

#HousingMobility2018

THE 7TH NATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**HOUSING
MOBILITY**

OCTOBER 16 – 17, 2018

WASHINGTON, DC

PRRAC
*Poverty & Race
Research Action Council*

**Mobility
Works** 

CLPHA
Strengthening Neighborhoods. Improving Lives.



National Conference on Housing Mobility, October 16th 2018

A Pilot Study of Landlord Acceptance of Housing Choice Vouchers

Mary Cunningham Martha Galvez Claudia L. Aranda Robert Santos Doug Wissoker Alyse D. Oneto Rob Pitingolo James Crawford



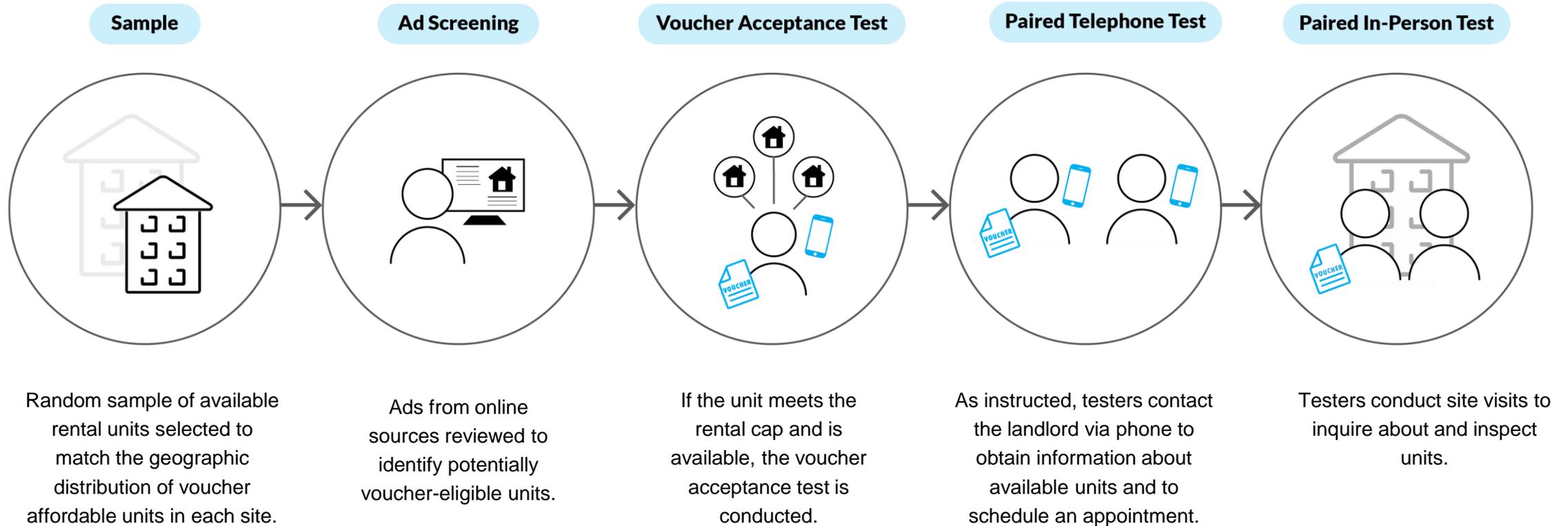
Pilot Study Research Questions

- Do landlords accept housing vouchers?
- Do landlords treat housing voucher holders differently than similar renters?
- What are the types and patterns of differential treatment against those who hold housing vouchers?
- Does the extent of differential treatment based on the source of income differ for black, white, and Hispanic renters? And does it differ by neighborhood poverty level of eligible rentals?
- What are the most appropriate testing methodologies for measuring differential treatment in the rental market for those with a Housing Choice Voucher?

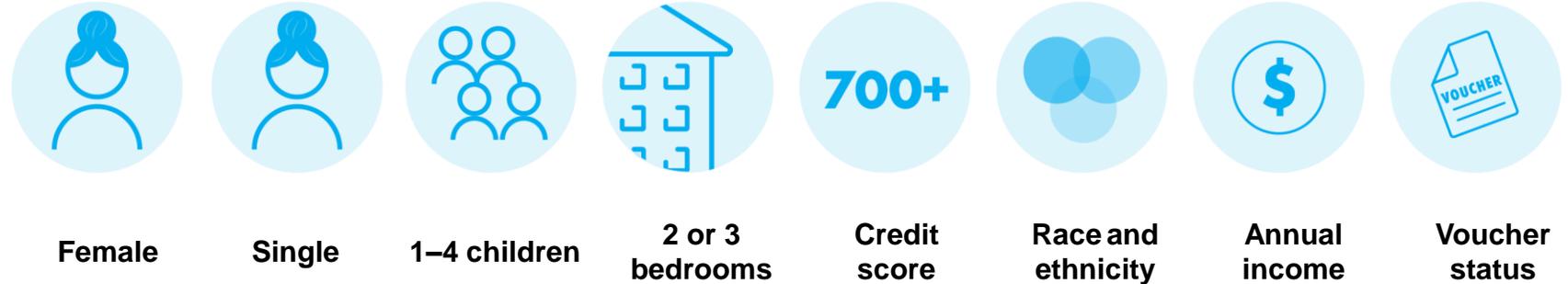
Testing Methodology



Testing Approach



Tester Profiles



Voucher holder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Equal to 30% area median income	YES
Nonvoucher holder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Equal to 30% area median income + voucher amount	NO

Test Sites

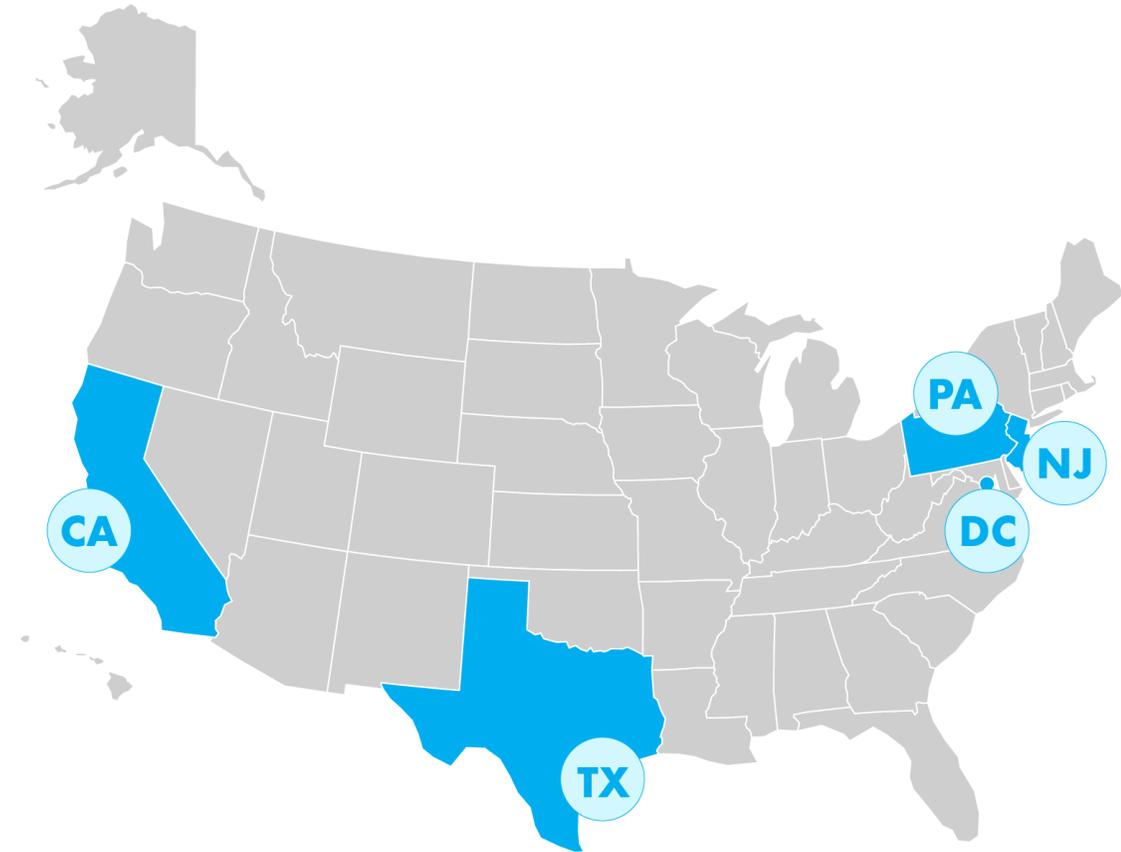
TX **Fort Worth, TX**
South Region
3 public housing authorities
1 county
No voucher protections

CA **Los Angeles, CA**
West Region
6 public housing authorities
1 county
No voucher protections

NJ **Newark, NJ**
Northeast Region
Statewide program
4 counties
Yes voucher protections

PA **Philadelphia, PA**
Northeast Region
2 public housing authorities
2 counties
Some voucher protections

DC **Washington, DC**
Northeast Region
2 public housing authorities
2 counties
Yes voucher protections



Over 14 months of testing, the field team

screened over **341,000** online ads across the five study sites;

identified **8,735** ads for rental housing located in our testing zip codes that appeared to be voucher eligible; and

made **16,026** contact attempts across the five sites by phone, email, or text.



