

SECTION 8 NOW MANDATORY IN COOK, COUNTY EFFECTIVE August 8, 2013

Against substantial REALTOR® opposition, the Cook County Board on Wednesday passed a measure making it a human rights violation for landlords to opt out of the federal Section 8 housing program.

The new rule passed by a 9-6 margin. Now, Illinois Association of REALTOR® advocates are trying to gain more details on how the policy will be implemented when it goes into effect Aug. 8, 2013 so the association can work with members to tell them what to expect. (See the testimony [here](#) and [here](#)).

IAR's concerns include the time it takes for the inspection process to be completed by housing officials certifying that the dwelling is acceptable for rental and the bureaucratic process that landlords would have to navigate in order to rent to a Section 8 voucher holder.

The federal Section 8 program was established in 1937 and is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Cook County Housing Authority. Historically the Section 8 program, which offers rental assistance to those with low incomes, was seen as voluntary on the part of landlords.

The Cook County Board's move was pitched as a move to end discrimination against voucher holders. This new protection will be included in the ordinance's "Source of Income" definition. This protection will join other protections already in place which guard against discrimination due to race, sex, age, disability and sexual orientation.

The new ordinance would apply to all rental units in Cook County. Even single-family homes that are rented are included under the provision.

The city of Chicago has had an ordinance for nearly two decades which is similar to the one passed by Cook County.