

Overview of rental housing subsidy programs (The Big 3)

An overview of three common rental housing subsidy programs where the renter pays only a percentage of their income. Properties participating in these programs appear in this directory.

	Public Housing	Project-Based Section 8 Housing*	Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
What it is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly owned and managed rental units for low-income households Some units are reserved only for seniors or people with disabilities. This is a project-based subsidy. (The subsidy stays with the unit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Privately owned and managed rental units for low-income households Some units are reserved only for seniors, people with disabilities, or other populations. This is a project-based subsidy. (The subsidy stays with the unit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government-funded program that helps low-income households pay the rent on private, market-rate rental units. A renter finds a unit (within certain requirements); a housing authority pays a portion of the rent directly to the property. This is a tenant-based subsidy (The subsidy goes with the tenant).
What it costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most units cost 30% of the households adjusted gross income. Some units have a low, fixed rent amount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most units cost 30% of the households adjusted gross income. Some units have a low, fixed rent amount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30% to 40% of a household's adjusted gross income.
What it offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very affordable rents; the rent you pay is based on your income Variety of housing styles (single-family, apartment, townhome) and amenities. A single access point for applying, often for a large number of units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very affordable rents; the rent you pay is based on your income Variety of housing styles (single-family, apartment, townhome) and amenities. Many different landlords and property managers participate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very affordable rents; the rent you pay is based on your income A renter gets to choose the apartment he/she wants to rent (including possibly staying in the same unit where the renter already lives). Sometimes you can keep your subsidy if you decide to move.
What to be prepared for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need to apply at a public housing authority to get on the waiting list. Waiting lists for public housing can be closed or long Sometimes there are specific lists for specific bedroom sizes or housing types. A credit and history check will probably be required. Some units are older and come with few amenities If you don't like the unit(s) offered, you may have limited choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need to apply at the individual property. Each owner keeps a separate waiting list. Waiting lists at properties can be closed or long You may have to call or travel around a lot to find out whose waiting list is open and how to apply. A credit and history check at the property will probably be required. <p>Other project-based programs operate in a similar manner, including: Section 202, Section 236, Section 515 for rural areas, and Section 811.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will need to apply at a housing authority to get a voucher. Waiting lists for vouchers can be closed or long. You still have to apply at the property A credit and history check at the property will probably be required. Some properties may choose not to accept vouchers. The unit must pass an inspection before the subsidy payments can start. The housing authority will help identify an eligible rent.