

Applying for Affordable Housing

What does it mean for housing to be “affordable”?

Housing is considered affordable when households spend no more than about one-third of their income on rent. If a family has to spend more than one-third of their income on rent, they are considered ‘rent burdened’.

WHERE TO GO

Begin your search for affordable housing at nyc.gov/housingconnect

WHAT TO DO

1 LOOK

Find affordable housing listings on Housing Connect or in newspapers.



2 LEARN

Learn about eligibility and application requirements.



3 APPLY

Register and apply online or mail your application in.



4 WAIT and PREPARE

It may take 2 to 12 months for applications to be processed.



5 QUALIFY

If selected, submit eligibility documents



6 SIGN or REAPPLY

Rent or buy if you are eligible. If rejected, challenge via appeal or apply to others.



For more information flip the page or visit us online at: nyc.gov/housingconnect

1 LOOK



Find Affordable Housing Listings

Visit NYC Housing Connect to view all developments accepting applications. NYC Housing Connect even includes existing affordable housing units that become available at turnover—these are called re-rental units: nyc.gov/housingconnect

Call 311 and ask for the Affordable Housing Hotline.

Look for advertisements in newspapers and posters at construction sites.

Contact local community organizations, including Housing Ambassadors, for help. Find a list of Ambassadors on HPD's website: nyc.gov/housing-ambassadors

Read the Ad Carefully

Different affordable housing developments have different eligibility requirements. You may fall into different categories for different developments, depending on your household size and income.

2 LEARN



Check to See If...

- your combined household income is between a development's low and high limits. Find HPD informational guides, including the Income Guide, at: nyc.gov/hpd/findhousing

- your household meets the unit size requirements of the development.

- you need help understanding your credit history. Visit one of the City's Financial Empowerment Centers to learn more: nyc.gov/talkmoney

Find out if you qualify for a preference. Some units are reserved for people who...

- have a mobility, hearing, and/or vision disability.

- live in the five boroughs.

- live in the same Community District as the development. Find yours at: communityprofiles.planning.nyc.gov

- work for the City of New York.

3 APPLY



Apply Online

Create an account on NYC Housing Connect: nyc.gov/housingconnect

Once you apply, developers will see your profile in real-time, so it's important to update your profile any time your household situation or income changes.

Or Apply Through the Mail

Follow the instructions on the advertisement to request a paper application by mail.

Answer all of the questions on the application to the best of your knowledge. False or incomplete information may disqualify you.

Sign and date your application, or it may be rejected. Submit your application before the deadline date.

Your Chances of Being Selected are the Same...

- whether you apply online or through mail.

- no matter when you submit your application, as long as it is before the deadline.

4 WAIT and PREPARE



Wait While Applications Are Processed

After the deadline, all of the applications are put into a random order and assigned a log number.

The developer reviews them in log number order (starting with those who meet preference categories) and contacts applicants. See Step 2 for a list of preference categories.

Prepare While You Wait

A property may receive many thousands of applications. You may hear about the status of your application within two to twelve months after the deadline. Use this time to prepare to have your eligibility reviewed:

- use HPD's informational guides: nyc.gov/hpd/findhousing

- begin saving documents in NYC Housing Connect: nyc.gov/housingconnect

Remember That You Might Not Hear Back

Because there are so many applications, you may not be contacted, even if you could have qualified. You are most likely to be contacted if you are randomly assigned a low log number or you qualify for a preference.

5 QUALIFY



Have Your Eligibility Reviewed

If your log number comes up, the developer will contact you to submit documents. This is to confirm that you meet eligibility criteria.

Respond immediately, as spots are limited, and you will only have a few business days to submit your documents.

Receiving a request for eligibility review does NOT guarantee that you will receive affordable housing.

Submit Documentation

The developer's request will include a list of all documents you must provide. Prepare early (see step 4).

If you applied online, you can upload all of your documents into Housing Connect, to share them directly with the developer. If you applied on paper, you will be asked to deliver your documents or submit them by mail.

Wait for Confirmation

After the developer verifies your eligibility, HPD or HDC will review your file for accuracy. The developer will contact you if there are questions.

6 SIGN or REAPPLY



Finalize the lease or purchase

If you are found eligible, you may be offered the choice to sign a lease or pursue a purchase

Appeal the Decision

If you are found not eligible, you will receive a rejection notice. If you disagree, follow the instructions on the rejection notice to appeal the decision.

In writing, explain the reason you believe the rejection was in error and provide supporting documentation.

The developer will contact you with the result of your appeal. If you disagree, follow the instructions on the appeal rejection notice to send a complaint to HPD or HDC.

Apply to Other Opportunities

Don't get discouraged if you don't qualify for a development. New affordable housing opportunities become available all the time, and you can apply to as many as you want.