

HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program: Landlord Testimonial (Miwa)

Speaker 1: Housing Choice Voucher Program. Landlord testimonial. Miwa, a landlord in Texas.

Miwa: Hi, I'm Miwa. I am an investor and landlord in the Austin, Texas market. I have a few properties with the HCV program and it's a great program and I love being part of it.

Speaker 1: What is your role as a landlord in the HCV program?

Miwa: Some of the things the housing authority requests of us as landlords is, what I think is best practices of landlords, which is to maintain a clean and safe environment for the tenants. To be responsive in partnership with the program managers themselves. But to be honest, it's not ... there's a little bit in the beginning with paperwork, but other than continual checks and renewals and checks, meaning like check-ins with the property inspections, which have changed a little bit during the pandemic. It's fairly ... it's minimal, but it's just the right amount, I feel.

Speaker 1: How often do HCV tenants turn over compared to other tenants?

Miwa: My HCV units do not turn over. And I like it that way. I house again, families who have younger children and they're near schools and I anticipate, and we have all come to a, basically a shared agreement, that they're going to be there as long as they can be, as long as they need to be. I'm fine with that. I'm glad of that. I prefer low turn ... certainly as a landlord change over costs are not something one seeks out. And so having low turnover is ideal.

Speaker 1: Have you encouraged other landlords to participate in the HCV program?

Miwa: Well, I've definitely encouraged other landlords to join the program. My sister's a landlord and her first property that went, that she turned into a rental is an HCV participating property.

Speaker 1: Can you tell us about a positive experience you've had with the HCV program?

Miwa: My favorite experience thus far with the HVC program is a family that I house. They were a homeless veteran family. They had been experiencing homelessness quite a while during and before the pandemic, as a matter of fact, and of course the pandemic compounded their pain and suffering in this time. I was introduced to the family through one of the caseworkers and one of the program managers in the Austin HCV program, I got to meet the family, or rather speak with the family and I felt like I had a property that really fit their needs. They would benefit. They've been in there. They love it. They were just brought to tears when they moved in, because they had had such trouble finding stable housing. And I said, "Look, you're here as long as you need to be, I don't expect you to move ever, if you don't want to." So, and they won't.

Speaker 1: What was your experience with the initial inspection process?

Miwa: The inspection process for the housing authority is good. He's super helpful. He walks through, he helps you know what is and isn't required and make sure that the homes

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are safe. And he also gives me tips on how to improve just safety for being a landlord in the state of Texas.

Speaker 1: Would you work with the HCV program again?

Miwa: I look forward to working with them again, it's ... the limitation's on my end, finding properties that I'm able to offer up to the program. But yes, absolutely. I would completely work with them again. I'm actively trying to do so.

Speaker 1: Can you tell us about a positive experience you've had with an HCV tenant?

Miwa: My favorite experiences are when they move in, I have a home, they move in, they're super enthused and happy, and they finally have the sense of relief of, "I'm here." And I'm happy too, because I get to be part of that moment where they realize that they don't have to be stressed out anymore about where they're going to live and what community they're going to be building.

Speaker 1: What advice would you give to landlords who are interested in the HCV program?

Miwa: If you're a new landlord to the program, just understand this is a partnership between you, the HCV program in your local area, and the tenant. And it's a great partnership if you get it right. Even if you don't, there's so many people to be involved to help actually make it right.

Speaker 1: Thank you for watching. For more information, contact your local PHA or visit www.hud.gov and search for landlords.