

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

HCV participants who are disabled, including the head of household and any other qualified individuals residing in the household, may qualify for a reasonable accommodation.

An individual with a disability is defined as: “Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.”

A reasonable accommodation is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common-use spaces.

Some reasonable accommodation requests include Live-In Aid, Extra Bedroom, Exception Payment Standard and Voucher Extensions. See the request form for more examples.

To request a reasonable accommodation, ask your housing specialist for a Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form or download a copy from the CHA’s website at www.thecha.org/forms.

Reasonable Accommodation Process

1. Submit a completed request form to your Housing Specialist with the name and contact information of a knowledgeable professional (someone who holds a professional title and knows about your disability, i.e. Doctor, Social Worker, Case Worker). **Please make sure to sign the form.**
2. The Housing Specialist will submit a Certification of Need form to the knowledgeable professional. The request form is also a release of information so that CHA can communicate with your knowledgeable professional.
3. The Housing Specialist will submit both forms to the Fair Housing Department. If your knowledgeable professional does not complete the Certification of Need within 10 business days, your request will be deemed incomplete. You may then submit additional information.
4. The reasonable accommodation will be deemed Approved, Incomplete or Denied by the Fair Housing Department. Participants may follow up with their Housing Specialist after receiving a determination notice.

Note: The HCV participant who is disabled does not need to receive federal disability benefits to be eligible for a reasonable accommodation with CHA.

EXCEPTION PAYMENT STANDARD

A HCV participant may receive an exception or increase to their payment standard in one of two ways:

1. The participant wishes to reside in a Mobility Area. A Mobility Area is defined as a Chicago community area with 20% or fewer of its families with income below the poverty level and a below median reported violent crime count (normalized by the community area’s total population). Some community areas with improving poverty and violent crime rates along with significant job clusters are also designated as Mobility Areas. To view the most recent map of Mobility Areas, visit www.thecha.org/residents/housing-choice-voucher-hcv-program/find-hcv-housing.

Note: A participant who locates a unit in a Mobility Area may request an Exception Payment Standard (EPS) up to 150% of the HUD-issued Fair Market Rent (FMR). EPS is subject to a rent reasonableness determination.



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES IN HOUSING

2. A participant is disabled and has been approved for an increase in their payment standard as a reasonable accommodation. This accommodation gives HCV families the opportunity to reside in units that accommodate a household member's disability. The reasonable accommodation EPS may be based on accessible features in the unit or the location of the unit. A participant who locates a unit with accessibility features may request an Exception Payment Standard up to 250% of the Fair Market Rent. To be approved for this accommodation, the participant must:
 - a. Locate a specific unit that meets their needs and provide the address and unit number.
 - b. Provide documentation from a knowledgeable professional that the unit meets the participant's disability related needs.
 - c. Provide a list of units that the participant viewed or called that did not meet their disability related needs or were otherwise unavailable.

Submission of a reasonable accommodation request does not guarantee approval. All units approved for an Exception Payment Standard are subject to rent reasonableness determination. The asking rent amount is not guaranteed.

SOURCE OF INCOME DISCRIMINATION

The city of Chicago forbids discrimination against people who use a Housing Choice Voucher as a source of income to support the rental or purchase of a housing unit in any of its 77 community areas. For example, it is a violation of the Fair Housing Ordinance to:

1. Refuse to rent or sell to an otherwise qualified person because that person would use a Housing Choice Voucher to support the rent or purchase price.
2. Refuse to cooperate with minor administrative requirements of the Housing Choice Voucher Program, such as completing routine paperwork and allowing inspection of the property.
3. Make any written communication (i.e. Craigslist or any online property search engines) expressing a limitation in the sale or rental of a housing unit based on source of income, such as 'No HCV/Section 8', 'Not HCV/Section 8 approved' or 'Not set up for HCV/Section 8'.
4. Engage in differential treatment in the price, terms, conditions or privileges of tenancy based on use of a Housing Choice Voucher or any other source of income.
5. Requiring that your income be at least 3x the asking rent without calculating the amount of the voucher.

A Chicago Housing Authority applicant/participant who believes they were discriminated against because of their source of income may file a discrimination complaint with Chicago's Commission on Human Relations by calling 312-744-4111.

If you have any questions, please contact the CHA's Fair Housing Department at 312-913-7062.

LANDLORD INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

To further the goal of deconcentrating poverty and providing greater access to all neighborhoods throughout Chicago, CHA implemented a Landlord Incentive Payment program. This provides an additional incentive for property owners to lease to voucher holders in areas of low poverty and crime. For all new moves into Mobility Areas, the property owner receives a one-time lump sum payment equal to the Contract Rent. There is no application process to receive this, the payment will be issued automatically.