

The following are frequently asked questions regarding the Housing Choice Voucher Program and answers to those questions.

**1. What is the Housing Authority of Baltimore City's Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP)?**

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP), formerly known as the Section 8 Program, is a federally funded and locally administered by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) to provide rental assistance for low-income families (including families with children, the elderly, and/or persons with disabilities), to afford decent, safe and sanitary housing in the private market. HABC does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, marital status, familial status, gender identity, national origin, age, pregnancy, disability, ancestry or sexual orientation for access, admission, employment in housing programs, resources, or housing-related activities.

**2. What is a Tenant Based Voucher (TBV)?**

A tenant-based voucher allows the person who receives it to rent a privately-owned apartment or house of their choice if it meets all HCVP requirements and the owner agrees to accept the voucher as partial payment of the rent. If a person with a tenant-based voucher moves into a HABC approved, privately-owned dwelling under HCVP guidelines, the HABC rental assistance will be used for a portion of the rent for that dwelling.

**3. What is the HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List (also referred to as the Waiting List)?**

The HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List is a list maintained by HABC of the applicants who applied for tenant-based vouchers. HABC HCVP staff will contact applicants from the Waiting List to determine their eligibility to receive a tenant-based voucher.

**4. Why does HABC have a Waiting List for Tenant Based Vouchers?**

There are more households who qualify for affordable housing than there are available vouchers for privately-owned dwelling units. Therefore, the Waiting List is the way approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to identify and contact applicants when vouchers are available.

## **Housing Choice Voucher Program Frequently Asked Questions | Opening the HCVP Tenant-Based Waiting List**

9:00am, October 2, 2023 – October 13, 2023, 11:59pm

### **5. How do I get on the Tenant Based Voucher Waiting List?**

To get on the HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List, a person must first submit a preliminary application. Preliminary applications for HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List will be accepted online only, starting at **9:00 a.m. on October 2, 2023 through 11:59 p.m. on October 13, 2023**. Preliminary applications can ONLY be submitted online at <https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com>.

### **6. What do I need to complete the preliminary application?**

Persons interested in being added to HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List need to provide their name, social security number, date of birth, current mailing address (where the applicant can be contacted within 120 days), basic information about household members, and whether any household member receives benefits from SSI, SSDI, or TANF/TCA. This information should be available before beginning the preliminary application process.

### **7. Can I use my home computer, smart phone, or tablet to submit the preliminary application?**

Yes. The preliminary application is only available online. HABC strongly encourages applicants to apply online using a computer, smart phone or tablet that has internet access from any location at any time during the period from **9:00 a.m. on October 2, 2023, through 11:59 p.m. October 13, 2023**. You may access the preliminary application by visiting the website at <https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com>.

### **8. What if I can't read English or if I am disabled or need assistance completing the preliminary application?**

The application is available in multiple languages. Persons with disabilities or others who need additional assistance with completing a preliminary application may contact a call center representative at **1-888-302-4303**.

### **9. What if I don't have a computer, smart phone or tablet or I'm someone who needs special accommodations?**

Applicants who do not have access to a computer, the internet or have special needs may receive assistance with completing their online preliminary application at any of the locations listed below, or by calling 1-(888) 302-4303. Preliminary applications can be accessed by visiting <https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com> starting at **9:00 a.m. on October 2, 2023 through 11:59 p.m. October 13, 2023**.



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The following sites are open to the public to use their computers and will provide volunteer assistance to help complete online applications.

### ***Additional Dates and Times for Public Walk-In Sites:***

#### ***Beans and Bread***

402 S. Bond St, Baltimore, MD 21231

#### ***Franciscan Center***

101 W. 23rd St, Baltimore, MD 21218

#### ***Healthcare Access Maryland***

1 N Charles St, Suite 900, Baltimore, MD 21201

#### ***Health Care for the Homeless***

421 Fallsway, Baltimore, MD 21202

#### ***My Sister's Place***

17 W. Franklin St, Baltimore, MD 21201

#### ***Our Daily Bread***

725 Fallsway, Baltimore, MD 21202

#### ***Paul's Place***

1118 Ward St, Baltimore, MD 21230

#### ***St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore (formerly St. Ambrose)***

3445 Park Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215

### **10. Will preliminary applications for the Tenant Based Voucher Waiting List be available at 1225 W. Pratt Street or 417 E. Fayette Street?**

No. Preliminary applications must be submitted [online no later than 11:59 p.m. on October 13, 2023](https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com), at <https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com>. HABC's HCVP Office will not accept applications, nor will they be able to assist with completing applications. You MUST apply online, and if assistance is required, please call 1 (888) 302-4303.

