

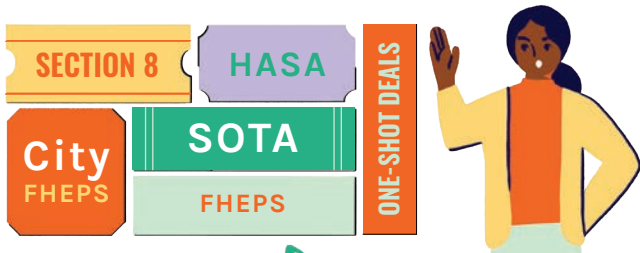
PUBLIC
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RECORD IT. REPORT IT!

Landlords and brokers in New York City
must accept your **housing voucher**.
Here's how to fight back if they say no.



Housing vouchers are used to pay rent, and, sometimes, security deposits and moving fees. If a landlord or broker turns you down for an apartment because you're using a voucher, that's called **SOURCE OF INCOME DISCRIMINATION**. **THIS IS ILLEGAL!**



If you have a voucher  **LANDLORDS AND BROKERS CAN NOT**

Say they won't take your voucher.

Avoid or "ghost" you.

Make up rules or requirements
like charging extra rent, application fees over \$20, or requiring a guarantor.



THEY MAY SAY THINGS LIKE:

Let me get back to you.

That unit is no longer available.

You don't meet the income requirement.

You don't meet the credit requirement.



Or they may not respond at all.

! If you heard or experienced any of these while looking for housing, the landlord/broker may have broken the law. Report this! **!**

HOW DO I START A REPORT?

Collecting evidence during your housing search is important. It can help you file a report against landlords and brokers who discriminate against vouchers. You can:

1 Take screenshots of emails or text messages.



Screenshots can show if landlords or brokers have changed the listing after learning you have a voucher.

Before you reach out to a landlord/broker, make sure you have an address for the building and take a screenshot of the listing.

Make sure the screenshot has their email address or phone number, the date, and the time.

! Collect evidence each time you reach out to a landlord/broker so you're ready to file a report if necessary! **!**

2 Record phone calls



Some brokers may call you. Recording the call can help you if they say something different than the listing.

Use weunlock.nyc/record to record the call and send reports.

Or have someone else record the conversation if you take the call on speakerphone.

3 Do a control test



Control tests can help you prove if the landlord or broker is treating you differently than someone without a voucher.

If a broker stops responding after you tell them you have a voucher, try contacting them again. This time, pretend you're another person.

Use a different number or email to contact them. Instead of saying you have a voucher, say that you make \$70,000 a year, and your credit is in the 700s.

Record the call or take screenshots!

! Once you've collected evidence, file a report as soon as possible! **!**

HOW DO I REPORT?

The best way to report is with an organization like **Neighbors Together** or **Unlock NYC**. They can answer questions, follow up, and help you get better results. You can reach them at

stopsidnyc.com or **weunlock.nyc**



You can also file a report by:

Calling 311 and asking for the **Human Rights Commission**

Filling out the **NYC Commission on Human Rights' (CCHR)** form: www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page

Filling out the **Attorney General's** form: ag.ny.gov/source-income-discrimination-form

Contacting HRA's Source of Income Unit at **929-221-6575** or soi@hra.nyc.gov

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I REPORT?

First, an advocate will review your report. They might ask you for more information, or do a control test for you (see page 4).

Next, the advocate will send your report to a government agency that has the power to investigate discrimination. The agency might reach out to you, so keep an eye out for their call!



Every report is different. Depending on what happened, the evidence you have, and how quickly you reported, you might be able to:

Apply to the apartment you were denied and be treated fairly

File a lawsuit against the landlord

Share your story to help others

Keep reporting! Every time you report, you're not just giving yourself a chance at justice – you're making the system fairer for all New Yorkers.

WHAT SHOULD I SAY TO A BROKER?

