

HRA HOME-Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program

Fact Sheet

July 2015

What is the HRA HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program?

HRA HOME TBRA is a United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-funded rental assistance program run by the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) under the oversight of the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). HRA HOME TBRA will help eligible families in shelter and chronically street homeless people afford the cost of rent. There is a limited amount of funding, so not every household in shelter or street homeless person who meets the eligibility rules will be able to get rental assistance under this program.

How does the program work?

Under the HRA HOME TBRA program, households will generally pay 30% of adjusted income toward rent for an approved apartment and the HOME TBRA subsidy covers the rest. "Adjusted income" means a household's income after deductions that are allowed under the program. **Households will have until 9/03/2015 to submit an application for the HOME program.** HRA will place all applications into a lottery and will review applications in order of selection from the lottery. Just over 1,200 eligible applicants will receive HOME coupons. Once the coupons are all given out, the rest of the eligible families will be put on a waiting list.

The HRA HOME TBRA coupon will allow the household to search for an eligible apartment. At a "briefing," HRA will tell the head of household about the program's rules and responsibilities under the HOME TBRA program and will give the head of household a Landlord Package, together with their coupon. The household cannot find an apartment outside of the five boroughs of New York City. When the household finds an apartment, a Landlord Package must be completed to request approval for the apartment. The apartment must pass a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection.

Who is eligible for HOME TBRA?

In order to be eligible for HOME TBRA, your household must:

- Either include at least two people or a pregnant person who currently lives in a NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) or HRA shelter OR be Chronically Street Homeless (a chronically street homeless individual is someone who has been identified by DHS as either currently living on the streets and having lived on the streets for nine months of the past twenty-four months or currently living in a DHS safe haven or using a DHS stabilization bed.)
- Have household income that does not exceed 60% of Area Median Income (AMI) (AMI is the median family income for NYC. For example, 60% AMI for a household of two is \$41,460)
- Have at least one household member who receives federal social security disability insurance benefits, old-age benefits, survivors insurance benefits, or supplemental security income.
- Have lived in shelter for more than 120 days as of the application deadline (except for Chronically Street Homeless individuals).

How can potential tenants apply?

HRA will send applications to households that are potentially eligible for the program based on information provided to DHS and HRA. Families, adult families, or chronically street homeless individuals who did not get an application from HRA can also ask for an application from their shelter or outreach worker.

How long is a HOME TBRA Coupon valid?

A HOME TBRA Coupon is valid for 120 days (almost four months). The household must find an apartment within New York City and return a completed Landlord Package by the end of the 120-day period. If the coupon expires, the household may get more search time for good cause due to hardship or other reasons.

How does a household with a coupon find an apartment and sign a lease?

Once the household has received a HOME TBRA coupon, the shelter housing specialist or case manager will assist in connecting with landlords and brokers. The coupon will list a "unit size," based on the number of people in your household and the maximum rent for that unit size. When the household finds an apartment, the shelter worker will work with the broker or landlord to ask for a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection by HPD and submit the Landlord Package with the leasing documents and any additional documentation to HRA for approval.

If the unit passes the HQS inspection and the unit is approved by HRA, HRA will work with DHS to schedule the lease signing. The tenant will sign a lease with the broker or landlord at 109 East 16th Street in Manhattan. The tenant may be eligible to receive a furniture allowance and the tenant should work with the shelter case worker to get help with moving.

A household that finds an apartment without the help of a shelter worker should let the shelter worker know right away so that an inspection can be done and the landlord can be given the program documents.

Please note that landlords are not allowed to charge any fees other than what is legally stated in the lease. Households should not agree to any side deals and should immediately inform DHS and HRA about any such requests by calling 929-221-0043.

How long will the tenant receive HOME TBRA?

Just like a Section 8 voucher, a HOME TBRA coupon can be renewed each year as long as the tenant is still eligible and federal funding for the program remains available.

What is the amount of rental assistance available and how much does the tenant have to pay toward rent?

The maximum rent or “rent standard” for each household will depend on the number of people in the household. The Rent Standards, **which include heat and hot water**, are listed in the chart below.

Family Size	Unit Size	Rent Standards
1	SRO/Studio	\$942 (SRO) \$1,256 (Studio)
2	1	\$1,312
3 or 4	2	\$1,555
5 or 6	3	\$1,999
7 or 8	4	\$2,241
9 or 10	5	\$2,577
11 or 12	6	\$2,913
13 or 14	7	\$3,249

The unit size, and therefore the Rent Standard, may change if the number of individuals in your household changes (goes up or down) during the program. HRA will figure out the tenant’s rent contribution, which will be the highest of the options below:

- 30% of the household's monthly adjusted income;
- 10% of the household's monthly gross income;
- Public assistance shelter allowance (that portion of the New York State public assistance grant that is specifically meant for housing costs); or
- \$50.

The HOME TBRA subsidy amount will be set after an apartment has been approved by HRA. The subsidy amount will be the difference between the tenant’s contribution and the full rent.

Are utilities included in the rent?

Heat and hot water must be included in the rent. The tenant will be responsible for electricity and cooking gas.

HOME TBRA Example

Example: You are part of a two person household. HRA will pay for a one-bedroom apartment that costs up to \$1,312 per month. If your income is \$1,000 per month and the rent on your one-bedroom apartment is \$1,312 (the maximum rent) HRA will calculate 30% of your income as \$300 that you should pay towards rent. HRA will pay your landlord \$1,012 (the \$1,312 rent minus your \$300 share of rent).

What help can tenants and landlords receive after the lease starts?

Support is available for tenants and landlords in the program. Call 311 to be directed to your nearest Homebase Homelessness Prevention program.