbook such as Housing Quality Standards, Housing Assistance Payment Contract or other forms used by the CDA, please call your Housing Representative and request copies to be sent to you.

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## **USING THE RTA TO LEASE A UNIT WITH THE VOUCHER**

The Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) form must be completed by the Property Manager or owner of the property you want to rent. The request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) form must be completed and returned to the Dakota County CDA by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the month you want your assistance to begin.

For example: If you turn your RTA form in on September 15 your housing assistance would begin on October 1. This form must be turned in so the CDA can process your paperwork. This form will tell the CDA the address of the unit, the rent amount, landlord and other required information.

If the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month falls on a holiday or a weekend the deadline will be the next business day. If the landlord does not know their Tax ID number or are not comfortable putting that information on the RTA form the CDA will contact the landlord directly to get the information. (For small landlords this may be their social security number). You are responsible for getting the RTA to the CDA by the deadline. The landlord may offer to fax or mail the RTA form for you, but getting the form to the CDA by the deadline is your responsibility.

### **Eligible Housing**

The voucher program is flexible and can work with many different types of housing as long as the rent the landlord is asking is reasonable, it is affordable for the voucher holder and the unit passes a HQS inspection. The voucher program can work with:

- Apartment buildings
- Duplexes or Twin homes
- Townhomes
- Single Family Homes
- Manufactured Homes (lot rent)

The landlords can choose to participate with the HCV program or not to participate at their discretion. If you find a landlord that is interested in working with the program you can refer them to the CDA's website ([www.dakotacda.org](http://www.dakotacda.org)) for more information or they can call the CDA at 651-675-4400.

### **Rent from a Relative**

You can not rent from a relative. A relative is considered to be: parents, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother. You cannot own or have any ownership in the unit which you are being assisted. If you own a mobile home the housing assistance will be based on the lot rent for the property, it will not include your mortgage.

Once the CDA receives your RTA we will:

- Determine that the rent and utility costs meets your 40% affordability criteria.
- Determine that the rent amount the landlord is requesting is reasonable based on other similar units in the area.
- Prepare the necessary leasing and contract paperwork to be sent directly to the landlord. (This paperwork must be returned in order for the CDA to make our payment).
- Submit an inspection request for the unit you have selected to the inspection staff. You do not need to contact the CDA to request an inspection.

## **Voucher**

Your voucher will expire in 120 days. This is your searching period to locate a rental unit that meets the terms of the HCV program.

When issuing this voucher the CDA expects that if the family finds an approvable unit, the CDA will have the money available to enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with the owner. However, the CDA is under no obligation to the family, to any owner, or to any other person, to approve a tenancy. The CDA does not have any liability to any party by the issuance of this voucher.

If there are not funds available to assist someone who has been issued a voucher the CDA may need to suspend the issued voucher. We would contact the applicant in writing and inform them that their voucher has been suspended. When funds become available the CDA will contact the applicant in writing and inform them that funds are available and they can continue their search for appropriate rental housing.

During your search for a unit, changes in your household composition, income, assets, and expenses must be reported to the CDA immediately because it may affect the voucher size that you were issued and it may affect your 30% and 40% search criteria. You must also keep the CDA notified of your address. We will contact you in writing if we need information from you or to notify you of changes or provide you a copy of the rent breakdown.

The CDA does require that you sign a twelve month lease. If you are currently in a lease you will be required to sign a new lease that is effective with the starting date of your housing assistance with the HCV program.

## **Side Payments**

When you are being assisted on the HCV (Section 8) program it is a program violation to make additional payments (side payments) to the landlord to cover a higher rent amount; it is a violation of the program for the landlord to charge side payments to participants of the HCV (Section 8) program. If the landlord agrees to lower the rent to meet the affordability criteria for a participant or to comply with the rent reasonable determination the rent must be reflected on the executed lease. If the CDA gains evidence that a side payment is being made the participant will lose their housing assistance and the landlord will be required to return all housing assistance payments made by the housing authority.

## **Other Payments (Not Rent)**

The HCV program does not include the cost for garages in your assistance if it is not included in the rent, we do not assist with "pet rent" you are required to pay for having a pet in your assisted unit, and storage units that are not part of the contract rent for the unit. The cost for garages, storage units, etc. must be voluntary and the same cost for all tenants. You cannot be forced to pay for an extra service if you do not want it. Contact your Housing Specialist if you have specific questions about side payments or additional costs outside of the contract rent for the unit.

## **DECIDING WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE**

There are many features to consider as you search for suitable housing, so try to select a place that meets your family's needs. Here are some suggestions.

## **SCHOOLS**

If you have school-aged children, you will want to consider the various school districts that are available, as well as the distance from the housing unit to the school.

## **SAFETY**

When you search for housing, consider the neighborhood and its surroundings. Try to avoid high crime areas.

