

INFORMATION AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE TOWN OF ISLIP HOUSING AUTHORITY

How do I apply for Housing Assistance?

IF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAS ADVERTISED THE LISTS AS OPEN, YOU MAY OBTAIN AN APPLICATION IN THE IHA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES OR ON OUR WEBSITE. PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION IN ITS ENTIRETY AND SUBMIT IT BY MAIL. NO APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED IN PERSON AT THE OFFICE. ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE MAILED TO THE ADDRESS FOUND ON THE APPLICATION. PLEASE NOTE THE OPENING AND CLOSING DATES FOUND ON THE APPLICATION

If I am already on the list, do I need to reapply?

No you do not need to reapply. You can check whether your name is on a list or lists by clicking on the “Waitlist Check” button on the IHA website or by contacting the IHA.

Should I submit additional documents with my application?

No. When applying for the waiting list, DO NOT submit identification or other documentation along with the application **unless** you are a person with a disability requesting an accommodation in order to access the IHA programs and you want to submit the type of accommodation you are requesting. This information can help the HA in determining availability. Please note that you are not required to submit any documentation that reflects the actual disability you have, only the requested type of accommodation.

Generally all persons can apply for Housing Assistance regardless of status because the IHA does not verify information or check eligibility until a point in the future. All pre-applications are received, the data is entered into the database, and the initial waiting list is created. Documentation is not requested until after that time.

What proof do I need to show that I am disabled?

For purposes of submitting an application to the waiting list, you do not need to provide any proof of a disability. For purposes of determining whether you have a qualifying disability, the HA will provide a form with the definition of a disabled person for purposes of HUD programs eligibility. This form can be verified by a knowledgeable professional or person knowledgeable about your disability that can be verified through the procedures required by the program regulations..

If I do not read, write or speak English fluently, will someone from your office be able to assist me?

It is the policy of the Islip Housing Authority to provide timely meaningful access for limited English proficiency persons to all IHA programs and services. The IHA is committed to its mission of empowering all individuals and families in need to achieve an enriched quality of life by providing housing opportunities and resources throughout the Town of Islip. If you are a person with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), that is, if you do not speak English as your primary language and you have limited ability to speak, read, write or understand English, the

Housing authority will provide you with language assistance including oral and written translation services free of charge. Please contact the Islip Housing Authority in person or by telephone at (631)589-7100 for Language Assistance.

I sent in my application, now what?

Typically, the process from opening all of the applications, entering applicant information into the database, and mailing a notice back to applicants can take as long as six months or more due to the large number of applications received.

Applications are ordered by preference points first, which include, veteran, working family (which includes elderly or disabled whether working or not) and living or working within the Township of Islip (the HA jurisdiction). Applicants that have an equal number of valid preference claims are then ordered by the date and time of their application.

Please note, that once your application has been placed on a program waiting list, new applications received at a future date will be ordered by preferences first, then by date.

. The HA does not determine the eligibility, i.e. the verification of the applicants' answers on the application, until the application is within close proximity to the HA having available funding for the family.

PLEASE note, based on the above information, the HA assists approximately 40-100 new applicant families per year or less depending on available funding through both programs, a very small amount considering the total number of applications received.

The IHA policies and procedures are available on the HA web site, or you may request to review a copy in the HA main office. A copy of the IHA Agency Plan filed with HUD provides a summary and is available at www.isliphousing.org.

How can I find out the status of my application?

If you have previously applied, you can send in a written request regarding your status. You can also access the HA website to look up your information to see if your record is active. If you have recently applied and you have not received a confirmation yet from the Housing Authority, please be patient as it may take up to 4-6 months or longer to load all of the new applications into the database and to then send out notifications.

What is the average waiting period?

The average waiting period varies depending on funding availability and the number of applicants on the waiting list. The average time period can vary anywhere from 2-7 years or longer. Please note that placement on the list does not guarantee assistance.

Unfortunately, there is not enough subsidy assistance for all persons that apply and the wait can be of an unknown and long duration.

Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to be eligible?

For purposes of the waiting list, all persons regardless of status can submit an application.

For purposes of the waiting list, you should submit an application even if you are unsure of whether you are an eligible non-citizen.

Once an application on the waiting list is reached for an eligibility determination, in order to be eligible, all applicants and residents must disclose a complete and accurate SSN for each member of the household, except for individuals who do not contend citizenship status.

To receive housing assistance all family members must either be citizens or nationals of the United States or eligible immigrants. Persons who are not citizens or nationals of the United States may either claim or document their eligibility for housing assistance OR they may choose not to contend their status and relinquish housing assistance. Relinquishing housing assistance does not necessarily mean that the undocumented family member cannot reside with the assisted family. So long as one family member is a citizen or an eligible immigrant, the family will qualify as a "mixed family" under 24 CFR §5.504 and will have their housing assistance prorated (which means they will pay a higher rent than they would if all family members were either citizens or eligible immigrants.)

Do I need any preferences or do I need to be an Islip township resident to apply?

No, the preferences order the waiting list and persons claiming and subsequently verifying eligibility for preferences claimed will be ranked higher on the list.

