The **Vermont Rental Subsidy Program** is a state-funded initiative providing rental assistance to Vermont households whose monthly income would otherwise be insufficient to afford the cost of renting in their communities. Beyond supporting stability and permanence, the Vermont Rental Subsidy Program provides a cost-effective and humane alternative to emergency motel stays which strain state budgets and place unnecessary pressure on families.

Participants pay a set percentage of their income towards their rental costs and The State of Vermont pays the difference to the apartment owner in the form of a monthly check. As a participants’ income increases, their share of the rent obligation increases, and the State’s share is reduced proportionally, much in the way a federal section 8 rental subsidy is managed.

To be eligible, apartment units must be priced at or below Fair Market Rental (FMR) rates for the county, and undergo an inspection to determine if the unit meets Housing Quality Standards.

Housing Quality Inspections are performed by staff from the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) at no cost to the apartment owner or tenant and ensure that housing rented under this program is decent, safe and sanitary. This partnership with the Vermont State Housing Authority also establishes a local preference whereby eligible participants in the **Vermont Rental Subsidy Program**, who remain in good standing with the program and their landlord, may receive a preference for a federal Section 8 rental subsidy at the end of one year.

The Vermont Rental Subsidy Program is administered by the Department for Children and Families, within Vermont’s Agency of Human Services. The Department has established eligibility criteria and a points system to rank all applicants on a statewide list.

Potential participants are referred to the Department for Children and Families by a local **Housing Review Team** consisting of housing, shelter and service providers as well as staff from the Agency of Human Services. The Housing Review team must meet basic requirements established by the Agency of Human Services before they may access the statewide program. Housing Review Teams then meet regularly to ensure that participants are fulfilling program expectations. Tenants also receive ongoing support from a designated Housing Support Worker who serves as a point of contact for the landlord if issues arise that could jeopardize a tenancy.

Because of funding limitations, these rental subsidies are competitive, time-limited, and should not be considered an entitlement. Subsidies are intended to provide support for up to one year, during which time a household is actively working to increase their income or secure other forms of longer-term affordable housing.

Additional information about the **Vermont Rental Subsidy Program** is available on the Vermont Department for Children and Families web site at: [http://dcf.vermont.gov/](http://dcf.vermont.gov/)

**APPLICANTS CANNOT APPLY DIRECTLY TO DCF.** They must first go through the local Housing Review Team, which pre-screens applications and assign applicants a housing support worker. Once the application is accepted by DCF, applicants have 30-60 days to rent an apartment.