

Getting a Voucher Q&A

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

Dec 16

Tips for Getting Assistance Quickly:

- ✓ Update your address! If you have moved, get a change of address form from our lobby, website or our Info Line.
- ✓ We will ask for Social Security cards, birth certificates, and photo IDs. If you don't have these, gather them now.
- ✓ Respond to all Housing Authority mail by the due date.

What Happens When You Reach the Top of the Waiting List

What Is an Initial Application?

When you reach the top of the list, you'll get a letter asking if you want an Initial Application packet. Respond to this letter immediately or you will be dropped from the list. This application is used to:

- ✓ Gather information about your family and your income
- ✓ Determine whether or not your family is eligible for assistance.
- ✓ Calculate approximately how much rent your family will pay
- ✓ Determine how many bedrooms your family is eligible for.

When you get your Initial Application, please fill it out completely and return it by the deadline.

What Happens at the Initial Interview?

Several months after your initial application is complete, you will be scheduled for an Initial Interview, where we will gather the information we need to complete your application. All adult family members are required to attend.

Can You Help Me Fill Out My Initial Application?

If you have questions about your Initial Application, please call our Info Line. You can also make an appointment to have Housing Authority staff assist you in person. We cannot assist on a "walk in" basis.

Please see our Special Needs Q&A for more information on extra assistance for a person with disabilities.

When Will I Get a Voucher?

Here is what will happen after the Initial Application and Interview:

- ✓ If you are eligible, you will be placed in the Waiting Pool along with other families waiting for a voucher.
- ✓ We may ask you to send updated information about your income, because the federal government requires us to ask for it again. Please respond to those requests promptly.
- ✓ **You could still have a long wait before a voucher is available.** When a voucher is available, we will invite you to a Briefing, where you will get your voucher and more information.



Questions? Call our Info Line at 454-5955
or visit us online at www.hacosantacruz.org



2931 Mission Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 Open M-TH 8-5, 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: 831 469-0122

Getting a Voucher Q&A cont'd

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What To Know Before You Get a Voucher

What Happens at the Briefing?

When the Housing Authority has a voucher for you, you will be invited to attend a Briefing, along with other families who are getting their vouchers. **You must attend a Briefing to get your voucher.**

At the Briefing, you will get your voucher and a packet of information to help you find a place to rent. **You will have 60 days to find a home to rent.** However, if funding runs short, a voucher can be "frozen" at any time after it has been issued to you. To avoid this, you should find a place to rent as soon as possible.

How Many Bedrooms Will My Family Be Eligible For?

The Housing Authority calculates roughly two people to a bedroom in deciding how much assistance your family will receive.

More details will be provided at the Briefing.

How Much Will We Pay in Rent?

Families pay about 30-40% of their income in rent. You will find out more at the Briefing.

Where Will I Be Able to Rent a Home?

- ✓ You may be able to use your voucher assistance to rent the place where you live right now, if the unit meets our standards and the landlord is willing to participate.
- ✓ You cannot rent a home owned by a relative, except in very limited circumstances for persons with disabilities. See Special Needs Q&A.
- ✓ You must rent a home within the Housing Authority's jurisdiction (county or city.) There are some exceptions that may allow you to rent a home in other parts of the country. This will be explained at the Briefing.
- ✓ We encourage you to find a home in a good neighborhood outside areas of poverty.

Should I Move Now?

Please do not move to a new home just because you think you are about to get housing assistance. It may be many months before you are issued a voucher. Also, program requirements can change quickly. You will not know exactly what you are eligible for until you are issued a voucher.



Need More Info?

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

- ✓ Housing Authority Programs Q&A
- ✓ Waiting List Q&A
- ✓ New Landlords Q&A
- ✓ Program Eligibility Q&A
- ✓ Special Needs for Persons with Disabilities Q&A

Info Line: 831 454-5955

Website: www.hacosantacruz.org