



Information to Owners

Hialeah Housing Authority

Section 8 Department

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Table of Contents

Welcome

Introduction to the Housing Choice Voucher Program.....	Page 3
Selection of Families and the Housing Choice Voucher.....	Page 3
Becoming a HCV Landlord.....	Page 4
Owner Responsibilities.....	Page 5
Change of Ownership.....	Page 6
Direct Deposit.....	Page 6
Lead Based Paint.....	Page 6

Rent to Owner

Rent Reasonableness.....	Page 7
Payment Standard Information.....	Page 7

Housing Quality Standards

Types of Inspections	Page 8
Initial Inspections	
Annual Inspections Special	
Inspections Emergency	
Inspections Quality Control	
Inspections	
Abatements.....	Page 9
Inspections Checklist.....	Page 9
What you need to know about lead poisoning..... (Located in back of Section 1)	

Lease, Tenancy Addendum and HAP Contract

Lease and Tenancy Addendum.....	Page 10
Housing Assistance Payment Contract (HAP).....	Page 10
Lease Renewal and Request for Rent Increases.....	Page 10
Annual Re-certification.....	Page 10

Family Termination of Assistance and Tenancy

Probable causes for termination of assistance.....	Page 11
--	---------

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	Pages 12 & 13
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What you need to know about Lead Poisoning

WELCOME TO THE HIALEAH HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Hialeah Housing Authority is dedicated to providing the community with quality, affordable housing that is decent, sanitary, and safe to eligible families. We shall serve our clients and all citizens with the highest level of professionalism, compassion, and respect.

INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federally subsidized, tenant based housing program that provides rental assistance to eligible low-income families. This is the largest assisted housing program administered by HUD, regulated by 24 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations), Part 982. Eligible families find and lease a unit in the private sector and pay a portion of the rent, the housing agency pays the owner the remaining rent.

SELECTION OF FAMILIES & THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER

Families are selected from a waiting list and processed for eligibility. In determining a family eligible for the HCVP a criminal background check is performed on all household members 18 years old or older, including a search in the National Registry of Sex Offenders. The Hialeah Housing Authority will repeat this process at the time of each annual re-certification. Once approved the tenant is issued a voucher which describes the rights and responsibilities and entitles the family to search for a unit. The voucher Form 52646 certifies that the family is now eligible for the program and describes the responsibilities of the tenant and the PHA.

The family has an initial 60 days to find housing, extensions will be granted, if requested timely, up to a maximum of 120 days. When the family finds a suitable unit the landlord must complete the packet that includes the RFTA and return to the Hialeah Housing Authority as soon as possible to initiate the approval/moving process.

The amount of the monthly housing assistance payment to be paid to the owner is determined by the PHA. Generally the monthly housing assistance payment is the difference between the applicable payment standard and 30 percent of the monthly adjusted family income. In determining the maximum initial housing assistance payment for the family, the PHA will use the payment standard in effect on the date the tenancy is approved by the PHA.

During the first year of the contract tenants cannot pay more than 40% of the adjusted monthly income, if the unit requires the tenant to pay more than the 40% they will be asked to find a unit with a lower rent. After the first year this restriction does not apply provided that the rent requested by the owner is determined reasonable.

BECOMING A HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER LANDLORD

HCV landlords and property managers must have a full understanding of their rights and obligations. Listed below you will find a list of the steps to be followed when deciding to become a HCV landlord.

