How will my rent be paid?

Rent will be paid through the use of a Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher, a permanent housing subsidy offered to Veterans through the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV). In order to receive the housing subsidy, the Veteran must abide by all terms and conditions of the lease and agree to supplement the federal payment with 30-40% of his/her income. In addition to rental assistance, HUD-VASH vouchers are paired with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The landlord will receive their portion from the Housing Authority on the first day of each month via direct deposit. The Veteran is expected to make their portion of the payment on the first day of each month as well (or an agreed upon date with the landlord, example 5 day grace period). If the Veteran is late on their portion, we ask the landlord to contact the case manager right away and ask for support. There are governmental and organizational resources that are available to step in and pay the Veterans portion. The case manager will be able to mediate the situation quickly, resolving the issue for prompt payment. Subsidies are available, but are not guaranteed.

How will the amount of rent be determined?

HUD assesses Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the County of Los Angeles to calculate the maximum rental subsidy that can be offered. This is considered to be the cost of standard, non-luxury housing (including necessary utilities) in the community. We are glad to announce that both the City and County Housing Authorities have recently received authorization to pay up to 120% of the FMR’s in the community for VASH vouchers.

To give an example in terms of the Veteran’s share of this amount, if your rent is $1,100 and the Veteran has an income of $500, the Veteran will pay $150 toward the $1,100 rent, and the Housing Authority will directly deposit the remainder ($850) into your account.

How much of a security deposit can a landlord request?

Owners may collect a security deposit that 1) is not in excess of amounts charged by the owner to unassisted tenants and 2) that does not violate state or local law.

How long will the unit be off the market while waiting for tenancy?

Once the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) has been submitted, the Housing Authority usually takes 3-5 business days to approve and move forward to the inspection, verifying the unit meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS). Including the subsequent inspection, the entire process can take 4-6 weeks total.

When does the Housing Authority begin to make rental payments?

The landlord can expect payment within the first 60 days from the date the Housing Authority receives all of the signed paperwork. After the initial payment, the landlord will begin to receive checks on the first of each month via direct deposit from the Housing Authority and personal payment from the Veteran for their portion of the rent.

What kind of support do veterans receive after being housed?

Newly housed Veterans are offered life-long services to ensure success and retention in their new home via a field-based VA case manager. These supportive services are a resource to both the Veteran and landlord, and the landlord is encouraged to contact the case manager as needed. Some of these in-home services offered include; care coordination to clinical, financial, employment, and educational supports as well as crisis resolution, transportation assistance, and coaching on how to be a good tenant.
INSPECTION AND HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (FAQ’S)

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) are the minimum health and safety standards allowed by HUD for rental property. If you are a property owner or a participant in the HUD-VASH program the HQS standards must be maintained throughout the term of the contract with the Housing Authority. To ensure compliance of HQS the Housing Authority must conduct an initial inspection of the unit and an annual inspection to identify any health and safety violations of HQS and give sufficient time to make repairs, if additional time is needed this would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

What is the inspection process for a new contract?

New contract inspections are part of the leasing process. The Housing Authority does not contact the Veteran about the inspection process. It is the owner’s responsibility to determine if the unit is ready for inspection and to establish the inspection date.

Note: The Housing Authority will only inspect a unit if it is vacant.

Who needs to be present for an inspection?

An adult (18 years old or older) must be present for an inspection to take place. The Housing Authority strongly recommends the adult is either the owner, or a Veteran who can address questions the inspector may have about specific deficiencies.

What do I need to make sure the unit passes?

The Housing Authority requires that assisted units are decent, safe, and sanitary in accordance with federal standards HQS, and Homes For Heroes is happy to provide you with a pre-inspection check-list to help you through this process. A couple of key considerations are listed below:

- **Utilities**: All utilities must be turned on and the appliances must be installed and in proper working condition at the time of the inspection. The stove and refrigerator present at the time of the inspection must be provided by the person (owner or Veteran) stated on the lease.

- **Lead-Based Paint**: If your unit was built before 1978 and your household includes one or more children under 6 years old, inspectors will conduct a Lead-Based Paint visual assessment to make sure that paint is maintained and does not pose a potential health hazard.

After an inspection, how do I find out if the unit has passed?

If you are present at the inspection, the inspector will verbally inform you of the results of the inspection. You may retrieve a copy of your inspection report by accessing the Housing Authority’s Owner Portal located on the menu insert web link here. Link needed here please.

The inspection report indicates the overall inspection result (pass or fail), and provides details on any unit deficiencies (fail), including identifying the party (owner or Veteran) responsible for correcting the deficiencies. We strongly encourage owners to attend inspections whenever possible. This may help to identify specific deficiencies, and to clarify responsibility between owner and Veteran responsibilities.

If the unit did not pass inspection, a copy of the inspection report that identifies the deficiencies requiring your attention is mailed to you, along with an appointment notice for a follow-up inspection. If the inspection is for a new contract, we will try to reach you by telephone to expedite the process.

