

JCHA PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LIST – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do you have emergency housing?

No. The JCHA does not have any type of emergency housing in either its public housing or Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs.

If you are in need of emergency housing, you may contact the Hudson County Alliance to End Homelessness at (201) 604-2600 or visit their website at HUDSONCOUNTYHOMELESS.COM.

How do I qualify for public housing?

Public housing is limited to low-income* families and individuals. A housing authority determines your eligibility based on: 1) annual gross income; 2) whether you qualify as elderly, a person with a disability, or as a family; and 3) U.S. citizenship or eligible immigration status.

HUD Income Limits for 2019-2020 that a family must not exceed:

Income Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
80% - Low Income	51,350	58,700	60,050	73,350	79,250	85,100	91,000	96,850

*HUD defines low-income as being 80% or less of area median income. For more information, visit <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>.

How do I check on the status of my housing application?

You can find out the status of your application by sending an email to applicantselection@jcha.us. Please include your name, address, phone number, and the last four digits of your social security numbers. You will receive a reply within 3 business days.

What may prevent me from receiving housing assistance?

There are many reasons why an application may be denied, including, but not limited to:

- Failed criminal background check
- Whether you or your household members owe any debts to JCHA or to another subsidized housing property or public housing authority
- Previous evictions
- Income over the federally-mandated income limits (see income limits below)
- Failure to appear for scheduled appointments
- Failure to provide necessary documents or information for JCHA to determine your eligibility
- Misrepresentation or Fraud: Evidence that the applicant provided false information on the application form or verification documents or provided false information in an Applicant Selection interview

All denials are based on the policies and regulations found in our [Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy](#) (ACOP) for public housing program. The JCHA is prohibited by federal law from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, and disability.

HUD income limits for 2019-2020:

Income Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
80% - Low Income	51,350	58,700	60,050	73,350	79,250	85,100	91,000	96,850

How are applicants to the waiting list ranked?

Applicants are ranked based on meeting the qualifications for one of the following Local Preferences:

1. Victims of a Federally Declared Disaster
2. Jersey City Resident/Working Family/Income Mixing
3. Jersey City Resident/Victim Witness or Victim of Domestic Violence
4. Jersey City Resident/Working Family/Veterans
5. Jersey City Resident/Working Family
6. Jersey City Resident/Veterans
7. Jersey City Resident
8. Other

Within these preferences, individuals/families requiring a wheelchair accessible unit are offered a vacant wheelchair accessible unit by the appropriate bedroom size before individuals/families that do not require a wheelchair accessible unit.

The Applicant Selection Department monitors all site-based waiting lists to ensure that placements agency-wide follow these preferences.

What does “preliminary waiting list” mean?

The preliminary waiting list is a pool of applicants waiting to be contacted for an eligibility interview. It is the initial stage of the application process upon submission of your application to JCHA.

Why are the waiting lists so long?

Public housing authorities are federally mandated to maintain waiting lists large enough to ensure that available units/vouchers are offered to qualified low-income individuals/families as quickly as possible when they become available. Given the range of unit sizes and designations (e.g., senior/disable, veteran, etc.) JCHA has to offer, our waiting lists must be sufficiently long to ensure there will be a qualified applicant for every unit/voucher.

What happens when my name nears the top of the waiting list?

When your name nears the top of the waiting list, you will receive a letter in the mail with a date and time to attend an eligibility interview at our office. It will also contain a list of all the documents you will need to bring with you.

The eligibility interview will take approximately 45 minutes. After the interview, the JCHA will verify the information you have provided and conduct a criminal background check for everyone in the household over the age of 18. Once we decide whether you are eligible or ineligible, you will be notified by letter, usually within four weeks.

If you are determined eligible for the public housing program, we will begin offering you public housing units that meet your needs, in the developments you have selected, as units become available.

Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to apply for housing assistance?

No, you do not have to be a citizen; however, you must have eligible immigration status. At the time of the eligibility interview, everyone in the household will be required to declare their citizenship status and provide proof of identity. Non-citizens with eligible immigration status will be required to provide proof of eligible immigration status as well.

If I have moved since the time I submitted my application, do I need to notify the JCHA?

Yes! You must report any change of address to the JCHA, either in person, email to applicantselection@jcha.us, or in writing to the following address:

JERSEY CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Attn: Waiting List Updates
400 U.S. Highway 1
Jersey City, NJ 07306

We are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

We do not accept changes by phone – they MUST be in writing.

Please note: reporting a change of address at the post office will NOT change your address with the JCHA. You must update us separately.

Most of our communication with you will be conducted by mail. This is why it is extremely important to keep us updated with your current address. If a letter we send you is returned undeliverable by the post office, your name will be removed from the waiting list without further notice.

You may also report changes of phone number or employment by writing a brief letter that includes your name, social security number, and address (both old and new if you have moved) or phone number. For changes of employment, please include employer’s name, address, and phone number, rate of pay and number of hours worked per week.

Can I add and remove family members from my application?

You may request to add or remove family members from your application. Any request to add somebody to your household must be approved by the JCHA. All adult members will be subject to a criminal background check as well as a check of whether they owe any debts to us or to another housing authority. Any member of the household that you remove from your application will be prohibited from living in the subsidized unit.

What is the maximum income a household may earn and still qualify for housing assistance in public housing?

A family’s combined annual gross income must NOT exceed HUD Income Limits. The following are HUDs income limits for 2019-2020:

Income Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
80% - Low Income	51,350	58,700	60,050	73,350	79,250	85,100	91,000	96,850

How much will I pay in rent?

Your rent will be based on your income. As a general guideline, you will pay approximately 30 percent of your adjusted monthly income as rent.

There are many factors that go into our calculations. [Please refer to the HUD fact sheet on how your rent is determined.](#)