Montclair Housing Authority
Housing Choice Voucher Program
Waiting List

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM?

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as Section 8) is a federally funded rental subsidy program. This program provides assistance to families so that they can afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Housing can include single-family homes, manufactured homes (trailer homes), townhouses and apartments. A family that is issued a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) is responsible for finding suitable housing of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by Montclair Housing Authority (MHA) on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the housing authority approved rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program.

2. WHAT IS A HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

A Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application is the first step in the process to apply for the Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list at https://www.pha-web.com/portals/onlineApplication/1750. All completed pre-applications will be entered into the lottery. After the random lottery is conducted you will be notified by email if you were selected or not selected to be placed on the waiting list.

3. WHEN IS THE WAITING LIST OPENING?

Pre-applications will be accepted Thursday, June 20, 2024, at 8:30 am until the maximum number of pre-applications are received.

4. HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM WAITING LIST?

Go to https://www.pha-web.com/portals/onlineApplication/1750 Thursday, June 20, 2024, at 8:30am. Click “apply” once the list is open.
5. **IS THERE A MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT WHEN APPLYING FOR A HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER?**

   Yes. In order to submit a Housing Choice Voucher pre-application, the Head of Household must be 18 years of age; or be an emancipated minor.

6. **I AM NOT A U.S. CITIZEN, CAN I APPLY?**

   Yes, you can apply if you are a legal resident and have permanent status to live in the United States or have eligible immigration status.

7. **I AM HOMELESS WHAT ADDRESS SHOULD I USE?**

   You can use a homeless shelter or transitional housing agency address.

8. **DO I HAVE TO ENTER NAMES AND INCOME ON MY HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?**

   Yes. You must answer all of the questions and complete all the required fields in the Housing Choice Voucher pre-application. Your Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application should list all the members of your household and ALL of your household’s income including, but not limited to: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Social Security Retirement, Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), pensions, child support, alimony, unemployment, temporary disability, wages, self-employment earning, etc.

9. **CAN I APPLY FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE IF I OR A MEMBER OF MY HOUSEHOLD HAVE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND?**

   Yes, however, prior to admission, a criminal background check will be conducted on each adult member of the household.

10. **ARE THERE INCOME LIMITS?**

    Yes, see chart below for the 2024 income limits for the Township of Montclair, Essex County.

    | COUNTY | 1 PERSON | 2 PERSON | 3 PERSON | 4 PERSON | 5 PERSON | 6 PERSON | 7 PERSON | 8 PERSON |
    |--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
    | ESSEX  | $68,500  | $78,250  | $88,050  | $97,800  | $105,650 | $113,450 | $121,300 | $129,100 |
11. WHAT OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE NEEDED FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

You will need an email address in order to apply. If you do not have one, you will need to create one to apply. Web browsers like Google Chrome, Fire Fox, or Internet Explorer 10 or higher are recommended.

Also, there are six (6) questions that you will be required to answer:

1. Has any household member been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last five years?
2. Has any housing agency terminated assistance under the Section 8 program for any household member?
3. Have any members of the household committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program?
4. Does your household owe rent or other amounts to the program or another housing agency concerning Section 8 or public housing assistance under the United States Housing Act of 1937?
5. Have any members of the household been deemed a lifetime sex offender?
6. Based on the chart above, does your household meet the outlined income requirements?

12. DOES THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM OFFER PREFERENCES? WHAT IS A PREFERENCE?

Yes. A preference is a priority placement given to applicants for a specific preference category; below are the preference categories (in no particular order):

**Residency Preference (Local Residents):** A Residency Preference for a family that currently resides in the jurisdiction of the Township of Montclair located in the County of Essex.

**Senior/Elderly Preference:** A Senior/Elderly Preference is defined as an applicant (Head of Household), Spouse, or Co-Head of Household is aged 62 years or older.

**Disabled Preference:** A Disabled Preference is defined by (1) Documentation from the Social Security Administration that a member of the household is a disabled person who is receiving Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income benefits; or (2) Certification from a physician, on a Certification of Disability Form that a member of the household is a person with disabilities.

