

WHA's Public Safety Department: A Resource for Landlords

Section 8 landlords are not on their own after leasing to a voucher holder. WHA offers resources to help the landlord-tenant relationship succeed — and when challenges arise, our Public Safety Department can help assess certain situations.

What Public Safety CAN Assist With: Unauthorized Occupants (UOs)

A common issue involves individuals staying in a unit who are not on the lease. When alerted, investigators:

- ✓ Confirm the unit is a WHA Section 8 property
- ✓ Gather details (name, vehicle, frequency of stay)
- ✓ Review supporting information, including photos or video when available

In one case, a suspected UO posted a photo on social media of artwork painted inside the apartment — something an investigator recognized from a prior visit. It helped confirm the complaint.

"That," said Public Safety Vice President Dan Peltier, "was a pretty good indicator that he was staying there often."

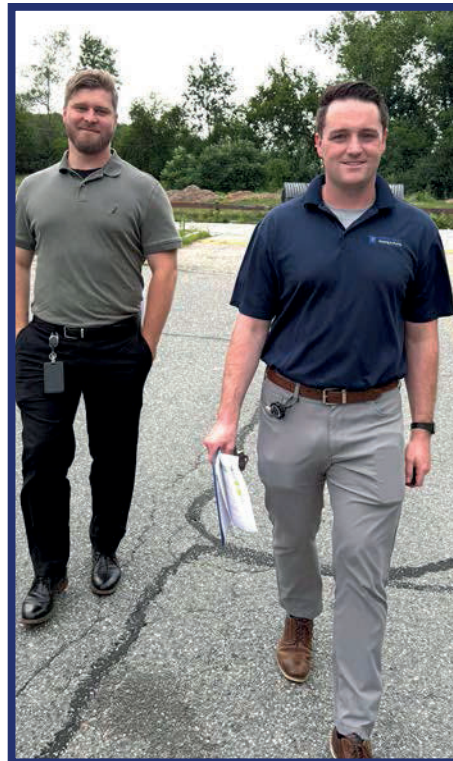
Public Safety may follow up with landlords for documentation to support findings.

Fraud

Fraud investigations are typically initiated internally and may involve:

- ✓ Unreported income
- ✓ Subletting

In one instance, a resident was found to be subletting their apartment, violating program rules.



Top: Public Safety Vice President Dan Peltier, right, and Investigator Tyler Reese.

Above: Public Safety Investigator Miguel Cepeda, right, and Vice President Dan Peltier pause to chat during a night management patrol in Great Brook Valley Gardens.

Preventative Programs

WHA offers preventative programs aimed at educating tenants and landlords on typical issues we encounter. This helps both the tenant and landlord prevent possible lease violations.

Remember, a voucher may be subject to lease enforcement based on findings. However, the individual is not removed from the property. That is the responsibility of the landlord.

Important Clarification

Public Safety DOES:

- ✓ Investigate UOs, fraud, and arrests
- ✓ Advise landlords on next steps

Public Safety DOES NOT:

- ✗ Arrest individuals
- ✗ Evict tenants or UOs
- ✗ Initiate court proceedings

Legal action — including eviction — remains the landlord's responsibility.

As Peltier explains: "We ask our landlords to help us preserve the integrity of the Section 8 process. We are a resource for them, but ultimately it is their responsibility to take action."

Need Assistance?

If you have concerns or need guidance:

Public Safety Department

508-635-3208

publicsafetyrequest@worcesterha.org

Payment Standards: What Landlords Need To Know

If you're a Section 8 landlord, you've probably heard the term "payment standard." But what does it mean — and why does it matter for you as a landlord?

What is a payment standard?

The maximum amount the Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) can subsidize for a unit based on bedroom size and location. It's set using HUD's Fair Market Rent (FMR) as a guide, with local adjustments to reflect the Worcester County market.

In Other Words: A payment standard is a cap on how much rental assistance WHA can provide for a unit.

Payment standards help ensure rents remain competitive while keeping housing affordable for voucher holders.

Why it matters to landlords

Payment standards help determine whether a unit will lease successfully through the voucher program. Understanding them can help you:

- Set competitive rents
 - Lease units faster
 - Reduce vacancy time
- Know what subsidy level to expect
If your rent is within a reasonable range of the payment standard and comparable to similar units in the area, the leasing process is typically smoother and faster.

How rent is calculated (simple version)

Here's how the numbers generally work:

1. The tenant pays about 30% of their income toward rent.
2. WHA pays the remaining portion up to the payment standard.

Example:

Payment standard for a 2-bedroom: \$1,800
Tenant portion (based on income): \$600
WHA subsidy payment: \$1,200

This structure provides landlords with a reliable monthly subsidy while keeping units affordable for tenants.

Key things to know:

- Payment standards vary by bedroom size
- They may be updated periodically
- Final approved rent must also be rent reasonable compared to similar units

WHA staff can help determine if your unit fits within the range

Questions about payment standards? Call WHA at 508-635-3148.

Contact WHA: 508-635-3148

Working together, we can provide stable housing for families while supporting property owners across Worcester County.

Winter Tips for Landlords

Protect Your Asset This Winter

Winter weather can be tough on properties — a little preparation now can prevent costly damage later. Keep your units safe, warm, and protected with these quick tips:

Keep the Heat On

- ✓ Set heat to at least 60° in all units
- ✓ Check thermostats regularly

Prevent Frozen Pipes

- ✓ Let faucets run at a slow drip during extreme cold
- ✓ Ask tenants to open cabinet doors under sinks
- ✓ Drain and shut off outdoor faucets

Stay Reachable

- ✓ Make sure tenants have your current emergency contact info
- ✓ Respond quickly to winter-related issues

Protect Vacant Units

- ✓ Check vacant apartments regularly

- ✓ Look for leaks, frozen pipes, or heating issues



Snow & Ice Responsibility

- ✓ Stay on top of snow and ice removal
- ✓ Ensure walkways, stairs, and entrances are safe

Review Insurance

- ✓ Confirm your winter coverage is up to date
- ✓ Know what's covered in case of storm damage

A little winter prep goes a long way.

Protect your property.
Protect your tenants.
Protect your investment.

Landlords Benefit from Shorter Lease-Up Times

What's that old saying? "Time is money?" That holds true when leasing out your property.

During 2025, roughly 52 percent of new voucher holders leased up within 30 days of receiving a voucher. That means less lost revenue for landlords.

Why It Matters

A \$1,500 rent equates to \$50 per day for every day that your unit sits vacant.

We can help you, your friends, partners, and fellow landlords, to fill your vacant units with motivated participants looking to move quickly.

Don't let your unit sit vacant. Call us today so we can match it with a new tenant.

# of Days to Lease Up	# of Voucher Holders
30 or Less	90
31-60	29
61-90	29
91-180	32
More than 180	3
Total	174