- Inform the Housing Authority of the availability of your property
- Indicate in your advertisement that you accept Section 8
- Screen the voucher holder just as you would any other prospective tenant. Please note the HA has not screened the family's behavior or suitability for tenancy. In accordance with HUD requirements information on previous landlord(s), if known to the HA, will be provided **upon request**. The HA will make an exception to this requirement if the family's whereabouts must be protected due to domestic abuse or witness protection. The following information will be provided based on documentation in our possession:
 - a) Payment of Rent and Utilities
 - b) Eviction history
 - c) Damage to rental units
 - d) Drug trafficking
- Become familiar with Fair Housing Law and Landlord/Tenant law.
- Once your tenant is selected complete the documents included in your Landlord Packet and return to the Housing Authority to get the approval process started. When completing the Request for Tenancy Approval, HUD-52517, indicate clearly who provides or pays for the utilities and appliances, this is crucial for the calculation of the subsidy
- Complete form W-9. Please make sure to enter the correct Taxpayer Identification Number, a 1099 will be mailed to you at the end of the year
- Direct deposit is now required to ensure your payment is received timely. To enroll please complete the Direct Deposit Form included in your Landlord Packet. (see page 6)
- The amount of the Security Deposit is set by the landlord, may not be in excess of private market practice, or in excess of amounts charged by the owner to non-assisted families. Paying for the security deposit is tenant responsibility, the HHA will not assist with the payment or be involved in security deposit matters. It is refundable by State Law, refer to Florida State Law (F.S. 83.49)
- Rent must be reasonable. The rent charged to the housing choice voucher holder cannot exceed the amount of rent charged for other unassisted comparable units. Once the rent has been determined reasonable an inspection will be scheduled before the applicant can be allowed to move into the unit. (Please check the section on Rent Reasonable for details on page 9)
- Properties must be maintained in accordance with HQS (Housing Quality Standards). Read the inspection procedures and checklist carefully to avoid failed inspections, and delays in renting your property (pages 7 & 8)
- The tenant lease must be signed before the tenant is allowed to move into the unit. Please note that the initial term of the lease must be at least one year (more details on page 10)
- Owners must comply with the provisions of the HUD Tenancy Addendum, if you do not wish to update your lease you may attach the Tenancy Addendum to the Lease
- Keep updated on the rules and regulations as well as the internal policies of the Agency by attending annual owner workshops hosted by the Hialeah Housing Authority

OWNER RESPONSIBILITIES [24 CFR 982.452]

- A.** The owner is responsible for performing all of the owner's obligations under the HAP Contract and the lease.

- B.** Owner responsibilities include:
 - 1. Complying with Landlord/Tenant and Fair Housing laws.
 - 2. Maintaining the unit in accordance with HQS, including performance of ordinary and extraordinary maintenance. Cooperate with HHA on all inspection matters.
 - 3. Performing all management and rental functions for the assisted unit, including enforcing tenant obligations under the lease, screening families to determine suitability as renters and evicting families for lease violations.
 - 4. Preparing and furnishing the HA with required information under the HAP contract.
 - 5. Lease the unit **only** to the family specified in the lease for use solely as their principal place of residence.
 - 6. Collecting from the family:
 - a) Any Security deposit
 - b) Tenant portion of the rent
 - c) Any charges for unit damage and unpaid utility bills
 - 7. Paying and maintaining utility services (unless paid for by the tenant).
 - 8. Not commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program.
 - 9. Not engage in drug trafficking.
 - 10. Adhere to HUD and State security deposit procedures for:
 - a) Security reimbursement.
 - b) Termination of tenancy.
 - c) Permit PHA/HUD access to premises and records
 - d) Not transfer the contract without prior written consent of the PHA.
 - e) Provide tenant with ninety (90) day written notice to vacate, as per HUD
 - 11. Notify the HHA of change of ownership (see details on page 6)

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

When a subsidized property changes ownership the Hialeah Housing Authority must be notified immediately to ensure payments are sent to the proper owner. To do the transfer new owners can call (305) 887-8009 to schedule an appointment and complete the "Change of Ownership Form/Package" available at our front desk. A copy of the following documents is required in order to complete the transfer:

- Recorded Warranty Deed
- Settlement Statement (If Deed is not available)
- Social Security or EIN number
- Driver's License

A copy of this manual and all updated existing tenant forms will be provided at this time.

