

Project-Based Section 8 Waitlist Requirements and Overview

General Information and Requirements

What is the Family and Elderly Housing Program?

Chelmsford Housing Authority's (CHA) Project-Based Section 8 Program consists of apartment complexes (also known as developments) and individual apartments in which the subsidy is property-based (attached to the apartment, and not mobile (attached to the tenant)). Within the Project-Based Section 8 Program, there are different types of sub-programs, with slightly different rules, with the biggest difference being the income eligibility requirement for admission into the respective programs. In order to be admitted into a particular program, the applicant household must not exceed the maximum income limit for that housing program.

How do I know if I'm eligible for the Program?

To be eligible for an apartment offer your income may not exceed the following amounts based on household size. Some of the developments listed on the Development Fact Sheet have a certain number of apartments where the household's income must be below 30% AMI and at 50% AMI. For example, if you apply for a property within a 50% AMI program and your household consists of 3-persons (including adults and children), and your total household income is greater than \$56,850 your household will NOT be eligible.

In addition to the income limits, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- ☐ Applicants cannot be a single full-time student under the age of 24 without dependents, (veterans and persons with disabilities are exempt from this requirement).
- ☐ There must be at least one member of the household who is either a U.S. citizen or has eligible immigration status.
- ☐ You will also be required to meet additional eligibility criteria.

How do I apply for the Program?

If you want your name placed on any of Chelmsford Housing Authority's (CHA) waitlists, complete the preliminary application online at www.Chelmsfordha.com. If you fail to complete the online pre-application correctly, your name will NOT be placed on any of the waitlists. You will receive a confirmation number when you have successfully submitted your pre-application.

Guidelines to Determine Appropriate Bedroom Size for Your Household

For Project-Based Section 8 programs, waitlist positions are categorized according to the number of bedrooms the household needs, and that number is determined based on the household composition. Additionally, the number of bedrooms the household requires determines whether or not you are eligible to live at a particular property. That is why it is important to select the appropriate bedroom size for your household. (See the chart below.) Selecting a waitlist that does not have the bedroom size that is appropriate for your household could mean that you will wait longer for housing.

APARTMENT SIZE REQUIREMENTS

Number of Bedrooms	Minimum Persons per Unit	Maximum Persons per Unit
	<i>Fewest Household Members</i>	<i>Most Household Members</i>
0 bedrooms	1 person	2 people
1 bedroom	1 person	2 people
2 bedrooms	2 people	4 people
3 bedrooms	3 people	6 people



Additional bedroom size requirements are as follows:

- Generally, two people are expected to share a bedroom.
- Two children of the same sex will be required to share a bedroom with the following exception:
 - When the household includes children of the same sex, eighteen (18) years of age and below, whose birth dates are more than ten (10) years apart, they will not be required to share a bedroom.
- Children of opposite sexes will not be required to share a bedroom.
- Adults (eighteen and over) who are spouses or in an equivalent relationship are required to share a bedroom.
- Adults (eighteen and over) who are co-heads who are not married or in an equivalent relationship are not required to share a bedroom although they may by request.
- Adults (eighteen and over) who are neither spouses (or the equivalent) nor co-heads are not required to share a bedroom although they may do so at their request;
- A single head of household is not required to share a bedroom with his/her child, although they may by request.

How are preferences applied to the waitlists?

Applicants can claim one or more of the following preferences on their pre-application (to be verified at the time of screening). Applicants with a preference have priority on the waitlists over applicants without a preference. All of the preferences listed below carry equal weight and are not ranked or combined to give certain applicants more priority points or a “higher” preference.

- ☐ **Chelmsford/Westford Resident** – The applicant is a permanent resident of Chelmsford/Westford on the date that they submitted a preliminary application, the date of screening, and the date of final certification. If the applicant is temporarily living with relatives in Chelmsford/Westford, or living in a shelter, in or outside of Chelmsford/Westford, and the applicant’s last permanent resident was in Chelmsford/Westford, the applicant is considered a resident of Chelmsford/Westford.
- ☐ **Employment in Chelmsford/Westford** – The applicant is not a resident of Chelmsford/Westford; however, the applicant or household member is employed or about to be employed in Chelmsford/Westford on the date of application, the date of screening, and the date of final certification.
- ☐ **Veteran’s Status** – The applicant is an honorably discharged individual that performed wartime service or the spouse, surviving spouse, parent or other dependent of an honorably discharged veteran.
- ☐ **Institutionalization** - An applicant at risk of being placed in a long-term care facility or currently a resident of a long-term care facility will receive two (2) priority points. At-Risk applicants will be reviewed and approved by in-house Social Workers prior to assignment of priority points.
- ☐ **Homelessness** - An applicant that is at risk of being homeless or is currently homeless will receive two (2) priority points. Homeless applicants will be reviewed and approved by in-house Social Workers prior to assignment of priority points.

