



Fair Market Rents and Payment Standards for Housing Choice Voucher Recipients, and Frequently Asked Questions

Effective Date: April 1, 2016

Unit Size (in bedrooms)	Fair Market Rent (per month)	Payment Standard (per month)
0	\$656	\$656
1	\$813	\$830
2	\$1,027	\$1,027
3	\$1,444	\$1,444
4	\$1,693	\$1,693
5	\$1,946	\$1,946
Space rent for mobile home	\$411	\$411

What is fair market rent?

Fair market rent is an estimate of the average cost of rent, plus utilities, for a medium-quality apartment in Washington County.

What is a payment standard?

The payment standard is used in an equation that figures out what the maximum monthly amount of assistance that the government will pay to a landlord that rents to a Housing Choice Voucher tenant. The payment standard is compared to the gross rent of the unit. Gross rent equals the rent plus the utility allowance for the utilities that the tenant must pay.

So how much will I pay in rent?

There are some exceptions, but most families pay 30% of their adjusted income. Your housing choice voucher covers the difference between what you pay and the payment standard listed above. So as an example, if your adjusted income is \$1,000 a month and you are looking at a two-bedroom unit, you would pay 30% of your adjusted income – \$300 – and the voucher would cover everything up to the \$1,027 cap. In the situation where the landlord pays all the utilities, a unit that is \$500 a month and a unit that is \$1,027 a month would cost the same to you – \$300.

What happens if I'm looking at a unit where the rent is higher than the payment standard?

We would encourage you to look for units where the rent, plus utilities, is not higher than the payment standard. If the rent is higher, you are responsible for paying the difference. If the rent would cause you to pay more than 40% of your adjusted income, you will not be able to use your voucher there. You would need to look at a less expensive unit.

Let's use the same example above, only now let's say the two-bedroom unit you're looking at is \$1,107 (Landlord pays all utilities). You would be responsible for paying 30% of your adjusted income – \$300 – plus the amount over the \$1027 cap. So your total payment would be \$380. This would be allowable, because \$380 is less than 40% of your adjusted income.

What is adjusted income?

Adjusted income is an amount determined by taking what you make and subtracting certain allowances for your children, some child care expenses, if you have a disability, and some other criteria. Your case worker will go through your income and expenses with you to ensure that you're paying the right amount of money. This is also why it is important for you to have good documentation of these expenses – it helps your case worker help you.

What if I have other questions?

Please call our office at 651-458-0936 and ask to speak to your case worker, or if you don't have one, a Rental Assistance Specialist. Someone will be happy to get you the answers you're looking for.