



Public Housing Fact Sheet

Introduction

“Public housing” is housing funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and managed by local housing authorities. These programs provide housing to low-income people, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Public housing is just one of many types of housing covered by HUD (search portal.hud.gov for “rental assistance”).

Qualifying

Only low-income people can live in public housing. A household income must be less than 80% of the average income for the area. However, exact income limits will vary based on where you live. Tenants in HUD-covered housing must be citizens or documented immigrants unless they are victims of domestic violence.

Rent

Most tenants in public housing pay 30% of their monthly adjusted incomes in rent. However, housing authorities can charge you the highest amount of the following that applies to you in rent.

- 30% of your monthly adjusted income (your income minus deductions for dependents, elderly family members, people with disabilities in the home, and some medical expenses)
- 10% of your total monthly income
- welfare rent
- a \$25–50 minimum rent per month

Applying

You should contact your local housing authority to apply for public housing. You can use the interactive map from HUD, found at resources.hud.gov, to find public housing and other affordable housing programs near you.

These applications generally ask for names, basic information about your household, contact information, rental history, and an estimate of your annual income and other financial income. A housing authority employee might visit your home during the application process.

Denying Your Application

A housing authority might deny your application for any of the following reasons:

- poor housekeeping
- non-payment of past-due rent
- a poor credit history
- a criminal record that shows you might be a risk to other tenants

You may go on a waiting list if there are no units available when you apply. Housing authorities can move people up the waiting list based on its preferences. Preferences might include factors such as employment, stable income, or recent homelessness.

This fact sheet is a collaboration of the Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas, Inc. These nonprofit organizations provide free legal assistance to eligible Arkansans who meet income, asset, and other guidelines. Legal assistance may also include advice and counsel, brief services, or full representation depending on the situation. For more information about civil legal aid in Arkansas, please visit arlegalservices.org. For information specific to Legal Aid of Arkansas, Inc., visit arlegalaid.org. Apply for services online or by calling 1-800-9-LAW-AID (1-800-952-9243).

The information and statements of law in this fact sheet should not be considered legal advice. This fact sheet is provided as a broad guide to help you understand how certain legal matters are handled in general. Courts may interpret the law differently. Before you take action, talk to an attorney and follow his or her advice. Always do what the court tells you to do.

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