**Displaced/Disaster Preference:** A Displaced/Disaster Preference is defined as being involuntarily displaced and not living in standard, permanent replacement housing, or will be involuntarily displaced within no more than six months from the date of written verification by the displacing unit or agency of government.
**Homeless/Unhoused Preference:** A Homeless Preference is defined as lack of a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence; and have a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised public or private shelter providing temporary accommodations. Families who are residing with friends or relatives on a temporary basis will not be included in the homeless definition.

**Veteran Preference:** A Veterans Preference is defined as current members of the U.S. Armed Forces, honorable or general discharged veterans, or surviving spouses of honorable or general discharged veterans.

**Domestic Violence Preference:** A Domestic Violence preference is defined as families that include victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, human trafficking or stalking who has either been referred by a partnering service agency or consortia or is seeking an emergency transfer under VAWA from public housing or other covered housing program.

13. **CAN I HAVE MORE THAN ONE PREFERENCE?**

Yes, applicants should select all preferences that apply to them. Preferences will be verified.

14. **I AM A SENIOR/ELDERLY, WHAT TYPE OF ASSISTANCE CAN I GET TO COMPLETE A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?**

You can have a family member or friend assist you with the Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application or you can contact Township of Montclair’s Senior Services Director, Judy Hurley at 973-509-4967.

15. **I DO NOT HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS. HOW DO I SUBMIT MY HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?**

You cannot submit a pre-application without an email address. You must obtain a valid email address for the Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application. There are many free email services such as Yahoo, Gmail, and Hotmail. Your email address will be used for all communication with Montclair Housing Authority.

16. **I DO NOT HAVE A HOME COMPUTER AND/OR INTERNET ACCESS. WHERE CAN I GO TO COMPLETE MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?**

You may have a family member or friend assist you with the Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application. Free wireless connections are available at coffee shops, bookstores, grocery stores, local libraries, and community centers. If you do not have your own electronic device, you can use the computers at a local public library and at most community centers.
17. CAN I USE MY SMART PHONE, IPHONE, ANDROID TABLET OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHICH HAS AN INTERNET CONNECTION TO MAKE A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Yes, providing you can navigate to the website: https://www.pha-web.com/portals/onlineApplication/1750 and enter the required information from your device.

18. CAN I MAKE CORRECTIONS OR CHANGES TO MY HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION DURING THE OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD?

No, not during the open enrollment period; if your pre-application is selected via the random lottery process and you are placed on a waiting list, then you can update your contact information ONLY.

19. DOES YOUR AGENCY PROVIDE THE HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES TO APPLICANTS?

Yes, the pre-application can be viewed in multiple languages. At the bottom of the page there is a drop-down menu that allows you to select different languages.

20. HOW DO I REQUEST A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION DUE TO A DISABILITY?

Call the MHA Wait List hotline to request a reasonable accommodation at 973-744-1400 ext. 5310 from 8:30AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday (please leave a detailed message if no answer) or email us at: MHAWaitList@montclairnjusa.org please put reasonable accommodation request in the subject line of the email. *Please note that by requesting a reasonable accommodation and receiving assistance with the pre-application process, it does NOT guarantee you a spot on the wait list as there is a maximum number of wait list pre-applications.*

21. I WANT TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION INSTEAD OF USING THE ONLINE PRE-APPLICATION, CAN I DO THAT?

No. MHA will only be accepting Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-applications on-line at the following website: https://www.pha-web.com/portals/onlineApplication/1750.

22. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION WAS SUCCESSFULLY SUBMITTED?

When you click the submit button, you will receive confirmation with a Control Number and registration code. Print, save, or screenshot the page for your records. You will then be able to create an account (which we highly suggest) to check your status and update your contact information. Registration codes expire after 60 days. If you do not receive confirmation, your application was not successfully submitted.
23. WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP AFTER SUBMITTING A HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

After the pre-application period ends, a random lottery will be completed to select applicants for placement on the Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list. MHA will notify you if you were or were not selected via email.

You can also go online to: https://www.pha-web.com/portals/applicant/1750 after September 3, 2024, using the account that you created or https://www.pha-web.com/portals/waitingListStatus/1750 with your social security number to see your status.

24. IF I HAVE QUESTIONS, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

Call the MHA Wait List hotline for assistance at 973-744-1400 ext. 5310 from 8:30AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday (please leave a detailed message if no answer), or email us at: MHAWaitList@montclairnjusa.org, please be specific with your questions in the email.