

# Monthly update

A service of the Cuyahoga  
Metropolitan Housing  
Authority for landlords  
and program participants  
in Cuyahoga County.  
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## Valuable News for Landlords

LANDLORDS CONSIDERING A NEW CONTRACT WITH THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE EXISTING CONTRACTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WHEN ASKING FOR A SPECIFIC AMOUNT OF RENT FOR THEIR PROPERTIES:

### Rent Affordability Calculator for New Contracts

The HCVP is pleased to announce a new tool to assist landlords in managing the business side of identifying new tenants. The Program has launched its new Rent Affordability Calculator on the CMHA web site. It provides the landlord with an easy way to determine whether a specific participant on the HCVP can afford to pay the asking rent for a unit. Just go to [www.cmha.net](http://www.cmha.net), and click on the Housing Choice Voucher Program tab. Choose "Rent Affordability Calculator," and enter the information requested. The calculator will show whether or not the unit is affordably priced for that specific family, based on the family's income.

The calculator addresses one of the two HUD requirements for setting contract rents in the HCVP. The unit will subsequently need to meet rent reasonableness requirements, which may result in a lower rent offer from the HCVP. But the calculator will save time for landlords who may submit a Request for Tenancy Approval for a specific family, only to discover after some time has passed that the family can't afford the asking rent—even with the housing assistance provided by the voucher.

### Requests for Rent Increases

Landlords seeking rent increases should keep in mind that by HUD regulation, contract rents must be reasonable—in line with HUD Fair Market rent levels, the HCVP payment standard and rents for comparable units in the neighborhood. In the current market where the supply of available rental property has grown, market rents in many neighborhoods are decreasing.

When a landlord requests a rent increase, the HCVP must review the reasonableness of the requested rent. If the reasonableness test shows that the reasonable rent is lower than the new asking rent, the rent increase will be denied. But if the reasonable rent is lower than the current rent, the contract rent on the property will be decreased. This will ensure that the housing assistance payment (HAP) complies with HUD rent reasonableness requirements.

Before requesting a rent increase, landlords are cautioned to consider comparable rents in their neighborhood to minimize the possibility of a reduction in their contract rent and HAP.



**Board of Commissioners:** William H. Smith, Chairman;  
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