

Section 8 Housing Assistance Program Navigation Guide



“Do you need help paying your rent?”

Section 1: Program Information

Purpose of the Program: The Section 8 Program is a voucher program that helps people with low-income afford their housing. The program is funded through the federal government but is managed by local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs). If you qualify for Section 8, you will pay 30-40% of your income for housing and Section 8 will pay the rest. There is also a Section 8 Homeownership Program, which helps to buy a home and meet monthly expenses of homeownership.

Deadline: You can apply at any time, as long as the Public Housing Authority has an open waiting list. It is suggested to apply to multiple Public Housing Authorities, as you are more likely to receive services sooner.

Contact Information: Different cities and counties have their own Public Housing Authorities. Contact information for all Public Housing Authorities can be found here: https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/PHA_Contact_Report_MN.pdf

Note: Some Public Housing Authorities do not cover Section 8-Under the ‘Type’ column, look for the words ‘Combined’ or ‘Section 8’.

Below is the contact information for several large PHAs in Minnesota. Additional contact information can be found at the link listed above.

Minneapolis:

MN002	PHA in and for the City of Minneapolis Phone: (612)342-1400 Fax: (612)335-4401 Email: Abdiwarsame@mplspha.org	1001 WASHINGTON Avenue N MINNEAPOLIS MN, 55401	Combined
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St. Paul:

MN001	Public Housing Agency of the City of St Paul Phone: (651)298-5664 Fax: (651)298-4258 Email: Jon.Gutzmann@stpha.org	555 N. Wabasha Street SAINT PAUL MN , 55102	Combined
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St. Cloud:

MN038	HRA of ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA Phone: (320)252-0880 Fax: (320)252-0889 Email: lreis@stcloudhra.com	1225 W. Saint Germain SAINT CLOUD MN , 56301	Combined
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You can check the status of waitlists at this link:

<https://www.housinglink.org/SubsidizedHousing/HousingAuthorityWaitingList>

Current PHAs that have open wait lists for certain populations are listed below:

Open Waiting Lists

Bloomington HRA

Rental Home for Future Home Buyers

Dakota CDA

Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers

Workforce Housing: 1, 2 & 3 BR

Senior Housing: 2 BR

Minneapolis PHA

Public Housing: Disabled

Public Housing: Near Elderly (Age 50-61)

Public Housing: Senior (Age 62+)

South St Paul HRA

Public Housing: Seniors

St Louis Park HA

Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (August 11th - 13th)

Certain PHAs, such as St. Louis Park, will have waiting list lotteries where you can apply for a chance to be placed on the waiting list. That information can also be found on HousingLink:

<https://www.housinglink.org/SubsidizedHousing/HousingAuthorityWaitingList/st-louis-park-housing-authority/section-8-housing-choice-vouchers>

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

Basic Eligibility: The exact income limits vary by area, and can be found by visiting the Housing and Urban Development website here:

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>. Households with lower than 50% of median income may qualify, although most households that receive Section 8 have lower than 30% of the median income in the area.

In the Twin Cities Metro Area, here are the average limits, although it can vary from city to city.

FY 2020 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income Explanation	FY 2020 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area	\$103,400	Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$) Explanation	36,200	41,400	46,550	51,700	55,850	60,000	64,150	68,250
		Extremely Low Income Limits (\$)* Explanation	21,700	24,800	27,900	31,000	33,500	36,000	39,640	44,120
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$) Explanation	54,950	62,800	70,650	78,500	84,800	91,100	97,350	103,650

NOTE: HUD generally uses the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) area definitions in the calculation of income limit program parameters. However, to ensure that program parameters do not vary significantly due to area definition changes, HUD has used custom geographic definitions for the **Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area**.

The **Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area** contains the following areas: Anoka County, MN; Carver County, MN; Chisago County, MN; Dakota County, MN; Hennepin County, MN; Isanti County, MN; Ramsey County, MN; Scott County, MN; Sherburne County, MN; Washington County, MN; Wright County, MN; Pierce County, WI; and St. Croix County, WI.

- Additional factors are considered with your application, including:
 - Past history with federal housing programs
 - Criminal background
 - Credit History

Section 3: Application Process

Every Housing Authority has its own, separate application to complete.

You will need the following information:

- How many people live in your household
- How the members of your household are related
- How much income you have
- If you have a disability

Warning: If you need help with your application, you can get it from your local Housing Authority Staff - NEVER pay for an application or voucher as it is illegal

Section 4: Expectations (What will happen?)

What is the timeline for receiving services?

- Unfortunately, even if you qualify for Section 8, you probably won't be able to receive assistance right away.
- Section 8 can only help a limited amount of people at a time. The wait time varies between Public Housing Authorities, but most waiting lists are either several years long or not open at all, meaning you cannot even submit an application at this time.
- The typical wait time to receive Section 8 Assistance is several years.

With whom will participants be communicating?

You will communicate with the local housing authority or housing authorities that you submitted an application to. Contact information can be found here:

https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/PHA_Contact_Report_MN.pdf

What additional steps must participants take to receive services?

- If you qualify for a Section 8 Housing voucher, you will still need to find a place to live.
- The place will have to be within size and rent limits, and the landlord must accept Section 8 as payment

- You can find places to live through HousingLink (<https://www.housinglink.org/>), looking at bulletin boards in the community, searching newspaper ads, getting recommendations from people you know, or by asking your PHA or nonprofits that help with housing
- You can also chat online with a Hub Expert (scroll to the bottom of this page <https://mn.hb101.org/a/12/> and click on the link)
- Seniors can call the Senior LinkAge Line (SLL) at 1-800-333-2433

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About Summer Reads:

This resource was created by Summer Reads VISTA members. Summer Reads is an [AmeriCorps VISTA national service](#) program of Literacy Minnesota. For 8 weeks over the summer, Summer Reads VISTA members volunteer full-time as children's/youth literacy mentors in schools, libraries and out-of-school-time programs across Minnesota. They bring literacy to life for low-income students through a variety of activities – one-on-one tutoring, creative enrichment activities like using arts and drama to explore language or practicing vocabulary and comprehension in science and other subjects. They also connect students and parents/caregivers to community resources through wrap-around basic needs support. At the same time, the VISTA members build their own leadership, explore career paths, pay for college and become lifelong advocates for the communities they serve due to the power of their experience. www.literacymn.org/summerreads