



MANCHESTER HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Public Housing, Other Income-Restricted Housing Options, and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8)

Applicant Handbook

Revised April 30, 2024

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If you need language assistance,
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Si necesita ayuda con el idioma,
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OVERVIEW

MHRA is a public housing authority, housing developer, and property management company located in Manchester, NH.

MHRA MISSION STATEMENT

The primary mission of the Manchester Housing and Redevelopment Authority (the Authority), the public housing authority for the City of Manchester, is to develop, promote, and sustain affordable, decent housing for low-income families and individuals and wherever possible, to provide supportive services to residents.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY – HOUSING DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW

MHRA is committed to ensuring equal housing opportunity in the administration of its housing programs. In the selection of families and in the provision of services, there shall be no discrimination against any person on the basis of age, race, color, sex, creed/religion, familial status, marital status, disability, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.

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REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

MHRA is required to try to provide reasonable accommodation to applicants or member of an applicant household with a disability. Reasonable accommodation means a modification to buildings or program procedures to help an eligible applicant with a disability or handicap to utilize MHRA's services or programs. Examples include: permitting an assistive animal in a development where animals are usually prohibited; providing large-type documents, a reader, or sign language interpreter; making alterations to a MHRA property for a wheelchair; permitting or scheduling an outside agency to assist an applicant with a disability to meet MHRA's applicant screening criteria.

An applicant family with a disabled member must be able to meet essential obligations of residency, but it is not required that they do so without assistance. If you or a family member thinks you might need or want a reasonable accommodation, it may be requested at any time during or after the application. This is up to you. If you would prefer not to discuss your situation with MHRA, that is your right.

HUD SECTION 214 – HOUSING ASSISTANCE

The receipt of financial housing assistance is contingent upon you and your family submitting evidence of either 1) citizenship, or 2) eligible immigration status. This Noncitizen Rule applies to MHRA HUD programs including the Section 8 Rental Certificate, Voucher, and Moderate Rehabilitation Programs, and Public and Indian Housing Programs. For more information, contact MHRA.

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INFORMATION GUIDE – PUBLIC HOUSING, OTHER INCOME-RESTRICTED HOUSING OPTIONS, AND HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (SECTION 8) PROGRAMS

Thank you for your interest in MHRA’s public housing, other income-restricted housing options, and Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) programs. These programs assist families in obtaining safe, decent, and affordable housing. Under these programs, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other regulatory agencies, eligible applicants are offered an apartment in a public housing development, another income-restricted housing development, or a voucher to seek and rent a privately-owned unit.

MHRA owns 1,169 public housing apartments – for families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities – throughout Manchester. Public housing residents pay generally 30% of their annual income for rent and utilities. MHRA is the landlord for people living in these units.

In the other 307 income-restricted apartments that MHRA owns or manages, MHRA is the property management agent for the property owners. Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) are available for several of these other housing options. The housing options include:

- Units for elderly or disabled adults needing services for daily living or to age in place.
- Units for the elderly or disabled do not require the need for services.

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- Family units ranging in size from 1- to 3-bedrooms are available with and without housing support services.
- Two units are reserved for veteran families.

Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program (HCV) participants are provided with financial assistance to afford an apartment owned by a private landlord. In this program, MHRA pays part of the rent each month for eligible families, who will be required to pay a portion of adjusted monthly income toward rent and utilities, which must be no less than 30% of income, to no greater than 40%.

The HCV can be a mobile voucher that you can take with you or it can be a Project-Based Voucher (PBV) that stays with the unit. PBV are issued to specific property owners and provide HCV assistance to a specific number of units in these developments. When a PBV resident moves out of the unit, they are no longer assisted under the voucher program

MHRA has special programs available for its participating residents:

Supportive Services Program (SSP) – PBV

The SSP provides a residential environment with supportive services (meals and household tasks) and PBV in certain MHRA-managed sites. The SSP assists the elderly and persons with disabilities to remain independent in their community. To be eligible, individuals must be assessed as in need of assistance with at least two (2) Activities of Daily Living (housekeeping, laundry, meals, etc.).