Existing voucher holders residing at the property under a current lease cannot be evicted as long as they are in compliance with the HCV Program rules and regulations. You may request in writing any information you wish to have in reference to the tenant's status, inspection history or any other program related information.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Direct deposit can help you save time by having funds immediately available to you. It is a safe and convenient way to have your money deposited directly into your checking or savings account.

The following are just some of the advantages of Direct Deposit:

Convenient and Fast – Timely access to funds and no waiting in bank lines
Money in your account the first of the month regardless of whether you are out of the country

Safe and Secure – Eliminates lost or stolen checks

As of October 1, 2014 the Hialeah Housing Authority ("HHA") will no longer issue paper checks for Housing Assistance Payments ("HAP") to owners, landlords and Public Housing Authorities ("PHAs"). HAP will be deposited electronically to your designated account. To enroll in direct deposit all you have to do is complete the Direct Deposit Authorization Form which can be found on the HHA's website at www.hialeahhousing.org, and it is also included in Section 2 of this packet, please make sure to complete the e-mail field to receive notification of the monthly HAP paid. The completed form must be received by the Finance Department no later than the 15th of the month prior to the beginning of Direct Deposit.

LEAD BASED PAINT

In 1978 lead-based paint was banned for residential use by EPA. HUD requires tenants and landlords are informed about the dangers of lead-based paint poisoning. It is the landlord's responsibility to inform tenants that there may be lead-based paint in the unit. Included in the packet you will find information regarding this topic.

Note: Should you have any additional questions or need help with information regarding inspection results, or to schedule an initial inspection please contact the Inspection Department at 305.887.3903 Ext. 1040

RENT TO OWNER

RENT REASONABLENESS

Prior to tenancy approval the Hialeah Housing Authority will make a rent reasonableness determination by comparing the rent being charged by the owner to rents for comparable unassisted units in the area, or in multifamily housing, to rents being charged by the owner for comparable, unassisted units on the site. If the proposed rent is determined to be too high and does not meet the rent reasonableness limitation, the HA will negotiate with the owner and attempt to reduce the contract rent.

Our Agency has contracted with “gosection8.com” for determination of Rent Reasonableness. To make this determination the location, quality type, unit size, age of the unit, amenities, maintenance and utilities are taken into consideration. Accessibility to persons with disability will also be taken into account. HUD regulations also require that rent be determined reasonable before approval of any increase in the rent to owner, or if it has been a 5% decrease in the FMR.

PAYMENT STANDARDS

The Payment standard is used to calculate the monthly housing assistance payment and is the maximum amount of subsidy a housing authority is allowed to pay. HUD publishes the Fair Market Rents for each market area in the United States and PHA’s must adopt a payment standard schedule that establishes voucher payment standard amounts for each FMR area in the PHA jurisdiction. Housing Authorities have the option of setting their Payment Standards between 90 and 110 percent of the Fair Market Rents. Listed below, you will find our most current Payment Standards.

<u>Unit Size</u>	<u>0 BDR</u>	<u>1 BDR</u>	<u>2 BDR</u>	<u>3 BDR</u>	<u>4 BDR</u>	<u>5 BDR</u>
FMR	951	1147	1454	1934	2354	2707
PMT STD	875	1055	1338	1779	2166	2490

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS)

Types of Inspections

Initial Inspections

In order for a unit to be approved for participation in the rental assistance program, it must first be inspected by a Hialeah Housing Authority (HHA) staff inspector to determine if the unit meets the Housing Quality Standard (HQS) requirements. This inspection will be scheduled with the owner once the RFTA is received and the proposed rent has been determined reasonable. The inspection will not be scheduled until the unit is unoccupied and all utilities are on. A unit can be occupied when the tenant is leasing the unit at the time the voucher is issued and wishes to remain in it. If the unit fails the inspection, a notice will be sent to the owner detailing the deficiencies, once the repairs have been completed the HA will schedule a re-inspection.

