

# Heritage Park Relocation FAQs

## Has the section 18 application been submitted?

Yes, RHA submitted the application to HUD in July 2024. We are currently waiting to hear back about its approval. Residents will be notified when we can provide an update.

## Where will I be relocated while the new community is being built?

Residents will have multiple relocation options including:

- RHA public housing
- Housing Choice Vouchers
- Project-Based Vouchers
- RAD/Project-Based Voucher

RHA is partnering with local housing providers to place project-based voucher units in developments throughout the city. These units, in addition to RHA's other public housing units, will be relocation options for Heritage Park residents. Residents will also have the opportunity to receive a tenant-based voucher for their housing needs.

## Will we be able to stay on the property while construction is going on?

No, residents will be required to move off-site during the construction process. RHA considered a phased relocation, but we have a number of concerns related to quality of life.

- Site costs: Development partner estimates that the total cost for site work is estimated to be around \$20-\$25 million. For a phased demolition, it would add 40%-50% more cost and would limit the number of units we can build.
- Inconvenience: As we have seen with nearby construction.
- Safety: Living on an active construction site creates potential safety issues for residents and their families. This is exacerbated by the fact that there is only a single access point on site.
- Utilities: Water and electricity would need to be moved twice, which would add even more costs, and RHA couldn't guarantee consistent utilities while residents were onsite during construction.

## When will I be relocated? Who will assist in this process?

A relocation timeline be shared once the site plan has been accepted by HUD and a financing structure has been established. All residents that will be affected by relocation will be notified in advance.

## Has RHA found landlords that take vouchers?

We stand by our commitment to ensure that residents in good standing will have a right to return, and we will work with residents well in advance of a move. We are working with families to help locate housing options and provide related assistance.

## Will residents be able to tour other RHA properties or other available affordable housing?

Yes, RHA will work with local development partners and other key stakeholders to arrange site visits for residents to see properties that are potential relocation options for them as we are able.

### **How early can I move?**

Some residents began moving as “early movers” in May 2024. The date to start the regular moving process will be determined based on when RHA receives approval by HUD. We anticipate this to start in late 2024 to early 2025.

### **What about families with school-aged children?**

RHA will have staff work with individuals to address all concerns related to school, work, medical or other needs. We are also committed to working with Wake County Schools and any personal case workers provided through WCPSS.

### **How should I expect to receive information from RHA?**

RHA uses a variety of communications methods to make sure that residents are included in everything that is distributed. Staff posts and distributes flyers in paper form as well as utilizes electronic communications. Make sure to keep a look out for multiple communications methods!

### **How is RHA reaching residents who can't attend any meetings?**

Staff is keeping track of each resident to ensure they attend an in-person or virtual meeting, and if they can't come to us, we will go them.

### **Have you thought about making the extra units available to the homeless population first before accommodating the community who already has resources to housing?**

RHA does not currently know the mix of income for the 550-900 units we plan to build, though it will be a range of 30%-80% of AMI as well as market rate units. We will have at least 122 units that are deeply affordable. Some of the unhoused population may be served through that tier of housing unit. We do recognize the crisis, and we're trying to address that now through our Strategic Plan that aims for creating at least 2,000 more affordable units and partnerships for project-based vouchers. We are also actively working with others who provide services for people who are transitioning from homelessness.

### **What is RAD?**

The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) is a HUD program that allows public housing agencies and owners to convert units to project-based Section 8 programs. The RAD program provides an opportunity to invest billions into properties at risk of being lost from the nation's affordable housing inventory. RHA has previously converted four of its properties to RAD: Valleybrook, Terrace Park, Berkshire Village and Meadowridge.

### **How will I know if my income qualifies for a voucher?**

The income limits are different between the public housing program and the voucher program. While the vast majority of Heritage Park residents currently qualify for both, staff will work with you to determine

whether this is true for your individual household. RHA does not set the income qualifications for these programs and has to work within the limits determined by HUD.

**Previously, I was living on a property with a 10-year limit. If I reach that limit while I am relocated, am I still able to return to Heritage Park?**

RHA will not have limitations or requirements like we did with other properties that were redeveloped in the past through redevelopment efforts, like Walnut Terrace. Residents will be able to relocate and move back into the new Heritage Park with no time limit restrictions. However, the returning resident preference will be made available for one year after lease up begins.

