

Chapter 14

CONTRACT TERMINATIONS

[24 CFR 982.311, 982.314]

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract is the contract between the owner and the PHA which defines the responsibilities of both parties. This chapter describes the circumstances under which the contract can be terminated by the PHA and the owner, and the policies and procedures for such terminations.

A. CONTRACT TERMINATION [24 CFR 982.311]

The term of the HAP contract is the same as the term of the lease. The contract between the owner and the PHA may be terminated by the PHA, or by the owner or tenant terminating the lease.

No future subsidy payments on behalf of the family will be made by the PHA to the owner after the month in which the contract is terminated. The owner must reimburse the PHA for any subsidies paid by the PHA for any period after the contract termination date.

If the family continues to occupy the unit after the Section 8 contract is terminated, the family is responsible for the total amount of rent due to the owner. The owner will have no right to claim compensation from the PHA for vacancy loss under the provisions of certificate HAP contracts effective before October 2, 1995.

After a contract termination, if the family meets the criteria for a move with continued assistance, the family may lease-up in another unit. The contract for the new unit may begin during the month in which the family moved from the old unit.

B. TERMINATION BY THE FAMILY: MOVES [24 CFR 982.314(c)(2)]

Family termination of the lease must be in accordance with the terms of the lease.

C. TERMINATION OF TENANCY BY THE OWNER: EVICTIONS

[24 CFR 982.310, 982.455]

If the owner wishes to terminate the lease, the owner must provide proper notice as stated in the lease.

During the term of the lease, the owner may not terminate the tenancy except for the grounds stated in the HUD regulations.

During the term of the lease the owner may only evict for:

Serious or repeated violations of the lease, including but not limited to failure to pay rent or other amounts due under the lease, or repeated violation of the terms and conditions of the lease;

Violations of Federal, state or local law that imposes obligations on the tenant in connection with the occupancy or use of the premises; or criminal activity by the tenant, any member of the household, a guest or another person under the tenant's control that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by the other residents, or persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises or any drug-related criminal activity on or near the premises.

Other good cause.

During the initial term of the lease, the owner may not terminate the tenancy for "other good cause" unless the owner is terminating the tenancy because of something the family did or failed to do (see 982.310)

Evidence of Criminal Activity

The owner may terminate tenancy and evict by judicial action a family for criminal activity by a covered person if the owner determines they have engaged in the criminal activity:

Regardless of arrest or conviction

Without satisfying the standard of proof used for a criminal conviction

Termination of Tenancy Decisions

If the law and regulation permit the owner to take an action but don't require action to be taken, the owner can decide whether to take the action. Relevant circumstances for consideration include:

The seriousness of the offense

The effect on the community

The extent of participation by household members

The effect on uninvolved household members

The demand for assisted housing by families who will adhere to responsibilities

The extent to which leaseholder has shown personal responsibility and taken all reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate the offending action

The effect on the integrity of the program

Exclusion of culpable household member

The owner may require a tenant to exclude a household member in order to continue to reside in the assisted unit.

Consideration of Rehabilitation

When determining whether to terminate the tenancy for illegal drug use or alcohol abuse, the owner may consider whether the member:

Is no longer participating

Has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehab program

Has otherwise been successfully rehabilitated

The owner may require the tenant to submit evidence of any of the three (above).

Actions of termination by the owner must be consistent with the fair housing and equal opportunities as stated in 24 CFR 5.105.

The owner must provide the tenant a written notice specifying the grounds for termination of tenancy, at or before the commencement of the eviction action. The notice may be included in, or may be combined with, any owner eviction notice to the tenant.

The owner eviction notice means a notice to vacate, or a complaint, or other initial pleading used under State or local law to commence an eviction action.

*** The PHA requires that the owner specify the section of the lease that has been violated and cite some or all of the ways in which the tenant has violated that section as documentation for the PHA's decision regarding termination of assistance.**

Housing assistance payments are paid to the owner under the terms of the HAP contract. If the owner has begun eviction and the family continues to reside in the unit, the PHA must continue to make housing assistance payments to the owner until the owner has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the tenant.

*** The PHA will continue housing assistance payments until the family moves or is evicted from the unit.**

*** If the action is finalized in court, the owner must provide the PHA with the documentation, including notice of the eviction date.**

The PHA must continue making housing assistance payments to the owner in accordance with the contract as long as the tenant continues to occupy the unit and the contract is not violated. By endorsing the monthly check from the PHA, the owner certifies that the tenant is still in the unit, the rent is reasonable and s/he is in compliance with the contract.

If an eviction is not due to a serious or repeated violation of the lease, and if the PHA has no other grounds for termination of assistance, the PHA may issue a new voucher so that the family can move with continued assistance.

D. TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT BY PHA

[24 CFR 982.404(a), 982.453, 982.454, 982.552(a)(3)]

The term of the HAP contract terminates when the lease terminates, when the PHA terminates program assistance for the family, and when the owner has breached the HAP contract. (See "Owner Disapproval and Restriction" chapter)

The PHA may also terminate the contract if:

The PHA terminates assistance to the family.

The family is required to move from a unit when the unit does not meet the HQS space standards because of an increase in family size or a change in family composition.

Funding is no longer available under the ACC.

The contract will terminate automatically if 180 days have passed since the last housing assistance payment to the owner.

Notice of Termination

When the PHA terminates the HAP contract under the violation of HQS space standards, the PHA will provide the owner and family written notice of termination of the contract, and the HAP contract terminates at the end of the calendar month that follows the calendar month in which the PHA gives such notice to the owner.