## **WORK**

Consider the distance between your workplace and the location of the housing unit.

## **CHILD CARE**

Consider the availability of child care in the area of the housing unit. If you work, what is the distance between the housing unit, the child care provider, and your work location?

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

If you do not have a vehicle, what is the access to public transportation in the area of the housing unit?

### **Premises and Neighborhood**

- Is there a place for children to play outside safely?
- Is the unit in a high crime area? Call the local police department to see how many police calls are made to the area.
- What is the general condition of the neighborhood?
- Are you close to medical services, fire department, or a police station?
- Is there adequate parking for you and your guests?
- Is the area/building well lighted at night?
- If you have pets, do they allow pets? If so, are there additional fees or increased security deposit?

### **EVALUATING A UNIT**

- What is the rent amount?
- How much is the security deposit?
- Do they offer a 12 month lease?
- What are the costs of utilities? Is the unit energy efficient?      What utilities will you be required to pay?
- Are tenant-paid utilities separately metered?
- Is the unit free from serious drafts?
- Is the building secure? Do all windows lock? Do the entrance doors have secure locks? Are there cameras on the property?
- Is there evidence that the unit has not been well maintained?
- Is the heating source adequate for the size of the unit?
- Is there enough room for your furniture?
- Does the landlord provide pest control?
- Is the unit clean and ready to move in?
- Are the refrigerator and stove large enough for your family size?
- Are there private, secure mail boxes?
- Are there restrictions on pets?
- Is there sufficient parking and storage?
- Are there sufficient amenities and facilities for your family?
- Is this a smoke-free property?

## TIPS TO LOCATE SUITABLE HOUSING:

Property managers and owners advertise rental properties in different ways. Here are some ideas on where to start.

- ✓ Check the classified section of all local newspapers.
- ✓ Ask friends and neighbors.
- ✓ Drive through neighborhood where you may want to live and look for yard signs.
- ✓ Check bulletin boards in Laundromats and supermarkets.
- ✓ Check with real estate offices or rental agencies. Rental agencies sometimes charge a fee.
- ✓ Request a vacancy listing from the CDA. You can request one to be mailed to you or you can stop by the office during normal business hours and pick up a copy in the lobby. The vacancy list is updated every Monday morning.
- ✓ If you have access to the internet, check out rental websites. Some examples;

[www.housinglink.org](http://www.housinglink.org)

[www.apartments.com](http://www.apartments.com)

[www.forrent.com](http://www.forrent.com)

[www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)

[www.apartmentguide.com](http://www.apartmentguide.com)

[www.rent.com](http://www.rent.com)

[www.mynewplace.com](http://www.mynewplace.com)

[www.apartmentsearch.com](http://www.apartmentsearch.com)

[www.rentcafe.com](http://www.rentcafe.com)

## APPLICATION FEES:

It's a good idea to ask about the rental policy a Landlord/Manager has.

- ✓ Rental policy can vary from landlord to landlord and is an indication of what a landlord screens for in accepting or denying applications.
- ✓ Do they accept the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)?
- ✓ Does a poor credit history effect their decision to accept or deny your application? If you are unsure of your credit report, there are resources available to assist you. For more information, contact the Consumer Credit Counseling Service at 612-617-1778 or 1-800-511-9204.
- ✓ Does a poor rental history (Unlawful Detainer or Eviction or other marks on your rental history) effect their decision to accept or deny your application?
- ✓ Does any type of criminal history affect their decision to accept or deny your application?
- ✓ How much income must you have to be accepted for the apartment rental you are applying for?



- ✓ Find out if you are likely to be denied before paying an application fee. The application fee is your responsibility and could be \$30 or more.

**The application fee is usually not refundable.**

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN A UNIT?**

In order for the unit to be approved, it must meet the following requirements:

- ❑ The rent for the unit must be **reasonable** for the type, size and condition of the unit. The CDA will determine rent reasonableness of the unit you select.
- ❑ The unit must pass a Housing Quality Standards inspection.
- ❑ The owner must be willing to enter into a contract with the CDA and comply with the program rules.
- ❑ The rent portion you are responsible for must be affordable for you. Refer to your maximum gross rent worksheet to determine affordability of the unit.

### **MAKE AN APPOINTMENT**

If you find a property you are interested in, ask for an appointment to see it. Be sure to keep the appointment and be on time. You may want to arrive early to look around the neighborhood. Do not take a lot of friends or children with you to look at the apartment. You want to give full attention to discuss the rental unit and to present yourself at your very best.

### **INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE LANDLORDS**

The CDA is required to provide prospective owners with which the following information about you:

- Your current address
- The name and address of your current landlord
- The name and address of your previous landlord (if previously assisted)

### **SECURITY DEPOSITS**

Security deposits are set by the owner of the property. The CDA does not assist with security deposit or application fees.

