

SECTION 8 vs. SECTION 9: KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

When public housing gets taken over by private developers and the big banks that back them, the housing stops being regulated under the public housing laws (“section 9”) in the Affordable Housing Act. Often the public housing gets demolished and replaced by a mix of **expensive market rate units**, “affordable” **rent-capped units** without subsidy that are still too expensive for most working people, and **project-based section 8 units** (not the mobile voucher kind that you can take with you when you move). The first two types are obvious drivers of gentrification and displacement, but politicians and developers try to convince people that the units that become project-based section 8 are basically the same as public housing and guarantee affordability while allowing for repairs. In reality, conversion to section 8 weakens long-term affordability and even threatens short-term affordability, funnels public money directly into private developers and bankers hands, and overall doesn’t really lead to improved conditions. Here’s how section 9 public housing and section 8 privately owned/managed housing compare:

Section 9 (Public Housing)	Project-based Section 8
The local housing authority is the landlord of the property.	Private developers and banks become co-owners of the buildings and usually lease the land.
Rent is 30% income, or a flat rent if tenant chooses.	Tenant rent is 30% income—but sometimes utilities added. All in all, post conversion to section 8, 57% see a rent increase despite promises of “it is all the same 30% income.”
Funded by the federal government. Federal government directly pays to maintain and rehab and modernize buildings, run operations/etc.	Government diverts funds to pay private developers difference between tenant rent and the full rent of the units. Full rent is often much higher than maximum rents people pay in public housing.
Rents are set to 30% tenant income (unless tenant chooses flat rent). This provides a form of decent affordability long-term, though 30% income is not necessarily cheap for working people.	The subsidy allowing tenants to pay rent based on income is tied to a temporary “HAP” contract between the building owner and the government. This contract can last between 1 and 20 years. At expiration, private landlords generally choose not to renew contracts and convert the Section 8 into market rate units. Loopholes that can allow owners to turn section 8 units into market units even sooner.

Join the struggle against the privatization of NYCHA. Contact the United Front Against Displacement, an anti-gentrification tenant organization:

Call/Text: 646-450-3880

Website: theufad.org

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Social Media: [!\[\]\(003082e50e3009141f59bd5df831749f_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(f439ede8735757e3190eab35e168f1de_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(f5c165e0bd35116675db6686a30b1fea_img.jpg\) @theufad](#)