We completed...

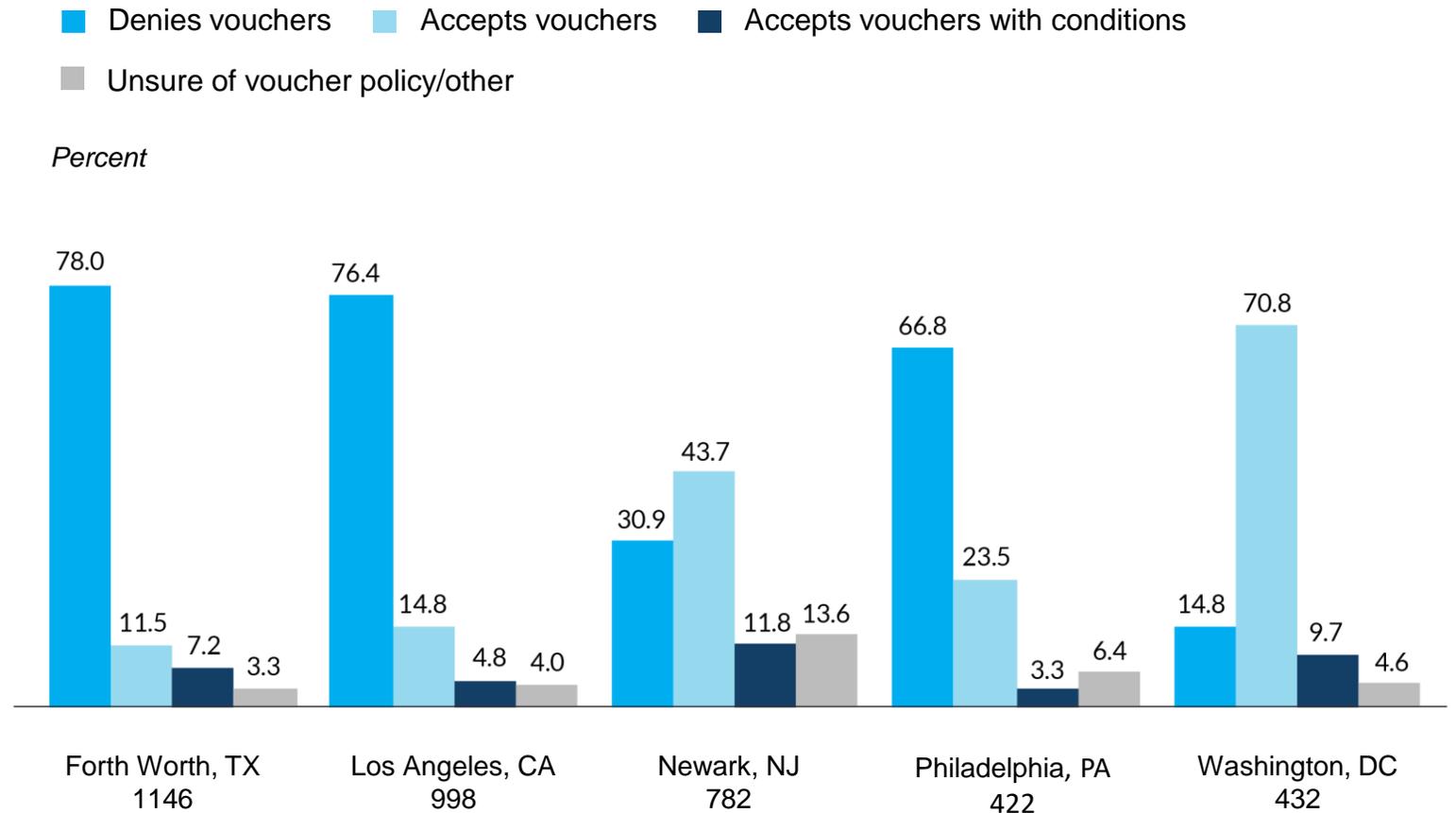
Site	Acceptance Tests	Phone Tests	In-Person Tests
Fort Worth, TX	1,146	142	73
Los Angeles, CA	998	126	62
Newark, NJ	782	426	374
Philadelphia, PA	422	-	-
Washington, DC	432	-	-
Total	3,780	694	509

In-Person Tests by Race of Tester Pair		
Black	White	Hispanic
18	23	32
25	25	12
188	186	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
231	234	44

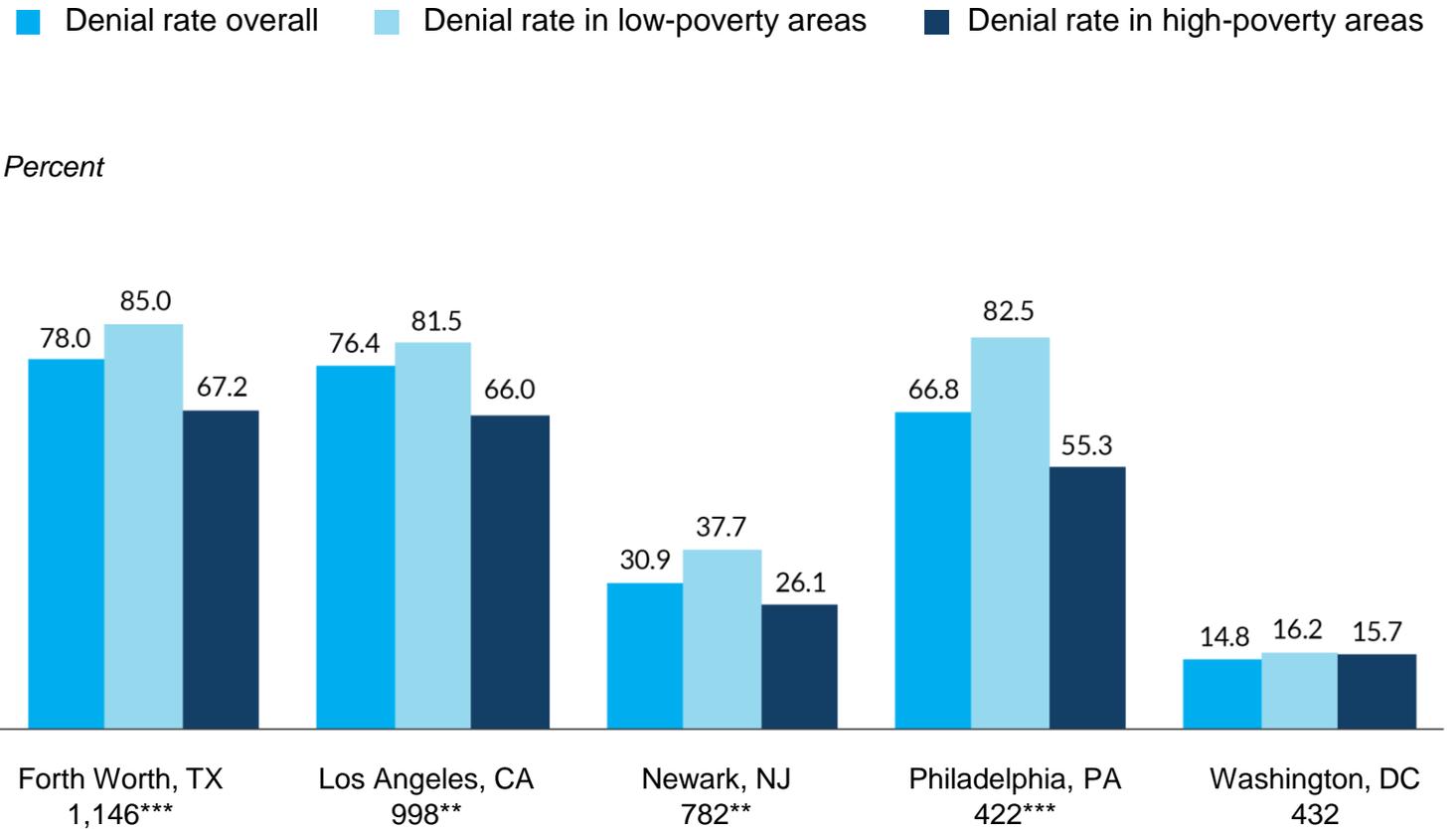
A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white lab coat, is looking down at a tablet computer she is holding. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue gradient. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