- (a) The owner may collect a security deposit from the tenant.
- (b) The CDA prohibits security deposits in excess of amounts charged by the owner to unassisted tenants.
- (c) Before you move into a unit, do an inspection with the landlord. Write down any problems with the apartment, and any areas that are dirty or damaged. Have the landlord or caretaker sign the list. Ask them to make all the repairs before you move in. This is a precaution for preserving your right to your damage deposit and will increase the possibility that the HCV Housing Quality Standards inspection will pass.

## **RENT REASONABLE**

The Federal Regulations for the HCV program require that the housing authority complete a rent reasonable test on all assisted units.

### **Moving Out of a Unit**

- (a) When the tenant moves out of the assisted unit, the owner may use the security deposit, including any interest on the deposit, in accordance with the lease, as reimbursement for any damages to the unit.
- (b) Make sure to give proper notice to the owner before moving out of a unit. Failure to do so will cause you to lose your voucher as well as your security deposit. A proper notice for the HCV program is 60 plus one day. For example. If you give notice on September 30 you would be eligible to move December 1.
- (c) Conduct a move-out inspection just like the move-in inspection. Have the landlord sign your inspection notes. Then you'll have proof of the conditions you left behind. Be sure you return all the keys (get a receipt for them), leave the apartment clean, and give the landlord your forwarding address. You may want to take pictures of the unit before leaving.
- (d) The owner must give the tenant a written list of all items charged against the security deposit, and the amount of each item. After deducting the amount, if any, used to reimburse the owner, the owner must refund within 21 days the full amount of the unused balance to the tenant or send a written explanation. Interest on the unused balance is also due to the tenant. You are not responsible to pay for "ordinary wear and tear" which includes worn-out carpet, chipped paint, and appliances that break because they are old.

**If the security deposit is not sufficient to cover amounts the tenant owes under the lease, the owner may seek to collect the balance from the tenant.**

In order to move with continued assistance with your HCV you must leave your unit in good standing. You and the landlord must sign the mutual termination of the lease form. This is proof for the CDA that you provided a proper notice to the landlord, you have not damaged the unit beyond normal wear and tear, and you do not owe any money to the landlord for unpaid rent or unpaid utilities you were responsible for paying.

### **MOVING OUT OF DAKOTA COUNTY PORTABILITY**

A voucher can be used anywhere in the United States of America and the US Territories that have a governing housing authority. If you are a new admission to the voucher program your voucher will indicate if you can port out. If you are not able to port out of Dakota County you must reside in Dakota County CDA's jurisdiction for twelve months. After you fulfill the twelve month requirement you can move out of the Dakota County CDA's jurisdiction. If you plan to move out of the county, return your completed RTA to the CDA, **not** the County/City to which you want to move. If you are moving outside of the Twin Cities metro area provide the name and address in writing of the housing

authority you want your file transferred to. If the move does not exceed your 40% and you are eligible to port out of Dakota County CDA's jurisdiction the Housing Specialist will make a copy of your file and mail/fax it to the appropriate housing authority.

Here are several facts to consider if you choose to move out of Dakota County:

- The new housing authority will have different Payment Standards and utility allowances which will affect your portion of the rent. They may have different subsidy standards which would affect the voucher size that you would be issued.
- Once you move to a new jurisdiction, you must remain in that jurisdiction for a minimum of one year.
- The new housing authority may have some different deadlines, rules, policies, etc. and you may have to attend another briefing session with the new housing authority. This could result in delay of assistance. **Start early!** Submit the RTA early for metro area moves and moves outside of the metro area. We suggest that you start the transfer process 30 to 60 days before your anticipated lease start date.
- You will have to pay the full amount for the damage deposit requested by the new landlord. Your current deposit with your present landlord will not likely be returned to you until 21 days after you vacate.
- You are not eligible to move if you owe money to the Dakota County CDA. You must have any outstanding debt paid in full (from all housing authorities) before you can move. Being current on your repayment agreement is not sufficient.
- If your voucher was not issued to you by the Dakota County CDA you must get approval from your original housing authority to move. Some Housing Authority's have move restrictions, they are not allowing moves if it increases the portion of rent the housing authority would pay on your behalf.

### **WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU HAVE FOUND A RENTAL UNIT**

1. Ask the owner or manager how much the rent is for the unit. Find out which utilities you will have to pay. For each utility paid by you (e.g. cooking stove, water heater, heat, etc.), ask if the energy source is gas, electric, or oil. Also find out which electric company and/or natural gas company will be providing your service. Once approved you will have to contact the appropriate companies and have the billing information changed to your name.
2. Discuss the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) Rent Assistance Program with the owner or manager:  
Invite the owner to contract the Dakota County CDA if he/she desires further information. They can call the CDA or visit our website [www.dakotacda.org](http://www.dakotacda.org)  
There is a special section for landlords interested in working with the voucher program.
3. If you decide that you want to rent the unit and the owner will accept you as a tenant participating in the HCV (Section 8 Program), ask the owner or manager to complete and sign his/her part of the Request for Tenancy Approval. You also need to sign it.