### **11. Can I submit the preliminary application by fax or email?**

No. Preliminary applications must be submitted [online no later than 11:59 p.m., on October 13, 2023](https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com), at <https://habc-onthelist.myhousing.com>.

### **12. Do I have to answer all of the questions on the preliminary application?**

Applicants must answer all required questions. The web application will indicate required fields with red text descriptions. Applicants are required to include a phone number and email address.



**13. Do I have to have an email address to apply for housing?**

Yes. If you don't have an email address, there are several options for a free email account, including [Gmail](#), [Yahoo](#), and [Outlook](#). Follow the instructions on the email provider's website to set up an email account.

**14. Will I receive a confirmation after I submit my preliminary application?**

Yes. You will receive a confirmation number after you complete the preliminary application. You are encouraged to record and keep your confirmation number for reference. HABC recommends that you write down, print, capture a screen shot, or take a picture of the confirmation number. The confirmation number will remain on the screen for LESS THAN ONE minute after the preliminary application has been submitted. You can select the "Email me my Confirmation Info" option on the confirmation page of the preliminary application to have the confirmation number emailed.

**15. Will everyone who submits a preliminary application get on HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List?**

No. Submitting the preliminary application does not guarantee placement on the Waiting List. HABC will randomly select 25,000 preliminary applications. If there are more than 25,000 households that submit preliminary applications, only 25,000 will be randomly selected and placed on the Waiting List for consideration. All preliminary applications submitted during the period from 9:00 a.m. on October 2, 2023, through 11:59 p.m. October 13, 2023, will be considered equally for the Waiting List through the Representative Random Selection process (see question #17).

**16. Is the preliminary application process based on first come, first serve?**

No. Preliminary applications received from 9:00 a.m. October 2, 2023, through 11:59 p.m. October 13, 2023, will be considered equally and included in the Representative Random Selection process. The date and time that preliminary applications are submitted (during the period starting October 2, 2023, through October 13, 2023) will not be a factor for the Representative Random Selection process (see question #17).

**17. What is the Representative Random Selection process?**

All preliminary applications received during the period from 9 a.m. October 2, 2023, through 11:59 p.m. October 13, 2023, will be considered equally and entered into a computerized system. The system will then randomly select a total of 25,000 households to be placed on the waiting list.

**18. How does HABC determine my order on the waiting list?**

Your position on the waiting list is based on your lottery ranking and the admission preferences for which you qualify. See questions #19 and #20 regarding admission preferences.

**19. What is an admission preference?**

An admission preference is how HABC prioritizes applicants on the waiting list. What this means is that when and if you qualify for an admission preference, your position on the waiting list may be closer to the top than a family who has no admission preference. Your admission preference will be determined based on the answers you provide to questions asked in the preliminary application.

**20. What are HABC's admission preferences for the Housing Choice Voucher program?**

HABC has the admission preferences outlined below. For detailed information on Admission Preferences, please refer to HABC's Administrative Plan for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

• **Preference #1**

- Referrals Only.

• **Preference #2**

- Families with Children – a household with at least one family member under eighteen (18) years of age;
- Non-Elderly person with disabilities household – a one or two adult household members and neither member is over the age of sixty-two (62) years and at least one member has a disability.
- Senior household – a one or two adult household members with at least one family member over the age of sixty-two (62) and no member is under the age of eighteen (18).
- Other Family – one or more adults where the head, co-head, or spouse do not have a disability and no family member is under eighteen (18) years of age or over sixty-two (62) years of age. The household may include an adult family member with disabilities.

• **Residency Preference:**

- HABC will grant priority within each of the preference categories to applicants who are residents of Baltimore City. Applicants who do not live in Baltimore City will only be considered for assistance after the waiting list of families who live in Baltimore City is exhausted, regardless of priority.
- Persons who are working or who have been notified that they are hired to work in Baltimore City will be treated as residents of Baltimore City. HABC may treat graduates of, or active participants in, education and training programs in Baltimore City as residents of Baltimore City if the education or training program is designed to prepare individuals for the job market.