Annual Inspections

To comply with HUD regulations annual HQS inspections are conducted within 12 months of the initial or previous annual inspection. Notification is mailed to the landlord and tenant approximately 14 days in advance. Tenants are responsible for providing access to the premises; failure to comply may result in termination of assistance. Written notification will be sent to both tenant and landlord outlining the deficiencies found and the party responsible for correcting the violations. Re-inspections will be automatically scheduled 30 days from the date of the first inspection, if it fails again for the same violations the property will be abated as per the terms of the HAP Contract.

Special/Complaint Inspection

These are done at the request of the landlord or the tenant and are normally due to a complaint. Violations should be corrected using the same time frame as the annual inspections. Failure to comply may result in abatement or termination of assistance.

Emergency (24 hours) Inspections

An emergency inspection will be performed upon request when a condition poses an immediate threat to the safety or health of the family. If the following types of violations are found the deficiencies must be corrected within 24 hours and the re-inspection scheduled for the next day.

- No running water, electricity or gas (when needed for range or heat)
- Major plumbing leaks, flooding or sewer back up
- Gas leaks or fumes
- Uninhabitable units due to fire or natural disaster
- No operational sanitary facilities
- Electrical fixtures that sparks, short circuits or smokes, creating a fire hazard
- Any condition that jeopardizes the security/ safety of the unit

Quality Control Inspections

These are performed to comply with HUD requirements where a percentage of the units inspected must be selected at random and re-inspected to determine the quality of the previous inspection.

ABATEMENTS

Abatements become effective the first day of the month following the failed re-inspection and will continue until the owner corrects the deficiency and the unit passes inspection. Abatement is a period of time when the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is not made to the owner. It is imposed as the result of program violations; therefore no retroactive payments will be made for the time the unit remains under abatement. During abatements, the HAP contract remains in force, for this reason, abatement of HAP is not legal grounds for evicting a tenant. As long as the tenant continues paying his/her portion of the rent the family cannot be evicted, federal regulations prohibit owners from evicting a tenant for an abated HAP. The owner's HAP will be reinstated once required repairs are made and unit passes inspection.

HAP payments will not be abated if the tenant refuses to provide the owner with access to the unit to make repairs. Documentation of failed attempts to repair deficiencies must be provided in writing. If the abatement is due to serious breach of contract such as owner's criminal activity or fraud information will be forwarded to the HUD office of Inspector General and the owner bared from future participation in the program.

LANDLORD/UNIT INSPECTION CHECKLIST

To avoid lengthy delays, the following checklist has been made as a guide to aid you in the make ready of the unit for an Initial Inspection. Please go through this checklist before calling to request an inspection.

- The unit has been completely cleaned
- All construction work has been completed and working tools and materials removed
- All exterior doors and windows have locks that are operable
- Window screens must be present and in good condition
- All light switches and electrical outlets cover plates are in place and in good condition
- There is no peeling paint inside the unit and no peeling paint on the exterior surface below five feet
- All cabinet doors open, close and latch easily
- All interior doors must have a keyless locking device
- Dirty walls have been newly painted
- All carpets are clean, secured and free of tripping hazards
- There is a least one operable smoke detector in each level of the unit, especially near sleeping rooms
- There are not plumbing leaks inside or outside the unit
- Water heater has a pressure relief valve and a discharge line directed toward the floor or outside the living area
- All utilities are turned on or connected (electricity, gas, water)
- All sleeping rooms have at least a window (**If iron bars are present, it must have some type of fire escape hatch operable from inside the unit**)
- The owner or the agent for the owner must be present for an initial inspection
- All grounds around the unit are free from debris and mowed
- Toilets must be working properly
- Lavatory, tub and shower must have hot and cold running water
- Kitchen sink must have hot and cold running water
- Refrigerator/freezer must work properly to prevent food spoilage
- Unit must have a fully operable stove or range

LEASE/TENANCY ADDENDUM

The Lease must be consistent with State and local law. The Tenancy Addendum is also Part C of the HAP Contract. If the lease has not been amended to incorporate the terms of the Tenancy Addendum it must be attached to the Lease.

