

Housing Voucher Application Process Overview

Please be advised that these are general guidelines & general answers to frequently asked questions about the leasing process. The information contained herein is subject to change at any time and your individual situation may differ. This overview is meant as a general outline and not any binding legal document.

1. Initial Application

- Go online and choose an apartment within your voucher amount.
 - When choosing a home, please keep in mind that the pricing on the website does not include utilities in most cases. This may lower the maximum rate your voucher is able to cover. It is recommended that you speak with your Housing case worker to clarify what their maximum rate is without utilities included before selecting a home.
- Review the apartment details, including the required deposit and any additional charges that may be applicable (varies by site).
- Fill out the online application for the selected apartment.
 - When applying for a home, always choose the best rate and ignore the lease term. We will adjust the lease term to 12 months after your application has been submitted while maintaining the best rate.
 - It is generally recommended that you choose an apartment that is available closest to your planned move in date. Some restrictions may apply depending on your situation. See page 4: "Q: How soon can I move into my unit?" for further information regarding move in dates.
 - When filling out the application, keep in mind that your voucher should not be considered as part of your income. For accuracy, you should report your actual income.
 - The application will automatically report denied at first due to rent-to-income ratio – this is normal and does not reflect your final screening result. Once the information in step 2 is provided, we will then be able to process a rescreen and manual override to provide the final result of your credit screening.

2. Submit Required Documents

- Once your application is submitted, a member of our application team will contact you. Upon receiving this communication, complete the following steps:
 - Inform them you are a **Housing Applicant**
 - Provide documentation confirming your **voucher**
- Upon confirming that you have a Housing voucher, a member of our Affordable Housing team will request the following documentation. Please be prepared to provide **within 24 hours**:
 - **Two forms of ID** that are not expired (one must be a form of photo ID)
 - The name of your Housing Authority and the best email contact for your case worker
 - **Request for Tenancy Approval Packet (RFTA)** or equivalent moving packet to be filled out by yourself and our Affordable Housing team

3. Application Review & Rescreening

- After receiving the required documents, we will **rescreen your application under voucher terms** for final approval.

4. Submission of RFTA to Housing

- Once your application is approved, we will complete and submit a copy of the **RFTA** to the Housing office. You will be required to sign the RFTA on all relevant pages before submission to Housing can take place.
- You will be copied on the email submission to Housing for your records.
- **Please note:** This part of the approval process can be lengthy. With that in mind, we will allow Housing a reasonable period of time to respond, however we are unable to hold a home indefinitely. Please remain in contact with your Housing Authority during this process to be sure they have everything needed to process the RFTA in a timely manner.

5. Housing Inspection

- After the RFTA has been processed for approval, **an inspection of the apartment** must be scheduled. In most cases, this will be done by Housing. If your voucher type requires a Board of Health inspection, this will be scheduled by the property.
- The unit must pass inspection prior to signing the lease contract.

6. Lease Signing & Move-In

- Once the inspection is passed, we will receive a **HAP contract, Voucher Payment Contract, or equivalent document** from Housing depending on your voucher type.
- At this point, we will coordinate your **lease signing and move-in date**.
- Final steps for move-in are as follows:
 - A move in appointment should be coordinated with the office. During this appointment, your ID will be verified, and you will be provided with access to the home. This is also an opportunity to meet your office team and ask any questions you may have about your new community.
 - Provide proof of Renter's Insurance with a minimum of \$200,000 in personal liability coverage. This policy must cover all household members and include our Interested Party address (shown below). The street address must also be updated to your new address.

Interested Party Address:

UDR – (Property Name)

P.O. Box 115009

Carrollton, TX 75011-5009

- Utility set up (required utilities vary by site). Our office will need confirmation of your account number to confirm set-up by your move in date.
- Payment will be required by your move in date for all funds not covered by Housing. This includes your deposit, your portion of the first month's rent, and any associated fees not included in the base rent. You will be provided with a full payment breakdown once Housing has confirmed the portion they will pay on your behalf.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is covered in the rent?

A: This will vary by site, however typically the price shown on the website is the best price without any additional charges or utilities included. This is the rate that would be approved or denied by Housing. The apartment details on the website will give an overview of any additional rentable items that you may choose to add to your lease in addition to this amount. These items are the tenant's responsibility to pay in addition to the portion of rent approved by Housing. Please ask your Affordable Housing Specialist if you have any concerns about your voucher covering the total rent amount.

Q: Do you accept RAFT/HomeBase?

A: We do accept both, however the process may look different under these programs.

If you are utilizing RAFT or HomeBase **in addition to** a voucher, please note that the landlord portion of the application may not be completed until we have both a **HAP contract and signed lease**.

If you are utilizing RAFT or HomeBase **instead of** a voucher, please notify us upon application submission. We will follow up with next steps depending on your situation.

Q: When is my deposit due?

A: As a Housing Applicant, your deposit will be due by your move in date in addition to your portion of the first month's rent, although you are welcome to make your payment earlier if desired.

Please note that all move-in funds, including the deposit, are your responsibility as the resident and must be paid in full by your move in date. Access to the home will not be provided until all resident-responsible move in funds are received.

Q: How soon can I move into my unit?

A: Obtaining Housing approval is a multi-step process, much of which is outside of our control. You can help us make the process more efficient up front by providing all requested documentation and information to us within a timely manner for RFTA submission. Once the RFTA is submitted to Housing, we are subject to a number of factors that may affect the speed at which a HAP contract or equivalent document may be provided for move in. Please keep the following in mind when selecting your unit:

- **The typical processing time for applications for your Housing Authority.** It is recommended that you speak with your case worker to get an estimate of their typical processing time, as this may vary based on your individual Housing Authority.

- Please note that if your move requires a voucher transfer from one Housing Authority to another, you can expect a significantly longer processing time. In some cases when multiple Housing Authorities are involved, the processing time for applications can even be doubled due to the amount of paperwork that must be done between RFTA submission and the inspection being scheduled. If you know your current Housing Authority does not cover the area you are moving to, we advise selecting a unit that will allow for this delay. It may be to your advantage to choose a unit that is not currently vacant and will not be available within the next 30 days.
- **Your Housing Authority's moving date restrictions.** Some Housing Authorities do not allow mid-month moves, meaning you will only be permitted to start a new lease on the 1st of the month with no exceptions. Other Housing Authorities may allow you to move either on the 1st or the 15th. In some cases, you may not have any restrictions at all on your move in date. Please be sure you are aware of the policy for your unique situation, as your move in date will be subject to Housing's restrictions.
- **Your notice to vacate to your current landlord.** Most Housing Authorities will require you to submit at least a 30-day notice to your current landlord. In the majority of cases, you will be required to fill out a form signed by yourself and your landlord confirming that sufficient notice has been given. If Housing determines that sufficient notice has not been given, they will not permit you to move. Please ensure you are aware of what your Housing Authority requires and that you submit appropriate notice early in the application process.
- **The availability date given on the website for your unit.** As a general rule, we typically allow at least 1-2 weeks between the date your unit becomes available and the date you move in. This is to ensure there is adequate time to complete an inspection, receive the HAP contract, send you your lease, and make any final move in preparations. If the unit is currently available, we will calculate this based on the date your application is submitted.

Thank you for your patience throughout this process! If you have any additional questions not covered here, please reach out to our Affordable Housing team at MAaffordablehousing@udr.com.