Do Landlords Accept Housing Choice Vouchers?

There is clear evidence of voucher denial in all sites, but denial rates vary widely.



**Voucher denials
more common
in low-poverty
areas than high-
poverty areas.**



*p < 0.10. **p < 0.05. ***p < 0.01

A woman in a kitchen, smiling and holding a document, with another person in the background. The image is overlaid with a blue tint.

Do Landlords Treat Voucher Holders Differently Than Other Apartment Seekers?

Measures of Differential Treatment

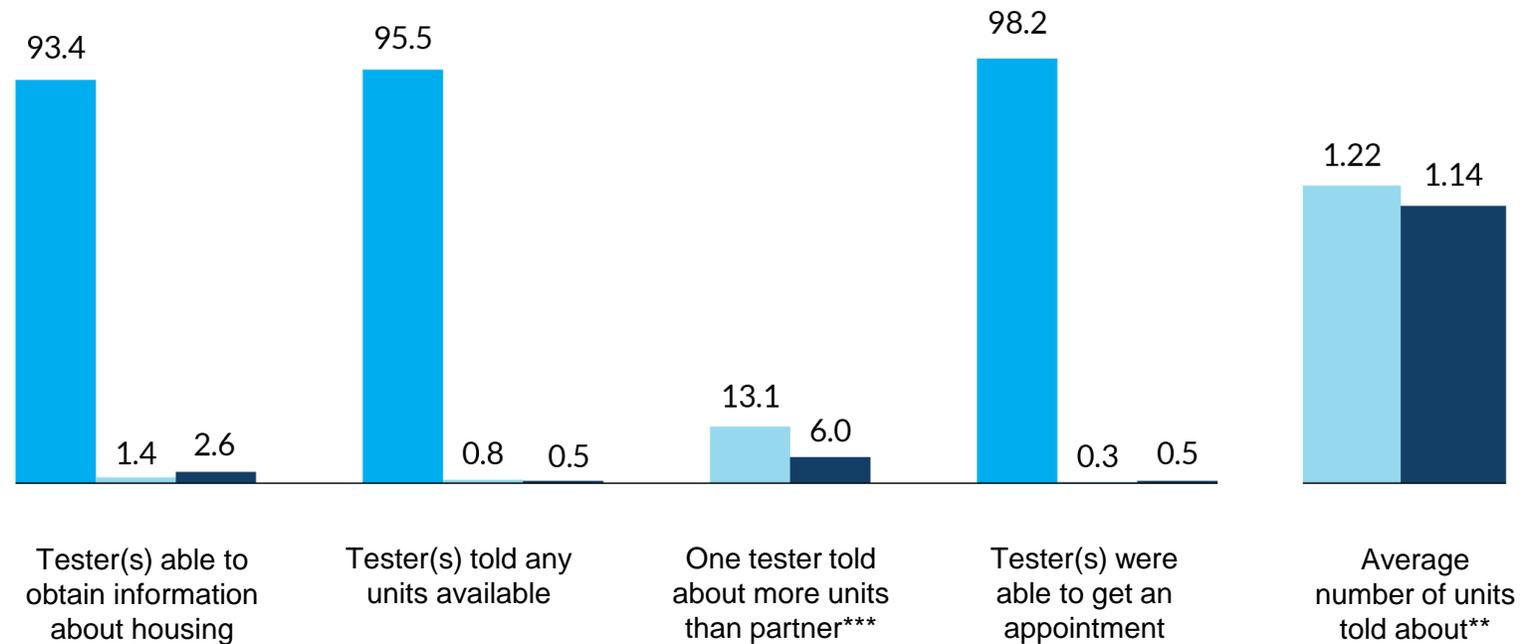
Requirements	Qualifications	Rent, fees, incentives, and move-in costs	Comments
<p>Applicants were told and or instructed to</p> <p>Complete an application</p> <p>Complete a credit check</p> <p>A cosigner is required</p> <p>A background check must be done</p> <p>An eviction check must be done</p> <p>Apply online or given web address</p> <p>Offered a copy of application by agent</p>	<p>Agent requested the following information</p> <p>Marital status</p> <p>Household size/comp</p> <p>Income</p> <p>Source of income</p> <p>Occupation</p> <p>Employer</p> <p>Length of employment</p> <p>Credit standing</p> <p>Rent history, including evictions</p> <p>Contact information</p> <p>Other information</p>	<p>Applicants and or testers were told</p> <p>Fees would go to deposit or rent</p> <p>Higher fees than partner</p> <p>Fees required for any unit</p> <p>About incentives</p> <p>Higher incentives than partner</p> <p>Security deposit required</p> <p>Higher yearly net cost</p> <p>Average rent for any unit</p> <p>Average fees would go to deposit or rent</p> <p>Average fees for any unit</p> <p>Average incentives</p> <p>Average security deposit for any unit</p> <p>Average yearly net cost</p>	<p>Comments from the landlord</p> <p>Requirements</p> <p>If they were qualified to rent the unit</p> <p>Fair housing information</p> <p>Remarks about race or ethnicity</p> <p>Asked how security deposit will be</p>

Newark, NJ Paired phone tests

Paired phone testers received similar treatment

Both Control tester Voucher tester

Percent



Note: $N = 426$.

