



Equal Housing Opportunity

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT

PUBLIC HOUSING ELIGIBILITY - FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM

The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) is an Equal Housing Opportunity Provider. It is the policy of HACM to fully comply with all federal, state and local non-discrimination laws; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the U. S. Department of Housing And Urban Development regulations governing fair housing and equal opportunity.

Am I eligible to apply?

- In order to submit an application, the waiting list must be open. (If the waiting list for a particular program is closed, applications are not being accepted.)
- The applicant (head-of-household) must be at least 18 years of age as of the date they submit their application. (HACM will verify age of the applicant at a later date through a birth certificate or INS documents. If HACM learns later that someone wasn't 18 when they submitted their application, they will be notified that their application is ineligible.)

What if I'm not 18 years old yet?

- If you aren't 18 yet, you must wait until you turn 18 before you are eligible to apply for housing. If the waiting list closes before you turn 18, you will have to wait until the waiting list opens again before you're eligible to apply.

Can I have a co-signer?

- No. The Housing Authority does not allow for co-signers to an application or dwelling lease.

What's the difference between low-income housing (also known as public housing) and Rent Assistance (Section 8)?

- Both are programs operated by HACM. Both are rent based on income programs. Applicants in both programs would pay 30% of their income for rent. There are other program differences between the programs, but basically the difference is:
- Low income housing (also known as public housing/housing developments): Under this program, HACM owns the apartment buildings and would be your landlord. You'd pay your rent to HACM. Under Rent Assistance (also known as Section 8), an applicant looks for an apartment on their own in the private market. The unit must fall within rent guidelines set by HUD, must pass and inspection and the landlord must be

willing to accept rent assistance. An applicant would pay 30% of their income to the landlord and Rent Assistance would also pay part of the rent to the landlord.

How do I apply for rent assistance?

- Their waiting list is closed at this time. Call 414-286-5650 for more information.

Are any of the low income housing developments outside the City of Milwaukee?

No. If you're interested in low income (subsidized or affordable housing) outside the City of Milwaukee, call the U. S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) at 414-297-3214 to request a listing of other subsidized/affordable housing or visit their website at www.hud.gov.

What are the income requirements for low income public housing?

- There is no minimum income required to apply for low-income public housing. However, the total household income for the family may not exceed the following:

Number of Persons	Maximum Income Per Year
1	\$41,100
2	\$46,950
3	\$52,800
4	\$58,650
5	\$63,350
6	\$68,050
7	\$72,750
8	\$77,450
9	\$82,100

How do I obtain an application?

- Applications may be obtained by calling our office at (414) 286-5678 (voice) or (414) 286-3504 (TDD) to request an application.

Can I request an application by email or download one from your website?

- Not at this time.

What happens after I submit my application?

- Once your application is received, it will be date and time stamped and placed on the waiting list.

Do you offer emergency housing?

- No. If you need emergency housing, we suggest you call 211 for information about housing at various shelters.

How long will I have to wait for housing?

- We can't tell any applicant exactly how long they could be waiting for housing. Waiting time varies based on the number of bedrooms a household needs and the number of units that become vacant by bedroom size. Based on our experience, we typically receive 4,000-5,000 applications whenever the waiting list opens. If you submit an application, listed below is an **approximate** amount of time you will have to wait before your name reaches the top of the waiting list:

1 bedroom unit	1-5 years or longer
2 bedroom units	2-3 years or longer
3 bedroom units	1-2 years or longer
4 bedroom units	3-5 years or longer
5 bedroom units	3-5 years or longer

Why is there such a long wait for family housing?

- Although we own about 2,100 family housing units, only about 350 families move-out each year.

Why did someone I know get housing so quickly and now I'm told I may have to wait?

- HACM has a number of housing programs. Some of our programs have different criteria and waiting times. Also there are other low income (subsidized) housing providers in southeastern Wisconsin. Sometimes people think their friend got housing with us, but it's actually with someone else.

Can I apply for a particular location?

- Not at this time. When someone applies for housing with us, they are applying for a unit. If someone is approved for housing, they will be made a housing offer whenever we have a vacancy at that time.

What locations typically have vacancies?

- vacancies can change on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Certain bedroom sizes (4 and 5 bedroom units) rarely become vacant. Very few of our locations have 4 or 5 bedroom units.

What happens when my name reaches the top of the waiting list?

- The Housing Authority is required by federal regulation to verify information about all of the household members who will live with you. You will be required to provide:

Current photo ID (only for adult household members)
 Social security cards (all household members)
 Birth certificates and/or INS documents (all household members)
 Signing various required forms (all adults must sign)
 Income/asset information (all household members)

Does everyone who applies for housing get approved?

- No. Public housing is not an entitlement program. The Housing Authority does have selection criteria for public housing. We are not obligated to provide housing to persons who do not meet our selection criteria.

What other information does the Housing Authority consider for housing?

- HACM does run credit and criminal report for all adults in the household
- Requests a three year rental history (for all adult in the household) and may contact current and prior landlords for references
- A telephone interview with all adult applicants

What happens after I'm approved for housing?

- You would be notified that your application is conditionally approved and offered a unit where we have a vacancy.

What are some of the reasons people are denied public housing?

- Many, many applicants are approved for public housing each year. However, the majority of applicants are denied due to:
 - Negative landlord references;
 - A history of disturbing neighbors or destruction of property;
 - Law enforcement contacts related to physical violence, property damage, disturbing behavior, drug-related activity, or any other law enforcement contacts that indicate behaviors that would adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of other residents or staff or cause damage to the premises;
 - Having committed fraud in connection with any federal housing assistance program, including intentionally misrepresenting information related to their public housing application
 - A history of abusing alcohol in a way that may interfere with the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment by others
- **HACM is required (by federal regulations) to deny for life any applicant (or family member) who is:**

- Required to register as a life-time sex offender (in any state) or
- Has been convicted of the manufacture or production of methamphetamine (speed) in a public housing development or in a Section 8 assisted property

If I have something negative in my background, does HACM take any special circumstances into consideration?

- If an applicant does bring something to our attention, HACM does consider extenuating circumstances, evidence of successful rehabilitation, etc. For example, an applicant was evicted from a prior apartment and owes money to a landlord. If the reason the applicant got evicted was because they lost their job, we may be able to take that into consideration, but may ask the applicant to provide documentation that they lost their job.

I'm afraid I'll be denied, so why bother to apply?

- We encourage everyone to apply. We look at each applicant on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes applicants are very concerned about something in their background that isn't a concern to HACM. Also, because you may be on the waiting list for a number of years, some of the things you're concerned about may no longer be a problem.

What happens if I'm denied for low-income housing?

- For all of our low-income programs, you would receive a written notice indicating the reasons for the denial and explaining your rights to an informal appeal hearing.

What advice do you have for applicants for housing?

- Notify HACM in writing of any changes to your application (address, income and family composition changes). People are on the waiting list for several years. We periodically sent out update letters. Many applicants are withdrawn (dropped from the waiting list) each year because letters we send to them are returned by the post office. Applicants **must** notify HACM in writing of any address change.
- Provide all requested information as quickly as possible
- Be honest in the application process about who will live with you, disclose all sources of income and assets and where you've lived for the last three years.

(Public Housing Q & A for webpage)