Looking for an apartment can take a long time. It can feel discouraging, especially when landlords or brokers keep discriminating against you. Here are some tips:

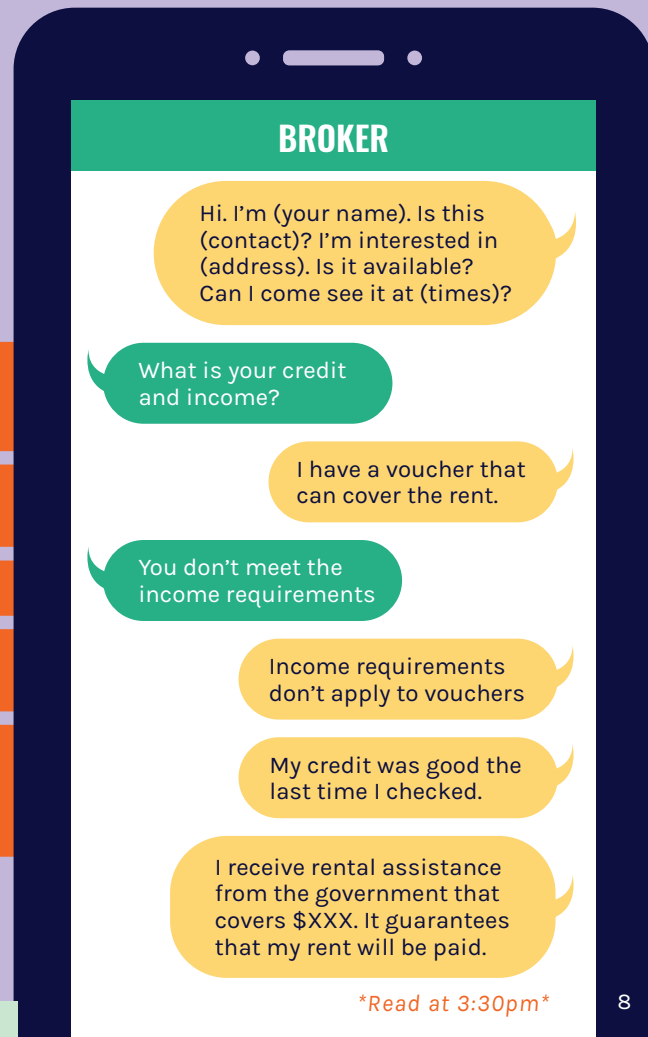
! Reach out by email or text message. If a broker asks to call, record it! See page 4 for more information.

! Ask if the unit is still available. If it is, try to schedule a time to see it.

!! **Don't mention your voucher right away.**

! When they ask about income or credit, then you can say you have a voucher.

!! **If you don't hear back in a few hours, reach out again. If you say you have a voucher and you stop hearing back, that's discrimination! Report it!**



HOW DO I LOOK FOR AN APARTMENT?

Set up your housing search to get the best results with your voucher.

DO

- ✓ Use websites like Streeateasy, Trulia, and Zillow.
- ✓ Read listings carefully. Remember that credit/income requirements might not apply to you!
- ✓ Record all conversations with brokers and landlords.
- ✓ Keep copies of important documents like your voucher, paystubs, or rent receipts.



DON'T

- ✗ Apply to places on Craigslist or Facebook.
- ✗ Go over your voucher limit. Filter out apartments that are over your limit.
- ✗ Pay anyone over the internet that you haven't met in person.

KEEP GOING, KEEP SEARCHING, AND KEEP REPORTING!



Need help reporting housing voucher discrimination?

Contact **Unlock NYC** at weunlock.nyc or

! hello@weunlock.nyc and **Neighbors Together** at **!**
stopsidnyc.com or info@neighborstogether.org

This project was produced through **Public Access Design**, a program of the **Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)**. Public Access Design projects use design to make complex urban issues accessible to the people most affected by them.

PublicAccessDesign.org



CUP:
Clair Beltran
Sucharitha Yelimeli



Neighbors Together

Neighbors Together:
Annie Carforo
Nailah Abdul-Mubdi

UNLOCK NYC

Unlock NYC:
Ashley Eberhart

Designer:
Gica Tam

Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) is a nonprofit that uses the power of design and art to increase meaningful civic engagement.
welcometocup.org

Neighbors Together is committed to ending hunger and poverty in Ocean Hill, Brownsville and Bedford-Stuyvesant, three of the lowest-income areas in New York City. neighborstogether.org

Unlock NYC's free tools help you record your phone calls with landlords and brokers and report unfair treatment during your housing search. weunlock.nyc

Gica Tam is a designer and illustrator who creates site-specific, community-based, and socially-engaged projects. gicatam.com

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