**21. Can I submit more than one preliminary application to increase my chances of getting on HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List?**

No. HABC will only accept one preliminary application per household. If a person attempts to submit multiple preliminary applications, the system will reject the second and any future applications.

**22. How will I know if I've been added to HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List?**

Applicants who are placed on HABC's HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List through the Representative Random Selection Process will receive written notification by March 30, 2024. Applicants who are not selected for the Waiting List will also be notified in writing by March 30, 2024.

**23. Can I make changes to the preliminary application including changes to my address or family composition or to correct an error on my preliminary application?**

Yes. If there are changes or corrections that need to be made to an existing preliminary application for the Housing Choice Voucher Program, you may contact our office to schedule an appointment and we will have the corrections made or changes updated to your active application. The walk-in hours are every Wednesday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. HABC's HCVP office will open for appointments only during the period the waiting list is open. If selected, after you are placed on the waiting list you may also go to the Applicant Portal and update your pre-application. Instructions for the Applicant Portal will be provided at a later date.

**24. Am I guaranteed housing assistance if I'm placed on the HABC HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List?**

No. Applicants placed on the Waiting List will be considered for assistance as vouchers become available. To be considered for assistance, applicants must meet the required qualifications. Applicants must:

- Qualify as a "family" household as defined by HUD and HABC.
- Be 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor under State Law.
- Have an annual income that does not exceed the applicable income limits established by HUD at the time of admission (see question #25).
- Pass a criminal background check.
- Meet HUD requirements on citizenship or immigration status.
- Not have been terminated or evicted within the past three years by HABC or any other public housing authority, and not have any debts owed under any federally assisted program.

**25. What are applicable income limits established by HUD?**

The following sets forth the current income limits. The income limits are changed periodically by HUD and therefore may be different by the time an applicant is invited to HABC for an eligibility determination. To qualify, annual gross income cannot exceed the “very low” income limit. Under very limited circumstances, HABC may admit a “low” income family as stated in the HCVP Administrative Plan.

FY2023 Income Limits Summary   Baltimore City								
FY2023 Income Limit	# of Persons in Family							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Very Low (50%)	\$ 42,600	\$ 48,700	\$ 54,800	\$ 60,850	\$ 65,750	\$ 70,600	\$ 75,500	\$ 80,350
Income	\$ 66,300	\$ 75,750	\$ 85,200	\$ 94,650	\$102,250	\$109,800	\$ 117,400	\$124,950

**26. What if my name is already on the HABC HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List?**

HABC will continue to process all of the applicants who were on HABC’s existing Tenant Based Waiting Lists even while the 2023 HCVP Tenant Based Waiting List is open. Applicants on the existing Waiting List will be processed based on their original date of application and preferences that apply to them. After the new waiting list closes, applicants may visit HABC’s Applicant Portal to get their status on the current Waiting List. Instructions to access and register for the Applicant Portal will be shared at that time.

**27. If I am selected for placement on the waiting list, how long should I expect to remain on the Waiting List?**

The availability of vouchers is based on federal funding and turnover of existing assisted households. As such, it is difficult to estimate the length of time an applicant may be on the Waiting List before being scheduled for an eligibility interview. Long waiting periods are common. Likewise, the length of your waiting will also depend on the number of applicants ahead of you on the list.

**28. What happens when my application moves to the top of the Waiting List?**

When an application comes to the top of the Waiting List, the applicant will be notified by U.S. mail and email. If HABC is unable to contact the applicant, or the applicant’s emergency contact, because of invalid contact information, the applicant’s name will be removed from the Waiting List.



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### 29. Where are the dwelling units located that accept Tenant Based Vouchers?

HABC does not own or operate tenant-based housing units. A person with a Tenant Based Voucher may lease any privately owned unit that meets all program requirements and where the owner agrees to accept the voucher as partial payment of the rent.

### 30. Where can I receive more information?

For more information, please visit us online by going to HABC's website at [www.HABC.org](http://www.HABC.org) and clicking on "Public Notices" in the menu on the right side of the screen. On the next screen, click on the links for more information on the opening of the HCV Tenant-Based Waiting List, or call **1-888-302-4303**.

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