



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

State-Wide

ENROLLMENT PERIOD: Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 9:00 AM EST until Friday, February 3, 2023, at 5:00 PM EST.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT IS THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM?

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is the federal government's major program for assisting eligible families with housing assistance to pay their rents. This program provides assistance to families so that they can afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Housing can include single-family homes, manufactured homes (trailer homes), townhouses and apartments. A family that is issued a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher is responsible for finding suitable housing of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the DCA on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program.

2. WHAT IS A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

A Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application is the first step in the process to apply for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list at <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559>. All completed pre-application will be entered into the lottery. After the random lottery is conducted you will be notified by email if you were selected or not selected to be placed on a waiting list. If you are not selected in the Lottery, your Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application will be marked inactive.

3. WHERE DO I GO TO APPLY FOR THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM WAITING LIST?

Go to <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559> during the open enrollment period and follow the instructions on the HOME page to submit a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application.

4. WHAT ARE THE HOURS THAT THE WEBSITE WILL ACCEPT SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATIONS?

The <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559> website accepts pre-applications 24 hours a day beginning **Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 9:00 AM EST., until Friday, February 3, 2023, at 5:00 PM EST.** The website will close exactly at **5:00 PM EST**; no more applications will be accepted after 5:00 PM. Therefore, if an application is being submitted at 5:01 PM EST it will not be accepted as the waitlistcheck site closes promptly at 5:00 PM EST on February 3, 2023.

5. WHAT IS A PREFERENCE?

A preference is a priority placement given to applicants for a specific preference category; below are the preference categories:

Veteran Preference: A Veterans Preference is defined as United States Armed Forces Veterans discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions are eligible for the veterans' preference. This means you must have been discharged under an honorable or general discharge. The surviving spouse of a United States Armed Forces Veteran who died outside of service is entitled to the same preference as the United States Armed Forces Veteran, up until they remarry.

Homeless Preference: A Homeless Preference is defined as individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness; at risk of experiencing homelessness; fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; or were recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability; or a household who lacks a regular nighttime residence, lives in a shelter, car, abandoned building, hotel, or other nonresidential place. For a complete definition of homeless see the footnote below.¹

Disabled Preference: A Disabled Preference is defined by (1) Documentation from the Social Security Administration that a member of the household is a disabled person who is receiving Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income benefits; or (2) Certification from a physician, on a Certification of Disability Form that a member of the household is a person with disabilities.

Domestic Violence Preference: A Domestic Violence preference is defined as (1) Is an applicant currently living in a housing unit in which a member of the household engages in such violence. The actual or threatened violence must have occurred within the past 120 days; (2) The applicant has been displaced because of domestic violence and is not currently residing in standard, permanent replacement housing, to avoid the threat of continued abuse; or (3) The applicant is victim of dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.

Local and Residency Secondary Preference: A Local and Residency preference is defined as a Public Housing Agencies (PHA) preference for admission of families that reside anywhere in a specified area, including families with a member who works or has been hired to work in the area (“residency preference area”). and to include the DCA’ s determination that for the purposes of selection, residency will be decided on a county-by-county basis.

6. CAN I HAVE MORE THAN ONE PREFERENCE?

Yes, applicants can choose one or all preferences on the preliminary application that applies to them.

7. IS THERE A MINIMUM AGE REQUIRMENT WHEN APPLYING FOR A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER?

Yes. In order to submit a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher pre-application the Head of Household must be 18 years of age; or be an emancipated minor to submit a pre-application.

8. WHY DO I HAVE TO CREATE AN ACCOUNT AT THE WEBSITE

<https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559?>

An account is necessary to apply for assistance. In addition, creating an account allows you to come back to the website after you have submitted your Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application and check on the status of your pre-application. You must save your account information so that you may return to the website and find out if your pre-application was selected through the lottery.

9. I AM LIVING WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS AND MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE, AM I CLASSIFIED AS HOMELESS?

