

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING SECTION 8 PORTABILITY Moving to New York City

1. What is portability?

Portability is the ability to bring your Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Section 8 rental assistance with you when you move from one location within the United States that administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program to another.

2. Who is eligible for portability?

You are eligible for portability if you are a voucher holder who is in good standing with Section 8 rules and obligations.

3. Are there any restrictions on eligibility?

Yes. In order to start the port process, you must first receive a determination from your current local Public Housing Authority (PHA) that you are eligible to obtain a voucher that allows you to move to NYC from your local, or initial, Public Housing Authority (also known as the IPHA).

You must also be income eligible under the New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development's (HPD) HCV program requirements. Please note that payment standards in NYC may result in an increase of tenant share or a determination that you have no rent hardship.

4. Are requirements different for people moving from areas devastated by natural or man-made disasters, like a hurricane?

Yes. An alternate portability process has been developed for voucher holders moving to New York City from any area that has been designated a Major Disaster Declaration after a natural or man-made disaster. If you have been impacted by a recent federally designated major disaster, such as hurricanes Irma or Maria in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Florida or Georgia, and the agency that administers your voucher is inoperable, contact HPD at (917) 286-4300.

5. How do I begin the port process?

Contact your local, or initial, Public Housing Authority (IPHA) that issued your original Section 8 voucher. The IPHA must contact the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and provide documents for your household, including a voucher to port out to NYC. When making the decision to port in to NYC, you may wish to consider the City's low vacancy rates and compare potential cost of living variations against your current city, as well as other locations.

If a review of these documents show that you are determined eligible to port in to NYC, HPD will contact you to schedule you to attend a mandatory briefing. The process can take up to 14 calendar days.

6. How do I know when I can start to look for a new apartment in NYC?

Once your family has been determined eligible to move to NYC, you will be scheduled to attend a required briefing at HPD regarding HPD's program requirements and the portability process. After the briefing you will be issued a voucher for New York City based on HPD subsidy standards. You will also receive a HPD Landlord Package to utilize once you have located an apartment that you would like to rent. You must attend a briefing to receive a voucher from HPD.

7. Will I be required to provide updated income information?

You are not required to provide updated income information at your scheduled briefing, but *are* encouraged to do so if you believe change in your income may impact your share of the rent. You will be required to provide up-to-date information at your next recertification. When you have leased a housing unit, HPD will mail you a rent breakdown letter along with the recertification package. You must complete and submit the recertification package with supporting documents, including updated income information to HPD at this time.

8. Will my voucher size remain the same?

Your voucher size may change depending on the subsidy standards from your Initial Public Housing Authority (IPHA). HPD's subsidy standards allow for one bedroom per two people in the household, regardless of ages or relationship. The payment standards and the utility allowance will likely be different as well.

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9. Do I continue to pay my current landlord rent while I am searching for new housing in New York City?

Yes, you must continue to pay your rent and comply with Section 8 rules and regulations unless you have received approval from your Initial Public Housing Authority (IPHA) and have formally left your previously assisted unit.

10. How long is my voucher valid?

The amount of search time on your voucher can vary depending on when a port is requested and the Initial Public Housing Authority's (IPHA) policies. If you are eligible on the date of your HPD briefing, HPD will issue you a voucher with whatever search time you have remaining on the voucher issued by the IPHA plus an additional 30 days.

11. Can I request an extension to my voucher?

If you think you will need additional search time you may request an extension to your voucher. Your voucher extension request must be received within 30 days of the expiration of your voucher. HPD will review your request, and if approved, issue a maximum 30 day extension.

12. What happens if my voucher expires?

If your voucher extension expires, you will receive a *Section 8 Denial* notice. You may contact your Initial Housing Authority (IPHA) to determine if they will reinstate your voucher. Your subsidy status will be determined by the IPHA policy.

13. Does HPD pay moving-related costs?

HPD does not pay any moving fees and does not pay for real estate broker fees or security deposits.

14. If I decide to port in to NYC, can I still participate in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program?

Yes. For more information, please call (917) 286-4300 and ask to speak to an FSS program representative.

15. What does the term "absorbed" mean?

HPD can choose to either bill the Initial Public Housing Authority (IPHA) for your monthly housing payment or to admit you into HPD's program. By "absorbing" (admitting) your voucher, HPD will pay your monthly housing payment out of HPD's funding. The decision to administer (bill) or absorb vouchers are administrative decisions made by HPD, and will not impact the amount of your subsidy or the amount you pay towards your rent. If HPD absorbs you into our program, you no longer have any tie to the IPHA. If you request portability again, HPD will then become your Initial Public Housing Authority.

16. What happens if I change my mind and decide not to move to NYC?

If, after you receive permission from your Initial Public Housing Authority (IPHA), you decide that you do not want to move to NYC, you must notify HPD before your voucher expires. HPD will then inform your IPHA, so that you can request a voucher to look for a new unit in your original community or to remain subsidized in your current rental unit. If you do not notify HPD before your voucher expires, your IPHA will decide if you will have to reapply with your IPHA.

17. What happens if I can't find a unit in NYC? Can I return to my home city and search for a unit?

If you do not locate housing in NYC within the term of your voucher, or if you decide to discontinue your portability request, HPD must refer you back to the Initial Public Housing Authority (IPHA).

It will be up to the IPHA to determine your next steps. For example, if you have vacated the assisted unit, you may not be eligible for continued assistance. And if your voucher has expired, the IPHA may not give you additional search time because an attempt to port has failed.