



HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title: **Housing Specialist**
 Department: **Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP)**
 Supervisor: **Team Leader**

Exempt Non Exempt New Position Revision (see below)

Change of title Previous Revision Date: _____ Other (Please Specify) _____

Revised qualifications Revised duties _____

Expanded qualifications Expanded duties _____

Effective Date: 09/07/2016

Approved: _____
Vice President, Housing Choice Voucher Program

Approved: _____
Director Human Resources

GENERAL SUMMARY

The duties of this position include a wide range of activities related to determining and documenting participant eligibility, income, rent and contractual relationships with owners in support of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) operations. The Housing Specialist may perform admissions, re-certifications, interim adjustments, rent increases and deal with both participant and landlord problems. Reports to the Team Leader.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Admissions

- Conduct eligibility interviews with applicant and port-in families.
- Conduct interviews in the client's home or field office as needed.
- Conduct criminal history check on all adult members of applicant families.
- Determine eligibility of applicants from the waiting list, special admissions and port-ins. Inform ineligible families of informal meeting procedures.
- Document family composition, citizenship or eligible immigrant status and social security numbers of family members over age six (or certification that no number exists) in accordance with HUD requirements.
- Determine Annual Income in accordance with HUD rules.
- Obtain Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) or third party verification of income (or documentation of why third party verifications are not present).
- Calculate Adjusted Income correctly in accordance with HUD rules.
- Obtain third party verification of deductions (or documentation of why third party verifications are not present).
- Calculate Total Tenant Payment (TTP) accurately.
- Determine the Voucher size for which each family qualifies in accordance with the Administrative Plan.
- Issue Vouchers and brief Voucher-holders, emphasizing housing opportunities outside areas of minority and low income concentration.

- Set-up complete and accurate files with all necessary participant-supplied documents and third party verifications (or documentation of why third party verifications are not present).
- Receive Requests for Tenancy Approval, HAP contracts (with HUD-required Tenancy Addendum) Inspection reports, rent reasonableness determinations and leases. Check to ensure that no participants will be paying more than 40 percent of adjusted monthly income in TTP, review for original signatures and internal consistency (particularly with respect to who pays for various utilities), place in participant files and authorize HAP payments to owner.
- Enter correct information and forward accurate and timely 50058 form to Team Leader for submission to HUD.

HUD Annual Re- certifications, Interim Adjustments and Owner Rent Increases

- Request Inspectors to schedule and conduct annual and special inspections.
- Schedule and conduct annual re-certification interviews in a manner that ensure that notices of rent increase are provided at least 30 days before the anniversary date and the entire process is completed by the anniversary date.
- Determine whether the participant family qualifies for a different unit/Voucher size than previously, issue new voucher for correct unit/Voucher size when appropriate.
- When families move later than 120 days after the most recent annual re-certification (in a manner acceptable under program guidelines and the Administrative Plan), conduct a full annual re-certification (including working with Inspector to set up inspection) and change the family's anniversary date.
- When participant reports changes in income or family circumstances, process Interim Adjustment.
- Document all information (complete information for the Annual Re-cert, only changed information for the Interim) using EIV when available, otherwise third party verifications or documentation of why third party verification was unavailable.
- Make determination in accordance with the Administrative Plan when tenants request to add family members for reasons other than the birth, adoption or Court-awarded custody of children.
- Receive owner rent increase requests and forwards them to Inspectors for rent reasonableness determinations. When received, forward entire package to Team Leader to determine whether the program can afford the rent increase within available budget.
- When rent increases are approved by Team Leader, notify owner in writing and the Finance Department within two working days.
- As the utility allowance schedule is updated, ensure that the utility allowances used in determining tenant rent are correct and accurate, taking into account the size and type of unit and the utilities paid directly by the tenant.
- Enter correct information and forward accurate and timely 50058 form to Team Leader for submission to HUD.
- Properly process client files as assigned within prescribed timeframe.