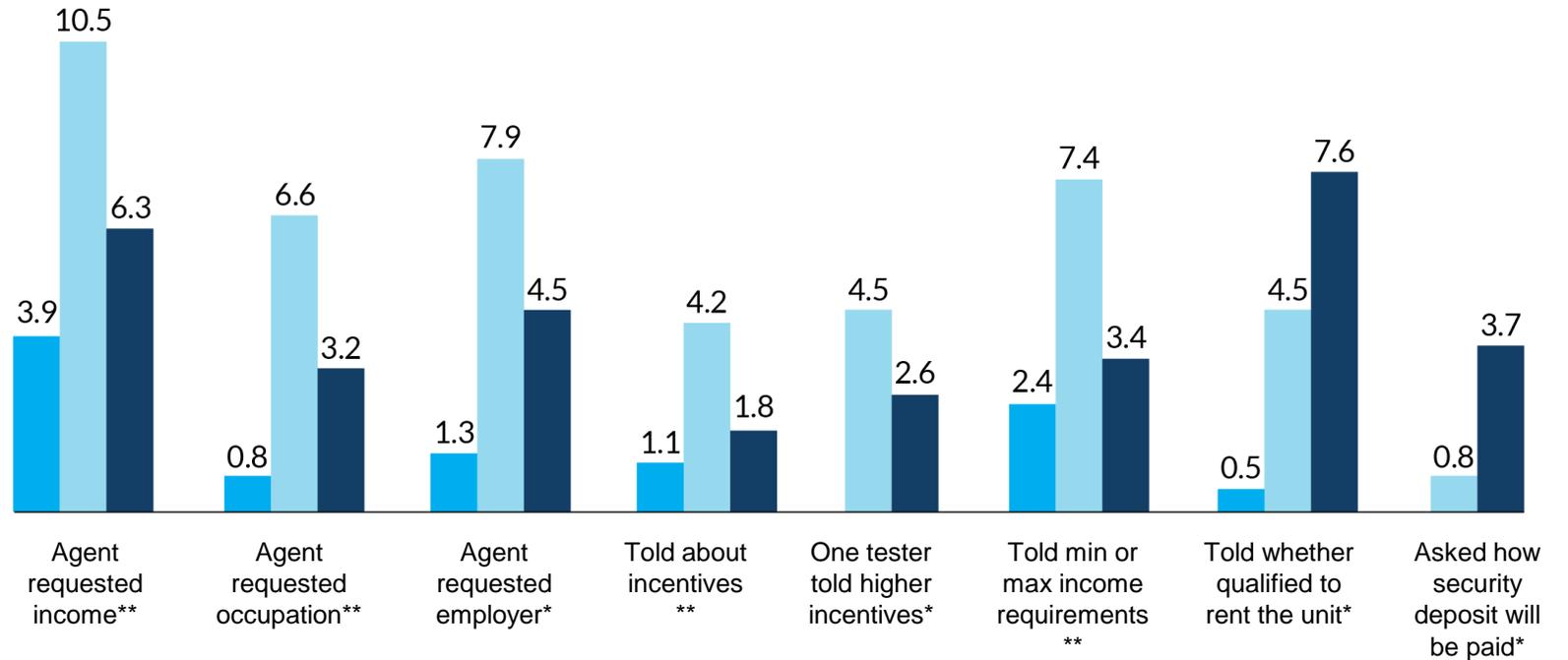
* $p < 0.10$. ** $p < 0.05$. *** $p < 0.01$

Landlords scrutinized nonvoucher holders' ability to pay

■ Both
 ■ Control tester
 ■ Voucher tester

Percent

Newark, NJ Paired phone tests



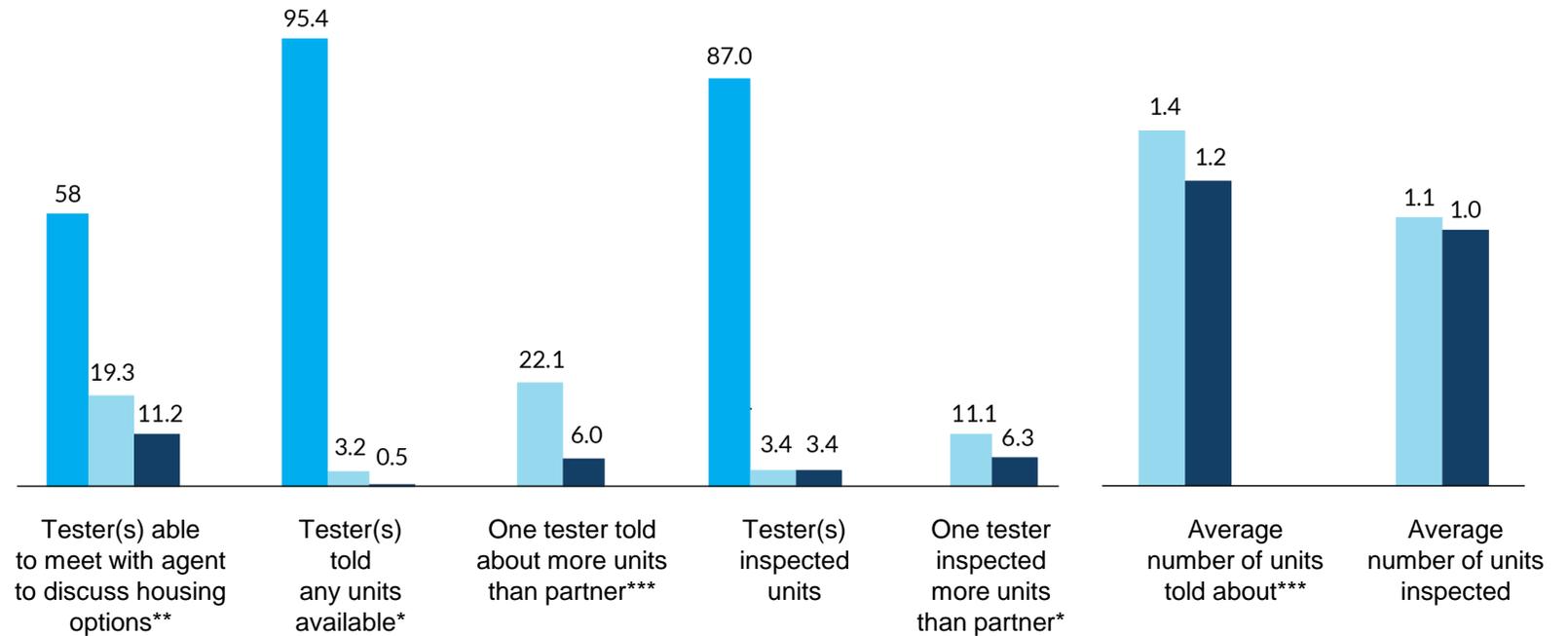
Note: N = 426
 *p < 0.10. **p < 0.05. ***p < 0.01

Voucher Holders Stood Up for Apartment Viewings More Often Than Nonvoucher Holders

Both Control tester Voucher tester

Percent

Newark, NJ Paired in-person tests



Note: N = 374.

