

### Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

#### What if the tenant doesn't pay his/her portion of the rent?

Non-payment of rent is a lease violation that may be corrected with proper notice. The owner has the responsibility of enforcing non-payment of rent lease violations.

#### What information is required in order to receive housing assistance payments?

Aside from an executed HAP Contract (between the owner and the HACSM), the HACSM needs a signed Tax Identification Statement (provided by the HACSM) for verification of the owner's tax ID, and a management agreement, if applicable. Proof of property ownership is also required, however, in most cases, the HACSM can verify property ownership directly with the County Assessor's office.

#### What types of units qualify?

Any existing rental unit may qualify: a house, duplex, apartment, condo, townhouse, or mobile home, providing the unit conforms to Housing Quality Standards (HQS) set by HUD and HACSM policy.

#### How do I advertise my unit with the HACSM?

Vacant units can be listed and managed for free at [www.smchousingsearch.org](http://www.smchousingsearch.org). We refer all of our voucher holders to this website for their housing search.

Landlord forms are available on our website at [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org). Click on **Forms** and select **Landlord Forms**.

### Thank you for your participation!

The HACSM would like to thank you for choosing to participate in our rental subsidy programs. Because of you, over 4600 low income families in San Mateo County have affordable places to live that are decent, safe, and sanitary. We realize that you have a choice in the rental market and we appreciate your business.

*Thank you*

### Let us know how we're doing

We strive to provide quality customer service. Let us know how we're doing and if there is anything we can do to improve. Visit our website at [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org) and fill out the "SMC CARES Survey" located under the "About Us" tab.



**Housing Authority of  
the County of San Mateo**

**Rental Subsidy Programs**



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## About Us

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (HACSM) administers rental subsidy programs to low income residents of San Mateo County. The success of our programs depends on the HACSM's ability to contract with property owners who have decent, safe, and sanitary rental units. Owner participation is voluntary; however, many low-income families in the community rely on owners that are willing to participate in HACSM Programs.

## Advantages of Program Participation

- ✓ HACSM guarantee a portion of the rent as long as the lease and contract remain in effect.
- ✓ HACSM offer comparable rents.
- ✓ Participation will help keep your vacancies at a minimum.
- ✓ Owners retain their ability to screen families for tenancy.
- ✓ Owners retain their rights to enforce the lease agreement.
- ✓ HACSM conducts inspections of the assisted units to ensure units continue to meet decent, safe and sanitary conditions.
- ✓ Rent payments are guaranteed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, unless the first falls on a weekend.
- ✓ Direct Deposit (optional) ensures housing assistance payments won't get held up or lost in transit.

## Owner Responsibilities

- ✓ Screen families for suitability.
- ✓ Enforce lease agreement.
- ✓ Collect tenant rent.
- ✓ Comply with fair housing laws, and not discriminate against any family.
- ✓ Comply with the terms of the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract with the HACSM.
- ✓ Not accept side payments from tenants.
- ✓ Maintain the rental unit by making necessary repairs in a timely manner.

## Tenant/Participant Responsibilities

- ✓ Comply with the lease agreement.
- ✓ Not allow unauthorized person(s) to stay in the unit.
- ✓ Take care of the unit and report any needed repair immediately to the owner.
- ✓ Not make side payments to the owner.
- ✓ Provide the HACSM with complete and accurate information.
- ✓ Attend all appointments scheduled by the HACSM.
- ✓ Comply with the Family Obligations listed on the Housing Voucher.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How much rent can I charge for my unit?

Rents are not "capped", however, there are three limitations: (1) the rent must be reasonable in comparison to unassisted units in the area, (2) the rent must not be in excess of rents charged by the owner for comparable unassisted units on the premises, (3) the tenant may not pay more than an amount determined to be affordable.

### Can I use my own lease/rental agreement?

Yes –However, the HACSM-prescribed Tenancy Addendum is required and must be attached to the lease/rental agreement. *You can view the Tenancy Addendum on our website.*

### Can the rent be raised over time?

Yes – An owner can request a rent increase any time after the initial lease term. The process begins with the owner placing the request in writing. The notice must be issued to the tenant and a copy to the HACSM, 60 days prior to the effective date. *Rent increases are subject to a rent reasonableness test and HACSM approval.*

### Who pays for the security deposit?

The tenant is responsible for paying the security deposit. An owner may collect a security deposit according to State and local laws.

### Who pays for utilities?

The utility responsibility is negotiated between the owner and the tenant. The terms of the utility responsible must be clearly stated in the lease/rental agreement.