**What are my next steps if I submitted a Section 8 application?**

Section 8 staff will be processing your application and entering it into RHA’s database. After that, you will be contacted to come in for a voucher orientation appointment. More information including specifics about the voucher program will be provided to you at that time. If you cannot make the appointment time, you need to notify staff beforehand so they can reschedule you. Residents who do not make the appointment and don’t notify us ahead of time will be held as pending.

**What happens if my voucher expires?**

All Section 8 vouchers expire if a new lease hasn’t been signed within a certain amount of days. Residents are being given a longer amount of time upfront to use their voucher but should try to lease as soon as possible once you have yours ‘in hand’. If you need more time, RHA can assist you with requesting extensions.

**I want to be an early mover. When will someone contact me?**

If you have let staff know that you want to be an early mover, then someone will be contacting you about your preferred relocation programs. Please be patient as RHA staff works through our list of early movers.

**What if I got my voucher early but I don’t want to be an early mover?**

RHA may award you a voucher after you submit a Section 8 application even if you aren’t quite ready to move. Don’t fret if you find yourself in this circumstance! RHA will extend the voucher indefinitely until you are ready to move.

**What funds will RHA provide to help me with moving?**

Reasonable relocation costs will be given to each relocating family. Residents can choose to receive relocation costs using a flat fee schedule based on your bedroom size or actual costs based on receipts. Payments are to be used for costs including but not limited to: utility shut off and turn on, moving expenses, storage units, transportation, application fees, and security deposits.

These amounts are provided in the Relocation Plan. Flat fee amounts are based on the Uniform Relocation Act (URA). Figures have been found using the total number of rooms of furniture in a unit which equates to bedroom size plus one for living space. An additional 3% has been added for each year since the last URA update to account for inflation.

### **When will I get my relocation funds?**

According to the Relocation Plan, relocation funds are provided to residents after you return your current unit keys to your Property Manager. However, you can receive part of your total payment ahead of time to help cover up front costs if needed. Advanced funds may be requested and provided up to a certain amount of your total fund amount to help make the transition easier for your household.

### **Why do I have to turn my keys in to get my full relocation fund balance?**

There are several reasons that RHA waits to issue its full funds after your turn your keys in. Receiving funds after a move helps ensure funds are appropriately applied to moving costs which prevents potential issues that could result in homelessness, returning keys allows RHA to accurately track occupied and unoccupied units on site, and safety concerns for vacant units need to be carefully monitored.

### **What if I need more money?**

Residents have two options for the amount of money they receive. You can either select the flat fee cost or choose to keep up with your receipts and get actual moving costs. If you find yourself still needing more funds, you can request additional reimbursement after the fact for reasonable costs. To get extra funds, you need to keep up with your receipts so that RHA can verify how you used the moneys you already received and understand why more is needed.

### **What happens to our security deposit if I move to another community?**

If you move within RHA public housing, we will transfer your security deposit for you. Because you are being asked to move and are staying within RHA's portfolio, your deposit amount will not change.

If you choose to use a voucher, RHA will refund of your security deposit, minus any outstanding account balances, to give to your new landlord. Payments will be provided to residents after they return their keys to the Management Office. RHA cannot determine the security deposit amount set by independent landlords and residents are urged to understand what that amount will be if they leave public housing.

### **How long do I have to decide on an RHA unit offer?**

RHA will give residents 3 working days to decide if they are willing to accept a housing offer. If you haven't given an answer after that time, then the offer will be extended to the next family. If you have been offered a unit outside of RHA, you will need to ask the offering landlord how long you have to give them an answer.

### **What if I'm offered something that doesn't work for my household?**

If something is offered that you decide doesn't work, then you need to tell RHA why. If the reason is legitimate, then we will work with you to find a better fit. If there isn't a good reason as to why the unit doesn't work for you, then we may not be able to give you different options. RHA can only offer what it has available in its inventory at any given time.

