

## Chapter 3

### APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

[24 CFR 982.204]

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The policy of the PHA is to ensure that all families who express an interest in housing assistance are given an equal opportunity to apply, and are treated in a fair and consistent manner. This Chapter describes the policies and procedures for completing an initial application for assistance, placement and denial of placement on the waiting list, and limitations on who may apply. The primary purpose of the intake function is to gather information about the family, but the PHA will also utilize this process to provide information to the family so that an accurate and timely decision of eligibility can be made. Applicants will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with this Plan.

#### **A. OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION TAKING PROCESS**

The purpose of application taking is to permit the PHA to gather information and determine placement on the waiting list. The application will contain questions designed to obtain pertinent program information.

Families who wish to apply for any one of the PHA's programs must complete a written application form when application taking is open. Applications will be made available in an accessible format upon request from a person with a disability.

When the waiting list is open, any family asking to be placed on the waiting list for Section 8 rental assistance will be given the opportunity to complete an application.

Applications will be mailed to interested families upon request.

Applications will be available for download online at [www.delawaremha.org](http://www.delawaremha.org) and can be mailed to the housing authority anytime.

The application process will involve two phases. The first is the "initial" application for assistance (referred to as a pre-application). This first phase results in the family's placement on the waiting list.

The pre-application will be dated, time-stamped, and referred to the PHA's eligibility office where it will be maintained until such time as it is needed for processing.

The second phase is the "final determination of eligibility" (referred to as the full application). The final determination takes place when the family reaches the top of the waiting list. At this time the PHA ensures that verification of all HUD and PHA eligibility factors is current in order to determine the family's eligibility for the issuance of a voucher.

**B. OPENING/CLOSING OF APPLICATION TAKING** [24 CFR 982.206, 982.54(d)(1)]

The PHA will utilize the following procedures for opening the waiting list.

When the PHA opens the waiting list, the PHA will advertise through public notice in newspapers, minority publications, media entities, and with city and county service organizations, including those which assist persons with disabilities.

The notice will contain:

The dates, times, and the locations where families may apply.

The programs for which applications will be taken.

A brief description of the program.

If the waiting list is open, the PHA will accept applications from eligible families unless there is good cause for not accepting the application, such as denial of assistance because of action or inaction by members of the family for the grounds stated in the "Denial or Termination of Assistance" chapter of this Administrative Plan. [24 CFR 982.206(b)(2)]

**Closing the Waiting List**

The PHA may stop applications if there are enough applicants to fill anticipated openings for the next 12 months. The waiting list may not be closed if it would have a discriminatory effect inconsistent with applicable civil rights laws.

The PHA will announce the closing of the waiting list by public notice.

The open period shall be long enough to achieve a waiting list adequate to cover projected turnover and new allocations over the next 12 months. The PHA will give at least 14 calendar days' notice prior to closing the list. When the period for accepting applications is over, the PHA will add the new applicants to the list by date, time, veteran status and residency preference.

**Limits on Who May Apply**

When the waiting list is open:

Any family asking to be placed on the waiting list for Section 8 rental assistance will be given the opportunity to complete an application in the DMHA office on the first Thursday of every month from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. Applications may also be obtained on DMHA's website at [www.delawaremha.org](http://www.delawaremha.org).

When the application is submitted to the PHA:

It establishes the family's date and time of application for placement order on the waiting list.

Applications are processed at the end of the month they are received in the order they are received.

**C. "INITIAL" APPLICATION PROCEDURES** [24 CFR 982.204(b)]

The PHA will utilize a preliminary application form. The information is to be filled out by the applicant whenever possible. To provide specific accommodation for persons with disabilities, the information may be completed by a staff person. It may also be mailed to the applicant and, if requested, it will be mailed in an accessible format.

The purpose of the pre-application is to permit the PHA to preliminarily assess family eligibility or ineligibility and to determine placement on the waiting list.

Ineligible families will not be placed on the waiting list.

Pre-applications will require an interview. The information on the application will not be verified until the applicant has been selected for final eligibility determination. Final eligibility will be determined when the final application process is completed and all information is verified.

The pre-application will contain at least the following information:

Applicant name

Family Unit Size (number of bedrooms the family qualifies for under PHA subsidy standards)

Date and time of application

Qualification for any local preference

Racial or ethnic designation of the head of household

Annual (gross) family income

Targeted program qualifications

Duplicate applications, including applications from a segment of an applicant household, will not be accepted.