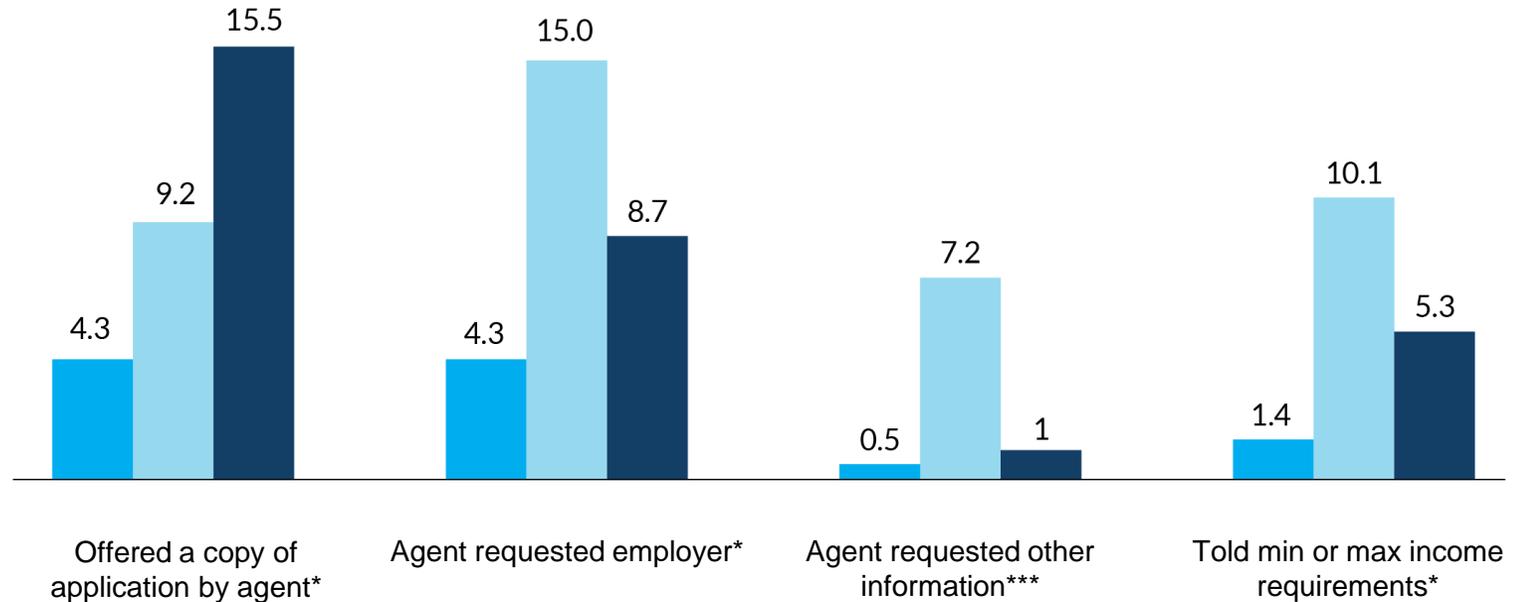
*p < 0.10. **p < 0.05. ***p < 0.01

Landlords Scrutinized Nonvoucher Holders' Ability to Pay

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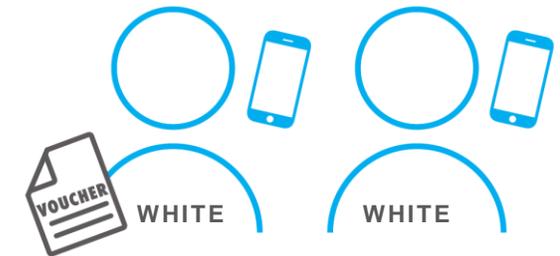
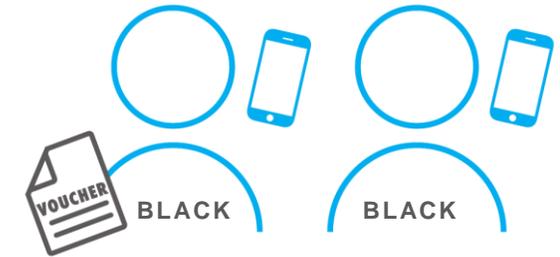
Discrimination by Voucher Holder Race and Poverty

We intended to measure discrimination by race and neighborhood poverty rate using paired in-person tests.

We did not detect differences by race in Newark.

Because of the sample size, we were unable to discern, with any statistical significance, differences in how testers were treated by neighborhood poverty rate.

This should not be considered definitive evidence that no difference in treatment exists.



In brief

- Landlords frequently deny voucher holders.
 - Overall, outright denial was more common in low-poverty neighborhoods than high-poverty neighborhoods.
- Landlords who said they accepted vouchers treated tester similarly in phone calls.
- Landlords were more likely to stand up voucher holders at appointments to view units.
- Once both testers were able to meet with landlords in person, differences in treatment were relatively small.
- Landlords were more likely to scrutinize control testers about factors that relate to their ability to pay the rent.

Recommendations for Future Research

Voucher acceptance tests and in-person paired tests yield the most information.

A future national study using a two-phase approach.

- Voucher-acceptance tests by phone in a large sample of sites.

- Continued acceptance testing in sites with relatively moderate denial.

- Study should include an extended data collection period as a design feature.

Research to understand landlords' perceptions and motivations.

To improve the voucher program, policy makers could...

Encourage landlord participation

- Recruit and attract landlords, particularly in low-poverty areas
- Ensure voucher payment standards meet market rents
- Explore financial incentives for landlords
- Improve program management

Help voucher holders navigate the housing search

- Expand search time
- Provide housing search assistance
- Improve the quality of public housing authority landlord lists

Pursue legal protections for voucher holders

Thank You

We thank the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for funding this project, and our panel of experts for their feedback and guidance along the way. To complete this study, the Urban Institute partnered with the Fair Housing Foundation, the North Texas Fair Housing Center, and the Fair Housing Council of Northern New Jersey. This project could not have been completed successfully without the commitment and hard work of their test coordinators and testers.

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Tempting the Opportunity Landlord