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Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) – PH and HCV/PBV

FSS offers assessment, case management, and training to enrolled PH and HCV participants to help them achieve economic independence. Participants must commit to working toward achieving economic self-sufficiency within five (5) years.

Supportive Housing Program-Upland Heights Only/PBV

SHP is similar to FSS in that it offers assessment, case management, training, education, employment assistance, and other options to ensure residents and families to succeed in their new homes and community. Most options are free or low-cost.

Other types of HCV programs – some are dependent on funding availability:

MOD/SRO Program – HCV only

Provides housing with HCV assistance for homeless men at Robinson House. Referrals are required.

Homeless Program – HCV only

Provides HCV assistance to homeless families and individuals who have been referred into the program by designated referral agencies.

Preservation Voucher – HCV only

These special HCV are given to families affected by several different types of owner or HUD actions (collectively referred to as “housing conversions”).

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VASH Vouchers – HCV only

Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing. MHRA and the Manchester VA work together in housing homeless veterans in need of services and housing assistance.

NED Vouchers – HCV only

Non-Elderly Disabled Vouchers assist families who are disabled. Referral required.

Mainstream Five (5) Year Voucher – HCV only

Assists families/households that includes a member who is disabled, over 18, but under 62 years old. Family must be homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Referral required, but may be self-referred.

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APPLICATION

Who can apply for assistance?

You may apply for MHRA assistance if you meet any of the following definitions of a “family.” The term “family” as used by MHRA means a single person or a group of persons -- two or more persons who intend to share residency and whose income and resources are available to meet the family’s needs. A group of persons may not be denied solely on the basis that they are not related by blood, marriage, or operation of law. The term “family” also includes, but is not limited to:

- A family with or without children;
- An elderly family (see page 11);
- A disabled family (see page 11);
- A single person who is, or is not, elderly or a person with disabilities;
- Two or more elderly or disabled persons living together, or one or more elderly or disabled persons living with one or more live-in aides.

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What are the income limits for assistance?

You may be eligible if your total annual gross family income is no more than the following amounts (effective 04/01/24):

Public Housing

Number in Family	Income Limit		Number in Family	Income Limit
1	64,050		5	98,850
2	73,200		6	106,150
3	82,350		7	113,500
4	91,500		8	120,800

Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8)

Number in Family	Income Limit		Number in Family	Income Limit
1	40,050		5	61,800
2	45,800		6	66,400
3	51,500		7	70,950
4	57,200		8	75,550

NOTE: The income limits above are the maximums for admission into the program, but MHRA is required to ensure that 75% of new vouchers are issued to households at or below 30% of median income, which are as follows:

Number in Family	Income Limit		Number in Family	Income Limit
1	24,050		5	37,050
2	27,450		6	41,960
3	30,900		7	47,340
4	34,300		8	52,720

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How do I apply for assistance?

The application process involves two steps:

Step 1: Application for Assistance

The purpose of the application is to allow MHRA to gather information about your household to determine whether you are eligible for assistance and to place your name on the waiting list(s). The application form contains questions about your household composition, income, current living situation, and housing needs. When you return your completed (and signed) application form, MHRA will date and time stamp it so that you may be placed on the waiting list in the order in which you applied. When filling out the application, we request that you please print clearly; make sure that you have provided all the necessary information about your household; and please be sure to indicate all the program you wish to apply for (public housing, other housing options, or HCV Section 8 rental assistance – all that you are interested in).

Any family wishing to be placed on a waiting list may:

- Apply online on MHRA's web site at www.manchesterhousing.org
- Pick up an application form at MHRA's Main Office at 198 Hanover Street, Manchester, NH;
- Print the form from MHRA's website at www.manchesterhousing.org; or

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- Request a form by mail by calling MHRA's main number at (603) 624-2100.

Application forms are available in an accessible format upon request from a person with a disability.

Using the information provided on the form, MHRA will determine preliminary eligibility. You will receive notification within four (4) weeks to let you know if you have been determined eligible.

