

PUBLIC HOUSING - WHAT WE DO

The Rochester Housing Authority's (RHA) Public Housing Program owns and manages property and provides subsidized rents for eligible low and very low income individuals and families to provide good, safe, affordable housing. RHA has a Resident Services Program that includes homeownership opportunities for qualified families, employment training opportunities and other special training and employment programs for residents and support programs for the elderly.

Some of the on-going functions of Public Housing Staff are:

- Assure compliance with the lease and HUD regulations.
- Assess other charges (e.g. security deposit, excess utility consumption, damages to dwelling beyond normal wear and tear, etc.
- Perform reexaminations of the family's income at lease once every 12 months.
- Transfer families from one dwelling to another to correct over/under crowding.
- Repair and renovate dwelling in response to a resident's request, or when the dwelling unit is vacated.
- Terminate lease when necessary.
- Maintain the property in a decent, safe and sanitary manner.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Public Housing Program?

The **Public Housing Program** was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. RHA Public Housing comes in all sizes and types, including scattered single family houses and apartments for families and sites for elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

How do I qualify for Public Housing?

Public Housing is limited to income qualified families and individuals. RHA determines your eligibility based upon:

- Annual gross income
- Whether you qualify as elderly, a person with a disability or as a family; and
- U.S. citizenship or eligible immigrant status. If you are determined to be eligible, RHA will check your references and criminal record to determine if you will be a good tenant

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on:

- Race or color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sexual preference
- Disability
- Familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and persons securing custody of children under 18)

RHA may deny admission to any applicant whose habits and practices may be expected to have a detrimental effect on other tenants, neighbors or the immediate environment.

What are the income limits?

HUD determines income limits on an annual basis. Income is calculated based upon gross income (before deductions). The total income received by all family members during a 12 month period must be counted.

2009 income limits for the RHA area must not exceed:

Household <u>Size</u>	Gross Annual <u>Income</u>
1	\$23,300
2	\$26,600
3	\$29,950
4	\$33,250
5	\$35,900
6	\$38,550
7	\$41,250
8 & up	\$43,900

When are applicants notified of eligibility?

Once RHA determines applicants are eligible, they are notified in writing, and their names are placed on a waiting list. RHA contacts applicants once their names reach the top of the list. Any applicant determined to be ineligible will receive an explanation as to why they have been denied. Applicants who have been denied are free to request an informal hearing on the decision.

Special Note: Approximate waiting list times vary by bedroom size, type of unit (family site or high rise). Applicants are contacted by mail when their name comes to the top of the waiting list for the appropriate bedroom size. Applicants are advised to notify RHA if there is a change in address, household composition or other information that was previously provided.

How is rent determined?

Your rent which is referred to as Total Tenant Payment (TTP) would be based on anticipated total gross annual income from all sources received by the family head and spouse, and each additional member of the household over the age of 18 less deductions or disregards, if any.

Will my rent change after I move in?

Your household income will be reexamined annually. Rent will not increase between reexaminations, but rent could decrease if household income decreases. You will be responsible to report all changes in household income within ten days of any change.

May I pay my rent electronically?

Unfortunately RHA does not accept electronic payments at this time. Rent may be paid in person or by mail at the management office that is responsible for your unit. All rents must be paid by personal check, bank check or money order.

Does Public Housing provide emergency housing?

No. RHA does not provide emergency housing in the Public Housing. The waiting list is currently open. You may request an application by calling (585) 697-7180. Applications are also available online or for pick up at the 675 West Main Street office or any RHA Site Office.

Who pays the security deposit?

The security deposit is paid by the family. Speak with the Housing Specialist to determine when and if you must pay a security deposit. The security deposit cannot exceed \$100 for Seniors and persons with documented disabilities, or \$250 for families. The security deposit is returned to you, with interest, providing there are no charges for unpaid rent, late or maintenance charges when you move out. If your income is SSI or DHS, RHA will also accept a Landlord/Tenant Agreement from DHS.

Who pays for the utilities?

The type of property in which you are housed determines who is responsible for payment of specific utilities. Responsibility for utilities must be spelled out in the lease agreement.

When will my unit be inspected?

A Move-in Inspection will be performed when you move into the unit. A HUD required inspection will be performed by Housing Quality Standard (HQS) inspectors on an annual basis. Housing Specialist or Property Managers are also required to inspect your unit for housekeeping and the possible need for improvements annually.

Must I be present when the inspection occurs?

RHA does not require that you be home when the inspection occurs. However, it will be beneficial to RHA staff if you are present, so that you may inform the inspector of any problems you may be having with the property.

How will I know when an inspection is scheduled?

HUD policies require that you be notified at least **48 hours** before your unit is inspected. In most cases, you will be notified sooner than the required 48 hours.

How do I add someone to my household?

You must have RHA approval prior to adding others into your household. To be added, family members must be related by birth, marriage or court awarded custody.

When may I move to another unit?

You will be allowed to move only if your family size changes, or for a reasonable accommodation for medical or physical reasons. Reasonable accommodations must be documented by a medical professional.

How long can I stay in Public Housing?

You may stay in public housing as long as you comply with the lease. If, at reexamination your family's income is sufficient to obtain housing on the open market, RHA will charge you a fair market rent.