



How Tenants Participating in HUD Housing Programs Can Address Concerns



This flyer discusses a few common concerns Public Housing tenants and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) tenants might experience. It offers tips for possible resolution. Tenants can take a proactive approach by identifying possible or existing concerns and who might best help resolve the concern.

Note: HCV tenants should work with your landlord and your public housing agency (PHA). For Public Housing tenants, your PHA is your landlord.

Resolving concerns that may affect your housing

If you have a concern that might impact on your housing, inform your PHA and/or landlord as soon as possible. Here are a few examples of concerns that may arise and suggestions on how to address them.

- **Changes in household income?** You are encouraged to make the PHA aware of changes in income immediately. The PHA having your correct income helps ensure your rent is calculated accurately. Paying the right portion of rent helps you make on-time rent payments.
- **Changes to your household?** You must promptly inform the PHA of additions due to birth, adoption or court-awarded custody, but the PHA doesn't have to provide prior approval. The PHA must approve other additional persons in advance. This includes when household members move out or move in. If you have a voucher, you must also inform your landlord before new household members move in.
- **Housing Health and Safety concerns?** Public Housing tenants should inform the PHA and HCV tenants should inform their landlord of health and safety issues in their housing unit as soon as possible – follow up in writing so there is documentation. The PHA is responsible for keeping Public Housing units safe and healthy. The landlord is responsible for keeping HCV units safe and healthy. If your concerns about the health or safety of your unit are not addressed:
 - Public Housing tenants - contact your [local HUD Office](#).
 - HCV tenants – contact [your PHA](#) and, if needed, your [local HUD Office](#).



To report concerns, describe the problem; state if it is an emergency and why (how does it affect your health or safety); your contact information and address; and the initial response when you reported the issue.

After reporting your concern, your unit may receive a special inspection. Any life-threatening health and safety deficiencies discovered during an inspection must be corrected within 24 hours. [Life-threatening deficiencies](#) have a high risk of death, severe illness, or injury to the tenants. Typically, non-life threatening deficiencies must be addressed within 30 days. PHAs must make necessary repairs or provide alternative accommodation for Public Housing residents. If alternative accommodations cannot be provided, and the damage was not caused by your household or guests, you can refer to your lease about credits or [abate](#)ments that can be applied towards your rent proportional to the damage.

Resolving concerns with neighbors

You have the right to live in your unit without threat to your health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment and the same is true for your neighbors! Some examples of being a good neighbor include:

- ✔ Treat your neighbors the same way you would like to be treated.
- ✔ Be courteous and listen if your neighbor reaches out to you about an issue. Consider if there are changes you can make.
- ✔ Maintain your property and respect community property.

Additional tips

- ✔ Always review your lease before contacting your PHA or, if you are an HCV tenant, before you contact your landlord. In most cases, the lease will address your concerns and point you toward options to remedy concerns. If you still have questions, then contact your PHA or landlord.
- ✔ Consider who can assist you best with concerns – the PHA, the property owner, or a tenant group?
- ✔ Always communicate with your PHA/landlord. It's a good idea to communicate your concerns to the PHA/landlord in writing. Keep proof of dates when you communicated about a concern and who you spoke with. Take photos of the concerns.
- ✔ Keep a list of important numbers on your refrigerator and save them to your phone (i.e. the telephone number to the PHA, after-hours emergency repair number, your landlord).

What if you need more assistance?

- ✔ Contact [your PHA](#) or your [local HUD Office](#) if you need additional assistance.
- ✔ If the Public Housing development has an elected resident council, contact them. Resident councils represent all residents at the property.
- ✔ Tenants have the right for legal representation. Search or call 211 for local legal assistance organizations.
- ✔ To report discrimination, contact your state fair housing assistance program at <https://www.hud.gov/stat/fheo/partners-agencies> or file a complaint directly with HUD at <https://www.hud.gov/fairhousing/fileacomplaint>.



For more Public Housing resident resources, visit Tenant Empowerment resources at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/public-housing/tenant-empowerment>.

For more HCV tenant resources, visit HCV Applicant and Tenant Resources at <https://www.hud.gov/helping-americans/housing-choice-vouchers-tenants>.



Contact your local PHA at <https://www.hud.gov/contactus/public-housing-contacts> for more information.