

Getting Started with New Hampshire Subsidized Rental Housing

This page describes the steps needed to apply for subsidized (income based) rental housing in New Hampshire. There are multiple ways to get affordable housing.

There are three types of subsidized housing programs. All have separate applications and waiting lists:

- **Housing Voucher Choice Program (HCVP)** provides rental assistance through a private landlord. You will need patience as it takes a long time (years) on a waiting list to receive a housing voucher. You can use these vouchers for many subsidized properties, such as private landlords within New Hampshire or a Public Housing Authority within their geographic area. After a certain time renting in New Hampshire, you can use the voucher in other states, known as portability. You cannot use a housing choice voucher with *any* public housing.
- **Specific Property, Project-based programs** are also known as Section 8 housing. When you apply to a Specific Property, Project-based program, the subsidized rent is not transferrable to a different unit. You can choose a property management company with multiple properties in your desired area. A property management company represents the owner or owns the property. Certain property management companies may allow you to keep a subsidy if you later want to move to a different subsidized unit within that property management company's properties. The subsidy cannot be transferred outside of that property management company's subsidized locations or to any Public Housing Authority.
- **Public Housing** applies to a certain area (such as a city), so it may or may not apply to your desired location. Public Housing includes housing owned by local certain New Hampshire Public Housing Authorities (PHAs). Each PHA serves a certain city or town geographical area to provide housing to those who meet requirements. Each local Public Housing Authority owns its public housing properties, so you cannot transfer the subsidy outside of that local Public Housing Authority's subsidized location(s) (or to any Specific Property, Project-based program). You cannot use a state-wide (NH) housing choice voucher with *any* public housing.

You can submit multiple types of applications. This includes a Housing Voucher Choice Program, one or more Specific Property, Project-based locations, and any Public Housing programs that are available in your desired area. You may need to gather some information.

These types of housing have requirements and benefits defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which provides the funding to support each of the housing programs. New Hampshire Housing administers a housing choice voucher program and publishes a list of subsidized housing properties throughout the state. New Hampshire Housing does not own buildings for rent. Instead, most subsidized rental buildings are owned privately and contracted through HUD.

Many of the public housing authorities (PHAs) across the state administer the housing choice voucher program for their geographic area. They also provide public housing.

Also, separate waiting lists for subsidized housing are maintained for **United States veterans**. For example, contact your US Veterans Affairs (VA) office or view

<https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp> and select New Hampshire.

Tap to view the specific instructions on this page for:

- Housing Voucher Choice Programs
- Specific Property, Project-based Programs
- Public Housing Programs

Housing Voucher Choice Programs

Housing Voucher Choice Programs are administered either by:

- New Hampshire Housing for the entire state of New Hampshire or
- A Public Housing Authority for its specific geographical area.

The rest of this section describes the state-wide (NH) Housing Choice Voucher Program. For information about applying for housing vouchers from a Public Housing program, contact the Public Housing Authority.

To determine whether you and your family qualify for a housing choice voucher, view this information:

1. At the web site <https://www.nhhfa.org/> tap **Rental Assistance**
2. Under **Rental Assistance**, tap **Housing Choice Voucher Program** and view the available options.
3. Tap **FAQ for the Housing Choice Voucher Program**
4. Select various frequently asked questions (FAQs), such as **Who is eligible for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.**
5. Select other **FAQ** topics as needed.

To download and print an application (PDF file) for Housing Voucher Choice Program:

1. At the web site <https://www.nhhfa.org/> tap **Rental Assistance**
2. Under **Rental Assistance**, tap **Housing Choice Voucher Program** and view available options.
3. Tap **Forms and Publications**
4. Tap **Application for Housing Choice Voucher Program**
5. This lets you view and/or print the required information. You can instead request that a paper application be sent to you by postal mail by calling 1-800-439-7247

To apply online for Housing Choice Voucher:

1. At the web site <https://www.nhhfa.org/forms/>, tap **Rental Assistance**
2. Under **Rental Assistance**, tap **Housing Choice Voucher Program** and view available options.
3. Tap **Apply** to start an online application.
4. View the guidelines and tap **Start Online Application.**

To get help while filling out a Housing Voucher Choice Program application (online or PDF/paper):

- Either call 1-800-439-7247 or send email to rentinfo@nhhfa.org.
- Under **Preferences** on the application:
 - **Special needs** are for those with proven special needs who are older than age 18 and younger than 62.
 - **Elderly** applies to those 62 years old and older.
 - Check the box if a member of your household is eligible for services through the Choices for Independence Program (CFI). Including home and community-based services through the Medicaid Waiver Programs.