**IMPORTANT:** For the assistance to start on the 1st day of a month, you must return your Request for Tenancy Approval to the Dakota County CDA by the 15th of the preceding month. Any RTA's submitted after

the 15th of a given month will result in a delay of the rental assistance until the 1st of the following month. For example, if you submit your Request for Tenancy Approval to your Dakota County Representative by October 15th, your rent assistance could begin on November 1st. If you submit it after October 15th, your assistance could begin no sooner than December 1st. The Dakota County CDA does not offer mid-month lease up dates.

4. Return the completed Request for Tenancy Approval to the Dakota County Office. You may either mail, fax, email or drop it off in the CDA's drop box outside the front entrance.

5. **RENTAL ASSISTANCE CANNOT BEGIN UNTIL THE UNIT PASSES INSPECTION.**

**INSPECTION:**

Your inspection will take place according to one of the following:

- A. If you presently live in the unit where you are requesting assistance to begin, the inspection department will arrange a date and time prior to the first of the month for your unit to be inspected if time permits. There is no guarantee that the inspector will be available to complete the inspection prior to the first of the month. Someone is required to enter and inspect the unit. If you cannot keep this appointment you must call to reschedule with the inspector.
- B. If the unit is vacant prior to the first of the month, the inspection department will attempt to contact the owner to set up an appointment. If an inspection has not been completed prior to the first of the month you are required to have someone present in the unit on the first working day of the month. An inspection will take place between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- C. If the unit is occupied until the end of the month prior to your move-in, the inspection will take place on the first working day on the month. Someone must be present to let the inspector into the unit between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to complete the inspection. The CDA inspection can be completed if you live in the unit or the unit is vacant. The inspection can not be completed until the previous tenants have vacated the unit.
- D. If you have on-site property management and they will be available between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. you can make arrangement with them to let the inspection in your unit in your absence. The CDA requires that you leave written permission for the CDA inspector to enter your unit in your absence.

**In all cases, if the unit does not pass or the inspection is done after the 1st day of the month, the assistance will not begin until the day the inspection is passed/completed. The CDA rent portion will be prorated based on a 30 day month.**

## CALCULATION OF TOTAL TENANT PAYMENT

The Total Tenant Payment or (TTP) is the amount you pay monthly toward rent and utilities.

The Dakota County CDA Representative assigned to your file will compute your adjusted income giving you credit for any deductions you are entitled to including dependents, medical expenses (elderly, handicapped, or disabled households only,) and/or expense for the care of dependents, as follows:

1. \$480 deduction for dependent per year (all those 17 and under and all those 18 and over except head of household or spouse, who are full time students, handicapped or disabled).
2. Expenses for child care while you are employed or attending school, providing:
  - a) There is no adult household member capable of providing the child care during the hours the care is needed.
  - b) The amount is reasonable for the hours and type of care provided.
  - c) The amount of child care does not exceed the amount of income.
  - d) The amount is not paid by the agency or an individual outside the household.
  - e) The expense is for children that are 12 years old or younger.
  - f) You can provide verification this expense has been paid. We need copies of your cancelled checks or a receipt from a licensed child care provider. We will not accept handwritten statements of cash payments.
3. FOR ELDERLY ONLY (Head or Spouse age 62 or older, Handicapped or disabled).
  - a) \$400 Deduction per family per year.
  - b) Medical expenses which exceed 3% of the gross annual income and which are not paid by outside sources (insurance etc.).

**EXAMPLE:**

Annual Income (\$5.50/hr X 40hrs X 52 wks)	\$11,440
 <u>Deductions</u>	
3 Minor Children (\$480 X 3)	\$1,440
Care Expenses (\$50/wk X 52)	<u>\$2,600</u>
Total Allowances	<u>-\$4,040</u>
 Annual Income After Allowances (11,400 - 4,040)	 \$7,400
Monthly Income After Allowances (7,400 \ 12)	\$617
30% of Monthly Income After Allowances (617 x 30%)	\$185*

**\*NOTE:** This is not necessarily the amount you will pay towards rent. We also have to look at the payment standard, voucher size, location of the unit, bedroom size of the unit, and the utility allowance. The CDA will send you a rent allocation sheet once your rent portion is calculated. You and the landlord will receive a copy so you know the portion you should pay and what the CDA will pay on your behalf to the landlord.

## What is the Maximum the Voucher Program will pay?

Sample Calculation:

<b>Payment Standard</b>	
<b>Minus Total Tenant Payment (TTP)</b>	
<b>Maximum Voucher Subsidy (estimate)</b>	

Look at your worksheet from your briefing session to do this calculation with *your* income.

