Applying For Housing For Your Adult Family Member With Disabilities

Autism Housing Pathways

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
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www.autismhousingpathways.org
What applications do I complete?

• Everyone:
  • The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Universal application
  • Boston Housing Authority public housing application (if a resident of Boston)

• Citizens, legal permanent residents, and other “qualified non-citizens”* should also complete:
  • The Section 8 Centralized Waiting List pre-application
  • The DHCD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application

* A registry immigrant (admitted for permanent residence by the U.S. Attorney General and eligible for citizenship); a refugee or an asylee; a conditional entrant; a parolee; a withholding grantee; a person granted 1986 amnesty status; a resident of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau, or Guam; a victim of trafficking or relatives of such a victim; VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) Self Petitioners

Where do I submit the DHCD Universal application?

• Submit the DHCD Universal application to:
  • Housing authorities participating in the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (you do not need to live there):

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• Your Local Housing Authority if it uses this application for its site-based housing (not Boston or Cambridge)
  • A complete list of ALL housing authorities is here (you will need to ask if they use the DHCD Universal Application):
Where do I submit the Boston Housing Authority application?

• Pick up the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) public housing application in person between 9:00 and 5:00, Monday through Wednesday, at:
  Boston Housing Authority
  John F. Murphy Housing Service Center
  56 Chauncy Street
  Boston, MA 02111
  First Floor

• People with disabilities may call (617) 988-3400, between 11:00 and 2:00, Monday through Wednesday, to ask that the application be mailed to them

• Submit the application in person at the BHA, between 2:00 and 4:30, Monday through Wednesday

Where do I submit the Boston Housing Authority application? (2)

• You will need to pick properties to apply to; find out what properties your family member may be eligible for at:
  http://www.bostonhousing.org/en/Housing-Communities/Housing-Community-Search.aspx

• Watch an application briefing video, available in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, and Haitian Creole (upon request you can have an application briefing session at the BHA with a translator for other languages): http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPTnL5o-c-GaACuXsl3OXnQ
Where do I submit the Boston Housing Authority application? (3)

• Complete the application:
  • If picking up the application at the housing authority is difficult, you may print it out (on 8.5” x 14” paper) at: http://www.bostonhousing.org/BHA/media/Documents/Applicants/Applicant%20Documents/Preliminary-Application-Package_20170919_FIN.pdf
  • Translations of the application and some additional information (including office hours for submitting the application) are available at:
    • Translations are for information only; the actual application must be submitted in English
  • Make a copy of your application before submitting it

Where do I submit the Section 8 applications?

• Complete the Section 8 Centralized Waiting List pre-application online (http://secure.massnahro.org/Section8LHA_Internet/WebPages/Registration/Home.aspx )
  OR
  Complete a paper application and mail it to the nearest participating housing authority (participating housing authorities and their addresses are listed on the back of the application)
• Submit the DHCD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application to the non-profit serving your community (non-profits and their addresses are listed on the back of the application)
The Fair Housing Act

- The Fair Housing Act protects people with disabilities against discrimination
- Under the Fair Housing Act, your family member is eligible for “reasonable accommodations” and “reasonable modifications” if they are necessary to live in housing
- Accommodations and modifications are always approved on a case by case basis; they can be denied if they are not “reasonable” (for instance, if they are too expensive, or other alternatives might work)

What are reasonable accommodations?

- Changes to rules, policies, practices, and services
- Examples might be:
  - Having a family member accompany them to (or represent them in) meetings with the housing authority
  - Having a service animal in a building where pets are not allowed
  - Using a Section 8 voucher to rent from a family member (for instance, in a three family building owned by a family member)
What are reasonable modifications?

• Physical changes to a home or apartment
• Examples might be:
  • Soundproofing in a bedroom for a person who is loud
  • Film on windows and mirrors that make them less likely to shatter for a person who has outbursts
  • Lowering kitchen cabinets for a person in a wheelchair

⇒ More information on reasonable accommodations and modifications is at:

Completing the DHCD Universal Application

• Your family member must be over 18 to complete this application
• Your family member is the applicant
• Under “Type of Public Housing You are Applying For”, check the box:
  • “AHVP” if you are submitting the application to a housing authority participating in the Alternative Housing Voucher Program
  • Both “Elderly” and “Non-Elderly, Handicapped” if you are submitting the application to a housing authority in your community that has elderly/disabled housing and uses this application (not Boston or Cambridge)
  • “Family” if you are submitting the application to a housing authority in your community that has family housing and uses this application (not Boston or Cambridge)

⇒ You may need to submit more than one application to a housing authority if your family member is applying for more than one type of housing there
Completing the DHCD Universal Application (2)

- If your family member is not in an emergency category, write “N/A” next to question 3.
- If your family member is in an emergency category, check the box for the appropriate category in question 3-- you will also need to complete the emergency application.
- If your family member is not a veteran, write “N/A” next to question 5.
- If your family member needs any special accommodations for their disability, check “yes” for question 6.
  - Examples might be: “the housing authority should communicate with the guardian”, or “explain the lease in simple language”, or “a unit on a higher floor where it is quieter”.
- If your family member needs an aide to live with them, check “2” for number of bedrooms (question 8).
- Unless your family member owns a car in their name, check “no” for question 10.