If the inspection failed, who is responsible for correcting the deficiencies? What is the deadline?

If the unit fails an inspection, the deficiencies must be corrected before the next inspection appointment. For new contracts, the follow-up inspection is scheduled as soon as possible. If you are present at the time of the failed initial inspection, you may schedule the follow-up with the inspector at that time. Owners are usually responsible for correcting deficiencies for new contract inspections.

For annual inspections, the party responsible for correcting deficiencies will be stated on the inspection report. The follow-up inspection will usually be scheduled no more than 21-28 days after the initial inspection, to allow you, and the Veteran, adequate time to make the necessary corrections to the unit.
Assuming I enter into a one-year lease, what happens after the first year?

It is the Housing Authority’s policy to inspect subsidized units at least once annually. You will receive a written appointment notice of the inspection within 12 months of the previous year’s inspection, and no less than fifteen days before the inspection date. Notices are mailed out to the owner and Veteran. The Authority's representative will also meet with the head of household to review family income and composition to insure they are still eligible to remain in the program and are housed in an appropriately sized unit. The Veteran's portion of the rent will also be recalculated at that time to determine if a change is warranted.

How do I request a rent increase? When can I request a rent increase?

The Rent Increase Request form will be mailed to you at the time of the Veteran’s annual reexamination. You must submit the form with your proposed rent increase to both the Veteran and the Housing Authority at least 60 days before the Veteran’s anniversary date.

Your rent increase request must be in accordance with the terms of your lease and the HUD tenancy addendum. The Housing Authority will deny rent increase requests made during the first 12 months of the lease, or from owners whose contracts are in abatement for owner violations.

The Housing Authority will conduct a rent comparability study to assess what current market rents are in the area for like-units. If it is determined that a rent adjustment is warranted, the Authority will make the proper adjustment so long as the owner has provided a minimum 60-days’s notice to the Veteran.

What should I do if the Veteran is not complying with the lease, not paying rent (on time or at all), or doing something illegal?

If the Veteran is not complying with the lease, including not paying rent, we highly encourage you to first reach out to the assigned VA case manager. They are there as a resource to you to help resolve these situations.

The Housing Authority requires HUD-VASH Veterans to abide by a set of obligations in order to receive program assistance. If you notify the VA case manager that a Veteran is acting or failing to act in accordance with these obligations, they can take measures that range from Veteran counseling to proposing termination of their assistance.

If this does not resolve the situation, please give the Veteran a written notice of the lease violation(s) and a deadline for compliance, and send the Housing Authority a copy. If the Veteran fails to comply, you may proceed with eviction according to state and local law.

If the Veteran is doing something illegal, you may also contact the local law enforcement agency, and notify the Housing Authority by calling the toll-free crime/fraud tip line at (877) 881-7233, or email us at fraud@hacola.org.

How can I evict a HUD-VASH Veteran? Does the Housing Authority and Veteran's Affairs get involved in the process?

Like any other tenant, HUD-VASH Veterans may be evicted for serious or repeated violations of the lease and/or violations of federal, state, or local law that impose Veteran obligations regarding use of the unit. You may also terminate the contract for non-lease violations or other reasons (including business or economic purposes or if you want to move into the unit) after the first year of tenancy, but in that case, you will be required to serve the Veteran with a 90-day notice.

The Housing Authority is not a party to the lease and is therefore not involved in the eviction process. If you are evicting a HUD-VASH Veteran or terminating his/her contract, you should follow the same legal measures as if you were evicting a non-HUD-VASH tenant. In both cases is that you must notify the Housing Authority of all legal action.

You will have the support of the VA case manager to resolve your concerns and provide alternatives to eviction and termination. In many cases, the VA case manager successfully works with the Veteran to retain the voucher and successfully move to another permanent setting.

In addition, if there is no other recourse and the HUD-VASH Veteran is evicted, the Housing Authority will pay through the end of the month in which the Veteran was evicted.
If a Veteran abandons the unit, at what point will the Housing Authority stop paying?

If a Veteran abandons the unit, the owner is obligated again to notify the Housing Authority. You will be allowed to keep the payment for the rest of the month that the Veteran left. The Housing Authority will stop paying the first of the month following the date the Veteran actually abandon the unit. Only in cases when housing assistance payment is sent after the end of the month in which the assisted unit was abandoned will overpayment be collected.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

| Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles | www.hacola.org |
| Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles | www.hacla.org  
www.hacla.org/ownerorientation |
| U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs | va.gov/homeless/landlords.asp  
(877) 424-3838 |
| United Way of Greater Los Angeles  
Home for Heroes Contact: Tina Estedabadi | www.unitedwayla.org/homes-for-heroes  
homesforheroes@unitedwayla.org  
(213) 808-6337 |