

CHAPTER 3

APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

[24 CFR 982.204]

INTRODUCTION:

The policy of the NBHA is to ensure that all families who express an interest in housing assistance are given an equal opportunity to apply, and are treated in a fair and consistent manner. This chapter describes the policies and procedures for completing an initial application for assistance, placement and denial of placement on the waiting list, and limitations on who may apply. The primary purpose of the intake function is to gather information about the family, but the NBHA will also utilize this process to provide information to the family so that an accurate and timely decision of eligibility can be made. Applicants will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with this plan.

A. OPENING/CLOSING OF THE WAITING LIST

[24 CFR 982.206, 982.54(d)(1)]

When the waiting list is open any family asking to be placed on the waiting list for Section 8 rental assistance will be given the opportunity to apply. When the NBHA opens the waiting list at least 5 days prior to the date that the application will first be accepted, the NBHA will advertise through public notice in the following newspapers, minority publications and media entities.

- Local and minority newspapers (such as the New Britain Herald, The Hartford Courant, New England Minority News and La Voz Hispana de Connecticut).
- The NBHA may list on the State of CT Website for such openings.
- Local community service providers.
- Info Line 211

The notice will contain:

- The dates, times, and the locations where families may apply.
- Selection method to be used.
- Information about the end of the application period, if it is limited.
- A statement that accessible formats are available upon request.
- The programs for which applications will be taken.
- A brief description of the program.
- A statement that public housing participants must submit a separate application if they want to apply for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Limitations, if any, on whom may apply.

The notices will be made in an accessible format, if requested. They will provide potential applicants with information that includes the NBHA address and telephone number, how to submit an application, information on eligibility requirements, and the availability of local preferences.

Closing the Waiting List:

The NBHA, at its discretion, may restrict application intake, suspend application intake, and close waiting lists in whole or in part. The NBHA may open or close the list by local preference category. The NBHA may stop applications if there are enough applicants to fill anticipated openings for the next twenty-four months. The waiting list may not be closed if it would have a discriminatory effect inconsistent with applicable civil rights laws.

The NBHA will announce the closing of the waiting list by public notice.

The NBHA will give at least seven (7) days notice prior to closing the list. When the period for accepting applications is over, the NBHA will not accept additional pre-applications, nor maintain a list of those who wish to be notified when the waiting list is open.

B. INITIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES: [24 CFR 982.204(b)]

Notification of Preliminary Status:

Applications are taken to compile a waiting list. Due to the demand for Section 8 Assistance in the NBHA jurisdiction, the NBHA may take applications on an open enrollment basis, depending on the length of the waiting list.

Families who wish to apply for the Housing Choice Voucher Program must complete a written pre-application form when the waiting list is open.

The application process will involve two phases:

- The first is the “initial” application for admission (referred to as a pre-application). Duplicate pre-applications will not be accepted.
- The second is the “final determination of eligibility for admission” (referred as the full application). The full application takes place when the family reaches the top of the waiting list. At this time the NBHA ensures that verification of all HUD and NBHA eligibility factors is current in order to determine the family’s eligibility for an offer of a voucher.

Pre-applications will not require an interview. The information on the application will not be verified until the applicant has been selected for final eligibility determination. Final eligibility will be determined when the full application process is completed and all information is verified.

After a review of the pre-application a written notification of preliminary eligibility will be mailed to the applicant by first class mail.

If the family is determined to be eligible, they will be placed on the waiting list by either of the following methods, at the option of the NBHA: i) based on the time and date of application and any claimed preferences or ii) based on selection by lottery.

Ineligible Families:

If the family is determined to be ineligible based on the information provided in the pre-application, the family will not be placed on the wait list and the NBHA will notify the family in writing (in an accessible format, upon request as a reasonable accommodation), state the reason(s), and inform them of their rights to an informal review. Persons with disabilities may request to have an advocate attend the informal hearing as an accommodation. (See “Complaints and Appeals”).

C. **APPLICANT STATUS WHILE ON WAITING LIST:** [CFR 982.204]

Applicants are required to inform the NBHA of changes in family composition, income, and address, or preference status in writing. Applicants are also required to respond to requests from the NBHA to update information on their application, or to determine their interest in assistance. A confirmation of receipt of pre-application is sent to applicant by first class mail.

D. **COMPLETION OF A FULL APPLICATION:**

Duplicate applications, will not be accepted.

All preferences claimed on the pre-application or while the family is on the waiting list will be verified after the family is selected from the waiting list and attends an interview, but prior to determining final eligibility.

The qualification for preference must exist at the time the preference is verified, regardless of the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list because the claim of a preference is based on current status.

Applicants will be required to:

- Complete a full application (including a Personal Declaration Form) in their own handwriting, unless assistance is needed, or a request for accommodation is made by a disabled person. Applicants will then be interviewed by NBHA staff to review the information on the full application form. The applicant will sign and certify that all information is complete and accurate.

The full application will be mailed to the applicant in advance.

Requirement to Attend Interview:

The NBHA utilizes the full application interview to discuss the family's circumstances in greater detail, to clarify information that has been provided by the family, and to ensure that the information is complete. The interview is also used as a vehicle to meet the informational needs of the family by providing information about the application and verification process, as well as to advise the family of other NBHA services or programs which may be available.

All family members age 16 and over and over are required to attend the interview, and are required to sign the housing application and authorization forms. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis; accommodations may be made upon request.

Reasonable accommodation will be made for persons with a disability that requires an advocate or accessible offices. A designee will be allowed to participate in the interview process, but only with permission of the person with a disability.

If an application is denied due to failure to attend the full application interview, the applicant will be notified in writing and offered an opportunity to request an informal review. (See "Complaints and Appeals").

All adult members age 16 and over must sign the HUD Form 9886, Release of Information, the application form and all supplemental forms required by the NBHA. Applicants will be required to sign specific verification forms for information, which is not covered, by the HUD form 9886. Failure to do so will be cause for denial of his application for failure to provide necessary certifications and release as required by the NBHA.

If the information is not supplied in this time period, the NBHA will provide the family a notification of denial for assistance. (See "Complaints and Appeals", of this Administrative Plan).

E. **VERIFICATION:** [CFR 982.201(e)]

Information provided by the applicant will be verified, using the verification procedures described in "Verification" of this Administrative Plan. Family composition, income, allowances and deductions, assets, full-time student status, eligibility and rent calculation factors, and other pertinent information will be verified. Verifications may not be more than sixty (60) days old at the time of issuance of the voucher.

F. **FINAL DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY:** [24CFR 982.201]

After the verification process is completed, the NBHA will make a final determination of eligibility. This decision is based upon information provided by the family, the verification completed by the NBHA, and the current eligibility criteria in effect. If the family is determined to be eligible, the NBHA, will mail a notification of eligibility. A briefing will be scheduled for the issuance of a voucher and the family's orientation to the housing program.

G. **TIME OF SELECTION:**

When funding is available, families will be selected from the waiting list in their determined sequence, regardless of family size, subject to income targeting requirements.