Philip ME Garboden

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Eva Rosen

Georgetown University

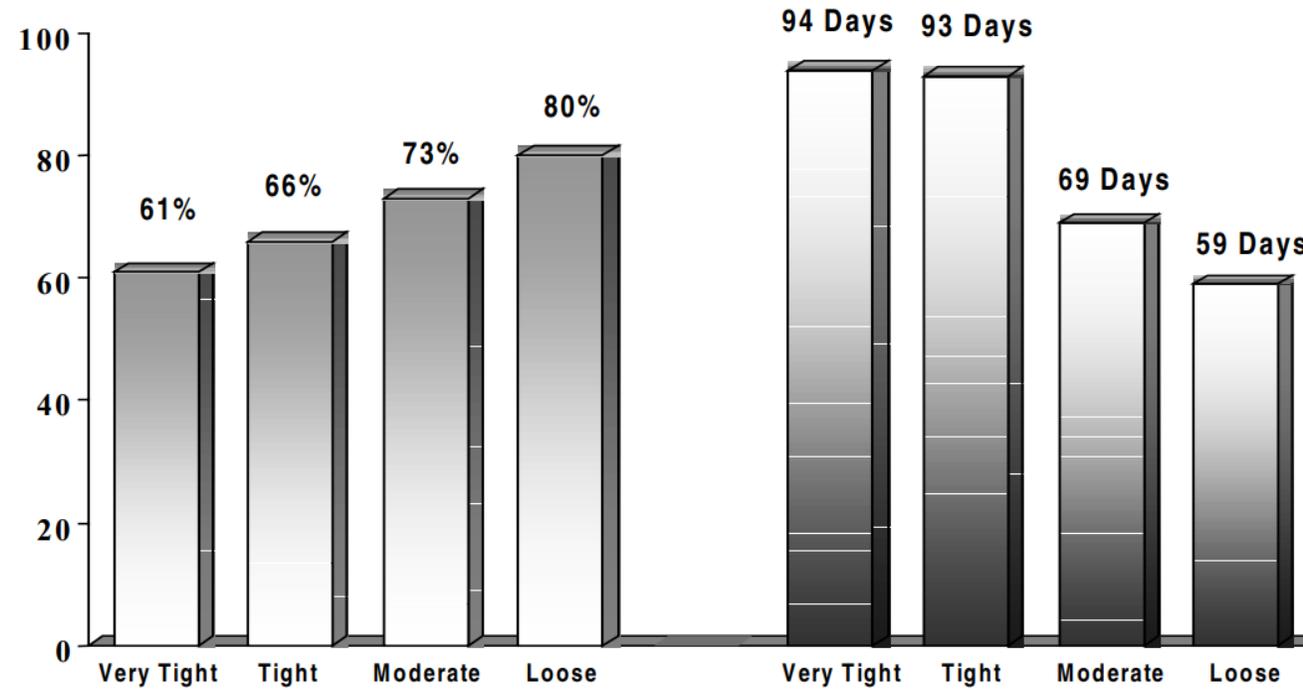
Jennifer Cossyleon

Johns Hopkins University

Housing Mobility Conference, October 2018

LANDLORDS & VOUCHERS

Exhibit ES-2
Success Rates and Time to Lease by Market Tightness

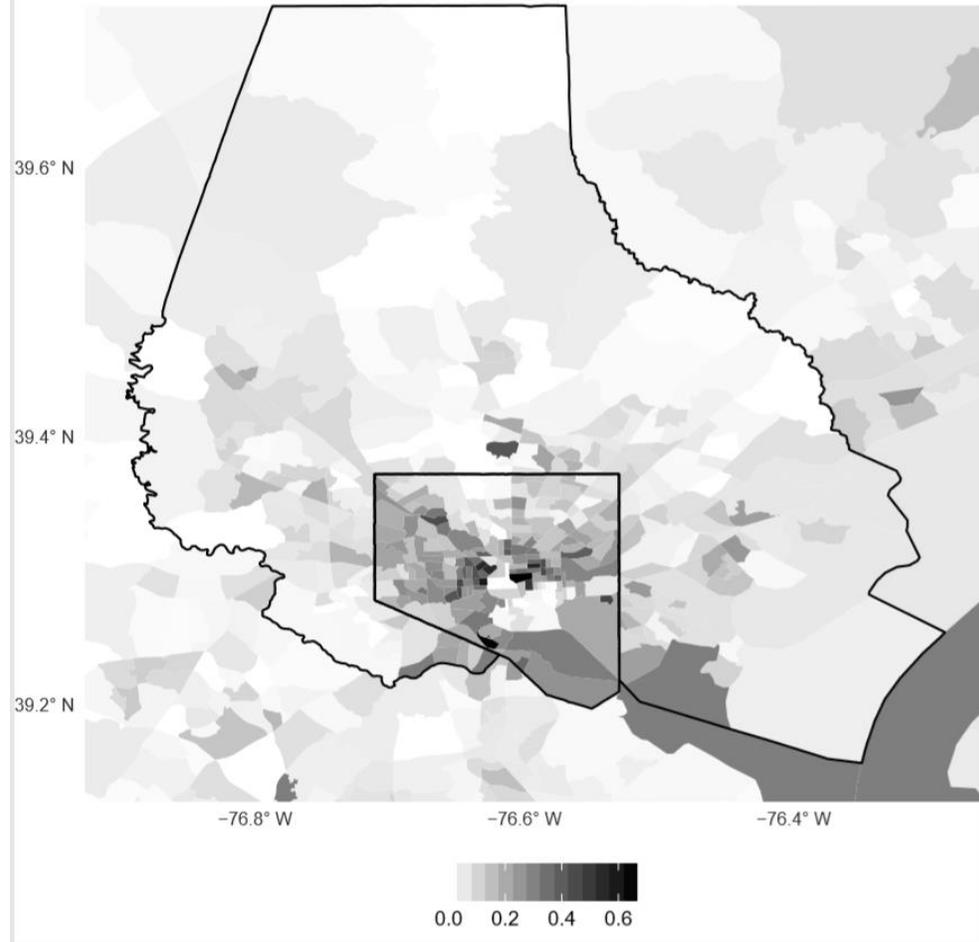


Success Rate (%)

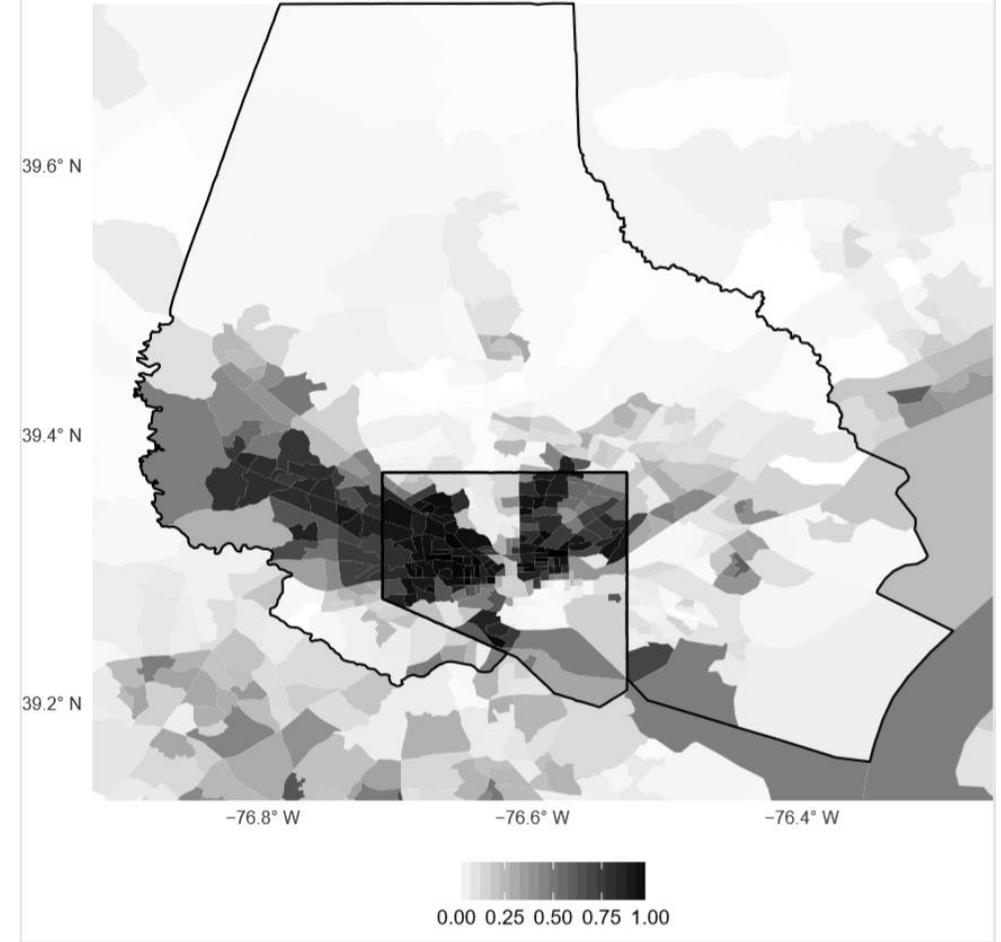
**Average Number of days between
voucher issuance and lease date
for successful voucher holders**

Source: Abt Associates composite vacancy measure and voucher holder tracking system.
Sample: 2609 (1780 successful voucher holders) weighted to reflect national population of voucher holders in large metropolitan-area PHAs.

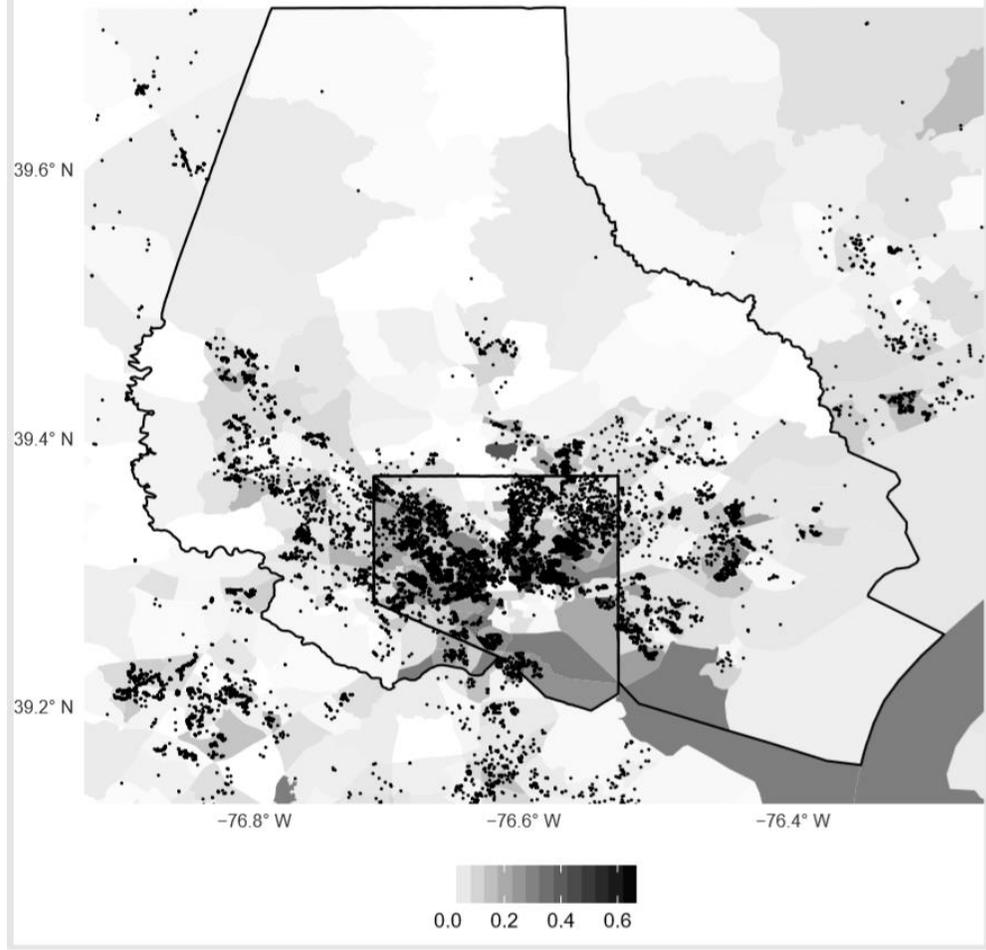
Percentage of Individuals below Poverty Line by Census Tract



