

What Is Portability?

Portability is the ability of a family to move from a PHA'S (Public Housing Authority's) jurisdiction to a location in another housing authority's jurisdiction.

Who is eligible for portability?

Any voucher holder that is in good standing with the housing authority and are not subject to any restrictions.

Are there any restrictions on eligibility?

Yes. You must live within the jurisdiction of the housing authority in which you applied for rental assistance in order to automatically qualify for eligibility. Otherwise, you are required to live in the jurisdiction of the Housing Authority issuing your Section 8 Voucher for the first 12 months of that assistance.

Example: You live Bristol, TN or Sullivan County, TN when you applied for assistance, you received a Voucher from Bristol Housing; you must initially use the Voucher in Bristol Housing's jurisdiction. You may transfer your Section 8 Voucher after you have lived in Bristol Housing's jurisdiction for 12 months.

Where can I transfer my Section 8 Voucher?

A family residing in Bristol Housing's jurisdiction at the time of application may receive assistance to lease a unit outside of Bristol Housing's jurisdiction in the jurisdiction of a housing authority anywhere in the United States that is administering a tenant-based (Section 8 Voucher) program.

However, if you choose to move to an area where there is no housing agency to administer your Section 8 Voucher the housing authority can deny you portability to that area.

What you should do if you choose to move under the portability provision?

You must notify Bristol Housing of your desire to move under portability and of where you want to move.

Bristol Housing will counsel the family on the proper procedures for terminating the current lease and any other necessary requirements such as paying any monies owed to Bristol Housing.

Bristol Housing will find out whether or not there is a housing authority operating a Section 8 program in the area the family wants to move.

If there is a housing authority operating in the area the family wants to move, Bristol Housing will contact that housing authority to determine whether or not it will issue their own Voucher or administer on behalf of Bristol Housing.

Bristol Housing will send necessary documents to the receiving housing authority and notify the client of whom they should contact at the receiving housing authority.

Will the programs work the same if I transfer under the portability provision?

Yes and no. All Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs are governed according to the Federal Regulations, therefore, there are many similarities. However, housing authorities do have areas in which they can create their own rules and Voucher Payment Standards (PS) vary from one housing authority to another. Some areas have higher Payment Standards than Bristol Housing and some have lower payment standards. You will have to locate housing that fits within the guidelines of the particular area in which you have chosen to live.

You must meet the income guidelines for the area in which you want to transfer your Section 8 Voucher.

What are the advantages of moving under the portability provision?

The most obvious advantage is to give you more options without you sacrificing your rental assistance.

If you live in a high poverty area, portability enables you to get away from those areas. Better living conditions usually means lower crime rates, better public services, better schools, and better shopping areas.