

June 2015

HAP HAPpenings

SECTION 8

NYC

Department of
Housing Preservation
& Development
nyc.gov/hpd

LANDLORD NEWSLETTER

Volume 4 Issue 1



A Message from HPD's Commissioner

Welcome to the newest issue of HAP Happenings, New York City Department of Housing and Preservation's (HPD) Section 8 landlord newsletter. As one of over 9,000 landlords providing safe, affordable housing to over 34,000 New Yorkers in need, you are a valued partner in tackling the city's affordable housing crisis. The goal of HAP Happenings is to keep you in the loop about the issues that are most important to our Section 8 landlords.

At HPD, we are committed to meeting the needs of our landlords, and making our policies as clear and consistent as possible. This issue will focus primarily on some important updates regarding Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections, as well as improvements we've made to our Partner Portal.

Affordable housing is fundamental to a person's safety, economic security, and identity, and to the strength and vitality of our city's neighborhoods. Thank you for your continued participation in our Section 8 rental subsidy program, and for all you do to help our city's low-income tenants. We welcome your feedback, and hope you enjoy this issue of HAP Happenings!

Vicki Been
HPD Commissioner

Got Apartments?

Don't forget to list available apartments on www.GoSection8.com. The apartment listing maintained through this site is provided to all HPD clients that are seeking housing, including our Section 8 rental subsidy clients.

How Do I Request a Rent Increase?

For HPD to consider a rent increase request, landlords must submit a Rent Increase/Decrease Request Form—available online at <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/rent-increase-decrease-request-form.pdf>.

By completing this form, you will provide HPD with the details of your request and certify that the Section 8 rent requested is not higher than that charged for non-subsidized, comparable units on the premises. Requests must be received by HPD no later than 60 days before the effective date of the lease and new rent. Remember, rent increase requests submitted fewer than 60 days prior to the increase will not be eligible for retroactive payments. Per federal regulations, landlords may not charge tenants for the rent increase amount for any period that HPD does not approve and pay the rent increase.

Depending on the type of development, landlords will need to submit additional information in order to complete the rent increase request process. For example, government-regulated developments (Rent Stabilized, Mitchell-Lama, Section 236, LIHTC, etc.) should include approved rent orders, issued by the appropriate supervising agency. Coops should include a copy of the minutes and/or resolution from the board meeting where the increase was adopted.

For assistance preparing your rent increase request, please contact the Rent Approval Unit directly by calling (917) 286-4300 and selecting the "Landlords and Brokers" option when prompted.

HAP Housing Fact:

In New York City, over 50% of renters are rent-burdened, spending more than one-third of their income on rent and utilities. Three out of 10 households are severely rent-burdened with half or more of their income going to housing. By capping rent at 30% of a tenant's income, Section 8 is vital for easing the affordable housing crisis in New York and keeping families in their homes.

(Source: <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/images/content/hvs-2014-infographic.jpg>)

DID YOU KNOW?

The Division of Tenant Resources would like to keep you informed of new and relevant information published by other agencies that may impact your Housing Assistance Payments. Please use the below as reference; whenever possible, we have provided a website link for additional information.

Partner Portal Update

Good news – we have made enhancements to the Partner Portal! Users will now be able to view all future scheduled HQS inspection dates for active Section 8 participants.

Additionally, landlords can continue to use the Portal to view HQS inspection history, including inspection type, the results of the inspection (and if there is a failure, the location and description of the failure), current HAP subsidy status, HAP check history, and household composition data. Landlords can also download Section 8 forms from the Partner Portal.

Important! The link to the Partner Portal has changed. Please follow these instructions to access the Partner Portal:

1. Please go to www.hpdnyc.org
2. Click on Partner Portal
3. Click on Section 8 DTR PartnerPortal
4. The usual login page will load up. Please enter your login credentials on this page.

Not enrolled in the Portal? It's easy to sign up! Just send an email to: DTRPartnerPortal@hpd.nyc.gov.

Report Fraud

If you know of anyone who provided false information on a HUD housing assistance application or recertification, or if anyone tells you to provide false information, report that person to any of the offices below:

- HPD's Inspector General's office at the New York City Department of Investigation at (212) 825-3502.
- HPD's Program Integrity and Compliance Unit at (917) 286-4300 ext. 8032.
- HUD's Office of Inspector General Hotline. You can call the Hotline toll-free Monday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Eastern Time, at (800) 347-3735 or e-mail your report to Hotline@hudoig.gov.



Direct Deposit of Housing Assistance Payments

The Department of Finance strongly encourages landlords to receive their Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) by Direct Deposit. If you are interested in this option, you can sign up online at the Department of Finance website at <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/finance/about/doing-business-with-nyc-direct-deposit-program.page>.

There are many benefits to enrolling in direct deposit, including faster receipt of payments, access to electronic payment records, and elimination of the risk of checks being lost in the mail or delivered to the wrong address.

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

www.nyc.gov/hpd

Links to:

HPD Section 8 Administrative Plan, Rent Increase Applications, other Section 8 Landlord Forms, and electronic version of HAP HAPpenings.