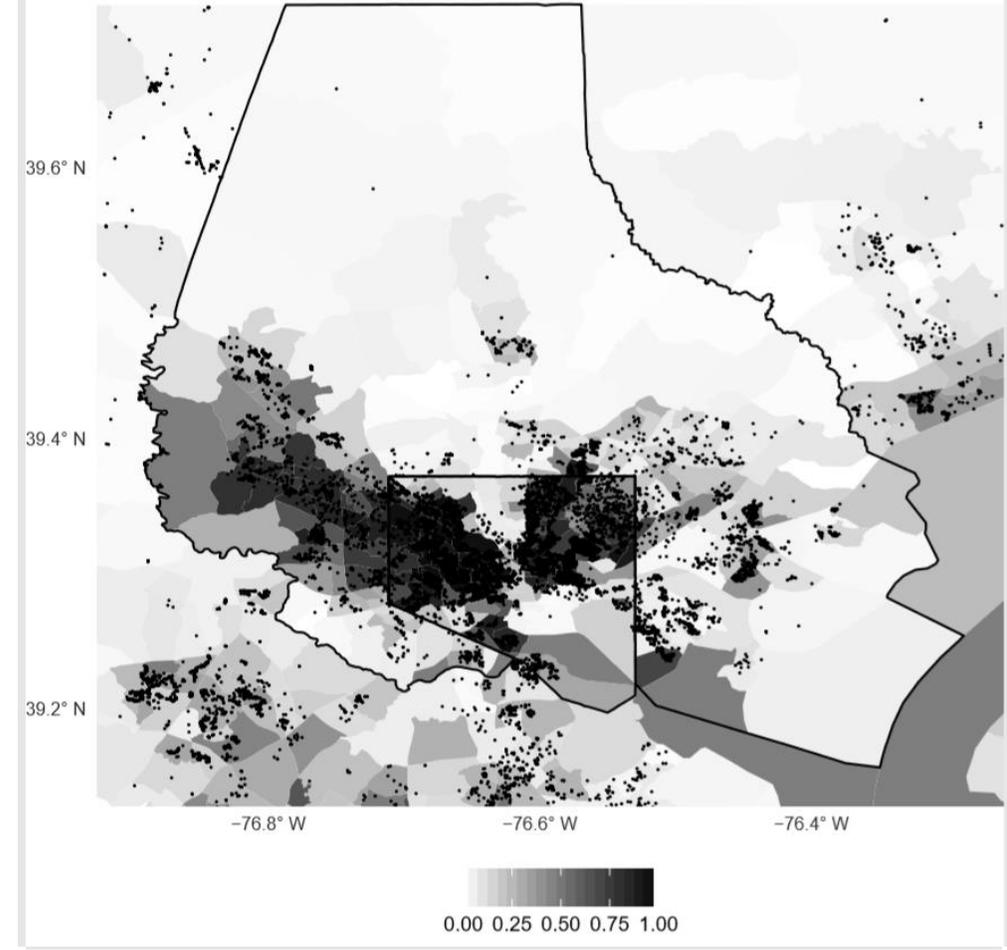
Percentage of Black Individuals by Census Tract



Percentage of Individuals below Poverty Line by Census Tract

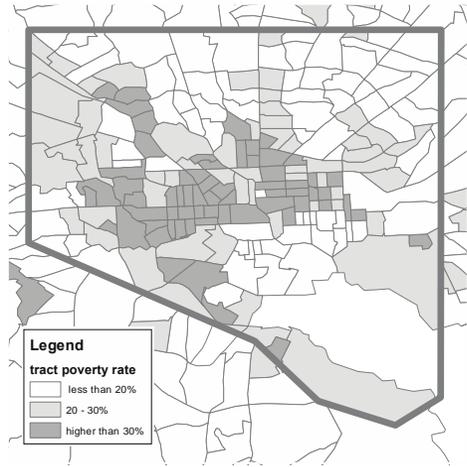


Percentage of Black Individuals by Census Tract

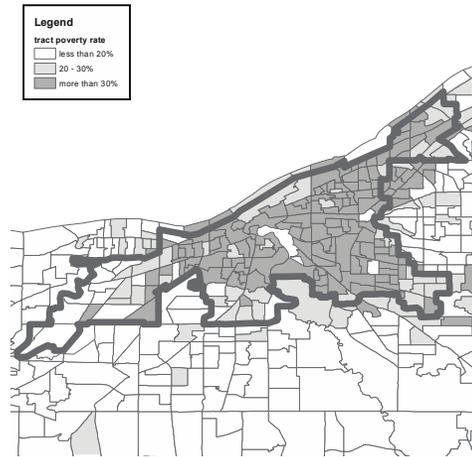


METHODS

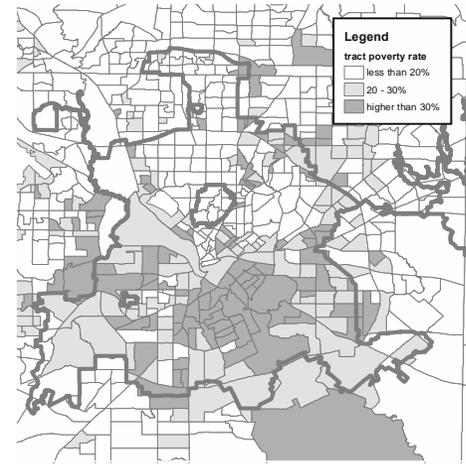
Data & Methods



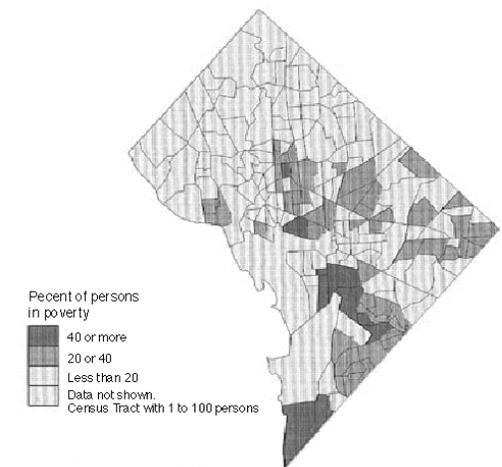
BALTIMORE, MD



CLEVELAND, OH



DALLAS, TX



WASHINGTON, DC

Data & Methods

INTERVIEW SAMPLING

Voucher Marketing

Subsidized

(listings on gosection8.com or housingcleveland.org)

Unsubsidized

(listings on craigslist)

Neighborhood Poverty

High-poverty

(>20 percent poverty)

Low-poverty

Neighborhood Racial Plurality

White

Black

Hispanic

(Dallas)

Data & Methods

Interview Sample Distribution

	Random Sample	Field Sample	Total
Dallas	26	9	35
Cleveland	36	20	56
Baltimore	18	18	36
Washington	27	4	31
Total	107	51	158

Data & Methods

Family Report U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development CMS Approval Number 2017-000
Office of Public and Indian Housing

1. Agency

1a. Agency name _____ 1a
1b. PHA code _____ 1b
1c. Program Public Housing (CO-Sub, 8-Capitals, 10-Sub, 8-Teachers, 10-Sub, 8-Sub, 8-Sub) 1c
1d. Project number (Public Housing only) _____ 1d
1e. Building number (Public Housing only) _____ 1e
1f. Building entrance number (Public Housing only) _____ 1f
1g. Unit number (Public Housing only) _____ 1g

2. Action

2a. Type of action _____ 2a
2b. Effective date (mm/dd/yyyy) of action _____ 2b
2c. Correction (Y/N) _____ 2c
2d. If correction (check primary reason): Family correction of income PHA correction of family income
 Family correction (non-income) PHA correction (non-income) _____ 2d
2e. Date (mm/dd/yyyy) of admission to program _____ 2e
2f. Projected effective date (mm/dd/yyyy) of next reevaluation _____ 2f
2g. Projected date (mm/dd/yyyy) of next full annual update (Public Housing full rent only) _____ 2g
2h. FSS participation now or in the last year? (Y or N) _____ 2h
2i. Special program (students only) (check only one) Enhanced Voucher Welfare to Work Voucher _____ 2i
2j. Other special programs, Number 00 _____ 2j
2k. PHA use only _____ 2k
2l. PHA use only _____ 2l
2m. PHA use only _____ 2m

3. Date of completion

3a. Date of completion _____ 3a
3b. Date of completion _____ 3b
3c. Date of completion _____ 3c
3d. Date of completion _____ 3d
3e. Date of completion _____ 3e
3f. Date of completion _____ 3f
3g. Date of completion _____ 3g
3h. Date of completion _____ 3h
3i. Date of completion _____ 3i
3j. Date of completion _____ 3j
3k. Date of completion _____ 3k
3l. Date of completion _____ 3l
3m. Date of completion _____ 3m
3n. Date of completion _____ 3n
3o. Date of completion _____ 3o
3p. Date of completion _____ 3p
3q. Date of completion _____ 3q
3r. Date of completion _____ 3r
3s. Date of completion _____ 3s
3t. Date of completion _____ 3t
3u. Date of completion _____ 3u
3v. Date of completion _____ 3v
3w. Date of completion _____ 3w
3x. Date of completion _____ 3x
3y. Date of completion _____ 3y
3z. Date of completion _____ 3z

50058 Data

All HCV subsidized units in the Baltimore, Cleveland, and Dallas metropolitan areas, 1994 and 2015.