The pre-application will contain questions designed to obtain the following information:

Names of all members and age of all members

Sex and relationship of all members

Street address and phone numbers

Mailing Address (If PO Box or other permanent address)

Amount(s) and source(s) of income received by household members

Information regarding Disabilities relating to program requirements (i.e., deductions)

Information related to qualification for local preferences

Social Security Numbers

Race/Ethnicity

Citizenship/eligible immigration status

Request for Specific Accommodation needed to fully utilize program and services

Emergency contact person and address

Program integrity questions regarding previous participation in HUD programs

Failure to provide information or to respond to mailings will result in the applicant being removed from the waiting list. See Chapter on Complaints and Appeals.

**D. APPLICANT STATUS WHILE ON WAITING LIST** [CFR 982.204]

Applicants are required to inform the PHA of changes in address, family composition, income and address as well as any change in their local preference status. Applicants are also required to respond to requests from the PHA to update information on their application and to determine their interest in assistance.

If after a review of the pre-application the family is determined to be preliminarily eligible, they will be notified in writing or in an accessible format upon request, as a reasonable accommodation.

The notice will contain the approximate date that assistance may be offered, and will further explain that the estimated date is subject to factors such as turnover and available funding.

This written notification of preliminary eligibility will be:

Given to the applicant at the time the pre-application is submitted and or

Distributed to the applicant in the manner requested as a specific accommodation.

If the family is determined to be ineligible based on the information provided in the pre-application, the PHA will notify the family in writing (in an accessible format upon request as a reasonable accommodation), state the reason(s), and inform them of their right to an informal review. Persons with disabilities may request to have an advocate attend the informal review as an accommodation. See "Complaints and Appeals" chapter.

**E. TIME OF SELECTION** [24 CFR 982.204]

When funding is available, families will be selected from the waiting list in their determined sequence, regardless of family size, subject to income targeting requirements.

When there is insufficient funding available for the family at the top of the list, the PHA will not

admit any other applicant until funding is available for the first applicant.

## **F. COMPLETION OF A FULL APPLICATION**

All Local Preferences claimed on the pre-application or while the family is on the waiting list will be verified after the family is selected from the waiting list.

The qualification for local preference must exist at the time the local preference is verified regardless of the length of time an applicant has been on the waiting list as the local preference is based on current status.

### **Requirement to Attend Interview**

The PHA utilizes the full application interview to discuss the family's circumstances in greater detail, to clarify information, which has been provided by the family, and to ensure that the information is complete. The interview is also used as a vehicle to meet the informational needs of the family by providing information about the application and verification processes, as well as to advise the family of other PHA services or programs, which may be available.

All adult family members are required to attend the interview and sign the housing application.

Exceptions may be made for members for whom attendance would be a hardship.

It is the applicant's responsibility to reschedule the interview if s/he misses the appointment. If the applicant does not reschedule or misses two scheduled meetings, the PHA will reject the application.

Applicants who fail to appear and want to reschedule a missed appointment must make the request to reschedule no later than 10 calendar days from the original appointment date.

Reasonable accommodation will be made for persons with a disability who require an advocate or accessible offices. A designee will be allowed to participate in the interview process, but only with permission of the person with a disability.

If an application is denied due to failure to attend the full application interview, the applicant will be notified in writing and offered an opportunity to request an informal review. (See "Complaints and Appeals" chapter).

All adult members must sign the HUD Form 9886, Release of Information, the declarations and consents related to citizenship/immigration status and any other documents required by the PHA. Applicants will be required to sign specific verification forms for information, which is not covered, by the HUD form 9886. Failure to do so will be cause for denial of the application for failure to provide necessary certifications and release as required by the PHA.

Every adult household member may be required to sign a consent form to release criminal conviction records and the PHA may receive such records and use them in accordance with HUD regulations.

If the PHA determines at or after the interview that additional information or document(s) are needed, the PHA will request the document(s) or information in writing. The family will be given 14 calendar days to supply the information.

If the information is not supplied in this time period, the PHA will provide the family a notification of denial for assistance. (See "Complaints and Appeals" chapter)

**G. VERIFICATION** [24 CFR 982.201(e)]

Information provided by the applicant will be verified, using the verification procedures in the "Verification Procedures" chapter. Family composition, income, allowances and deductions, assets, full-time student status, eligibility and rent calculation factors, and other pertinent information will be verified. Verifications may not be more than 60 days old at the time of issuance of the Voucher.

**H. FINAL DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY** [24 CFR 982.201]

After the verification process is completed, the PHA will make a final determination of eligibility. This decision is based upon information provided by the family, the verification completed by the PHA, and the current eligibility criteria in effect. If the family is determined to be eligible, the PHA will mail a notification of eligibility. A briefing will be scheduled for the issuance of a voucher and the family's orientation to the housing program.