CHANGES: If any of the information you provided changes, you must report these changes – in writing – to MHRA immediately. Please note that failure to report such changes, at any time prior to receiving assistance – or failure to respond to MHRA correspondence – will result in your removal from the waiting list(s).

Step 2: Eligibility Interview

Once your name is nearing the top of the waiting list, you will be contacted by mail to schedule an eligibility interview. Families reach the top of the waiting list according to: the date and time that the completed application is received by MHRA; preferences for which the family qualifies; the availability of HCV vouchers, and/or the appropriately-sized public housing or other type of housing unit.

Prior to your interview, you will be mailed a Personal Declaration Application to complete and bring with you to your interview. During the interview, MHRA

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will collect all information needed to determine if you qualify for assistance. The following is a list of the documentation MHRA will require at the interview:

- Proof of Preference(s) requested
- Birth certificates for all members of the household
- Social security cards for all members of the household
- Photo ID for anyone 18 years and older
- Photo ID proof of citizenship/eligible immigration status
- Proof of all income
- Proof of all assets
- Proof of deductions (child care, medical deductions for elderly/disabled families)
- Legal documents, if applicable, such as:
 - Custody/guardianship
 - Power of Attorney
 - Documentation of name change (marriage certificate, divorce decree, court order, etc.)
 - Documentation of alimony/child support/child custody (divorce decree, legal separation order, etc.)

All adults in the family are required to attend the eligibility interview.

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Where are the MHRA public housing and other housing developments?

MHRA owns, operates, and manages several types of housing available for rental:

FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS: Units range from one (1) to five (5) bedrooms. Many families with children live in these developments, but single people, including single people with disabilities, may also live in these developments.

The public housing developments in this category include: Elmwood Gardens, Kelley Falls Apartments, Manseau Manor, and multiple scattered sites throughout Manchester.

The other MHRA housing options include 2-bedroom Cedar and Chestnut Street Apartments (income-restricted) and Upland Heights Apartments (1- to 3-bedroom income-restricted PBV).

DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Eligibility for these developments is limited to families defined as Elderly or Persons with Disabilities -- individuals aged sixty-two (62) or older or who are persons with disabilities; families whose head of household or spouse is at least sixty-two (62) years of age or a person with disabilities; two or more elderly or persons with disabilities living together or one or more such persons living with one or more live-in-aides.

The public housing developments include the O'Malley, Kalivas, Pariseau, Burns, and Gallen high-rise buildings, and various scattered sites throughout Manchester, NH.

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The other housing options include Tarrytown Road Apartments (income-restricted) and the Mary Gale Apartments, Brown School Apartments, Laurette Sweeney Apartments and So. Main Street Apartments (income- and age-restricted, PBV).

How do I obtain an accessible unit, or a unit with accessible features, because I or a member of my family has a disability?

The application allows you to inform MHRA of your need for an accessible unit or unit with accessible features. If you become disabled while you are on the waiting list, please contact MHRA to request a Reasonable Accommodation form. Complete and sign the form and return it to MHRA's Main Office so your file can be updated to include your reasonable accommodation request.

How long will the interview take?

MHRA tries to give you as much time as you need. You may bring with you anyone you wish, but please note that there are space limitations for interviews at MHRA.

WAITING LISTS

When your application is received, MHRA will review it and determine if you are eligible to be placed on the requested waiting list. You will be notified of your eligibility status within four (4) weeks of MHRA's receipt of your application.

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How do I report changes to, or update, my application?

Any change to your address, contact information, income, housing needs or family composition (for example, if there is an addition of household members to the family) must be reported – in writing – to MHRA immediately to avoid delays in processing your application and so that you may receive appropriate assistance for your family. Send any changes to MHRA at 198 Hanover Street, Manchester, NH 03104. If changes are NOT reported, this may result in removal from any waitlist.

How is my application processed and maintained on the waiting list?