- Check the box if a member of your household is disabled. The individual with a disability is considered a household of one unless the entire family plans on living together and needs a voucher as a family.
- Check the box if a member of your household is rent burdened or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Carefully read similar check boxes. Check those that apply to your family situation.

After you submit a Housing Voucher Choice Program application:

1. When you receive any letters from the NH Housing Finance, **save those letters**.
2. Once you are on the waiting list, you may get sent a form about annually to verify that you still want to be on the waiting list. The estimated waiting time is based on the number of people on the waiting list, the availability of vouchers, and an applicant's preference status. This could mean an estimated waiting time of 5-7 years. Also verify or update your contact information.
3. Please complete that form and promptly return it using postal mail or by the options available.
4. After your application was placed on a waiting list for a housing choice voucher, you will receive a letter confirming receipt of your application.
5. About once a year, you will get a form to fill out asking if you want to remain on the waiting list. At that time, verify or update your contact information.
6. When your name comes to the top of the waiting list, you will receive a letter. At this time, you will be asked to provide additional eligibility criteria to ensure you qualify for the program you applied for, including identification and financial information.

What happens after you move in and use your Housing Voucher Choice Program?

1. You are eligible to use your housing choice voucher to move after you live in your apartment for a certain time if you are in good standing after one year. Housing choice vouchers can be transferred both within New Hampshire and to a different state after you meet the residency requirements.
2. About once a year, you will get a form asking you to recertify your income and household members for your voucher application (annual recertification process).
3. If you decide to relocate to a different state, you should first contact the other state's housing authority to determine how to coordinate use of your housing choice voucher in the geographical area you wish to move to.


Specific Property, Project-based Programs

Specific Property, Project-based programs are administered by landlords and property management companies within New Hampshire.

This section describes Specific Property, Project-based programs administered by private landlords within New Hampshire.

To search for subsidized housing in an area of New Hampshire for a Specific Property, Project-based program (aka Section 8 housing):

1. At the web site <https://www.nhhfa.org/rental-assistance/search-for-housing/> tap **Subsidized Unit Listing**.
2. Under **Directory of Assisted Housing**, select:

- Your **County**, such as Hillsborough
 - **Towns** you would like to consider. To consider all towns in the country, leave the selection as **Towns**.
 - **Housing Type**. such as **Special Needs, Elderly**, and so on. **Special needs** are for those with proven special needs who are younger than the age limit for **Elderly**. **Elderly** applies to those 62 years old and older. Some rental properties provide subsidized housing only for **Elderly** and some have units for both **Special Needs and Elderly**.
 - Whether you need an **Accessible Unit**. For example, select **Yes** if you or a family member needs wheelchair access.
3. Tap **Submit** to view matching units.
 4. Tap the down arrow  to the right of a unit to view (or print) its details, such as its address, types of rents, and contact information.
 5. In the details:
 - If you need rental assistance, make sure there is a **Yes** after **Income Based Rents**.
 - If you need wheelchair accessibility, make sure there is **Yes** after **Accessible Units**.
 6. Write down possible rental unit matches that meet your needs.
 7. Consider driving by the area of each potential rental unit.
 - You can call (or visit) the property management company and ask questions within their business hours.
 8. Be aware that most subsidized rental properties have a waiting list.

To apply for housing at each rental unit in a Specific Property, Project-based program:

1. Choose a property management company carefully. For example, how many units does it have in the area you want to live in? How many of those housing units appeal to you? To change property management companies, you need to make a separate application.
2. Contact the property management company to obtain application information. This application will be a “project application” for a specific property. You can often find applications on the property management company’s web site.
3. Save your paperwork! Make a copy of each application you submit.
4. If a property management company has multiple rental addresses, consider leaving the location blank and make copies of that application if the property management company provides multiple addresses. Later, fill in the property address for each form.
5. After you receive a letter explaining the receipt of your application, save it! The waiting period averages about 2-3 years in parts of New Hampshire.
6. After acceptance, you may receive an annual form to verify that you still want to be on the waiting list. You also need to verify or update your address and phone/contact information.
7. Please complete that form and promptly return it using postal mail or by the options available.
8. Retain a copy of the form for your records.
9. After an application reaches the top of the waiting list, you will be asked to provide additional eligibility criteria to ensure you qualify for the program you applied for.