How do I make my waitlist selection(s)?

Under CHA’s Project-Based Section 8 programs, you select the wait list only for the properties where you are willing to reside. Individuals and families who are screened and found eligible for one of our Project-Based Section 8 programs will be offered an apartment at the relevant property when one becomes available. Refusal of the offer without good cause results in the household’s removal from **all** Project-Based Section 8 waitlists. That is why it is important that you select only the properties where you know you want to live.

- Select waitlist(s) for which you fall below the maximum income limit for admission. (See Maximum Income Limit chart on page 2.)
- Select waitlist(s) for properties that have apartments with the number of bedrooms that your household needs. (See chart on apartment size requirements on page 3.)
- Select waitlist(s) with properties in areas of the city where you are willing to live.
- You should review the fact sheets for the waitlists before making your selection(s). The fact sheets will provide more detailed information about the properties.



How do I maintain my status as an applicant on the waitlists?

Generally, pre-applications are processed by CHA within 30 days of confirmation.

- Applicants should wait 30 days from the time of submission of a pre-application to make changes.
- Notify CHA of any changes in your information. Once you have submitted a pre-application, it is your responsibility to notify CHA of any changes in your household composition, contact information, income and/or selection preferences, by logging in to the applicant portal at cha.applicants4housing.com and updating your information.
- Make sure that you can and will receive mail at any address that you have provided to CHA to use as your mailing address.
- Correspondence that is returned to CHA marked as “unknown,” “return to sender,” “forwarding address unknown,” or “no such address” will result in an applicant’s removal from all CHA waitlists.

Some changes in household composition may affect your original date and time of application.

- If you have a change in household composition, due to birth, adoption, court ordered permanent custody or marriage; divorce, death, or other decrease in family size; or the addition of a live-in aide and your existing development choices do not have the appropriate bedroom size for your new household composition, CHA will allow you to make new development selections for any open SBWL and retain your original date and time of application.
- A new date and time of application will be applied to any new wait list selections for all other changes in household composition.

How do I add and remove my household from the waitlists after my pre-application is submitted?

After submitting a pre-application online, you may apply to additional site-based wait lists waitlists by submitting a new pre-application online. Each pre-application you submit receives a new date and time of application for the additional waitlists you have chosen. Generally, the date and time of your previous pre-application for other waitlists will not change. You may remove your name from a waitlist at any time by submitting your request in writing to the CHA’s Operations Department.

When do I get an apartment?

When your name is near the top of a waitlist, and an appropriately sized apartment from that waitlist will become available soon, you will be contacted by the Leased Housing staff at that CHA office to come in for a screening appointment. It will be important that you promptly provide all the requested documentation required for the screening process. If you fail to attend your scheduled screening without good cause and do not contact the CHA **prior to** the scheduled screening appointment, the CHA will withdraw your application from all waitlists.

Please take note of the average wait time in the charts below. This will give you an idea of how long you will most likely be required to wait before your name reaches near the top of the particular waitlist. Please consider this when making your selections.

Before you make your waitlist selections, remember...

Review the fact sheets for each waitlist and make sure you are interested in all the properties on a particular waitlist.

You may sign up for as many waitlists as you wish.

However, when selected from a waitlist and offered an apartment, if you refuse the offer without good cause, OR you refuse or fail to complete the screening process for a list you are on, your name will be removed from all waitlists. The only exception to this rule applies when a couple is offered a studio apartment from a waitlist that also has 1-bedroom apartments. In this instance, the couple may decline the offer and opt to wait until a 1-bedroom apartment becomes available. There is no penalty for this type of refusal of an offer.

Make sure that the waitlist you choose has appropriately sized apartments to house your household.



- See “Guidelines to determine appropriate bedroom size for your household” above. Make sure that you choose a waitlist that has an appropriate development for your household type.
- For example, if you are a non-elderly, non-disabled household you cannot select an elderly, disabled waitlist. If a waitlist states “Elderly/Disabled Only” it means that the head of household, co-head or spouse must be at least 62 years of age or have a disability. (Disability status will be verified at the time of screening.) You will not be able to choose a specific development on a waitlist with more than one development.

Questions?

If you have any other questions about the Family and Elderly Housing program waitlist, please contact CHA’s Main Office at 978.256.7425 and select the prompt for the waitlist.



