

Section 8 Department
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PORT IN INSTRUCTIONS

You should notify your Initial Housing Authority (IHA) to let them know you want to move to Westmoreland County, PA. The Initial Housing Authority (IHA) must ***mail, email or fax*** the Portability Packet to the address listed above. Portability Packets will ***not be accepted*** if hand carried by Participant.

It takes 2 to 3 weeks for Admissions and Occupancy to receive your paperwork in the office. You may contact Janet at 724-832-7258 ext. 3054 to see if your information has been received. You can also check your status via email janetg@wchaonline.com

When it has been confirmed that your portability packet has been received, you will be contacted by mail to schedule your office eligibility/briefing interview that may last 1-1/2 hours. At this interview you will receive a WCHA voucher and, if not included in your portability packet, a Request for Tenancy Approval packet.

To receive your voucher, you must attend the Portability briefing and bring the following items to your interview:

- Current valid photo identification
- Birth certificates for everyone in the household
- Social Security cards for everyone in the household
- Proof of any and all income (pay stubs, award letters for Social Security benefits, SSI, unemployment, child support, cash assistance, workmen's compensation, etc.)
- Proof of any assets (all pages of current bank statements (checking, savings, money markets, trust funds, life insurance, property, etc.)
- All adults 18 years and over listed in the household **must** come to the interview
- WCHA researches criminal history of **ALL** adult household members on incoming transfers and will not process the transfer if anyone in the household has engaged in certain criminal activities, including violent and drug-related criminal offenses.
- WCHA may reduce the voucher size.
- WCHA payment standards may be lower.
- For an admission at the initial housing authority, the family income may exceed WCHA's income limits and they may be ineligible for assistance at our agency.
- If applicable, legal immigration documents for **ALL** household members.

The paperwork is very important. You will need to provide all the necessary verifications requested before we can approve you for assistance. Again, **the approval process may take 45-60 days.** Failure to provide your paperwork in a timely manner may result in termination of your rental assistance benefits. Some documents may be sent by the IHA; i.e., Photo ID for all adults, birth certificates, social security cards, income, Declaration of Citizenship, etc. (If these documents are not sent by the IHA to our Agency, you must provide the originals.) ***We are not to determine the eligibility of the portable family; they have been determined eligible by the Initial Housing Authority.*** Our function is to make sure that all documents, signatures and/or verifications required by our Agency and HUD are in your file.

It is the policy of Westmoreland County Housing Authority to deny program participation to families who have criminal activities within the last three (3) years.

If you or any family member have any arrest and/or criminal activities within the last three (3) years, your portability may be denied and your port papers will be returned back to your Initial Housing Authority.

No briefing appointment will be given if there are documents missing or if your annual income exceeds the income limits of Westmoreland County.

Once the interview/briefing has been completed and all documents are in your file, you will be given a Request for Tenancy Approval Packet if one is not included in your portability packet from the Initial Housing Authority. Finding a unit is your responsibility. For a list of landlords willing to participate in the rental assistance program, go to our website www.wchaonline.com, click on the tab "**Housing Sites**" and select "**PAHOUSINGSEARCH.COM**". You may also look for a unit on your own (i.e., local newspapers, church bulletins, grocery stores bulletin boards, real estate agencies, etc.).

Due to a high volume of families porting into Westmoreland County, inspections can take approximately 7 to 14 business days to be scheduled after you turn in the Request for Tenancy Approval packet (RFTA). You must turn in the RFTA on or before the date your voucher expires. We cannot process the RFTA until your family passes a criminal history check and we verify the unit selected has a reasonable rent and is affordable. Assistance will begin only after the unit passes an inspection, a lease agreement is executed, and the landlord signs a Housing Assistance Payments Contract. ***It is important the family have sufficient resources, including a place to stay, and available funds to pay for temporary housing and other expenses, to carry them through the processing period. Sorry, but we do not have funding for emergency assistance or security deposits.***

Westmoreland County Small Area FMR Payment Standards effective 4/1/2018

Effective 4/1/2018, WCHA will use different payment standards for different ZIP codes in its jurisdiction. The new SAFMRs will help you choose a unit that meets your needs. You will be able to use your voucher in more places than would have been possible before – including neighborhoods with higher rents that may have high-performing schools, low levels of poverty, and access to grocery stores, parks, and other amenities.

The payment standard includes the utility allowance.
(Rent + utilities must not exceed the payment standards.)

Westmoreland County Housing Authority is currently billing all incoming portable vouchers.

2/10/20 Port In Instructions