



# Housing Matters.

Changing your address can change your life—now and for years to come.

Where you live *matters*.

Much more than you might think. It can determine your family's health, income and the quality of your child's education. In short, where you live can determine whether you realize your dreams of a better future for your family.



With this in mind, your next move can be one of the most important decisions of your life. Choose wisely.

First, avoid the temptation to move down the street or around the corner or to “settle” for the first unit that passes inspection. Instead, sit down and make a list of things that really matter to you and then make a commitment to find housing in a community that not just meets your needs, but exceeds your expectations.

## Community Matters.

The second step is the hardest. You'll have to explore lots of different housing

options—and in different communities. That is where the Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) can help. The program is designed to help households with vouchers carefully consider their housing choices by expanding their search to Opportunity Areas throughout the region.

## Quality Matters.

Opportunity Areas represent some of the best communities in Southeast Pennsylvania. In general, Opportunity Areas are family-friendly communities with good schools, safe neighborhoods, good job availability and a diverse population.



These communities offer a wide variety of choice in terms of location, types of housing, services and amenities. For these reasons alone, it makes sense to include Opportunity Areas in your housing search.

## Information Matters.

Finding the right house in the right community can be daunting. To be successful you have to do your homework. HOP helps in two ways. First, families enrolled in the program are assigned a housing counselor. The housing counselor will serve as your resource and your advocate, supporting you before, during and after you move to an Opportunity Area.



Your housing counselor will help you develop an action plan, provide housing referrals, and introductions to landlords with housing for rent in Opportunity Areas.

Second, families receive mandatory landlord/tenant training. By the time you begin your search, you will have the information and support you need to be able to find a house or apartment that you will cherish.

## Get what matters to you the most.



The Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) is a regional housing initiative of the Philadelphia Housing Authority. HOP is open to households with vouchers served by the participating housing authorities. The program is based on the premise that once a household finds housing that is safe and secure and there is the right mix of support and services, they can begin to put down their roots and focus on the things that really matter—like their children's education, starting a new career or another life's ambition.

Don't delay. Call (215) 684-4050 now to schedule an appointment with a housing counselor.



# Moving Matters.

We'll be with you every step of the way.

The Housing Opportunity Program is like having your very own real estate broker—but better. But that is only the beginning. Following are some of the benefits of enrolling in HOP.

## Free Credit Report.

A free credit report is standard. This allows you to “know where you stand” before you start your search for housing. And if there are problems, your housing counselor can assist you in getting credit counseling.



## Search Assistance.

Your counselor has established relationships with landlords. As a HOP participant, you will have the opportunity to view units for rent and meet with owners who want to rent to families with vouchers.



In some cases, you will be able to apply for units right on the spot.

## Information and Resources.

As a participant in HOP, you will also receive tools and information that empower you to be a smart consumer. This includes a resource guide and mandatory workshops that cover household budgeting and landlord/tenant rights. Workshop participants learn strategies to make good choices about where to live and how to be the type of tenant that landlords value.



Topics include:

- The kinds of questions to ask prospective landlords
- Your rights regarding security deposits
- What to do if you're denied housing based on your race or because you have children
- How to negotiate—yes—negotiate a lease

## Post-Move Support.

This is perhaps the most attractive feature of the program. After you move to

an Opportunity Area, you're not alone. HOP will be there for you for up to one year. Your counselor will link you with resources and services that will help you get settled and thrive in your new home and your new community.

## The Fine Print.

You might be wondering, “What’s the Catch?” Here it is. It is not easy to move to a new community, but nothing worthwhile ever is.

The program is open to households in the voucher program who are served by the participating housing authorities. To qualify, you must also be in good standing with the program and currently live in a traditional neighborhood. Once enrolled, you will be expected to make a concerted effort to move to an Opportunity Area. This means taking advantage of HOP services and actively searching for housing in Opportunity Areas on your own.



The Housing Opportunity Program

A regional housing initiative designed to increase housing choices for households with vouchers

Philadelphia Housing Authority

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