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# Help Center

Be aware of fake websites and flyers targeting housing authorities nationwide. Housing authorities never charge a fee to join a waitlist. Do not give any personal information to any website or person that is not reputable.

Public Housing, Project-Based Voucher (PBV), and PBRA (Project-Based Rental Assistance) waitlists are open. [Apply here](#). If you need assistance, visit the CHA Client Center at [60 E. Van Buren Street](#).

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## Housing Programs and Types

The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) offers several types of housing in different programs to meet the various needs of its residents. Here is an overview:

**Public Housing Program:** The Public Housing program provides affordable housing assistance to low-income individuals and families in housing units owned and operated by CHA.

- **Family Housing:** This housing type provides affordable apartments for families and individuals of all ages. Family housing communities are designed to support families with children and some properties offer various amenities and services.
- **Scattered Sites Housing:** This housing type consists of single-family detached homes, units within market rate rental developments, and units within newer construction condominium buildings that are scattered throughout Chicago's 77 communities.
- **Senior Housing:** This housing type is tailored to individuals aged 62 and older. Certain properties provide apartments to individuals 55 and older. These communities provide a safe, supportive environment for seniors, with access to social activities, wellness programs, and other resources designed to enhance quality of life.
- **Mixed-Income Housing:** This housing type includes developments where CHA residents live alongside market-rate renters, other affordable apartments, and homeowners. This program promotes eclectic, vibrant communities by offering a mix of housing options within the same neighborhood.

**Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program:** The PBV program connects eligible residents with affordable housing in privately owned buildings. Through this program, residents pay a portion of

their income towards rent. CHA contracts with the property owner to pay the remaining amount of the approved rent. PBV offers stable housing in communities across Chicago. Many buildings that are part of the PBV program offer supportive housing, including assistance for people who are experiencing homelessness, veterans, and those with disabilities.

**Housing Choice Vouchers:** The HCV program provides a tenant voucher to assist with rent in privately-owned buildings. HCV participants are selected from a waitlist. *The HCV waitlist is not open at this time.*

**PBRA (Project-Based Rental Assistance) Program:** The PBRA program provides rental assistance to assist tenants afford rent in approved buildings.

CHA housing programs assist eligible individuals, families, and seniors in finding safe, secure affordable housing and a place to call home.

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## Household Size to Number of Bedrooms

When applying for housing, the size of your household will determine the number of bedrooms for which you qualify. Here is a general guide:

- **1 Person:** Studio to 1 Bedroom
- **2 People:** 1 to 2 Bedrooms
- **3 People:** 2 Bedrooms
- **4 People:** 2 to 3 Bedrooms
- **5 People:** 3 Bedrooms
- **6 People:** 3 to 4 Bedrooms
- **7 People:** 4 Bedrooms
- **8 People:** 4 to 5 Bedrooms

The number of bedrooms assigned is based primarily on the number of people in your household. Some flexibility may be provided depending on your specific needs, such as medical reasons or other special circumstances.

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## Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for housing, your household must meet specific [income limits](#) based on the number of people in your household (see additional income limits information below). At least one member of your household must be a U.S. citizen or have eligible immigration status. CHA will also conduct a background check in a process that follows the requirements of the Cook County Just Housing Amendment to the Human Rights Ordinance for persons with criminal convictions (click [here](#) for more information at the Cook County website). CHA offers an FAQ on our [Criminal Screening Process](#).

In addition to these criteria, applicants must have a good history of paying rent on time and must not owe any money to CHA such as an unpaid rent balance. Applicants may request waitlist preferences based on their status or background such as veterans, people with disabilities, victims

of domestic violence, or those experiencing homelessness.

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## Income Limits

Income limits are a factor in determining eligibility. Income limits are set to ensure that rental assistance helps those who need it most.

Income limits are set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are based on the Area Median Income (AMI) for the Chicago area. These limits are adjusted by household size annually. Income limits are reviewed every year to keep pace with changes in the local economy, cost of living, and other factors.

To qualify for CHA public housing, a family’s income cannot exceed 80% of the AMI. For buildings in the Project-Based Voucher program, individual buildings may have different income requirements for each individual unit

Visit [Chicago.gov](https://www.chicago.gov) for the most [up-to-date income limits](#).

Household Size	Area Median Income Limits 2024 (Effective April 1, 2024)				
	30%	40%	50%	60%	
1	\$23,550	\$31,400	\$39,250	\$47,100	\$
2	\$26,910	\$35,880	\$44,850	\$53,820	\$
3	\$30,270	\$40,360	\$50,450	\$60,540	\$
4	\$33,630	\$44,840	\$56,050	\$67,260	\$
5	\$36,330	\$48,440	\$60,550	\$72,660	\$
6	\$39,030	\$52,040	\$65,050	\$78,060	\$
7	\$41,730	\$55,640	\$69,550	\$83,460	\$
8	\$44,400	\$59,200	\$74,000	\$88,800	\$

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## FAQ for Undocumented Migrants

The recent influx of undocumented migrants has raised some questions regarding eligibility for CHA housing.

### **1. What are the citizenship requirements?**

At least one person in the household must be a U.S. citizen or have a legal immigration status.

### **2. Are migrants newly arrived in Chicago eligible to apply?**

Undocumented Chicagoans are welcome to apply, but, again, at least one person in the household must be a U.S. citizen or have a legal immigration status. Additionally, they need to provide paystubs/ proof of employment at the time of screening. These requirements often disqualify undocumented applicants.

### **3. What is the process like to verify documentation?**

Documents will only be requested and then verified when an applicant has reached the top of the waitlist *and* a vacancy is reported for their household size. Note that most waitlists are years long (often estimated at 10+). Screening includes background, credit and residential history checks, as well as income verification.

### **4. How does CHA use or share information provided by applicants?**

CHA shares data to confirm waitlist preference (i.e., homeless status), not immigration status. At the time of screening, immigration status is verified to confirm eligibility.

*Applicants are advised that it is optional to choose to share information with other government agencies via the application. It is required to allow other agencies to share information with the CHA for verification purposes, including, but not limited to, employers, Department of Public Services, the Social Security Office, Law Enforcement, and/or other agencies.*

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