



CENTRAL CALIFORNIA LEGAL SERVICES

JUSTICE. EQUITY. POWER.

## Know your Housing Choice Voucher Rights!

**CCLS** has partnered with the **City of Fresno** to provide renters and landlords with this educational message.

It is illegal for a California landlord to refuse to rent to an applicant because they have a Housing Choice Voucher (“HCV,” or “Section 8”). The HCV Program pays a portion of a tenant’s rent, depending on the tenant’s income. It is illegal for the landlord to refuse to rent to a new tenant who is using HCV, or to deny a current tenant’s request to use HCV to pay for the rent.

The law protects tenants’ rights to use income from public assistance, or other “nontraditional” sources, to pay rent. When a tenant otherwise qualifies for housing, landlords cannot lawfully reject them because they receive, or will receive, public assistance in paying their rent. In determining whether a rental applicant is able to pay their rent, landlords must include **all sources of lawful income**: • Regular Paychecks • Social Security • Supplemental Security Income (SSI) • Disability Income • CalWORKS • Child Support • Spousal Support • Public Assistance • Savings • Housing Subsidy Programs (i.e., Section 8/HCV)

### **A Note to landlords:**

Landlords may screen and reject any applicant, including those with Section 8/HCVs. But landlords can only ask lawful questions (*not* race/color/religion/sex/family status/etc.). Landlords can also screen for past conduct or inability to pay rent, as long as the screening is applied equally to all applicants. Landlords may choose to lower their rents to make them eligible for use with a voucher. However, it is illegal to raise the rent for the purpose of making it ineligible for the voucher program.

If you are a landlord and would like to learn more about fair housing laws and the Housing Choice Voucher Program, please contact the Fresno Housing’s Landlord Liaison at [landlordoutreach@fresnohousing.org](mailto:landlordoutreach@fresnohousing.org) or go to their webpage at <https://fresnohousing.org/partners/>.

**For more information or to file a complaint please contact:**

**Central California Fair Housing Council:**

(559) 244-2950 or toll free (888) 498-FAIR; [CentralCAFairHousing@gmail.com](mailto:CentralCAFairHousing@gmail.com)

**California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH):**

(559) 244-4760 or toll free (800) 884-1684; <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/housing/>

**Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development:**

(800) 347-3739; [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/online-complaint](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint)

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