Yes. (For homeless preferences, see question #5)

10. I AM HOMELESS WHAT ADDRESS SHOULD I USE?

If you do not have an address, please ask a family member or friend if you can use their address. You can also use a homeless shelter, transitional housing agency address or a caseworker’s address. If you do not have any of the above, you can type in “homeless” and include the town or city you are located in at the time of application. Or, you can select “email preferred” on the pre-application under the Contact Information Box.

11. I AM ELDERLY, WHAT TYPE OF ASSISTANCE CAN I GET TO COMPLETE A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

You can have a family member or friend assist you with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application or you can contact one of the organizations listed at the Division of Aging website for assistance using this link:

<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/doas/home/saaaa.html>.

You can also contact the Department of Aging at 1-800-792-8820 or DCA's call center at 609-292-4080, option 9 between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM seven days a week or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov., during the opening period.

12. I DO NOT HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS. HOW DO I SUBMIT MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

You cannot submit a pre-application without an email address. You must obtain a valid email address to make a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application. There are many free email services such as Yahoo, Gmail, and Hotmail. When you begin your pre-application process at

<https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559>, there is a free email site where you can set up an email if you don't already have one. If you have any questions, please call 609-292-4080, option 9, between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM seven days a week or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov during the opening period.

13. CAN I USE MY SMART PHONE, IPHONE, ANDROID TABLET OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHICH HAS AN INTERNET CONNECTION TO MAKE A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Yes, providing you can navigate to the website: <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559> and enter information about yourself from your device.

14. CAN I MAKE CORRECTIONS TO MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION DURING THE OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD?

No, not during the open enrollment period; if your pre-application is selected via the random lottery process and you are placed on a waiting list, then you can update your pre-application via Assistancecheck or by emailing DCA's at customer.service@dca.nj.gov or by regular mail at: DCA-DHCR, Application Service Unit, 101 South Broad Street, P. O. Box 051, Trenton, NJ 08625-00501

15. CAN I SAVE AN INCOMPLETE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION FOR LATER?

Yes, but you must complete and submit your pre-application before the deadline.

16. I APPLIED TO ANOTHER HOUSING AUTHORITY USING WAITLISTCHECK.COM, DO I LOG IN USING MY EXISTING ACCOUNT

INFORMATION TO SUBMIT MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION TO DCA?

Yes. If you remember the credentials that you used for the other housing authority you can use the same credentials to apply to this waiting list; or you can create a new account.

17. DO I HAVE TO ENTER NAMES AND INCOME ON MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Yes. You must answer all of the questions and complete all the required fields in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher pre-application. Your Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application should list all the members of your household and all your household's income including, but not limited to: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Social Security Retirement, Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), pensions, child support, alimony, unemployment, temporary disability, wages, self-employment earning, etc.

18. DO I HAVE TO REPORT ALL ASSETS, INCLUDING BANK ACCOUNTS ON THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Yes. You are required to report all household assets, including any stocks, bank accounts, for all household members, including minors. DCA will use the interest earned from the assets when calculating your household income.

19. I DO NOT HAVE A HOME COMPUTER. WHAT TYPE OF ASSISTANCE CAN I GET TO COMPLETE A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

You may have a family member or friend assist you with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application. You can also go to the local public library or call Division of Housing Community Resources, Customer Service Unit at 609-292-4080, Option 9 for assistance from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM seven days a week or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov., during the opening period.

20. I DO NOT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS AT HOME. WHERE CAN I GO TO COMPLETE MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Free wireless connections are available at coffee shops, bookstores, grocery stores, local libraries, and community centers. If you do not have your own electronic device, you can use the computers at a local public library and at most community centers. If you are currently in a long-term care facility, please contact **I Choose Home NJ** at 855-466-3005 or log onto this link: <http://www.ichoosehome.nj.gov/>. You can contact the customer service for additional assistance at 609-292-4080, option 9 from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM,

seven days a week or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov., during the opening period.

21. I DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION TO GET TO A WIRELESS CONNECTION LOCATION. CAN I COMPLETE MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION OVER THE PHONE?

