

## Waitlist Lottery Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. What is CHA's Waitlist Lottery?

- CHA's waitlist lottery is used to identify applicants for CHA assisted housing as it becomes available.
- In 2014, CHA opened its waitlist lottery registration process for three of its housing programs—Family Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher (formerly Section 8), and the Property Rental Assistance Program. For four weeks, between October 27<sup>th</sup> and November 24<sup>th</sup>, individuals had the opportunity to register for all three programs at one time.
- In 2015, a random lottery was conducted by a third-party vendor to select and place names on all three waitlists.

### 2. What is the difference between the Family Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and the Property Rental Assistance Program?

- Family Public Housing – provides housing assistance to low income individuals and families living in traditional family developments as well as scattered site and mixed-income properties.
- Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) formerly Section 8 – provides housing assistance to low income individuals and families using a voucher in the private rental market (voucher is provided to applicant).
- Property Rental Assistance (PRA) – provides housing assistance to low income individuals and families using a property based voucher in family and supportive housing properties (voucher is provided to landlord for specific unit).

### 3. How many names were placed on each waitlist?

Housing Program	Total Waitlist Applicants
Family Public Housing	30,000
Housing Choice Voucher	50,000
Property Rental Assistance	16,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>96,000</b>

### 4. I registered for CHA's waitlist lottery in 2014. How do I know if my name was selected and placed on a waitlist?

- Everyone that registered for the lottery and provided a valid mailing address will be notified of their waitlist status.
- If you have not received a letter confirming your waitlist status, please call: 1-844-242-4532 (1-844-CHA-4532).
- You may also visit CHA's main office at 60 E. Van Buren, Chicago IL 60605 to determine if you have been selected for any of the waitlists.

- 5. I was NOT selected for any of the waitlists, but I need affordable housing. What are my options?**
- If you are looking for other affordable housing opportunities, please visit [www.ilhousingsearch.org](http://www.ilhousingsearch.org).
  - If you are looking for emergency housing, please call 311 for the City of Chicago's city service hotline.
  - If you are 55 years of age or older, please note that CHA's senior housing wait list is always open. To apply for CHA senior housing, please visit: <https://applyonline.thecha.org/>
- 6. My name was placed on a waitlist but I've moved or my contact information has changed.**
- You are required to keep CHA informed of changes to your information. If you fail to keep CHA informed of your information, you may lose your place on the waitlist. Please visit the following website to update your contact information: [www.thecha.org/update](http://www.thecha.org/update)
- 7. My name was placed on the Family Public Housing waitlist. I do not remember the geographic preference I selected for housing when I registered for this waitlist. What should I do?**
- To ensure you are offered housing in only a specific geographic region of the City, please use the waitlist applicant update form at [www.thecha.org/update](http://www.thecha.org/update) to update your geographic preference.
- 8. My name was placed on a waitlist but the size of my household has changed since I registered. What should I do?**
- Please visit the following website to update the total number of people in your household: [www.thecha.org/update](http://www.thecha.org/update)
- 9. I don't have access to a computer to complete the online waitlist applicant update form. What are my options?**
- You may visit the Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center (4859 S. Wabash) or any Chicago Public Library for access to a computer (library card is required).
  - The online waitlist applicant update form may also be accessed from a smartphone or tablet.
- 10. My name was placed on a waitlist. What is the next step? How soon can I move into my apartment?**
- Once your name reaches the top of the waitlist, you will be contacted for screening.
  - The wait time for screening is one to five years.
  - If you fail screening or do not respond to outreach for screening, your name will be removed from the waitlist (all programs).

**11. What is involved in the screening process?**

- The screening process includes a criminal background, credit and residential history check. Annual income, family composition, social security numbers, citizenship or eligible immigration status of all family members are examples of information that will be verified during screening.
- False information provided during the screening process may result in you being ineligible for CHA housing programs.

**12. What are the basic requirements to be eligible for housing?**

- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Must meet eligibility guidelines found in CHA’s Administrative Plan (for HCV and PRA) or Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (for Public Housing). *Visit [thecha.org/policies](http://thecha.org/policies) to view or download these documents; you may also need to meet the site specific requirements for the property in which you are being screened.*
- Must meet income guidelines as set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The maximum income guidelines are as follows:

Family Size	Income May Not Exceed (80% AMI)
1	\$42,600
2	\$48,650
3	\$54,750
4	\$60,800
5	\$65,700
6	\$70,550
7	\$75,400
8	\$80,300

**13. How far back does the CHA look when conducting criminal background checks?**

The criminal background check look-back period varies among CHA programs according to the current CHA policy, federal regulations, and the specific property. In general, the following guidelines are currently in effect, but may vary depending on the specific property.

- For Family Public Housing, the current look-back period for criminal activity is 3 years.
- For Housing Choice Voucher and Property Rental Assistance, the current look-back period for criminal activity is 5 years.

- Please note that if any of the following criminal offenses show up on your criminal background check, you may be subject to a lifetime ban from CHA assistance: sex offenses, child molestation, arson, and manufacture/production of methamphetamine in or on any federally-assisted housing/property.

**14. My name was selected for a waitlist and I am currently homeless. Does CHA offer a housing preference for the homeless?**

No, CHA does not offer an admission preference to the homeless.

**15. I'm a veteran and my name was selected for a waitlist. Does CHA offer any housing preferences for veterans?**

Yes, CHA offers an admission preference to veterans.

**16. Does CHA offer other admission preferences?**

Yes, CHA offers additional ranking preferences that permit some applicants to be offered screening opportunities based on their specific situation.

- For Public Housing, the CHA Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) allows for ranking preferences to:
  - victims of federally declared disasters,
  - victims of domestic violence, and
  - families who are eligible for family preservation, which means you are currently working with the courts or Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).
- For HCV, the Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher program also allows for various ranking preferences for:
  - households where all non-disabled adults aged 18 – 55 are working or in school
  - victims of federally declared disasters in the City of Chicago,
  - participants of the State's Victim Assistance Program, etc.

**17. My name was selected for more than one waitlist. If I am housed from one waitlist, will I automatically be removed from the other waitlist(s)?**

No, your status on one CHA waitlist does not affect your status on another CHA waitlist.

**18. I registered for both the Family Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher waitlists but was only selected for Family Public Housing. If I no longer want to be housed in Public Housing, can I be transferred to the Housing Choice Voucher program?**

- No, waitlist results are final.

**19. Can you tell me what number I am on the waiting list?**

No, CHA does not provide waitlist placement numbers.

**20. I really need housing. Can the lottery be redone so that my name gets placed on one of waitlists?**

No, waitlist results are final.