HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS

Enabling eligible families and individuals to secure and maintain decent, safe, sanitary, accessible, and affordable rental housing.
What are Housing Choice Vouchers?

A housing choice voucher (HCV) entitles you to a rental subsidy which helps you, and your family, secure a rental unit that fits your needs and is within your budget. You are responsible for paying a security deposit and a portion of rent and utilities based off of your household income level, while the Office of Housing pays the remaining amount of rent directly to the landlord.

Am I Eligible to Receive a Voucher?

This is a key question, before going any further. The ACOH is a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sanctioned Public Housing Agency (PHA). We must follow all guidance and rules set forth by HUD when determining participant eligibility.

The five main areas of Eligibility are detailed in our Administrative Plan, found on our website, but are outlined below:

1. Qualify as a Family, as defined by HUD and ACOH
2. Meet ACOH Income limits
3. Provide Consent for ACOH to collect and use family information
4. Qualify based on citizenship or eligible immigrant status.
   - All members of the household must provide their social security number (SSN). This requirement does not apply to non-citizens who do not have eligible immigration status.
   - At least one member of the household must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. national or have eligible immigration status.
5. Pass a Background Check
   - ACOH is reviewing 3 years of history for violent or drug related criminal activity
   - Automatic Disqualifiers include being convicted of producing or manufacturing methamphetamines and any crime that requires registry as a lifetime sex offender under a state sex offender registration program
How do I get a Housing Choice Voucher?

The first step is the application. You’ll need to check our website, regularly, for when the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting list opens. Once it does, you’ll be able to apply, either in-person or via mail, by providing us basic information that will be used to permit you entry to the waiting list. We make selections from our waiting list based on a random lottery and when we have vouchers available.

Once you’re selected from the Waiting List, you’ll go through eligibility, where we take a deeper dive into your income, citizenship, assets, and family makeup. If you’re deemed eligible, you’re provided a voucher and can start the search for a rental unit. Once you find one that fits your needs and ACOH guidelines, your Housing Specialist will help you finalize ACOH contracts, you’ll sign a lease with the owner of the unit, and then you will move into your new home!

The process is pretty simple, as outlined above, but there are a lot of little steps along the way. Fortunately, our team is here to provide guidance as you move towards securing your rental.

How long does the process take?

While we can’t confidently tell you the length of time from application to move-in, we can let you know that it is a long-term process that could possibly take years. We do our best to stay in touch and keep you up to date with changes and will be sure to reach out to you as soon as we have a voucher that you’ve been selected for.

Where can I rent a Unit?

The great thing about an HCV is that as long as you are eligible, the voucher is yours. You can choose where you want to live, as long as the unit fits our quality standards and has a reasonable rental rate (see the next page). At first, vouchers issued by our office allow you to live anywhere in Albemarle, Charlottesville, Greene, Louisa, Nelson, and Fluvanna, as long as the rental qualifies. After a period of time, you can choose to move anywhere in the country – your voucher travels with you!
Reasonable (Fair Market) Rent Rates

FY2020

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Visit the [HUD website](https://www.hud.gov) on Fair Market Rent for more information.

*** Please keep in mind that an estimated utility allowance on the unit will also be taken into account when determining the contract rent. For a copy of the utility allowance charts, click [here](#) (effective July 2020).

How do I get Started?

Feel free to check out the rest of the Office of Housing website and reach out to us with any questions you may have about our programming. We’re here to help!

For general questions, please contact our office at ACOH@albemarle.org or call (434) 972-4011, ext. 3407

Disclaimer: The above information is meant for general informational purposes, only, and does not construe all program requirements, processes, and obligations. Further documentation on the process is available via our website and administrative plan.