

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. When will the waiting list for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Project Based Voucher (PBV) be open?**

→ The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (BHRA) will be accepting applications online for its Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) and Project Based Voucher waiting lists on Monday, July 15, 2024, and will remain open.

**2. How can I apply?**

→ You can apply online at [bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov](https://bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov).

**3. How are applications selected?**

→ All eligible applications will be sorted by preference, and then by date and time they are received. More information regarding the application process and program eligibility is available at [bloomingtonmn.gov/hra](https://bloomingtonmn.gov/hra).

**4. Can I come into the BHRA office to apply?**

→ Yes, you can come to the Bloomington Civic Plaza to receive assistance with your application. Additionally, on July 15, 2024, through July 26, 2024, BHRA will be hosting application workshops from 10am-2pm at the Bloomington Civic Plaza for application support.

**5. Can BHRA help me with the application?**

→ Yes, BHRA can help you to submit your application online. Stop by the Bloomington HRA Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm for assistance.  
→ Additionally, on July 15, 2024, through July 26, 2024, BHRA will be hosting application workshops from 10am-2pm at the Bloomington Civic Plaza for application support.

**6. I do not have a computer with Internet access. How can I complete the application?**

→ You can apply with any Internet-connected device, including a smartphone or tablet. You can also find a computer at your local library or at the BHRA office.

**7. What information do I need to apply for the waiting list?**

→ The application requires name, SSN, email, and date of birth for all household members. The head of household applying will need to provide an email address that they have consistent access to and income information for anyone over 18 years old.

**8. I am nervous about putting my information on this site. How do I know it's secure?**

→ The website is protected using industry-standard SSL (Secure Socket Layer) technology and is hosted on dedicated servers in a secure data center. All sensitive data and Personally Identifiable Information, including social security numbers, dates of birth are encrypted.

**9. What if I don't have a permanent address of where I am living?**

→ You will have an option to provide BHRA with any address where we can reach you by mail. You can also use General Delivery along with the city and ZIP code, or a P.O. Box.

**10. Can I apply more than once? Can my spouse and I each put in a separate application?**

→ No, you may not apply more than once. Only one application is allowed per household.

**11. Can someone else apply on behalf of me or assist me with the application?**

→ No, A trusted third party can assist you with completing the application process, however signature authorization is required to submit the application. Please be advised that by submitting the application you are certifying that all information you provided is true and complete.

**12. I have a disability. How do I ask for reasonable accommodation to apply for the waiting list?**

→ Applicants who need reasonable accommodation due to a disability that impacts their ability to complete an online application to the waiting list are encouraged to submit written request to the BHRA's office at 1800 West Old Shakopee Rd Bloomington, MN 55431 or email us at [hra@blommingtonmn.gov](mailto:hra@blommingtonmn.gov) stating the reason why the application cannot be filled out online. If approved by the HRA, a paper application will be mailed out.

**13. I started my application but lost my internet connection in the middle. Can I continue it?**

→ If you did not click submit and receive a confirmation number, you will need to start the application over.

**14. I am already on the Bloomington Section 8 waiting list. Do I need to re-apply?**

→ No. We will go through everyone on our current waiting list before we pull applications from the new list. However, you may apply to other housing authorities' waitlists at this time. To confirm your current application status, please email the HRA at [hrawaitinglist@bloomingtonmn.gov](mailto:hrawaitinglist@bloomingtonmn.gov)

**15. How long will I wait for a voucher?**

- Wait times depend on many variables. Your wait time will depend on where you are placed on the list and funding availability.
- With the high demand for assistance from our programs, please prepare to be on the waitlist for several years before you are selected to be a participant on the program.
  - If you have a housing emergency, please contact Hennepin County Emergency Shelter line at 844-803-9466.
  - You may also call Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP) for counseling at 952-888-9616.

**16. How can I check my waiting list status?**

- You may check your application status for our Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher programs at [bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov](http://bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov).

**17. My status says active. What do I do?**

- You do not need to do anything because you are already on the waiting list. Please check your email regularly for update requests regarding your application. When you have been selected from the waiting list, you will receive more information regarding next steps from our office.

**18. What about if my waiting list status shows inactive?**

- If your waiting list status shows inactive, that means you are not on the Bloomington Housing Choice Voucher waiting list.

**19. How often does BHRA update the waiting list?**

- We send an email to all applications on the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list every six months to update their contact information and give them 30 days to respond. After 30 days any applicant who did not respond will be removed from the waiting list.

**20. When will the BHRA waiting list close?**

- Moving forward, BHRA intends to keep the Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher waiting list open, and you can apply anytime to place your name on the waiting list.

**21. How can I update my waiting list contact information?**

- You may check your application status for our Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher programs by logging into the portal at [bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov](http://bhra.bloomingtonmn.gov).
- For any question about your waiting list, please send us an email: [HRAwaitinglist@bloomingtonmn.gov](mailto:HRAwaitinglist@bloomingtonmn.gov) and we will respond back to you.