If you get a call that a Specific Property, Project-based program rental unit you applied for is available:

1. Gather your questions. Call the property management company back promptly.
2. Verify which property is available, such as the town and street address.

3. Ask when it is available and verify that it is for subsidized rental housing.
4. You should arrange a visit to the property with the property manager.
5. Each subsidized rental property defines the rental assistance, which is based on the age of the building and other factors.
6. Ask how long you can wait to decide whether you want this property. They need to know within days.
7. After you find a suitable rental, you will need to fill out and return the forms provided by the property management company.

What happens after you move into a Specific Property, Project-based rental unit?

1. After you move in, you will need to fill out redetermination forms about annually that provide your current income, assets, occupants, and other personal information. You should retain a copy of the form for your records.
2. If you also applied for the Housing Voucher Choice Program, continue to save any letters from New Hampshire Housing or a Public Housing Authority. After your name eventually comes to the top of the Housing Voucher Choice Program list, you will be asked to provide additional eligibility criteria to ensure you qualify for the program you applied for. Carefully read the letter and check with New Hampshire Housing or the Public Housing Authority to understand your options. For example, if you are already housed in a Specific Property, Project-based program, contact New Hampshire Housing or a Public Housing Authority.
3. After a certain time (such as one year), you can ask what other properties the property management company has available. For example, if your work location changes, you may need to consider moving.

Public Housing Programs

Public Housing is owned by local certain New Hampshire Public Housing Authorities (PHAs). Each PHA serves a certain city or town geographical area to provide housing to those who meet specific requirements defined by each Public Housing Authority. Public housing subsidies can be used only by the public housing authority's unit(s) and can never with a private landlord. Also, you cannot use a housing choice voucher for any public housing.

Public housing authorities may offer housing choice vouchers that are similar to the state-wide (NH) housing choice vouchers but are limited to the specific geographical area served by that PHA program. To apply for housing choice vouchers for a Public Housing program, contact the Public Housing Authority.

To find a list of local PHAs, use a web browser to:

- Open: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts
- Select New Hampshire
- Choose your desired area(s).

Public housing programs have similar income requirements and follow similar HUD rules as Housing Voucher Choice Programs and Specific Property, Project-based programs.

Each local Public Housing Authority maintains its own waiting lists, so you can apply to multiple public housing programs. Depending on your circumstances, you might be able to apply for one or more program types within the same public housing authority program.

Contact the local Public Housing Authority. For example, you can ask:

- About residency requirements to participate in their program.
- About income and other requirements to participate in their program.
- About available housing locations?
- Whether you can visit any of the properties?
- Whether a change in household circumstances would allow you to transfer to a different unit?
- How long is their wait list?
- What types of programs might I qualify for (elderly, disabled, Veterans, and so on)?
- Depending on my circumstances, can I apply to multiple types within your public housing authority?
- Does your PHA administer housing choice vouchers? If so, which geographic areas do these housing choice vouchers apply to? A Housing choice voucher can never be used with a public housing unit.
- Each public housing authority has its own priorities and preferences which will impact applicant placement on waiting lists. Ask how these might impact your eligibility or placement on various waiting lists.

When your application reaches the top of the waiting list, you will be asked for additional eligibility criteria to ensure you qualify for the program you applied for, such as identification and financial information.

Other Resources and Credits

Some helpful resources about Project-based Rental Assistance, Housing Choice Voucher Programs include:

- <https://www.nhhfa.org/>
- <https://www.usa.gov/rental-housing-programs>
- <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/section-8-project-based-rental-assistance>
- <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/the-housing-choice-voucher-program>

Other resources provide information about USDA programs including multi-unit housing:

- <https://www.rd.usda.gov/>
- https://rdmfhrentals.sc.egov.usda.gov/RDMFHRentals/select_county.jsp?st=nh&state_name=New%20Hampshire&st_cd=33

Veterans can view: <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp> and select New Hampshire.

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