

NEWS RELEASE

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PHA Opens Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List

A lottery will randomly select 10,000 applicants to be added to the list

Philadelphia – January 9, 2023 – The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) today announced that -- for the first time in more than 12 years -- the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program will open its waiting list.

HCV (formerly known as Section 8) is a federal government program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. With the current waiting list now exhausted, PHA will open the list by accepting on-line applications at www.pha.phila.gov for a two-week period from **Monday, January 23 at 6:00 a.m. to Sunday, February 5 at 5:59 p.m.**

“Our goal is to ensure a fair, open, transparent barrier-free process with broad community outreach and equal access for all interested applicants. Getting the word out is a top priority since previous applications periods favored those who applied first. Under this system, all applications in the lottery pool have an equal chance of being selected.” said PHA President and **CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah**. “Going forward, this process will allow PHA to open the HCV waiting list more frequently, providing others in the community a chance to apply in just a few years when the waiting list is re-opened.”

“I applaud PHA for not only re-opening the waiting list, but doing so in a way that is fair and transparent,” said **Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney**. “The Housing Choice Voucher program is an important part of Philadelphia’s commitment to providing affordable housing to all residents, and we welcome this opportunity to make more vouchers available to those in need of housing.”

“There is an urgent need in our City for more affordable housing of every kind, and Philadelphians are clamoring for it,” said **City Council President Darrell L. Clarke**, a champion of affordable housing in Philadelphia. “We applaud our partners at the Philadelphia Housing Authority, including President & CEO Jeremiah, for diligently working to reduce and clear the waiting list for this Federal program to a point where they can now open it up to new applicants. We strongly endorse this effort and our shared goal: a safe, well-maintained place to live for every Philadelphian who needs one.”



Housing Lottery: PHA President & CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah (podium) announces that the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) will hold a lottery in two weeks to add 10,000 new names to its Housing Choice Voucher Waitlist. Two thousand vouchers will be given out immediately in the coming months. Back row (from left): Lynette Brown-Sow, PHA Board Chair; Curtis Wilkerson, chief of staff for Council President Darrell Clarke, and Congressman Dwight Evans.



PHA Hosts a Housing Lottery: The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) and its partners stand ready to help the thousands of people expected to apply for the Housing Choice Voucher Waitlist Lottery. Attending the press conference from left: Will Gonzalez, Esq., Executive Director, Ceiba; Asia Coney, PHA Commissioner; PHA President & CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah; Rev. Bonnie Camarda, PHA Commissioner; Curtis Wilkerson, chief of staff for Council President Darrell Clarke; Lynette Brown-Sow, Chair of the PHA Board of Commissioners; Herb Wetzel, PHA Commissioner; Congressman Dwight Evans; Thomas H. Earle, CEO, Liberty Resources, Inc. and John Chin, Executive Director of PCDC.

“PHA is committed to extensive, multi-lingual outreach efforts through the enrollment period -- with the goal of reaching all racial and ethnic groups, persons with limited English proficiency, seniors, and people with disabilities,” said **Jeremiah**, who added this warning: “Don’t get scammed. Applicants should not share personal data or send money to anyone who claims they can get them on the PHA waiting list.”

Congressman Dwight Evans (D-PA-3) said, “This is very welcome news, made possible in part by historic funding for housing that we approved in the last Congress! And I want to reinforce what PHA President and CEO Jeremiah has said about how important it is for people to make sure they are getting on the official PHA list and avoiding potential scams.”

At the end of the period, there will be 10,000 applicants randomly selected in a computerized lottery system to be placed on the waiting list. A preference will be given to applicants who currently live, work, or have been hired to work in Philadelphia. PHA will make 2,000 vouchers immediately available to qualified applicants within that group.

PHA created barrier-free access for this opportunity by working with partners in diverse communities throughout Philadelphia.

The lottery method is allowed under federal regulations and has been successfully used by other large U.S. housing authorities. PHA anticipates that a list of 10,000 applicants will be sufficient for an approximate three- to five-year period to cover voucher issuance and turnover needs.

Once the application period opens on January 23rd, through February 5th, applicants can go online to www.pha.phila.gov from any device. The online application and important informational materials will be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese and Russian. Other languages will be available through Google Translate. They can also apply the designated call center at 215-999-3102. Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities using TDD or TTY technology may call 7-1-1 for assistance. The phone line will include live agent and interpreter services for applicants who may require translation or additional support due to a disability.

Following the closure of the two-week application period, PHA will:

- Notify, by March 1st, the 10,000 applicants who were randomly selected by lottery of their place on the waiting list via mail and email.
- Notify all other applicants that they were not selected for a spot on the waiting list via mail and email.
- Make 2,000 vouchers available to the selected waiting list applicants. As PHA begins to pull applicants from the waiting list, each household will be evaluated for eligibility (including for the residency preference) prior to voucher issuance.

Currently, PHA houses over 19,000 individuals and families and over 44,000 household members under the HCV program. There are also over 5,200 active landlords under the HCV program. The HCV wait list was closed in 2010 because the number of families on the waiting list at the time (over 55,000) far exceeded the number of vouchers allocated to PHA.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER WAITLIST LOTTERY

January 23, 2023 at 6am
to February 5, 2023 at 5:59pm

Apply: www.pha.phila.gov

QUESTIONS:

Call 215-999-3102 between 9 am-6 pm EST
during the lottery application process.

NOTE: NO PAPER APPLICATIONS