**22. Will immigration status affect my family eligibility?**

→ No, immigration documentation status does not impact a family's eligibility.

**23. What is a Housing Choice Voucher?**

→ A Housing Choice Voucher, historically called "Section 8," is a rental subsidy for low-income households in the United States. There are typically long wait lists for families who want to receive vouchers.

→ Families who receive vouchers search for housing on the private rental market. With a voucher, the rent payment is shared between the tenant and the HRA through a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) made monthly to the property. The rental amounts are determined based on family income and current BHRA payment standards.

**24. Which areas are eligible for section 8?**

→ BHRA only administers Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers within the city limits of Bloomington. Suburban areas are covered by other housing agencies. Program rules may vary for other housing agencies. Visit [www.Housinglink.org](http://www.Housinglink.org) for a listing of Housing Authorities within the 7 County Metro area.

**25. Can owners raise the rent?**

→ Contract rent increases are allowed in accordance with the lease terms. Rent increases are allowed at the annual renewal of the lease and HAP Contract. Property owners must notify BHRA of any increase in rent at least 60 days prior to the effective date.

**26. When will the owner receive the subsidy payments?**

→ The first payment for a tenant moving into your unit will be released within 45-60 days after the start date of the lease agreement. Payments will be retroactive to the rental subsidy start date.

**27. What will cause the rent portions to change?**

→ Rent portions may change at the family's annual re-examination, or with a change in the Contract Rent. Changes may also occur mid-year due to a change in the family's income or the family's composition. The owner and the family will be notified in writing of any change in the rent portions.

**28. Who is responsible for utilities?**

→ The Section 8 HCV Program does not have rules about which party is responsible for utilities. Utility responsibility is based upon the terms of the lease agreement.

**29. Does section 8 provide security deposits?**

- BHRA does not assist families with security deposits. For assistance with security deposits, households can contact Hennepin County Emergency Rent Assistance or VEAP.

**30. What should an owner do if a tenant violates the lease?**

- Lease violations by Section 8 HCV tenants must be managed in the same manner as you would with unassisted tenants and in accordance with applicable laws. The lease is between the tenant and the owner. BHRA is not a party to the lease.
- BHRA advises the owner to notify the family “in writing”, of any lease violations, request the necessary change(s), and state a deadline for the correction of the violations. A copy of this correspondence MUST be forwarded to BHRA.
- If the family does not comply with the written correspondence, the owner must initiate a legal court eviction by contacting the Clerk of Court and filing an Unlawful Detainer Action.
- The owner must notify BHRA, in writing, of the commencement of termination procedures. This can be done by furnishing BHRA with a copy of the Unlawful Detainer. The owner must notify BHRA of the outcome of the Unlawful Detainer action and the actual court ordered date of eviction.

**31. When will the owner know what the tenant portion of the rent is?**

- Upon receipt of the executed HAP contract BHRA will release payments and notify in writing both the owner and the tenant of the final rent portions.
- The calculation of the final rent portions and the drafting of the Housing Assistance Payment Contract (HAP) may take up to 45 days for completion.
- Participant families are instructed to pay the estimated rent portion to the owner until the final calculations are completed.

**32. When can a tenant move in?**

- If a tenant moves in before the assistance starts, the tenant is responsible for the full rent until rental subsidy is authorized. BHRA will only begin rental assistance as of the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month after a unit passes inspection and the family, property owner and lease agreement have been approved.
- For example, if a unit fails an inspection on May 26<sup>th</sup>, and the required repairs aren't complete until June 5<sup>th</sup>, the tenant may move in on June 1<sup>st</sup>, but BHRA will prorate rental assistance payments based on the date of the passed inspection. In this example, the tenant would be responsible for the whole rent amount from June 1<sup>st</sup> until June 5<sup>th</sup>.

**33. Can BHRA deny housing assistance?**

→ Yes. BHRA is required by federal law and regulations to deny assistance if you do not qualify.

**34. How many offers can a tenant receive for a housing unit?**

→ You will be provided with up to two offers. If you do not accept the first offer, you will then have one additional unit offer. If you do not accept either offer, you will be taken off the wait list and you must reapply to be reconsidered.

**35. How long will it take for me to be housed?**

→ The wait for housing varies, depending on the size of your family and the length of the waiting list. It may take five years or more from the approval date of your application before an offer of housing is made to you. The time, however, varies from list to list.

**36. I do not speak, read, or write English. Can I apply in other languages? Can I get an interpreter?**

→ The online application is available in English, Spanish, Somali, and Vietnamese. You can also translate the application into 60 languages using a built-in Google Translate feature. You may call 612-342-1975 or come into our office and we will arrange a free interpreter.