



SECTION 8 FAQs: Agency Referrals

Frequently Asked Questions Agency Referrals Updated June 2022

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What is Section 8?

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, also referred to as Section 8, provides funding for rent subsidies for eligible low-income families for decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Eligible families receive a voucher to begin their housing search. The voucher allows families to search for housing within a neighborhood of their choice and rent a unit from a landlord willing to participate in the program. The program allows families to pay a reasonable share of their income toward rent while the program, within specific limits, pays the remaining amount to the owner.

2. What types of referrals will NYCHA be accepting for its HCV Program?

NYCHA's HCV waitlist is closed to the general public.

NYCHA is **ONLY** accepting referrals for its HCV waitlist for the specific categories listed below:

- Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative referrals from the Administration for Children's Services (*effective 7/1/2022*)
- Homeless applicant referrals from the Department of Homeless Services (*effective 7/1/2022*)
- Homeless applicant referrals from Department of Homeless (*effective 7/1/2022*)
- Victims of Domestic Violence Referred by Prosecutorial or Law Enforcement Agency (*effective 6/8/2020*)
- Intimidated Witnesses Referred by Prosecutorial or Law Enforcement Agency (*effective 6/8/2020*)
- NYCHA public housing residents required to move or referred by NYCHA's Public Housing Operations Department because their unit is not habitable, they are at risk of displacement, or they are extremely under occupied or extremely overcrowded in their current apartment. (*effective 6/8/2020*)



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HOW TO REFER ELIGIBLE CASES TO NYCHA

3. How do I refer eligible cases to NYCHA for HCV assistance?

The referral must come from a child welfare agency (FYI referral), Department of Homeless Services (homeless referral), or from a law enforcement or prosecutorial agency (DV or IW referral).

The referring entity initiates the referral process by entering the username and password provided by NYCHA into the portal: <https://selfserve.nycha.info> and clicking on 'Refer Case.'

Once the case is created, a temporary username and password will be issued for the referral/applicant to complete the application online.

Once the application is complete, the applicant will be contacted by NYCHA for an eligibility interview.

NOTE: Please see reference documents provided, "Agency Referral Case Creation Process" and "Agency Referral Online Application Instructions (for applicants)" for step-by-step instructions on how to use the portal.

4. Do I need the applicant's Social Security number (SSN) to submit a referral?

Yes. The applicant's SSN is required to submit a referral. If the applicant does not have a valid SSN because of their citizenship status, you must provide the applicant's name and date of birth.

5. Can I submit a referral for NYCHA's HCV waitlist if the person(s) is currently living in public housing?

Yes.

6. What if the individual is already on NYCHA's HCV waitlist?

At the end of the referral process, if the applicant is already on NYCHA's HCV



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waitlist, the system will provide the existing case number for the applicant. The applicant can use this information to complete the online application.

AFTER A REFERRAL IS SUBMITTED

7. How long will it take for a referral to be contacted for an interview?

The referral (applicant) will be contacted to come in for an interview when NYCHA reaches their name on its HCV waitlist.

8. How do I know what number the applicant is on NYCHA's HCV waitlist?

Applicants do not have a specific number on NYCHA's HCV waitlist. Applicants are placed on the waitlist list in order of any applicable preference and application date.

9. How do I check the status of an HCV application?

You can check the status of an application by logging onto:
<https://selfserve.nycha.info>

10. What can I do to expedite an application?

We cannot expedite an application at the request of an individual or third party. Applicants are selected from NYCHA's HCV waitlist based on any applicable preference and application date.

11. What does "any applicable preference" mean?

Applications are assigned a preference code based upon the information provided on the application. NYCHA uses the preference code to determine the priority of the case. A complete list of NYCHA's HCV Program preferences can be found in NYCHA's Administrative Plan, available online.

12. What does it mean when an applicant is on NYCHA's HCV waitlist?

After an individual submits an HCV application to NYCHA, the waitlist is the initial stage of the application process. The waitlist is a pool of applicants waiting to be reached for an eligibility interview.



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ELIGIBILITY

13. Does NYCHA consider criminal offenses when determining eligibility for its HCV program?

Criminal offenses are taken into consideration for NYCHA's HCV Program in accordance with HUD regulations. (See NYCHA's Administrative Plan, available online, for further details.)

14. If an applicant/family member has a criminal record will they be eligible to receive HCV assistance?

It depends on when the offense took place. Different offenses carry different ineligibility periods.

15. If the applicant is not a citizen, or does not have a SSN, are they ineligible for NYCHA's HCV Program?

You do not have to have a SSN or be a citizen of the United States to apply for HCV assistance, but at least one member of your family must be a United States citizen or a non-citizen with eligible immigration status to qualify for HCV assistance.

VOUCHER ISSUANCE & SEARCHING

16. When will the referral/applicant receive a voucher?

We cannot estimate when applicants will be issued a voucher. Applicants will be contacted for an eligibility interview when they are reached on the waitlist. If the applicant is found eligible at the time of the eligibility interview, the applicant will be issued a voucher and rental packet.

17. Can the referral/applicant start searching for an apartment before they are issued a voucher?

We do not recommend searching for an apartment before a voucher is issued.

18. How many bedrooms will be on the voucher?



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Bedroom size is based on family composition and NYCHA’s occupancy standards. The referral/applicant will be given this information when they are called in for an eligibility interview.

Voucher bedroom sizes are based on NYCHA’s occupancy standards below.

# of People	Household Composition	Certified Bedroom Size
1	Single Person	0
2	Head of Household & Spouse/Domestic Partner	1
	2 Persons of the Same Sex	1
	2 Persons of Different Sexes	2
3	Head of Household & Spouse/Domestic Partner <u>and</u> 1 Person (any sex)	2
	3 Persons of the Same Sex	2
	2 Persons of the Same Sex <u>and</u> 1 Person of a Different Sex	2
	3 Persons of Different Sexes	3
4	Head of Household & Spouse/Domestic Partner <u>and</u> 2 Persons of the Same Sex	2
	Head of Household & Spouse/Domestic Partner <u>and</u> 2 Persons of Different Sexes	3
	4 Persons of the Same Sex	2
	2 Persons of the Same Sex and 2 Persons of a Different Sex	2
	2 Persons of the Same Sex <u>and</u> 2 Persons of Different Sexes	3
	3 Persons of the Same Sex and 1 Person of a Different Sex	3
5	Any 5 Person Combination	3
6	Any 6 Person Combination	3
7	Any 7 Person Combination	4
8	Any 8 Person Combination	4

Applicants with pregnant household members may be eligible for an increased voucher size dependent upon total family composition as stated in the HCV Program Occupancy Chart.



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GENERAL WAITLIST QUESTIONS

19. How can I apply for HCV assistance (also known as Section 8)?

Currently, NYCHA's HCV waitlist is closed to the general public.

20. When will NYCHA's HCV waitlist be open to the general public?

It has not been determined when the waitlist will be opened.

21. What are the steps in the application process?

The waitlist is currently closed to the general public. When open, applicants complete a preliminary application. The applicant is placed on NYCHA's HCV waitlist in order of any applicable preference and application date. When an applicant's name is reached on the waitlist, they are contacted and asked to complete a full Section 8 application online. NYCHA will then conduct a criminal background check for all family members 16 years of age and above, and schedule the applicant for an in-person eligibility interview.