

SECTION 8 PROTECTION ORDINANCE



Information prepared by the Suburban Hennepin Housing Coalition
The Section 8 Protection Ordinance prohibits the denial of prospective tenants simply for using Section 8 (Housing Choice Vouchers) or other subsidies to help pay rent.

Currently, accepting subsidies are voluntary. Housing providers can refuse to rent to individuals solely because they have a Housing Choice Voucher. In the Twin Cities' tight rental market, this voluntary approach makes it difficult for families to access housing, particularly housing in opportunity-rich communities and neighborhoods. This ordinance ensures that voucher recipients are not excluded from the rental market for paying rent with a voucher, and that they are assessed as any other applicant would be. This allows families that rely on housing vouchers to have an equal opportunity to acquire housing.

Impact of Ordinance

1. **Prevents displacement of families** when a new owner who doesn't accept in Housing Choice Vouchers buys a property.
2. **Prevents discrimination of voucher holders.**
3. Opens up **housing options for lower income families** who struggle to find homes in a tight rental market.
4. Helps to **efficiently utilize government supplied housing resources:** recipient loses voucher if unable to find housing in allotted time.
5. **Reduces amount of families that need to move away from their communities** in search of affordable housing.

Positives for Landlords

- **Reliable, trustworthy tenants**
- The government has a rigorous application process to receive housing vouchers and screens all of its participants.
- **Assurance of rent paid** - Rent covered by a subsidy or voucher is paid directly to the landlord from government, ensuring timely and full payments.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who else participates in this program?

Around the country, there are currently 13 states other than Minnesota, 10 counties, and over 45 cities that participate in/have a similar program.

What if there is a problem with the renter?

Landlords retain all of the rights they already had to deal with troublesome tenants.

Does a landlord have to lower their rents?

No, however a landlord cannot raise their rent simply to avoid being part of the program; that could be considered intentional discrimination.

Does this mean if a person has a voucher a landlord has to accept them as a renter?

No, however, the applicant has to be assessed just like any other applicant, and if they meet all of the landlord's qualification policies, then they cannot be disqualified from renting.

FAQ compiled by attorneys with the Housing Justice Center