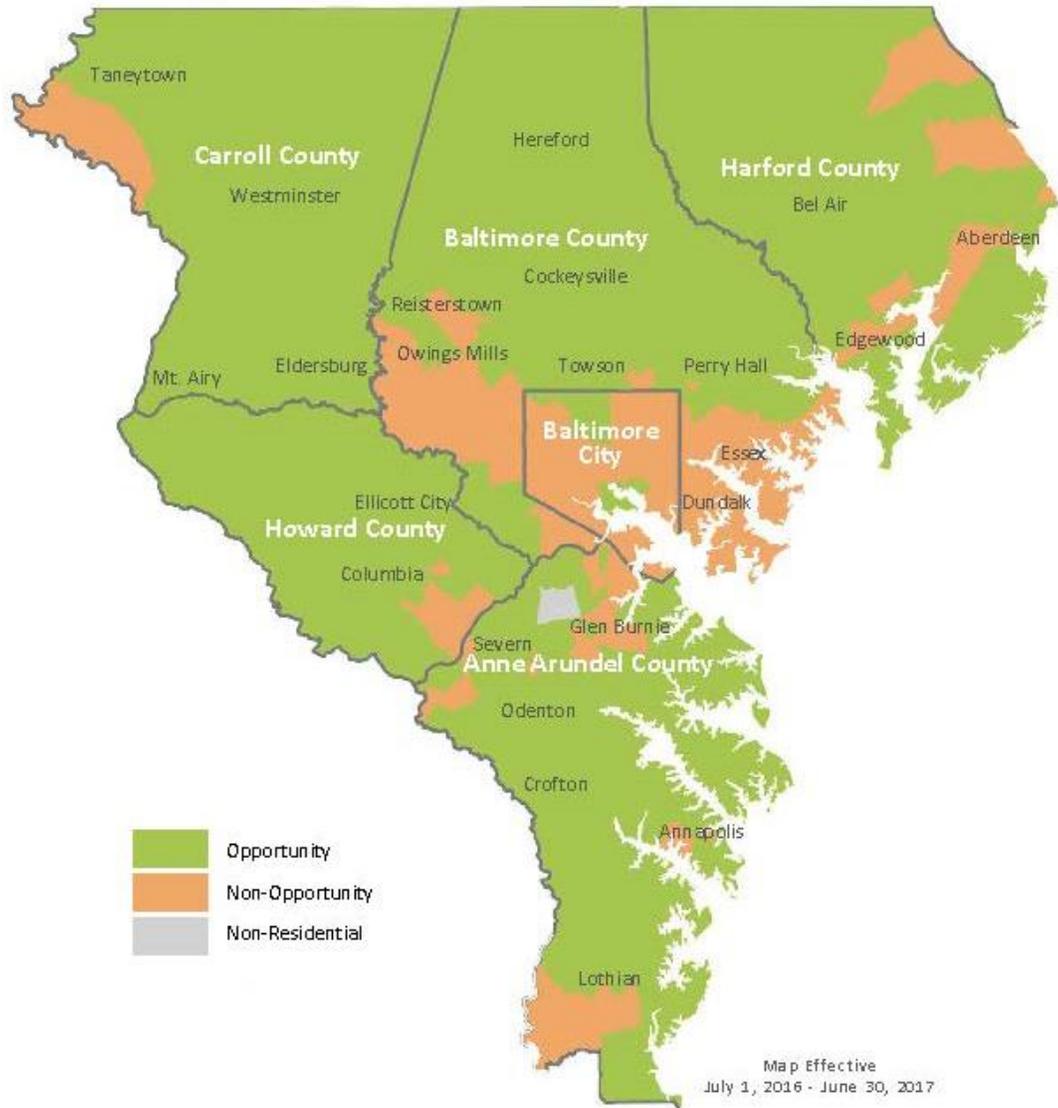
Field Observations

Time in housing court, sheriff's ride alongs, stakeholder meetings.



Ethnographic Data

Accompanying landlords going about their day-to-day, observation of REIAs.



Opportunity Landlord Extension Summer-Fall 2018

Interviews with landlords renting eligible properties within opportunity areas.

28 Landlords (and counting)

14 from craigslist

14 from BRHP sample



FINDINGS

context matters: the counterfactual tenant



BALTIMORE, MD

The Voucher Specialist

“Landlords who have horror stories and then say Section 8 is terrible. Well Section 8 is not terrible; you’re actually a terrible landlord.” (Owner Rutherford Properties)



DALLAS, TX

The Institutional Investor

“[It’s a] tax credit property, which is based off your income... [I] take [the tenants’ kids] on field trips, take them to the pool, just different things with them to keep them active and instead of being in trouble.” (Manager, Breezewood Estates)



CLEVELAND, OH

The Struggling Mom and Pop

“I could schedule five people to come and look at it this afternoon and a very low percentage [would] show up. So I end up going down there basically for nothing. So I just got on the Section 8 list and if they call me that means they’re interested they want to see you.” (John)

Housing Choice Voucher Unit Type and Ownership Concentration

		Baltimore City	Cleveland City	Dallas City
<i>number of HCV units in portfolio</i>				
huge (100+ units)	%	0.12	0.07	0.29
large (31-100 units)	%	0.18	0.10	0.31
medium (6-30 units)	%	0.27	0.26	0.21
small (1-5 units)	%	0.42	0.57	0.19
<i>structure type</i>				
Single Family Detached	%	0.56	0.43	0.19
Semi-detached	%	0.02	0.31	0.04
Rowhouse/Townhouse	%	0.26	0.01	0.13
Low-rise	%	0.12	0.16	0.62
High-rise with elevator	%	0.03	0.09	0.03
Manufactured home	%	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source: HUD Administrative Data

experience matters: the “broken” partnership

70% of non-participating landlords in our random sample with units <150% FMR had participated in the past.

Antwan

I guess somehow Section 8 she said I wasn't doing what I needed to do. You know? They wanted me to fix some things and I was trying to make them understand that I would do this, but the tenant needs to be responsible for some of this. And they were like no, well if you don't do certain things as the landlord they'll let them get out of the lease.

[The tenant] can say I don't like the way things are going over here and Section 8 doesn't really say, 'Well you can't keep moving every year.'

TEMPTING THE MARGINS

rebrand the voucher program

WELLS FARGO

Home Commitment Products and Services Community Contact

Established 1852. Re-established 2018 with a recommitment to you.

From day one, we always came through for our customers. Today, we're renewing our commitment to you—and working to earn back your trust.

See what's new at Wells Fargo:

- 
Building a better bank
- 
Putting service first
- 
Upgrading our banking features
- 
Increasing community impact

retention: do the basics well

pay them more

answer the phone

have someone familiar with the client for landlords to talk to

inspection standardization

implement screening or tenant readiness training

“They [BRHP] teach tenants about budgeting and how to manage their money and pay bills on time. They teach them how to build their credit. So, it is good things for the landlord. [I’m more willing to accept late rent because] “they showed me their budget book. Rent comes first and [then] all the other bills.” (Sarah)

share the opportunity mission

“Right, as long as you wanna live in a better environment and have a better school for your children and have a better neighborhood to help raise your children up then. So, it’s important. It’s gotta be important to them.” (Jean)

thank you

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collaborators

Stefanie DeLuca, Meredith Greif, Kathryn Edin

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