Completing the DHCD Universal Application (3)

- In question 11, remember your family member is the head of household.
  - If your family member needs a live-in aide, write the aide’s name (if known) or “not yet known” as an additional household member, and write “live-in aide” under “relationship to head of household” (provided the aide is not a close family member; in that case, write the actual relationship).
  - Remember, income of an aide who is a close family member will also count in qualifying for housing.
- Check the box “no” for question 12, unless someone other than an aide is expected to move in with your family member.
- Be sure to include all sources of income your family member has under question 13.
  - If your family member receives EAEDC, put it under “other income”.
  - If there is live in-aide who is a close family member, their income should also be listed.
Completing the DHCD Universal Application (4)

• In question 14, make sure to include medical expenses your family member has that are not covered by insurance, and include any payments for insurance (such as premiums)
• Remember, questions 15 and 16 apply to your family member only, unless a live-in aide is a close family member
• You can use doctors and/or teachers for question 17; an office address and phone are fine
• In question 18:
  • List ALL addresses for the past 5 years, starting with the current one; use extra paper if necessary.
  • The “primary leaseholder” is the first name on the lease
  • You will need the names and addresses of ALL landlords for the past 5 years

Completing the DHCD Universal Application (5)

• If you are your family member’s guardian, sign for your family member:
  • Print your name, print “guardian for”, print your family member’s name, and sign it
  • Attach a copy of your letter of guardianship when you submit the application
• It is a good idea to hand carry the application to the housing authority, so they can look it over for any errors
• Housing authorities will ask for copies of supporting documentation, such as proof of income, where the person lives, immigration status; bring them with you when you go to the housing authority
• You may also need to complete a Verification of Handicapped Status form and a Verification of Disability Form; both are at: http://www.mass.gov/service-details/public-housing-applications-documentation
Completing the Centralized Waiting List Section 8 Application

- Your family member must be over 18 to complete this application
- Your family member is the “head of household”; use their Social Security number
- Use your own phone number and email address if you will be the one dealing with the housing authority
- Leave “spouse or partner” blank, unless your family member has a spouse or partner
- If your family member needs a live in aide, answer “2” to “How many people will live in the unit?”

Completing the Centralized Waiting List Section 8 Application (2)

- “Gross annual household income” is your family member’s income
  - It includes any SSI, SSDI, EAEDC, or other cash benefit, in addition to any wages
- Most likely preferences are: Disabled, Extremely Low Income, One Person Family
  - Check “Working”, if your family member works
  - Check “Homeless”, if your family member attends a special needs residential school
- If you are using a paper application, and you are your family member’s guardian, sign for your family member:
  - Print your name, print “guardian for”, print your family member’s name, and sign it
  - Attach a copy of your letter of guardianship when you mail the application
Completing the DHCD Housing Choice Voucher Program Section 8 Application

• Your family member must be over 18 to complete this application
• Your family member is the “head of household”; use their Social Security number
• Use your own phone number if you will be the one dealing with the housing authority
• Leave “shelter name” and “shelter address” blank, unless your family member is living in a shelter
• If your family member needs a live in aide, answer “2” to “How many people will live in the unit?”

Completing the DHCD Housing Choice Voucher Program Section 8 Application (2)

• “Gross annual household income” is your family member’s income
  • It includes any SSI, SSDI, EAEDC, or other cash benefit, in addition to any wages
• Check “Disabled”
• Under “Current housing situation”:
  • If your family member lives with you, check “I am doubled up with friends or relatives”
• If you are your family member’s guardian, sign for your family member:
  • Print your name, print “guardian for”, print your family member’s name, and sign it
  • Attach a copy of your letter of guardianship when you mail the application
Final thoughts

• Always make a copy for your own records before submitting a paper application
• It is a good idea to ask for a written receipt for any application and supporting documents you submit in person
• It is a good idea to mail all correspondence “certified mail” and “return receipt requested”, so you have proof you mailed it, and that it was received