

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

What if the tenant doesn't pay his/her portion of the rent?

Non-payment of rent is a lease violation that must be addressed with proper notice. The owner is responsible for enforcing lease violations related to non-payment of rent.

What information is required in order to receive housing assistance payments?

In addition to an executed HAP Contract (between the owner and HACSM), the HACSM requires a signed Tax Identification Statement for verification of the owner's tax ID and a management agreement, if applicable. Proof of property ownership is also needed, though, in most cases, HACSM can verify ownership directly with the County Assessor's office.

What types of units qualify?

Any existing rental unit may qualify, including a house, apartment, duplex, townhouse, condo, shared housing (room), mobile home provided it conforms to the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) set by HUD and HACSM policy. Note: HUD is transitioning from HQS to NSPIRE (National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate) by February 1, 2027.

How do I advertise my unit with the HACSM?

Vacant units can be listed and managed for free at www.affordablehousing.com. We direct all of our voucher holders to this website for their housing search.

Landlord forms are available on our website at www.smchousing.org. Click on *Landlords and Property Owners* and select *Landlord Forms*.

Thank you for your participation!

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (HACSM) would like to thank you for choosing to participate in our rental subsidy programs. Because of you, over 4000 low income families in San Mateo County have affordable places to live that are decent, safe, and sanitary. We realize that you have a choice in the rental market and we appreciate your business.



Let us know how we're doing

We strive to provide quality customer service. Share your feedback and suggestions for improvement by visiting our website at www.smchousing.org. Complete the "SMC CARES Survey" under the "About DOH" tab.



**Housing Authority of
the County of San Mateo**

Rental Subsidy Programs



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About Us

The Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (HACSM) administers rental subsidy programs for low income residents of San Mateo County. The success of these programs relies on partnering with property owners who provide decent, safe, and sanitary rental units. While owner participation is voluntary; many low-income families depend on owners willing to engage with HACSM programs, ensuring stable housing and community support.

Advantages of the Program

- ✓ HACSM guarantees a portion of the rent as long as the lease and contract remain in effect.
- ✓ HACSM offers comparable rents.
- ✓ Participation helps keep your vacancies at a minimum.
- ✓ Owners retain the ability to screen families for tenancy.
- ✓ Owners retain the rights to enforce the lease agreement.
- ✓ HACSM conducts inspections to ensure units continue to meet decent, safe and sanitary conditions.
- ✓ Rent payments are guaranteed on the 1st of the month, unless it falls on a weekend.
- ✓ Direct Deposit (optional) ensures that housing assistance payment aren't held up or lost in transit.

Owner Responsibilities

- ✓ Screen families for suitability
- ✓ Enforce lease agreement.
- ✓ Collect tenant rent.
- ✓ Comply with Fair Housing Laws and avoid discrimination against any family.
- ✓ Adhere to Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract with the HACSM.
- ✓ Not accept unauthorized payments from tenants.
- ✓ Perform necessary repairs promptly to ensure the property remains in good condition.

Tenant/Participant Responsibilities

- ✓ Comply with the lease agreement.
- ✓ Not allow unauthorized persons to stay in the unit.
- ✓ Take care of the property and report any needed repair immediately to the owner.
- ✓ Not make unauthorized payments to the owner.
- ✓ Provide complete and accurate information to HACSM.
- ✓ Keep all appointments scheduled by the HACSM.
- ✓ Comply with Family Obligations listed on the Housing Voucher.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much rent can I charge for my unit?

While rents in the program are not “capped,” there are important limitations to ensure affordability and fairness. The rent must be reasonable when compared to similar unassisted units in the area, must not exceed what the owner charges for comparable unassisted units on the same premises and the tenant cannot pay more than an amount determined to be affordable according to program guidelines.

Can I use my own lease/rental agreement?

Yes, however, the HACSM-prescribed Tenancy Addendum is required and must be attached to the lease/rental agreement. *View the Tenancy Addendum on our website for more details.*

Can the rent be raised over time?

Yes – an owner can request a rent increase any time after the initial lease term. The owner must submit the request in writing and send the notice to both the tenant and HACSM at least 60 days before the proposed effective date. Rent increases are subject to a rent reasonableness test, compliance with the AB1482 rent cap law, and require HACSM approval. *View our website for details on AB1482*

Who pays for the security deposit?

The tenant is responsible for paying the security deposit. Owners may collect a security deposit according to State and local laws.

Who pays for utilities?

The utility responsibility is negotiated between the owner and the tenant. The terms of the utility responsible must be clearly stated in the lease/rental agreement.