## What is the Maximum rent I can pay when I am moving or using the program for the first time?

- 1) You can not pay more than 40% of your adjusted income toward your rent and utilities.
- 2) If the unit you select costs more than 40%, the CDA will not approve the unit.
- 3) This means you have a rent limit based on your income.
- 4) The CDA calculates 40% of your household income.
- 5) Then we add the maximum subsidy.
- 6) Then we subtract the utility allowance.
- 7) This is your estimated Maximum Rent Limit, (IMPORTANT: your rent limit may change if your estimated income is different from your verified income information or if you choose a unit outside Dakota County.

40% of Income	
Plus Maximum CDA Subsidy	
Utility Allowance (see Utility Schedule)	
Estimated Maximum Rent Limit	

MONTHLY DOLLAR ALLOWANCE

	0 BR			1 BR			2 BR			3 BR			4 BR			5 BR		
	M	T/D	SF	M	T/D	SF	M	T/D	SF	M	T/D	SF	M	T/D	SF	M	T/D	SF
<b>1 HEATING</b>																		
Natural Gas	19	23	26	22	27	31	26	32	37	29	37	42	33	41	47	37	45	53
Bottle Gas	58	71	81	67	85	97	80	99	113	90	113	131	103	127	147	117	142	165
Fuel Oil	57	72	81	68	86	97	79	99	113	93	113	131	104	127	147	115	142	165
Electricity	26	37	62	30	44	73	42	58	86	53	72	98	64	86	111	76	99	124
<b>2 COOKING</b>																		
Natural Gas	2			2			3			4			5			6		
Bottle Gas	5			5			9			12			16			18		
Electricity	6			7			10			12			15			18		
<b>3 LIGHTS/REFRIGERATION</b>																		
Electricity	21	27	31	25	31	36	36	44	51	44	56	65	54	68	79	64	80	93
<b>4 WATER HEATING</b>																		
Natural Gas	5	6	6	5	7	7	8	10	10	10	13	13	13	16	16	15	19	19
Electricity	15	19	19	18	23	23	23	29	29	28	35	35	33	41	41	38	47	47
Bottle Gas	14	18	18	16	21	21	23	28	28	30	39	39	39	48	48	44	57	57
Fuel Oil	14	18	18	16	20	20	23	29	29	32	38	38	38	47	47	45	57	57
<b>5 WATER/SEWER</b>																		
Water	14			15			18			21			25			28		
Sewer	24			25			30			36			43			48		
Trash	124			24			24			24			24			24		
<b>6 Range/Refrigerator</b>																		
Range	11			11			11			11			11			11		
Refrigerator	12			12			12			12			12			12		
Surcharges																		
Electric	10			10			10			10			10			10		
Natural Gas	10			10			10			10			10			10		
<b>TOTAL</b>																		

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unit Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Heating Codes: M = 3 or More Attached Units D = Duplex or 2-Family Home SF = Single Family & Mobile Homes
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**Payment Standards  
Effective 02/01/2021**

<b>Unit Size</b>	<b>Dakota County</b>
<b>0 Bedroom</b>	<b>910</b>
<b>1 Bedroom</b>	<b>1085</b>
<b>2 Bedroom</b>	<b>1345</b>
<b>3 Bedroom</b>	<b>1780</b>
<b>4 Bedroom</b>	<b>2155</b>
<b>5 Bedroom</b>	<b>2475</b>
<b>6 Bedroom</b>	<b>2800</b>

**SUBSIDY STANDARDS**

The CDA will determine the appropriate Voucher size by applying the following criteria:

1. The first bedroom will be assigned to the head, co-head and spouse.
2. After the first bedroom, the CDA will add an additional bedroom to the voucher size for each two persons, regardless of age, gender or relationship.

These principles result in the following standards:

<u>Number of Bedrooms</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>	
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
0	1	1
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	6	8
5	8	10
6	10	12

In individual cases of need or hardship, the CDA has the ability to deviate from this schedule. If you feel you have a need for a larger size Voucher, you must submit a written request for a reasonable accommodation to the CDA with documentation (i.e. doctor's statement) supporting this need. These requests will be reviewed by the Director of Housing Assistance. The applicant or participant will be mailed the decision.

The regulations for the HCV program provide that a family may rent a unit with more bedrooms than stated on the voucher, but the family's subsidy will be based on the applicable payment standard for the unit size for which the family is eligible. If a family rents a unit with fewer bedrooms, it must comply with the HQS requirements (not more than 2 persons per living/sleeping room). The subsidy will be based on the unit size in this case.



## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

A HCV (Section 8) applicant/participant (or household member) who has a handicap or disability may ask for an exception to the Dakota County CDA's rules, policies, or procedures as a REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION of his/her disability if compliance with the existing rules constitutes a hardship in light of the person's disability. The CDA may make an accommodation if it does not create an undue financial or administrative burden, or fundamentally change the nature of the program. A disability does not include alcohol or illegal drug dependence.

You may request a REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION at any time. You must send your written request to: **Dakota County CDA; 1228 Town Centre Drive; Eagan, MN 55123**. It is your right and responsibility to decide when and if you want to request a REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION.

## INSPECTION STANDARDS

The home you choose must meet the Housing Quality Standards. It can be any type of unit. The CDA must inspect and approve your choice.

**CAUTION! If the unit was built before 1978 and you have children under age 6, there must not be any chipped or peeling paint inside or outside of the property.**

### **FYI: Lead Base Paint Exposure Testing**

See your family physician or call Dakota County Public Health. Intake 651-552-3115. They will refer you to low cost medical clinics for lead based paint testing.

### **DWELLING UNIT MUST INCLUDE:**

Living room, kitchen, bathroom, and one (1) living/sleeping room for every two (2) family members.

### **ALL ROOMS MUST HAVE:**

Ceilings and walls must be in good condition. There must not be any large cracks or any peeling and/or chipped paint or loose plaster.

Floors must be in good condition. The floor covering must not be curling or have loose edges or holes.

Windows must be in good condition and must open and close. The sills and frames must not be rotting. There can be no cracked, broken or missing window panes. Windows that are within six feet of the ground must have adequate locks that are permanently attached to the window. Window screens should be in good condition.

All rooms must have two (2) sources of power, except the bathroom which only requires a permanently installed light fixture. Kitchen must have one (1) permanently installed light fixture and one (1) outlet. All outlets and switches must have covers that are not cracked or broken with no exposed, frayed wiring. There must be no open, exposed electrical boxes or wires.

### **KITCHEN: - Must have a range, oven and refrigerator**

Stove - all burners of the stove must work with the pilot light or electric range.

Refrigerator - the door gasket must be attached to the door securely, forming a proper seal.

Sink - must have hot and cold running water, a drain with trap, properly hooked to a waste line, with no leaks.

There must be adequate food preparation and storage areas, with adequate means to dispose of food waste.

### **BATHROOM:** - Must be inside unit

There must be a private flush toilet that is fastened tight to the floor. There must be a sink with hot and cold running water with no leaks. There must be a tub or shower. There must be a fan or a window that opens. There must be no rotten or weak areas on the floor or any water damage to the ceiling.

**BEDROOM:**

There must be either two (2) outlets or one (1) light and one (1) outlet. The window(s) must open and be large enough to use for an emergency exit. There must be a source of heat.

**HEATING:**

The dwelling unit must have a heating system that will heat the unit to a comfortable temperature and must meet local codes.

**STEPS/PORCHES:**

Any porches, balconies or decks which are more than 30 inches above ground must have a rail 36" high. All stairs (inside and outside) with four (4) or more steps must have a handrail. All steps must be sturdy.

**SITE:**

There must be no hazards in the area such as broken down buildings or large amounts of trash or junk.

**INFESTATION:**

There must be no insects or rodents in the unit.

**SMOKE DETECTORS:**

A working smoke detector with a live battery must be installed on every level of the unit, including the basement and outside of sleeping rooms. If any members of the family are hearing impaired, a detector for the hearing impaired must be installed.

**CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS:**

There must be one approved and operational carbon monoxide alarm within 10 feet of each bedroom. Apartment complexes that have a monitored Centralized Carbon Monoxide System should mail or fax the CDA a statement from the monitoring computer so that the complex can be listed as exempt from this requirement.

Each unit must have adequate garbage storage facilities.

**MOST COMMON "FAIL" CONDITIONS**

**Nonfunctioning smoke detectors**

Inoperable bath fan

Leaking faucets/plumbing

Cracked and/or broken window panes

Carpet and vinyl conditions—safety issues

Missing or damaged window screens

Missing or cracked electrical switch plate and outlet covers

Peeling and/or chipping exterior and interior paint

Burners on kitchen stove/range not operating as designed

Railings on four or more steps not present

Missing Carbon Monoxide detectors

## FRAUD NOTICE

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is seriously concerned about fraud in the HCV (Section 8) Housing Program and has asked the CDA to send this reminder to all families in the program. Going along with these simple rules will help you stay in the HCV (Section 8) Housing Program and help the program run fairly and honestly. Not following these rules could result in referral of the matter for investigation, termination of your assistance, and you being accused of a Federal crime.