In case of any conflict between the provisions of the tenancy addendum as required by HUD and any other provisions of the lease or any other agreement between the owner and the tenant the requirements of the HUD-required tenancy addendum shall control.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENT CONTRACTS

Take your time to read the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract. It is a legal agreement between the Housing Authority and the owner by which agencies and landlords agree to comply with to avoid regulation violations. Please read carefully before signing it. HAP is the amount paid by the HHA to the owner; it is the difference between the rent to owner and the tenant's portion of the rent. The term of the HAP contract is the same as term of the lease. According to the Code of Federal Regulations, 24 CFR, Part 982.451, the owner may not demand or accept any rent payment from the tenant in excess of the amount approved by the Housing Authority and stated in the HAP contract.

Note: Owners are required to personally come to our office to execute the HAP Contract and to provide a lease agreement as soon as their tenant(s) have been approved to move in. Please note that failure to do so will result in a payment hold on your account.

LEASE RENEWAL AND REQUEST FOR RENT INCREASES

Owners may request a rent increase at the time of the lease renewal. The Housing Authority will mail a Lease Renewal Form approximately 120 days prior to the tenant's re-certification along with the annual inspection notification. The form must be returned within 15 days of receipt via mail or fax and forwarded to the Rent Reasonableness Tech for evaluation. Please do not give it to the tenant as we need to process and approve your request prior to the tenant's re-certification appointment.

ANNUAL RE-CERTIFICATION

One of the family's obligations is to attend an annual re-certification. During the interview HHA will determine that the family is still eligible for the program and that the income information is updated to ensure that the family is paying the correct amount of rent. This process is started 120 days prior to the anniversary date and once completed a letter of notification will be sent to the landlord informing him/her of any changes in the tenant's portion of the rent or family composition.

FAMILY TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE AND TENANCY

The Hialeah Housing Authority may terminate a tenant's assistance due to any of the following violations as defined in 24 CFR 982.552, and 982.551. When assistance terminates, the HAP contract terminates, payment to owner stops and notification is sent to the owner.

- a) Owner eviction.
- b) Failure to provide required documentation
- c) Any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in drug-related criminal activity
- d) Any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in violent criminal activity
- e) Any household member's abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol that may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents
- f) Failure of students to meet ongoing eligibility requirements
- g) Any family member has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any Federal Housing Program
- h) The family currently owes rent or other amounts for any HA in connection with the Housing Choice Voucher or any other Federal Housing Program
- i) The family has breached the terms of a repayment agreement entered into with the PHA
- j) A household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program
- k) The family allows individuals other than those authorized by the housing authority to reside in the subsidized unit. The family must request HA approval to remove or add any other family member as occupant of the unit
- l) The family fails to cooperate in child support enforcement efforts
- m) The family violates any provision of the lease. The family may not commit any serious or repeated violations of the lease
- n) The family moves without authorization, abandons unit.
- o) The family fails to provide information necessary for the HA to determine their eligibility, rent, or status
- p) The family subleases, let, assigns or transfers the unit
- q) Any adult family member fails to sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information in accordance with 24 CFR Part 760 and 813.
- r) A family member has engaged in or threatened abusive or violent behavior towards HA personnel.
- s) The family has failed to supply true and complete information
- t) Any family member receives Section 8 assistance while receiving another housing subsidy for the same unit or a different unit under any other Federal State or Local housing assistance program
- u) Insufficient Funding.
- v) Family no longer requires assistance. If the amount of HAP provided by the HHA drops to zero and remains at zero for 180 consecutive calendar days the family's assistance terminates automatically.

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Frequently Asked Questions

Who is responsible for providing the inspector access to the unit?