Yes, if you are disabled and require a reasonable accommodation , please call DCA's, Customer Service Unit at 609-292-4080 option 9, from 8:00 AM. to 8:00 PM for assistance seven days a week or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov. during the opening period

22. DOES YOUR AGENCY PROVIDE THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES TO APPLICANTS?

Yes, During the open enrollment period, the pre-application can be viewed in over 90 languages on-line at waitlistcheck.com/NJ559. At the top right is a drop-down button that allows you to select different language used on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application.

23. IF I HAVE QUESTIONS, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

Call the DCA's Customer Service Unit for assistance at 609-292-4080, Option 9 from 8:00AM to 8:00 PM seven days a week, or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov during the opening period.

24. I WAS ON THE WEBSITE AND STARTED TO COMPLETE MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION. I LOST THE INTERNET CONNECTION IN THE MIDDLE. HOW DO I GET BACK?

Sign back into your account and re-start the application, if you were able to create an account.

25. THE WEBSITE IS UNAVAILABLE AND I CANNOT ENTER MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Wait a few minutes then try again. You have the ability to sign back into the pre-application if you already have created an account.

26. WILL DCA ASSIST WITH FINDING APPLICANTS WITH LOCATING SUITABLE HOUSING?

No, however you can go online to New Jersey Housing Resource Center at <https://nj.gov/njhrc> or, go to Zillow.com or Rent.Com.

27. I AM AN MINOR, BUT I AM EMANCIPATED, CAN I APPLY?

Yes.

28. I AM NOT A U.S. CITIZEN, CAN I APPLY?

Yes, you can apply if you are a legal resident and have permanent status to live in the United States or have eligible immigration status.

29. HOW DO I REQUEST A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION DUE TO A DISABILITY?

If you are disabled and need help applying for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application, DCA will extend reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis and will take into consideration the disability and the need(s) of the individual(s). DCA's Reasonable Accommodation policy is in DCA Administrative Plan which can be viewed online at: www.nj.gov/dca. You can also call DCA-Customer Service number at 609-292-4080, option 9 for assistance from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM seven days a week, or email us at: customer.service@dca.nj.gov during the opening period. (Also, see question # 22.)

30. I WANT TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION INSTEAD OF USING THE ONLINE PRE-APPLICATION, CAN I DO THAT?

No. The DCA will only be accepting Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-applications on-line at the following website: <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/NJ559> .

31. CAN I APPLY FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE IF I OR A MEMBER OF MY HOUSEHOLD HAVE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND?

Yes, however, prior to admission, a criminal background check will be conducted on each adult member of the household.

32. CAN I PRINT MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

Yes, after submitting the pre-application it can be printed.

33. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION WAS SUCCESSFULLY SUBMITTED?

When you click the submit button, you receive an Applicant Receipt page, (retain receipt for your records). If you do not receive an Applicant Receipt page, your application was

not successfully submitted. You have to re-submit your Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application.

34. WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP AFTER SUBMITTING A SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION?

After the Open Enrollment period ends, a random lottery will be completed to select applicants for placement on the Section 8-Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list. DCA will notify you if you were or were not selected via emails.

You can also go online to: <https://www.waitlistcheck.com> after **February 24, 2023**, using the same credentials you used when you applied for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program pre-application to see your status.

ⁱ SEC. 103. [42 USC 11302]. GENERAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL. (a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this Act, the term “homeless”, “homeless individual”, and “homeless person” means: 1) an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; (2) an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; (3) an individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing); (4) an individual who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided; (5) an individual or family who—(A) will imminently lose their housing, including housing they own, rent, or live in without paying rent, are sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels not paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, as evidenced by, (i) a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; (ii) the individual or family having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days; or (iii) credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause; (B) has no subsequent residence identified; and (C) lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing; and (6) unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes who, (A) have experienced a long term period without living independently in permanent housing, (B) have experienced persistent instability as measured by frequent

moves over such period, and (C) can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse.