

# Program Eligibility Q&A

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz, also serving Hollister and San Juan Bautista

Oct 21

## Different Eligibility Rules for Different Programs

Each program has its own set of eligibility rules, and those rules can change from time to time.

The information in this Q&A applies to the Housing Choice Voucher Program and Public Housing.

Other programs may have special rules. For instance, our farmworker program is open only to farmworker families.

## Finding Out Who Is Eligible for Assistance

### How Do You Determine My Income?

The first step to becoming eligible is for the Housing Authority to determine how much your family's annual income is.

- ✓ We will ask you to complete forms stating all of your income and assets.
- ✓ We will ask you to provide documents like tax returns, pay stubs, bank statements and more
- ✓ We may verify your income directly with your employer and/or the agency that provides you benefits.
- ✓ We will also check with federal and state agencies that gather information about earnings from many different sources to confirm the information you have provided.

If we discover that your family has not reported some income to us, you could be denied assistance or face fraud charges. **It is very important to declare all income to the Housing Authority.**

### What are the income limits?

The Housing Choice Voucher program and the public housing program require that we assist a certain number of "**extremely low income**" families. These are families whose income is below 30% of the county median income.

We can also assist families who are "**very low income,**" which means that their income is below 50% of median income. Some families with incomes up to 80% of median, called "**low income,**" may also be assisted.

Other programs have different income limits, but the income limits mentioned above are a general guide for most housing assistance programs.

The income limits are based on the number of people in your family and change at least once a year. You can get the current income limits from our website.

**We will give you the current income limits when we are ready to process your full application for assistance.**



Questions? Call our Info Line at 454-5955  
or visit us online at [www.hacosantacruz.org](http://www.hacosantacruz.org)



2160 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Capitola CA 95010 Open M-TH 8-4:30, Closed Fridays  
For our business office or para información in español: 831 454-9455  
*Program rules are subject to change. Use this as general guidance only.*

TDD: 831 475-1146

# Program Eligibility Q&A cont'd

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## Other Eligibility Questions for Housing Authority Programs

### Is Anyone Eligible for a Special Preference?

The Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz determines applicant eligibility and issues vouchers on a first come, first served basis, based on the date that an applicant added their name to the waiting list. Additionally, for the County of Santa Cruz, the Housing Authority has a limited waiting list preference for disabled and medically vulnerable homeless persons. Currently, a maximum of 40 households may receive the preference at any given time. If you think you might qualify as a disabled and medically vulnerable homeless person, you will need to take survey (called a Vulnerability Index), through the 180/180 Campaign, which is a campaign to provide housing for the County's most vulnerable homeless persons. To find out how you can take the survey visit our website.

Some clients of other agencies in the county may receive housing assistance from the Housing Authority through those agencies. These programs were funded through a separate funding source, and they are not open to the general public.

### Is There a Background Check?

For public housing and other apartments the Housing Authority owns, there is an extensive criminal background, landlord, and credit check.

**In the Voucher program, housing is denied for registered sex offenders and certain other violent or drug-related offenses**

### How Many Bedrooms Will My Family Be Eligible For?

The Housing Authority calculates one bedroom for the head of household and spouse or domestic partner, if any.

We then calculate one bedroom for every two family members, regardless of age or sex.

In the Housing Choice Voucher Program, your family may choose to rent a home with more bedrooms, but we would re-calculate your rent so that you pay the extra cost of the additional bedrooms.

A few exceptions are made for persons with disabilities. For more information, see our Special Needs Q&A.

### Who Counts as a Family Member?

When you submit your full application, we will ask you to list everyone who will live in your home when you get assistance.

### Are there citizenship requirements?

Many Housing Authority programs require that at least one adult in the family be a citizen or a legal resident. If some members of your family are not citizens or legal residents, you may receive less rental assistance than you would otherwise.



### Need More Info?

Visit our website or call our Info Line to request Q&A sheets on these topics:

- ✓ Housing Authority Programs Q&A
- ✓ Getting a Voucher Q&A
- ✓ New Landlord Q&A
- ✓ Waiting List Q&A
- ✓ Special Needs for Persons with Disabilities Q&A

**Info Line: 831 454-5955**

**Website: [www.hacosantacruz.org](http://www.hacosantacruz.org)**