

ABATEMENTS

Landlords, abatements are preventable.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires housing authorities to ensure that assisted families reside in decent, safe and sanitary affordable housing. To that end, housing authorities conduct Annual, Special (complaint) and Quality Control Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections.

Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) are abated when

- a unit on the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program fails HQS inspection and
- the repairs are not completed by the due date and/or
- the owner has not notified the inspector that all repairs have been completed and the unit is ready for follow-up inspection by the due date.

The inspector conducts the HQS inspection and notes all deficiencies. A letter with the deficiency list is mailed to the owner and tenant. The owner is responsible for repairing items identified as owner items. Likewise, the family is responsible for correcting deficiencies cited as tenant items. **Close attention should be paid to the due date because less time is permitted for correcting deficiencies described as non-emergency (urgent but not life threatening) or emergency.** The inspector will not automatically return to the unit and conduct the follow-up inspection on the due date. **The owner must complete the owner deficiencies and contact the inspector on or before the due date in order to prevent the unit from going into abatement.**

The owner cannot charge the family for housing assistance payments lost due to abatement. Nor can the owner evict the family for money lost due to abatement.

Owners are not responsible for deficiencies assigned to tenants. The family is responsible for making any repairs marked tenant items. Housing assistance payments are not abated if the family fails to complete their repairs by the due date.

There is no reason for your unit to go into abatement. Below are ways to avoid abated payments.

- Inspect your unit quarterly to minimize the need to perform major repairs in order to pass annual HQS inspection.
- Conduct an inspection of the unit sixty-ninety days before the next annual inspection and make repairs. Annual inspections are conducted approximately twelve months from the previous annual inspection.
- Complete repairs immediately after an inspection.

- Contact the inspector as soon as repairs are completed by telephone or email. Contacting the inspector by email ensures documentation of your notification that repairs have been completed.
- Follow-up with maintenance staff to make sure repairs are completed professionally and timely.
- If you need an extension, do not wait until the due date to request the extension. Provide documentation of the reason why you are requesting an extension.
- If you have a new address, make sure DHA has your new contact information.
- Before you purchase a property on the HCV program, verify with the seller that the unit is not in abatement.