### **Why am I being required to move now and not given the same options?**

Heritage Park is being redeveloped because of the age and condition of the site. If you experience an emergency that causes your home to become uninhabitable, RHA will need to move you immediately according to your Lease Agreement. RHA and HUD cannot allow residents to stay in an unsafe home. Your

Property Manager will instruct you on this process as it will be different due to the emergency circumstances.

RHA will notify you if an immediate move is required. You are still eligible for RHA provided relocation assistance in the Relocation Plan including 21 days to turn in your keys, relocation funds at the end of your move, and the right to return to the new Heritage Park.

### **How do I know if I'm in good standing?**

Residents are in good standing if they are following their lease agreement. If you have not been following your lease agreement, then Management will be counseling you on whatever item needs to be addressed or fixed. The Relocation Team will also start sending out 'good standing' letters monthly to help make sure each family understands their status.

### **What happens if I'm not in good standing?**

All residents should be working to get back into good standing. This means that you are following all sections of your lease agreement and you are caught up on your rent payments or are in a repayment agreement. If you don't get into good standing, then you aren't eligible to get relocation benefits now and your ability to return in the future might be jeopardized. Make sure to talk to your Property Manager now if you have questions about your status.

### **Can I move if I'm not in good standing?**

Yes, but you won't qualify for relocation benefits including access to relocation funds or returning resident preferences. It is in your best interest to work towards getting into good standing now.

### **What is a lease agreement?**

A lease agreement is a legal contract between a property owner and a tenant that outlines the terms of a rental agreement. A lease agreement is important because it legally binds both parties to the terms of the agreement, which can help prevent disputes. It can cover a variety of assets, including:

- Rent amount: The amount of money the tenant is required to pay each month.
- Lease duration: The length of time the tenant is allowed to live in the property.
- Tenant responsibilities: The actions the tenant is required to take while living in the property.
- Security deposits and fees: Any security deposits or fees that the tenant is required to pay.
- Repair and maintenance policies: The policies that govern who is responsible for repairs and maintenance.
- Landlord's right to enter: The circumstances under which the landlord is allowed to enter the property.
- Rules and policies: Any other rules or policies that apply to the agreement.
- Contact information: The contact information for both parties.
- Renewal options: The terms and conditions for renewing the lease.

### **What should I look for in a replacement unit?**

RHA urges residents to consider multiple things like location, access to transportation, household size, any accessibility needs or whether you need a flat level unit. A replacement unit should be comparable to or better than your current unit.

### **Do I need to give Heritage Park management a notice to vacate?**

Yes, you still need to follow all conditions of your current lease agreement including giving management at least a 30 day notice that you are about to move. You can do this several ways including sending [kiaraw@rhanc.gov](mailto:kiaraw@rhanc.gov) an email or submitting an intent form that is provided in the management office.

### **Do I need to clean my unit before I turn my keys in to Management? Will I be charged if I don't clean up?**

Before returning your keys, make sure that you have gotten everything out of your old unit. RHA will have to throw away anything you leave behind. Residents are expected to empty out the unit and leave appliances in good condition and there not be any signs of property damage/destruction present, but typical maintenance and cleaning fees will not be added to your account.

### **Who will be able to return to the redeveloped site?**

The Raleigh Housing Authority has committed that any resident that is lease-compliant will have the opportunity to return to Heritage Park. Lease compliance means that if you are in good standing on your lease with RHA, you would be accepted into the redeveloped site. The most common lease compliance issues are failing to make timely payments, not notifying staff of income changes, not complying with pest control treatments, etc.

If you have concerns about your status, please reach out to the Property Manager to learn about tools and resources to ensure you are eligible for relocation benefits and the right to return.

### **What happens after I move?**

A relocation packet and survey will be provided to each household after the site has been fully vacated. From there, you will occasionally hear from RHA about the property and given updates on its status. Make sure you keep your contact information current as we want to make sure that you are kept in the loop on construction and that we can notify you when the redeveloped site gets close to finished. Updates will be less frequent than they are now while you have a current lease at Heritage Park.

### **I have more questions. Who can I contact?**

You can reach out to the Raleigh Housing Authority planning and development team at [info@rhaonline.com](mailto:info@rhaonline.com) or (919) 508-1304 if you have any further questions.