

## INFORMAL HEARING INSTRUCTIONS & INFORMATION

### **What can I do if I disagree with a decision by the Housing Choice Voucher Program of Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA)?**

Program participants have a right to request an informal hearing if they disagree with a decision. RRHA offers informal hearings for certain HCVP determinations that reduce or adversely impact voucher benefits, including termination from the program. The purpose of the informal hearing is to consider whether the HCVP's decisions are in accordance with the law, HUD regulations, and RRHA policies.

**How and when should I submit a hearing request?** You may begin your request for an informal hearing by completing the attached hearing request form or submitting a written request. A request for informal hearing must be submitted to the HCVP via email, mail or fax, by the close of business day, no later than 15 calendar days from the date of HCVP's decision or notice to terminate. (If you make the request by mail, make sure to send it well before the 15th calendar day, to ensure that it is delivered on time.)

**How and when will I find out about my hearing date?** The Housing Compliance Officer assigned to the informal hearing will schedule and send written notice of the informal hearing to your resident portal or via mail to your residence within 15 calendar days.

**What if I have a conflict and need to reschedule my hearing date?** The family may request to reschedule the hearing for good cause, or if it is needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. A reasonable accommodation is defined as a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service. Requests to reschedule a hearing must be made orally or in writing prior to the hearing date. At its discretion, the Housing Compliance Officer may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the hearing.

**Can I access my file or other documents before the hearing?** The family has a right to review their tenant file. Before a hearing, the family must be given the opportunity to examine any HCVP documents that are directly relevant to the hearing. The family must be allowed to copy any such documents at their own expense (\$.25 per page). The family must request discovery of HCVP documents no later than two (2) business days prior to the scheduled hearing date. If the HCVP does not make the document available for examination on the request of the family, the HCVP may not rely on the document at the hearing.

**Do I need an attorney or representative at the hearing?** An attorney or representative is not required for your participation at the hearing. However, at its own expense, the family may be represented by a lawyer or other representative at the informal hearing.

**What does a hearing look like?** An informal hearing is a proceeding in which you will be provided an opportunity to explain why you believe the decision you are challenging is incorrect (HCVP will be given the same opportunity at the hearing). The hearing will take place before RRHA's Housing Compliance Officer; because it is informal, there is neither a judge nor a jury.

**Who will conduct the hearing?** Informal hearings will be conducted by the Housing Compliance Officer. The Housing Compliance Officer may not be the person who made or approved the decision being challenged, or a subordinate of that person.

**Can I present evidence at the hearing?** The family must be given the opportunity to present evidence and question any witnesses. In general, all evidence is admissible at an informal hearing. HCVP may also present evidence at the informal hearing.

**How and when will I receive the Housing Compliance Officer's decision?** The Housing Compliance Officer will issue a written decision no later than 30 calendar days following the date of the hearing. The written decision must provide an explanation for



its basis, and factual determinations relating to the individual circumstances of the family and must be based on a preponderance of the evidence presented at the hearing. A copy of the hearing decision must be furnished promptly to the family.

Additional information about the informal hearing process can be found in Chapter 16, of RRHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan. A copy of the Administrative Plan is available for public review and is posted on-line at [www.rrha.com](http://www.rrha.com)



### Informal Hearing Request Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR INFORMAL HEARING:

- Determination of family’s annual or adjusted income and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment.
- Determination to terminate assistance because of the family’s actions or failure to act.
  - If the family violates any family obligations under the program as listed on the voucher and in 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 982.551(see Family Obligations)
- Determination to terminate assistance because the participant has been absent from the assisted unit longer than the maximum period permitted under RRHA Policy and HUD rules.
- Denial of Reasonable Accommodation
- Determination to terminate a family’s Self-Sufficiency contract, withhold supportive services, or propose forfeiture of the family’s escrow account.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **I have a disability and require a reasonable accommodation for the hearing**

Requested Accommodation:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

RETURN THE INFORMAL HEARING REQUEST FORM TO:  
 Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority  
 Via email: HCVP@rrha.com  
 Via mail: 918 Chamberlayne Parkway Richmond, VA 23220  
 Via Fax: (804) 644-1445