General

- Works cooperatively with other members of the Voucher Administration group, adjusting workload as necessary when other members are ill or on vacation.
- Investigate and resolve participant and landlord complaints minimizing involvement of the Team Leader to the satisfaction of all parties.
- Communicate with applicants, participants, landlords/owners and co-workers in a manner that is courteous and professional.
- Answer resident and landlord questions, providing information on status of rent, damage claims, property inspections, provisions of the lease and contract, program regulations, Houston Housing Authority policies, and procedures, etc.
- Return calls to participants and landlords within one workday.
- Place information received through the mail, by fax or email in appropriate part of participant file within two workdays of receipt.
- Participate in the revision to Departmental policies and procedures.
- Submit monthly performance reports as required.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of HUD policies, and other Federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations related to low income housing and Houston Housing Authority policies.
- Knowledge of general office practices and procedures, business English and basic mathematics.
- Ability to perform basic accounting functions.
- Knowledge of spoken and written Spanish preferred.
- Knowledge of HUD HQS, inspection procedures and Houston Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher policies and procedures.
- Ability to communicate interpersonally.
- Ability to communicate with and relate to persons of diverse backgrounds and abilities and to establish and maintain effective working relationships with participants, landlords and other employees.
- Ability to complete complex and detailed tasks in a timely manner.
- Ability to plan and prioritize duties.

GUIDELINES

- Most work is performed according to existing procedures or written guidelines, such as HUD regulations, handbooks, desk references, or existing records.
- The employee will frequently be required to use independent judgment in making recommendations and decisions.

COMPLEXITY / SCOPE OF WORK

- The employee performs relatively complex work requiring a deep understanding of HUD rules and requirements relative to Voucher program eligibility, income, rent, and contract procedures. In addition, the employee must be able to handle complex interpersonal situations involving conflicts between assisted tenants and landlords with skill and professionalism.

- The employee works with the Voucher program, participants, landlords and other employees.
- The employee's work is essential to the successful operation of the Voucher program.
- The employee's efforts affect the Houston Housing Authority's ability to earn administrative fees and to obtain additional Vouchers and funding.

SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

- The employee receives work assignments and instructions from the Team Leader. Normally, the instructions are broad and general, both written and oral. In unusual situations the supervisor may specify how to accomplish assigned work.
- The employee must be able to work independently, performing relatively complex work in an accurate and timely manner without close supervision. Situations not covered by instructions may be referred to the supervisor or handled by the employee, depending on the circumstances.
- The employee's work is reviewed sporadically for thoroughness, accomplishment of objectives, and compliance with existing policies and procedures.
- Employee has no supervisory responsibilities.

PERSONAL CONTACTS

- The employee has continual contact with other employees, program participants, and landlords. Most contacts are structured in nature and the employee is expected to use normal tact and professional courtesy.
- Occasionally a contact may be uncooperative or antagonistic, and the employee would be expected to use above-average tact and courtesy. Failure to respond courteously could adversely affect the public's opinion of the program and the Houston Housing Authority.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS / WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Work is principally sedentary, but may involve some physical exertion, such as kneeling or crouching to obtain files, and eyestrain from working with computers and other office equipment. Additionally there is some degree of stress resulting from contact with applicants, participants, landlords, the public and other employees.
- Work involves the normal risks and discomforts associated with an office environment, but are usually in an area that is adequately cooled, heated, lighted and ventilated.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- High school diploma or equivalent required.
- Two (2) years of college course work preferred.
- Bachelor's degree preferred.
- Three (3) years of experience in public housing, Housing Choice Voucher Program, case management, apartment management, HCVP Call Center, or calculation experience, i.e. loan processing, tax preparation, or other basic accounting experience; or an equivalent combination of college course work and higher education (one (1) year of relevant experience is equivalent to one (1) year of relevant higher education and vice versa).
- Certification in Income, Rent, and Voucher program administration required within first year of employment (training and testing will be at the Houston Housing Authority's expense).
- Bondable.
- Valid Texas driver's license or obtain such within the first thirty (30) days of employment.
- Eligibility for coverage under Houston Housing Authority fleet auto insurance.

DISCLAIMER

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of personnel so classified.