Applications are placed on the waiting list in the order they are received according to the preferences for which they qualify. Applicants who do not claim a preference will be ranked in order by date and time of application only. Applicants are required to verify any preferences claimed at the eligibility interview.

What are the preferences?

There are several preference categories that MHRA will consider to determine placement on some waiting lists. You may claim as many preferences as apply to you. Please do not hesitate to contact MHRA if you are unsure about any of these categories, as any preferences that you claim will be verified by MHRA.

- **Veteran:** Applies to:
A household member currently serving in the US

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- Armed Forces or has been discharged with an honorable discharge or a discharge based on a service-related injury, illness, or disability;
 - Law enforcement officers or firefighters who suffered 100% disability due to a service-related injury;
 - Spouse with dependent children of a veteran of the armed forces killed in a war/conflict if the spouse was dependent on the armed services veteran at the time of death and is eligible as a family at time of application;
 - Spouse with dependent children of a law enforcement officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty if the spouse was dependent on the law enforcement officer or firefighter at the time of death and is eligible as a family at time of application.
- **Resident of Manchester:** Applies to applicant families living, working or who have been notified that they are hired to work in Manchester. This preference also applies to applicants aged 62 or older, or who are a person with disabilities and have a son, daughter, or parent living in Manchester as well as applicants who at one-time lived-in Manchester and can provide documentation of same.
 - **Displaced:** Applies to families who are being displaced from their current residence due to government action, disaster such as fire that was not caused by their own negligence or due to a federally declared disaster.

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ELIGIBILITY

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

When your application reaches the top of the requested waiting list, MHRA will notify you by mail to come in for your eligibility interview. It is important that you bring all documents and verification papers that pertain to your household with you to your interview.

MHRA will conduct criminal background checks of all household member aged 17 or older. MHRA will also verify the information you provided on your Personal Declaration application including any preferences claimed, income, citizenship, and immigration status. MHRA may also conduct landlord reference checks for applicants to public housing.

What happens if my application is denied?

You will be notified, in writing, of the reason for the denial and you will be offered an opportunity to request an informal review. Requests for informal reviews must be received in writing no later than 14 days from the date of MHRA's notification of denial.

Upon receipt of a request for a review, MHRA will schedule the informal review and notify you in writing of the date and time of the appointment. During the review, you will have the opportunity to present objections to MHRA's decision and to present new information for MHRA's consideration.

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Applicants may use an attorney or other representative, at the applicant's own expense, to assist in the review process.

MHRA will notify the applicant, in writing, of MHRA's final decision and an explanation for the decision.

ACCEPTING A UNIT/LEASING

What happens after I am determined eligible?

Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) -- You will be given a housing assistance voucher as soon as your name comes to the top of the waiting list and a voucher becomes available. Once the voucher has been issued, you will have 120 days to find a decent, safe, sanitary unit, which MHRA will inspect to make sure that it meets our standards. HCV applicants should be aware that landlords do not have to participate in the HCV program, and that they may perform their own background checks to determine your ability to pay the rent, credit, rental history, utility history, etc. You will enter into a private lease with the landlord and will have to abide by the terms of that lease. MHRA cannot guarantee that you will find affordable housing and locating a unit to rent is your responsibility, although MHRA maintains a list of landlords throughout the city that accept HCV/Section 8.

Public Housing and Other MHRA Housing Options – Once your name comes to the top of a waiting list and an appropriately sized unit becomes available, you will be offered the unit. Applicants can decline the unit if they wish. However, should they refuse a second offer, the applicant family may be removed from the waiting list. If you accept a

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unit offer, you must sign the lease and related forms and the unit will be inspected. You will also receive various informational pieces, including MHRA's grievance procedure, pet policy and other important documents related to your occupancy.

You will be expected to report any changes in the household, as during the application process. Your household situation will be reviewed at least annually during the recertification process as well as at any time your situation changes. These reviews could result in a change to your monthly rent amount.

Should you have any questions about the information contained in this handbook, or any questions that are not answered here, please contact Manchester Housing and Redevelopment Authority at (603) 624-2100.

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