“LET’S COMMUNICATE!”

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation as a Section 8 landlord, please feel free to call us at 917 286-4300. You can also e-mail us at s8landlords@hpd.nyc.gov.

Important Updates on Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections

Moving to Biennial Inspections

HPD is pleased to announce an important change to our annual HQS inspection process. Effective immediately, HQS inspections will be conducted on a biennial basis (once every two years). HPD will reserve the right to conduct annual inspections as necessary in units where there is persistent uncorrected failure to meet HQS. This policy change will be phased in so that approximately half of the apartments in our program will be inspected in the coming year, and the remainder will be inspected in the following year. We believe the move to biennial inspections will benefit both our program participants and our partners.

Have You Registered Your Property?

Property owners of multiple dwellings (3+ units) or private dwellings (1- 2 units) where neither the owner nor the owner’s immediate family reside are required to register annually with HPD. Property registration provides owners with an opportunity to be contacted by HPD and notified of any violations and emergencies at the property. Early notification will allow an owner to make necessary repairs and avoid the inconvenience and cost of having HPD perform emergency repairs. Registration may also prevent the issuance of violations and civil penalties for failure to register.

The annual registration is due by September 1st. There is a \$13 fee. Building registrations must also be filed whenever ownership changes or whenever the information on a valid registration changes (example, new managing agent or site management). The easiest way to complete a registration form and keep track of whether your property is registered is through HPD’s Property Registration Online System (PROS): <https://a806-pros.nyc.gov/PROS/mdRInternet.html>. With PROS, building owners can also review a building’s registration history, print the current registration information, and are able to receive electronic notification when forms are accepted or rejected.

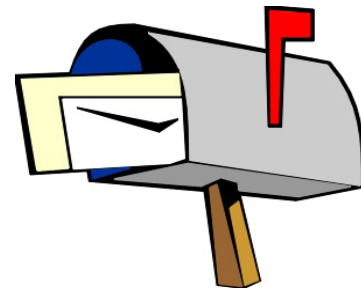
Owners can also use PROS to confirm that they are registered or find instructions on how to register, or they can call (212) 863-7300 or send an email to register@hpd.nyc.gov.

Where Are HQS Notices Mailed?

If you own a property that meets HPD’s property registration requirements (outlined in *Have You Registered Your Property?*), all HQS failure notices will be mailed to the managing agent indicated on the most recent valid HPD Property Registration. It is important that the managing agent take action immediately upon receipt of a notice. Failure to correct and certify the correction of HQS failures by the HQS deadline on the notice will result in the suspension of the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) or Rental Assistance Contract (RAC) payments.

If you own a property that is not required to be registered with HPD under New York City law, HQS failure notices will be sent to the contact address listed on the Section 8 HAP Contract or RAC.

Appointment notices and notices regarding HAP or RAC suspension due to HQS non-compliance will be sent to the contact address listed on the Section 8 HAP Contract or RAC.



How Do I eCertify the Correction of an HQS Failure?

Through eCertification, we’ve provided the opportunity for online certification of HQS corrections. Validly registered Property Owners and Managing Agents can use the system to certify correction of both HPD violations and HQS failures online. HPD’s eCertification system is free and the process is paperless. It allows owners to save time and money by notifying HPD immediately of a correction to a violation or failure condition. If you are not registered to use eCertification, we encourage you to do so.

To find out more and enroll to use eCertification, please go to: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/owners/compliance-clear-violations.page>.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

What Are the Current Payment Standards?

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) publishes new Fair Market Rents (FMR) annually. HPD uses a payment standard that is equal to 105% of the FMR. Current payment standards based on the 2015 FMR went into effect on January 23, 2015.

The payment standard is the maximum monthly rent that HPD can pay for an apartment, based on the number of bedrooms in that apartment. If tenants are responsible for paying their utilities, as designated on the HAP Contract and lease, they receive a utility allowance based on the number of bedrooms in their apartment. That utility allowance is deducted from the tenant's share of the rent to the owner.

Below are the updated payment standards and utility allowances, effective January 23, 2015:

Payment Standards

SRO	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR	7 BR	8 BR
\$942	\$1,256	\$1,312	\$1,555	\$1,999	\$2,241	\$2,577	\$2,913	\$3,249	\$3,585

Utility Allowances

# of Bedrooms	Gas	Electric	Total Gas & Electric	Gas Heat & Hot Water	Oil Heat & Hot Water	Electric Heat & Hot Water
SRO	\$17	\$40	\$57	\$41	\$89	\$192
Studio	\$17	\$40	\$57	\$41	\$89	\$192
1	\$18	\$41	\$59	\$52	\$128	\$296
2	\$18	\$42	\$60	\$60	\$153	\$366
3	\$18	\$55	\$73	\$67	\$179	\$436
4	\$20	\$56	\$76	\$75	\$204	\$506
5	\$20	\$68	\$88	\$82	\$230	\$575

GOT EMAIL?

If you have an email address, make sure you register it with Owners Services. You can receive important updates from HPD immediately by email. To register your email, please call 917-286-4300 or email s8landlords@hpd.nyc.gov.