Development Fact Sheets

Westford Village at Mystery Spring



This development serves over 36 low-income seniors and has an on-site Supportive Services Coordinator. The coordinator works collaboratively with AgeSpan and community agencies to provide assistance to those residents in need. The Westford Council on Aging provides transportation through its Road Runner service and offers numerous programs for seniors at the Westford Senior Center. The development houses a full-service hair salon and its location is within close proximity of shopping, restaurants and medical facilities. This is a 62-and-over development with one- bedroom apartments. Each apartment is allocated one parking spot.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
30% AMI	18	1BR
50% AMI	18	1BR

The Elms – Harvard

The Elms is a nine-unit subsidized rental development that consists of 6 one-bedroom units and 3 two-bedroom units. The average square footage of the one-bedroom units is 703 sq. ft. and the two-bedroom units is 860 sq. ft.; both feature a kitchen, living room, and full bath. Heat and Hot Water are included in the rent, and there is an allowance for electric utilities (unit electric, cooking and A/C). Landlord requires a security deposit equal to one month's rent.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
50% AMI	5	1BR
50% AMI	1	2BR

Shirley Meadows



Shirley Meadows is an affordable rental housing development for elders aged 62 years or older. This development consists of 58 units: Fifty-five (55) one-bedroom units and three (3) two-bedroom units. All household members must be over 62 years of age. There are twenty (20) Section 8 Project-based units in this complex and each program participant will be required to pay 30% of gross income towards the rent. Heat and hot water included (tenant pays electric). Landlord requires a security deposit equal to one month's rent.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
30% AMI	8	1BR
50% AMI	11	1BR
50% AMI	1	2BR

The CHOICE Center



The CHOICE Center is an affordable rental housing development for elders aged 62 years or older. This development consists of 37 units: 32 one-bedroom units and five two-bedroom units. The CHOICE Center is located on an existing campus, which contains both state and federal housing programs. It is also close to the Chelmsford Senior Center. Available services on this campus include: 24-hour on-call emergency care, vendor-contracted homemaking services, on-site service coordinator, free prescription delivery service, foot care clinic, full service beauty salon, and brown bag food program. There are thirteen (13) Section 8 Project-based units in this complex: eleven 1-bedroom units and two 2-bedroom units and each program participant will be required to pay 30% of gross income towards the rent. All utilities are included. Landlord requires a security deposit equal to one month's rent.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
30% AMI	5	1BR
50% AMI	6	1BR
50% AMI	2	2BR

Roberta McGuire Senior Residences



Roberta McGuire Senior Residences, located at 2 Balsam Circle, Westford, MA, and offers seven efficiency style apartments. The building itself includes a common living space containing a full kitchen, dining room, office & living room. By combining private apartments in the context of a building with a common area, Roberta McGuire Senior Residences creates an environment that fosters choices for independence as well as community. Roberta McGuire Senior Residences is a non-smoking property and has a no pets policy.

All utilities are included. Landlord requires a security deposit equal to one month's rent and all residents must maintain renter's insurance.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
30% AMI	1	1BR
50% AMI	6	1BR



Chelmsford Woods Residences



Chelmsford Woods Residences is a 116-unit, all-affordable rental development consisting of one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. Some of the one- and two-bedroom apartments are designed for people needing accessible units.

Unit features include fully applianced kitchens with refrigerator, microwave and stove, 36" designer kitchen cabinetry, solid surface counter and island tops, bathroom ceramic tile flooring and bath surround. There is also an expansive clubhouse with lounge, community kitchen and meeting area; laundry rooms on each floor and each unit has one allocated parking spot.

The Section 8 Project-Based program is administered by the Leased Housing Department of Chelmsford Housing Authority. There are fourteen (14) Section 8 Project-based units in this complex: four 1-bedroom units, nine 2-bedroom units and one 3-bedroom unit. Each program participant will be required to pay 30% of gross income towards the rent and utilities. Heat, gas & electricity are not included in the rent and are the responsibility of the tenant.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
30% AMI	6	1BR
50% AMI	2	1BR
30% AMI	4	2BR
50% AMI	2	2BR
30% AMI	2	3BR

235 Littleton Road

This development has 12 one-bedroom units of which 4 units are project-based Section 8. Each program participant will be required to pay 30% of their gross income towards the rent and utilities.

Each unit is 546 SF and includes all utilities. This building does not have an elevator and may require stairs for access.

Set Aside	Number of Apartments	Unit Size
50% AMI	4	1BR