We review your income, assets, expenses and household composition annually to make sure that you are paying the proper rent to your landlord and that you have been issued the appropriate voucher size for your household composition. When we ask for this information be sure to:

1. Let us know about all income received by members of your household and income that you expect to receive in the next year. Remember to include income from second jobs, overtime, part-time jobs, social security, MFIP, General Assistance and income received for child support.
2. Let us know the names of everyone expected to live in your household in the next year. You must report anyone moving in out of your household with in ten days. You must get prior approval to add members to your household. You must request to add members to your household in writing.

Your rent payment to your landlord must not be more than the amount in your lease that we calculated at the time of our review. If you are now paying (or if your landlord asks for) any money in addition to this payment, please report this to us at once. We will determine if these extra payments are legal. Most of these payments are illegal and appropriate action will be taken against the landlord. Exceptions would be for pet fees, charges for the garage or parking space the CDA does not assist with these additional expenses.

It is very important that you report all income, assets, and expenses in your household and any changes in the number of people living with you. You are obligated to notify the CDA within ten days of any change. The CDA must approve any additions to your assisted household. We urge you to be sure that you are meeting these responsibilities so that you will continue to receive assistance.

If you know of any cases of fraud by landlords, other families, or if you have any questions on this subject, please call or write the Dakota County CDA at 1228 Town Centre Drive, Eagan, MN 55123, 651-675-4400. If you know of any cases of fraud by CDA employees, write the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Minnesota Office, 220 South Second Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401 Attention: Housing Management Specialist or call (612) 370-3072.

## **INFORMAL HEARING PROCEDURES**

The Dakota County CDA will give the program participant an opportunity for an informal hearing to consider whether decisions relating to the individual circumstances of the family are in accordance with law, HUD regulations, and CDA rules, in the following cases:

A determination of the computation of the amount of housing assistance payment for the family;

A decision to deny or terminate assistance on behalf of the participant;

A determination of the number of bedrooms entered on the certificate/voucher under the CDA standards for a family who wants to move to another dwelling with continued participating in the program.

Written notice of these determinations by the CDA will state that if the participant does not agree with the decision, they may request an informal hearing on the decision within 10 days of the date of mailing.

The guidelines for the informal hearing include:

The hearing may be conducted by any person designated by the CDA other than a person who made or approved the decision under review or a subordinate of such person.

At their own expense, the participant may be represented by a lawyer or other representative.

The CDA and the participant shall be given the opportunity to present evidence and may question any witnesses. Evidence may be considered without regard to admissibility under the rules and evidence applicable to judicial proceedings.

Participants will be given the opportunity to examine before the CDA hearing any CDA documents that are directly relevant to the hearing. The participant will be allowed to copy any such document at their expense. If the CDA does not make the document available for examination on request of the participant, the CDA may not rely on the document at the hearing.

The CDA will be given the opportunity to examine any documents that the Participant intends to submit at the hearing before the hearing, and will be permitted to copy such documents at its own expense. If the Participant does not make any document available for examination by the CDA, the Participant may not rely on the document in the hearing.

If the participant does not attend a hearing or is more than (15) minutes late, the right to review by a hearing officer is forfeited. Only ONE opportunity will be provided for a participant to attend an informal hearing.

The person who conducts the hearing shall issue a written decision stating briefly the reasons for the decision. Factual determinations relating to the individual circumstances of the participant shall be based on evidence presented at the hearing. A copy of the hearing decision shall be furnished promptly to the participant.

The CDA is not bound by a hearing decision:

Concerning a matter for which the CDA is not required to provide an opportunity for an informal hearing or otherwise in excess of the authority of the person conducting the hearing under the CDA hearing procedures, or contrary to HUD regulations or requirements or otherwise contrary to Federal, State or local law.

If the CDA determines that it is not bound by a hearing decision, the CDA will promptly notify the participant of the determination and of the reasons for the determination.

**NOTICE OF PLANS TO MOVE**

TO: Dakota County CDA, Housing Assistance Department (Section 8)

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Your Full Name Date

FAMILY ID# \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street, Apt. No.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

I am planning to move on \_\_\_\_\_ and want to  
(Moving Date)

transfer the housing assistance to my new address. I know that I must give the CDA a minimum of a proper **60 plus one day notice** of my plans to move. I must also give my landlord the required notice as stated in my lease. I understand I must have my landlord sign a mutual termination form to ensure that I am vacating in good standing. I have given a proper notice to my landlord, I have not damaged the unit beyond normal wear and tear, and I do not owe any money to my landlord for unpaid rent or other fees.

I understand that I may not be allowed to move with housing assistance if I owe any money to the CDA. If my voucher is from a housing authority other than the CDA I understand my original housing authority will approve or deny my request to move. I understand if I am moving more than once in a twelve month period I will have a delay in my housing assistance payments. I understand if I have not given proper notice I will have a delay in the housing assistance payments made on my behalf.