LOCAL PREFERENCE POINTS

Working Family (includes Elderly(62) and/or Disabled whether you are working or not)	3
Resident/Working in Jurisdiction	4
Veteran-Working/Living Jurisdiction	1

Can I be working and still apply?

Yes. Program eligibility is based upon family total income from all sources including employment. Please note the description of the Working Family Preference above. Please note the income limits will be applied at the time your application is reached for a full eligibility review.

If I don't live in the Town of Islip, can I still apply?

Yes, there is no residency requirement in order to be eligible for assistance or to apply.

Do I have to be 18 yrs old?

The Head of Household must be 18 years old **or** have emancipated minor status.

Can I be on the Section 8 and other Housing lists at the same time?

Yes, the IHA will put your name on the appropriate list or lists for which you are eligible based upon your answers to the questions on the application. You do not have to indicate for which list you are applying. Fill out the application and the HA will determine the list, depending upon which lists are open for new applications.

If my child is disabled, can we be included on the waiting list for people with disabilities?

In order for an applicant household to be given credit for the working family preference, which is also given to qualifying disabled or Elderly households, as defined by HUD, the Head, Co-Head or Spouse would be the person(s) with the qualifying disability. However, all families are encouraged to apply regardless of status, disability, handicap or any reason, please apply, the specific program regulations, rules, policies, procedures, as may be required based on a specific set of circumstances for any applicant family will be reviewed consistent with any applicable laws, regulations or otherwise at such time when your application is undergoing full eligibility review.

What is the difference between S8 and RAD/PBV?

Section 8 is a subsidy program which will, AFTER your application is reached on the waiting list and AFTER the HA determines you are eligible and IF there is an available voucher (funding) and AFTER a program participant finds a suitable unit for the HA to review AND the unit matches the program requirements, provide a family with a rental subsidy. Sometimes applicants call and state, "My landlord will accept Section 8. Can you give me a voucher." The HA must first reach your application and then determine if you are eligible, regardless of whether your current private rental landlord accepts Section 8 or not.

RAD/PBV Housing and Section 8 eligibility are similar, except the RAD/PBV Housing units are owned by the HA or affiliate and the subsidy or rental assistance stays with the unit, while the Section 8 subsidy is in the form of a voucher issued to a program participant and paid to a private landlord. Program information can be found at www.hud.gov. You can also obtain a program handbook by contacting the IHA.

How much income must I have to qualify for assistance?

There is no minimum amount of income. The maximum amounts of total family income ("Income Limits") are listed on the application, and these limits are revised annually by HUD. Please note, families documenting "zero income" may be required to recertify more frequently to identify how basic needs are being met, i.e. food, utilities.

How many Section 8 vouchers are available?

The short answer is none for purposes of the application acceptance period. This is because the HA issues and maintains the maximum number of allowable Section 8 vouchers, approximately 1,000-1044, depending upon available funding. The waiting list is open for new applicants periodically when the number of families listed does not provide a sufficient pool of applicants to meet the estimated funding availability for a four to five year period, or when a response to request for information from the applicants shows that the applicant information has changed, e.g. the mail comes back as undelivered, or is not responded to at all. Applications are accepted for a period of at least 30 days as may be advertised. All applications received during this period are placed in a container and randomly drawn. This allows fairness to all applicants during the open period.

Will my current residence be inspected by the Housing Authority?

The Housing Authority does not inspect current residences for Section 8 program participation. If/when your name is reached on the RAD/PBV Housing waiting list and you are found eligible and if an offer of a unit will be made to you, the HA as your prospective landlord may inspect your current residence as part of the eligibility process for purposes of determining housekeeping standards. However, this is not typically a single determining factor for denial of eligibility.

If I am eligible for Section 8 assistance, will the Housing Authority help me find housing?

The Housing Authority will provide guidance and resources to assist your housing search. However, the primary responsibility for locating suitable housing remains with the program participant.

How can I let you know if my address changes?

You should advise the Islip Housing Authority in writing of any change in address, either by mailing it or bringing it to the Housing Authority. The HA will provide a return notice acknowledging your change of address.

Should I let you know if my family size or income changes?

If you are already on the waiting list you should have received a confirmation notice that explains which changes in information are required to be reported. Generally the IHA does not need information about an income change for an applicant because the information will only be needed if/when your application is reached on the list for an eligibility determination. If your family composition, size, changes, you should provide the information in writing and mail it or bring it to the Housing Authority. The IHA will provide a return notice acknowledging your change.

What if I have questions?

Contact the IHA main office, extension 210. Please note that during periods when the list is open for new applications, the time to respond to phone messages may increase. The HA goal is to return phone calls within 24 hours. A written request is preferred, but not mandatory, and will generate a written response. The HA keeps a log of all calls on the 210 extension voice mail so that a return call can be made as quickly as possible by the appropriate staff member. Please note that the IHA appreciates the importance of each person's inquiry. However, prioritization of calls and requests and the volume of calls received sometimes results in calls being returned beyond the 24 hour goal. For example, persons already assisted in need of information will be responded to first, while applicants requesting information about how to change an address may be called outside the 24 hour window.