For initial inspections of vacant units, the owner is responsible for providing access; failure to comply may result in cancellation of the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA). For occupied initial inspections, the tenant is responsible for providing access. If two scheduled HQS inspections are missed, due to the tenant's failure to provide access, the family will be denied or terminated for failure to meet the family obligations.

How do the inspectors decide whether to pass or fail an apartment?

The inspectors will perform the inspections based on the (HUD) Inspections Checklist which are used as a guideline to determine if the unit meets HQS standards. One single failure item on this checklist will result in a failed inspection. The inspector must determine whether the reason for the failed inspection was landlord or tenant caused and whether this represents an emergency or not.

What happens if the inspection fails?

On failed initial inspections - A detailed result of the failed items will be provided to the landlord / tenant. The applicant will have the option of waiting to see if the owner will correct the failed items within a reasonable time or continue a housing search. If applicant chooses to wait, the owner must notify HHA that the failed items have been corrected and a re-inspection of the unit must be scheduled to confirm unit meets HQS requirements.

On emergency (24 hours) inspections – In these cases the owner will be notified via fax or telephone regarding the emergency condition. The owner will have 24 hours to repair the unit before a re-inspection occurs. If the failed item(s) are not corrected, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) will be suspended on the first of the month following the failure date, and will not be reinstated until there is a passed inspection result. (For failure items under this category, please refer to page 6)

Non-emergency, tenant responsibility – The tenant will have 28 to correct the failed items. A re-inspection will be scheduled to verify if the items were corrected. If not, the HHA will initiate termination of assistance.

Non-emergency, landlord responsibility – The landlord will receive a First Failure Notice and a copy of the inspection report within 3-5 business days from the date of the inspection. The owner will have 28 days to complete repairs before re-inspection. If the unit fails for a second time, it will be abated. (Please refer to page 7, “Abatements”)

What if a landlord cannot obtain access to make repairs?

An owner's Housing Assistance Payments will not be abated in an HQS violation if the owner's responsibility and the tenant refuses to give the owner access to the unit to make the required repairs. In this situation, the owner must document attempts to gain entry by notifying the HHA in writing of the situation and include copies of any correspondence sent to the tenant requesting entry to make repairs. If the tenant refuses to allow entry after the owner's documented attempts, the HAP contract will be terminated and the owner should consider initiating eviction proceedings.

If there is a disagreement with a determination that a failure was either landlord or tenant caused, can you appeal the decision?

If there is a disagreement with an inspector's determination, both the tenant and landlord have the option to appeal the decision by contacting the HHA's HQS Department and presenting all evidence that the failure was the fault of the other party. If a supervisory inspection is needed, one will be scheduled. During this time, if the party that the failure was attributed to chooses not to make the repairs and the correction period passes, HQS enforcement (abatement or termination of assistance) will take place. However, if it is decided that the initial determination was wrong and the failure was the other party's fault, reversal of the HQS enforcement will take place and the proper course of HQS enforcement will begin.



What You Need To Know About Lead Poisoning

Despite laws established in the 1970s to make people aware of the dangers of lead and its poisonous effects, lead poisoning in children remains a common, yet preventable, environmental health problem in the United States. By understanding, identifying, and safely removing sources of lead, we can ensure the long-term health of children and prevent its devastating and irreversible effects.

What is lead poisoning?

Lead is a toxic metal used in a variety of products and materials, including paint, vinyl mini-blinds, pipes, leaded crystal, dishware, and pottery coatings. When lead is absorbed into the body, it can cause serious damage to vital organs like the brain, kidneys, nerves, and blood cells. Lead poisoning is especially harmful to children under the age of six.

What are the health effects of lead poisoning in children?

Lead interferes with the development and functioning of almost all body organs, particularly the kidneys, red blood cells, and central nervous system.

Lead poisoning is much more serious when children are exposed to lead. Since their bodies are not fully developed, lead poisoning can cause:

- ❖ Brain, liver, and kidney damage;
- ❖ Slowed development;
- ❖ Learning or behavior problems;
- ❖ Lowered intellect (or IQ);
- ❖ Hearing loss; and
- ❖ Restlessness.

