

Section 8 Rental Assistance - Eligibility

The Section 8 Program provides rental assistance to help low-income persons afford decent and safe rental housing. Section 8 Programs are funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and administered by public housing agencies authorized under federal or state law to operate housing programs within an area or jurisdiction. The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) administers a Section 8 program throughout Orange County except the cities of Anaheim, Garden Grove, and Santa Ana.

A person selected to participate in the Section 8 Program is issued a Housing Choice Voucher and is then free to locate a rental unit in the private market. Once the family selects an apartment, house, etc., OCHA must inspect the unit before initial leasing and annually thereafter to ensure that the unit meets HUD housing quality standards (HQS). After the unit passes HQS inspection, OCHA will enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with the owner who leases the unit to a family. Thereafter, OCHA pays a portion of the rent to the owner on behalf of the family.

Under the Housing Choice Voucher Program, the family is generally required to pay approximately 30% of adjusted monthly income toward rent and utilities. Families can choose to pay up to 40% of their income if needed to allow greater choices in location and type of rental dwelling. The HAP made by OCHA to the owner generally pays the remaining portion of the approved contract rent.

Who is Eligible? The Housing Choice Voucher Program can assist:

- Elderly persons, i.e. 62 years or older
- Handicapped or disabled (for at least one year)
- Families and individuals

Eligible households must qualify as "low income": has a gross annual income from all sources within the amounts listed below for the family size. Family income includes salaries, wages, interest from assets, tips, pensions, assistance grants, etc. for all members. OCHA must target 75 percent of new admissions to extremely low-income families. An extremely low-income family is defined as a family whose annual income does not exceed 30 percent of median income for the area.

The following chart provides income limits to qualify for assistance.

Eligibility Limits for Voucher Program

FAMILY SIZE	VERY LOW INCOME LIMITS	FAMILY SIZE	VERY LOW INCOME LIMITS
1	\$26,450	5	\$40,800
2	\$30,250	6	\$43,850
3	\$34,000	7	\$46,850
4	\$37,800	8+	\$49,900

How can someone receive a Housing Voucher?

Applicants can apply for the Housing Voucher Program when the Waiting List is "open". Preference on the Waiting List is given to applicants residing or working in OCHA's jurisdiction (all cities in Orange County except: Anaheim, Garden Grove, and Santa Ana). Priority is then given to Families of U. S. Veterans or U. S. Servicemen, working families, the elderly and disabled.

Waiting List:

We're very sorry the List is currently closed! OCHA opened its Waiting List in June 2001 and received more than 17,000 pre-applications during a one-month period. On July 1, 2001, OCHA closed the list and required several months to validate completion of application data, apply preference categories and assembled a new Waiting List. Applicants began receiving Housing Vouchers by January 2002. Unfortunately, it may take several years to deplete the current Waiting List and accept applications for a new list.

For further information on H&CS visit www.ochousing.org
For more information on the above Fact Sheet subject, please call (714) 480-2970