

TENANTS & NEIGHBORS

A Few Facts about Project-Based Section 8 Housing

What is a project-based Section 8 building?

A project-based Section 8 building is a building in which a landlord has a contract with the federal government, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to keep the building affordable for low income families. These contracts between the landlord and the government expire, so project-based Section 8 buildings can lose their affordability if landlords don't renew their contracts. Section 8 contracts apply to the entire building, so Section 8 buildings provide affordable housing for many low income people.

How do the subsidies in project-based Section 8 housing work?

In Section 8 buildings, tenants only pay 30% of their income towards rent, while the government subsidizes the rest of the rent. If the household income is \$1000 a month, then the tenants pay \$300 in rent every month. If the government and landlord agree that an unsubsidized rent would be \$700, then the government pays the \$400 difference. If a tenant moves out of an apartment in a Section 8 building, then another household which meets the income eligibility requirements can move in and the government will subsidize the rent of the new family. In exchange for getting subsidy they have to recertify every year, indicating the household income and who lives in the household.

What happens if a landlord does not want to continue his or her contract with HUD?

If a landlord does not want to renew his or her contract with the government once it reaches its expiration date, then tenants living in the Section 8 building can, if they meet the eligibility requirements, receive "enhanced vouchers." These vouchers allow the tenants to continue to pay 30% of their income towards rent, with the government paying for the rest of the rent. However, once the tenant with the voucher leaves the building, that apartment is converted to market rate housing and the government does not have to subsidize the next family's rent.

Where can I find information about specific Section 8 buildings?

To find out if a building has a Section 8 contract, download the national database from www.hud.gov. To find out if a Section 8 contract is about to expire, call HUD's New York office at (212) 264-8000.