What are the symptoms of lead poisoning?

Most children with lead poisoning do not show any outward symptoms unless blood-lead levels become extremely high; consequently, many cases of children with lead poisoning go undiagnosed and untreated. However, some symptoms of poisoning include:

- ❖ Headaches;
- ❖ Stomachaches;
- ❖ Nausea;
- ❖ Tiredness; and
- ❖ Irritability.

Because the symptoms of lead poisoning are similar to those of flu or viruses, the only way to know if a child is poisoned is to have a doctor perform a simple blood test.

Blood Testing: The only way to detect lead poisoning is by performing a simple blood test. The bodies of children six-months to two years of age absorb more lead; thus, testing is increasingly important for their health. Nevertheless, all children under the age of six should have their blood-lead levels tested at their regular pediatrician's office or at a public health clinic, even if nothing is apparently wrong with their health.

What are the main sources of lead?

Lead hazards can be found in several places inside and outside of your home, including:

- ❖ **Old Paint:** Lead-based paint, most often found in homes built before 1978, is unsafe if it peels, chips, cracks, or chalks. Since babies and young children often put their hands and other objects in their mouths, they are likely to swallow lead dust or chew paint chips.
- ❖ **Lead Dust:** This harmful, invisible dust is created when windows, doors, edges of stairs, rails, or other surfaces with lead-based paint wear down from repeated friction, such as opening or closing windows or doors. Children are most often poisoned by consuming lead dust through normal hand-to-mouth activity. Pregnant women who breathe in high levels of lead dust can transmit lead to their unborn children, causing serious damage.
- ❖ **Important:** Lead dust can spread throughout a home when walls or other painted surfaces are sanded, scraped, or torn down. Only trained professionals should safely remove old paint surfaces in a home.
- ❖ **Soil:** Soil surrounding homes may be contaminated from chipping or flaking exterior lead-based paint. While playing outside, especially on bare soil, children can accidentally swallow the contaminated soil, or track it indoors on carpets and floors where they can come into contact with it.



For more information about lead poisoning, visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/lead or call The National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).



What You Need To Know About Lead What You Need To Know About Lead What You Need To Know About Lead What You Need To Know About Lead

❖ **Drinking Water:** Lead pipes placed in homes before 1930 are likely to contain lead, which is released into drinking water as it passes through the old pipes. Between 10 and 20 percent of a non-lead poisoned child's total lead contact comes from drinking water.

❖ **Food:** Lead can leech into food or drinks, which are stored in imported ceramic dishes or pottery.

Other sources of Lead:

❖ **Workplace exposure:** Parents who work in lead-related industries (namely painting, automotive, or recycling industries) or use lead for hobbies (such as for stained glass windows).

❖ **Home remedies:** Aragon, greta, or pay-loo-ah.

❖ **Cosmetics:** Kohl and kajal.

How can lead poisoning be prevented?

Since treatment options for lead poisoning are limited, it's best to prevent lead poisoning before it has a chance to occur. Lead poisoning is preventable with proper:

❖ **Nutrition:** Serve children foods with a high content of *iron* (such as eggs, cooked beans, or red meats), *calcium* (such as cheese, yogurt, or cooked greens) and *vitamin C* (such as citrus fruits, green peppers, or tomatoes). Adequate intake of these nutrients minimizes lead absorption in children's bodies.

❖ **Housekeeping:** Teach and practice healthy home habits, such as hand-washing before eating and sleeping, shoe removal, washing children's toys or other chewable surfaces, purchasing "lead-free" mini-blinds, and wet mopping and drying floors and surfaces. Hire a certified professional to safely remove lead sources from a home. Make sure children and pregnant women do not stay inside a home when renovations are underway.

❖ **Personal Care:** Wash your hands and your children's hands frequently, especially before eating and sleeping.



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