



## Improving Access to Housing "Housing Choice" Vouchers

Housing gives people an opportunity to build better lives. We all need a safe and affordable place to call home. Currently, too many Oregonians are struggling to find suitable housing, even those fortunate enough to have been offered a housing choice voucher.

The Housing Alliance supports efforts to remove barriers for tenants with Housing Choice vouchers (also known as Section 8 vouchers) to rent housing in their preferred communities. We believe a proposal that addresses multiple barriers will make the best use of this critical resource, help more families find stable housing, and help the rental housing market support housing opportunity.

A balanced proposal must include: statewide approaches to better support both landlords and tenants in working with the process; increasing tools available to housing authorities to educate and work with both landlords and HUD, as well as amending ORS 659A.421 (1)(d) and (2)(e) to clarify that receipt of federal rent subsidies and other housing assistance - in particular Section 8 vouchers - is not grounds for denying tenancy.

**The Oregon State Legislature should take action to remove barriers tenants with Housing Choice vouchers face in renting housing in their preferred communities. We believe a proposal with multiple strategies to ensure tenant success will help more families find suitable housing with Housing Choice Vouchers and support landlords and housing authorities in their work.**

Strategies that the Housing Alliance believes will be most effective to help ensure tenant success are:

- Creation of a flexible funding pool to help address the variety of needs faced by tenants, housing authorities, and landlords. Potential uses for the funding pool include:
  - Resources for landlords who accept Section 8 which will mitigate the costs and risks of participation;
  - Support for tenants with housing search and access (hard costs like application fees and deposits as well as staff support and guidance);
  - Landlord support, including efforts to streamline housing authority interactions and inspections.
- Pursuit of a waiver from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to help increase flexibility and streamline processes including inspections to better serve landlords and tenants.



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