When the CDA receives this notice, a CDA Representative will review my file. If I do not owe the CDA money for an outstanding debt and my original housing authority allows me to move, a letter will be sent to me with a date and time to attend a "move" appointment. Along with the appointment letter I will receive an application to complete, a Tenant Certification to read, sign and date, and will also send a "Request for Tenancy Approval" form to be completed by my new landlord. At this appointment, I will be issued a new Voucher to enable me to move with continued rent assistance. I will bring with me to my appointment the completed application and Tenant Certification. I must return the "Request for Tenancy Approval" form to the CDA by the 15th of the month for rental assistance to begin on the 1st of the following month.

I have made a copy of this for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

## **REASONS YOU COULD LOSE YOUR HOUSING BENEFITS**

The Dakota County CDA wants you to be successful in keeping your voucher. Please remember the most common reasons that participants lose their benefits:

- Skipping out on the lease (vacating without a proper notice to the CDA and the landlord).
- Eviction for a lease violation. The landlord takes you to court and wins an action against you.
- Failing to report all people who are living in the assisted unit.
- Failing to report all income for all household members in the assisted unit.
- Failing to attend scheduled appointments at the CDA office and with the CDA inspector.
- Failing to supply information needed by CDA staff that is required to calculate your proper rent amount.
- Failing to provide true and complete information when completing the CDA paperwork.
- Failing to cooperate with the inspection.
- Having household members on your application who are assisted on another person's assisted household.
- Participation in illegal drug related or violent criminal activity. (This includes all members and visitors to your home.)
- Conducting yourself in a manner that is threatening or abusive to CDA personnel.

## **SUBSIDIZED HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE HOUSING**

The following is a list of handicap accessible housing in Dakota County. For more information about accessible housing units in Dakota County or other counties, call The Metropolitan Center for Independent Living at 651-646-8342.

Apple Villa South Townhomes (Family Housing)  
Apple Valley,  
952-432-4644

Hidden Valley (Family Housing)  
Hastings  
651-437-6565

Apple Valley Villa (Senior Housing)  
Apple Valley  
952-236-2600

Oak Ridge Manor (Senior Housing)  
Hastings  
651-437-1367

Cliff Hill Townhomes (Family Housing)  
Burnsville  
952-890-0212

Prairie Estates (Family Housing)  
Inver Grove Heights  
651-451-2662

Horizon Heights Townhomes (Family Housing)  
Burnsville  
952-890-0233

Fairfield Terrace (Senior Housing)  
Lakeville  
952-469-1414

Glen Pond Estates (Family Housing)  
Eagan  
651-454-6911

Rosemount Greens (Family Housing)  
Rosemount  
651-423-4636

Royal Oaks (Family Housing)  
Eagan  
651-452-8067

Rosemount Plaza (Senior Housing)  
Rosemount  
651-423-5995

Eagan Gardens (Family Housing)  
Eagan  
651-454-5667

Camber Hill Townhomes (Family Housing)  
South St. Paul  
651-451-1487

Westview Apartments (Family Housing)  
Farmington  
651-463-7369

John Carroll (Senior Housing)  
South St. Paul  
651-554-3273

Spruce Place (Senior Housing)  
Farmington  
651-463-2511

Westwood Ridge (Senior Housing)  
West St. Paul  
651-455-2211

Red Oak Manor (Senior Housing)  
Farmington  
651-460-6644

Nan McKay (Senior Housing)  
South St. Paul  
651-554-3273

## SCHOOLS IN DAKOTA COUNTY

Burnsville-Eagan-Savage (I.S.D. #191)  
100 River Ridge Court  
952-887-7300

Randolph (I.S.D. #195)  
Randolph, MN 55065  
507-263-2151  
651-332-2997

Cannon Falls (I.S.D. #252)  
East Minnesota Street  
Cannon Falls, MN 55009  
507-263-3562

Rosemount (I.S.D. #196)  
14445 Diamond Path  
Rosemount, MN 55068  
651-423-9400

Farmington (I.S.D. #192)  
510 Walnut Street  
Farmington, MN 55009  
651-463-7193

South St. Paul (I.S.D. #6)  
700 North 2nd Street  
South St. Paul, MN 55075  
651-457-9490

Hastings (I.S.D. #200)  
9th and Vermillion  
Hastings, MN 55033  
651-437-6111

West St. Paul (I.S.D. #197)  
1897 Delaware Avenue  
West St. Paul, MN 55118  
651-681-2300

Inver Grove Heights (I.S.D. #199)  
9875 Inver Grove Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077  
651-457-7210

Dakota County Area Vo-Tech  
1300 East 145th Street  
Rosemount, MN 55068  
651-423-2281

Lakeville (I.S.D. #194)  
8670 - 210th Street West  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
952-469-4461

Inver Hills Comm. College  
8445 East College Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55075  
651-455-9621

Northfield (I.S.D. #659)  
301 Union Street  
Northfield, MN 55057  
507-663-0629