

# OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY RECERTIFICATION



City of Boston  
Mayor Martin J. Walsh



*Neighborhood Development*

# Our Work



## Case Coordination and Triage

---

We take calls from Bostonians, answer questions, and direct them to resources that can help meet their housing needs.



## Non-Profit Partnerships

---

We organize and fund non-profit partners to expand our capacity to prevent homelessness through emergency assistance, housing search, legal assistance and stabilization services.



## Informed Policy-Making

---

We collect and analyze data, community input, and stakeholder feedback to develop policies and programs to address displacement.

# Overview of Housing Subsidies

*Let's learn about the different types of housing subsidies.*

# ***Let's Get Started.***



There are many housing programs, we'll focus on a few major categories:

1. Public Housing
2. Section 8 & MRVP Subsidies
3. Income-Restricted Units
4. Alternative Housing Options in the Private Market

# Public Housing

---

## What is it?

Subsidized housing owned and operated by a local housing authority, such as the [Boston Housing Authority](#), to provide safe and decent housing to low-income individuals, families, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

---

## Who is eligible?

Income limits range from 70-80% AMI.  
Elderly/disabled housing is available for those 60 (state) or 62 (federal) and up or disabled heads of household.  
Family housing is open to all low income households.

---

## How much would I pay in rent?

Typically 30% of income, less if utilities are not included. Your rent can be adjusted if your income changes.

---

## What if I need to move?

The subsidy stays with the unit. Public housing tenants can request a transfer for health & safety purposes to another development within the same housing authority. A local housing authority cannot transfer you into another town.

---

# SECTION 8 & MRVP

## Tenant Based

## Project Based

### What is it?

A subsidy (in the form of a mobile voucher) to help low-income households pay rent.

Privately owned and managed subsidized housing.

### Who is eligible?

- “Extremely Low” to “Low” income households
- Income limits vary by program from 30-80% AMI.
- Some programs are restricted to currently homeless households or those which meet other priority criteria.

### What will my rent be?

- Rent is a set percentage of your household’s gross income (Section 8: 35%, MRVP: 40%), minus any applicable deductions.
- Your rent portion can be adjusted if your income changes.

### What if I need to move?

Voucher can be used in any unit that meets guidelines:  
*Section 8: anywhere in the U.S.*  
*MRVP: anywhere in MA*

Subsidy is typically connected to the unit and cannot be transferred to another unit.

# ***Income Restricted Housing***

## ***(Low-Income Housing Tax Credits or LIHTC)***

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program was created in 1986 and is the largest source of new affordable housing in the United States. There are about 2,000,000 tax credit units today and this number continues to grow by an estimated 100,000 annually. The program is administered by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

---

### **What is it?**

Fixed rate rental housing opportunities designed to be affordable for households meeting set income guidelines. Rents are set at 30% of the income of the AMI tied to the unit and are calculated to include a utility allowance.

---

### **Who is eligible?**

Typically, moderate-income households with stable income between 50 - 100% AMI. There may be opportunities below or above the typical range.

---

### **How much would I pay in rent?**

Rent is fixed and is not subsidized; it will **not** be adjusted based on changes to income. You will need to recertify yearly for eligibility purposes.

---

### **What if I need to move?**

The affordability stays with the unit and cannot be transferred.

---

# Overview of Recertification Requirements

*Let's learn about when and how to recertify  
in different housing programs.*



# ***What is a Recertification?***

---

**Annual review of your household's income, household composition, and other factors used to determine your ongoing eligibility for the unit**

In subsidized housing, housing providers will recalculate and adjust your rent and assistance payments, if applicable, based on the information gathered.

# ***What are the Procedures for Recertification?***

---

*(This process usually starts 90 days prior to the move in anniversary.)*

1. Tenant receives notification from the housing or subsidy provider
2. Second and third reminders sent
3. Interview scheduled
4. Conduct Interview
5. Verify Income and household composition documentation provided
6. Enter information into tool used by housing provider
7. Notification sent to tenant regarding changes
8. Tenant and property owner sign the new lease
9. Housing provider notifies State or Federal Agency of the completion of the process
10. Give tenant initial notification of the following year's process

# ***What documents are needed?***

---

## **1. Proof of Identity:**

- a. Current Photo ID Mass License, Mass ID, and or College ID and Work ID
- b. Birth Certificates
- c. Social Security Cards
- d. Passports
- e. Citizenship Certificates

## **2. Proof of Income:**

- a. Earned income (Pay Stubs, W-2s)
- b. Benefits Received (Social Security, SSI, TAFDC, Unemployment, EBT, etc.)
- c. Retirement benefit letter
- d. 1099's, IRS Tax Transcripts, Tax filings
- e. Child Support Statement

# Documents Needed cont...

## **3. Proof of Assets:**

- a. Statements from Savings accounts
- b. Statements from Checking accounts
- c. investment account statements
- d. Whole Life Insurance account Information

## **4. School enrollment Statement:**

- a. For adults, children over 18, minor children
- b. from Colleges, Trade schools, elementary and high Schools

# ***Can I recertify prior to my annual date?***

---

**Yes, tenants with federal or state subsidized housing (public housing, Section 8, MRVP, etc.)** may request an interim recertification to have their rent adjusted based on the following changes:

- Increase or Decrease in Income
- Change in Household Composition

*(No for Low Income Household Tax Credit tenants, because the rent will not be recalculated based on these changes.)*

# ***What happens if I do not complete the recertification process?***

---

Recertifications are required by both State and Federal programs.

**Failure to comply with the recertification process may result in:**

- **Rent increasing to market rate**
- **Loss of subsidy**
- **Eviction**

*Keep in mind that families who are evicted from subsidized housing are barred from accessing DHCD's EA family shelter system for **3 years**.*

# ***I informed my housing provider of a change in my income and they failed to complete an interim recertification. What can I do?***

---

- Email your property manager or subsidy administrator.
  - In the email, remind them that you reported a change in your income and have not received a response.
  - Include dates, details, and documentation.
  - If they do not respond, reach out to a supervisor or the main office.
- If you do not have access to email, or do not have your housing provider's email address, go in person or send a certified letter and keep a copy to prove that you reported the change.

# ***Can I dispute the rent calculation done by the housing provider?***

---

**Yes, all housing subsidy providers are required to have a grievance procedure** (a step-by-step process tenants can follow to dispute tenant rent calculations).

If at the end of the first grievance process the tenant is not satisfied or does not understand how the calculations were made, they can call the customer service line at HUD (federal subsidies) or DHCD (state subsidies) and ask for a case to be opened to clarify why the rent is set at that amount .

A representative will contact management and discuss the case and require management to give them the calculations. HUD/DHCD will contact you with their findings of whether or not the calculations are accurate.



# ***Low Income Housing Tax Credit Recertifications***

LIHTC rents are not based on a tenant's income. Instead, rent is set by the use restriction tied to the unit. This means that **a tenant's rent will not change due to the household's income changing**. The rent can change annually, but these changes are based on adjustments to the Area Median Income as determined by HUD.

**Owners are required to annually certify the household's Housing Credit eligibility.** The re-certification must be effective no later than 12 months from the effective date. Owners must obtain third-party documentation to support the household's income eligibility and verification of the household's student status during an annual recertification. Once this information has been obtained, a Tenant Income Certification form must be completed and signed by all adult household members.

**If a family's income increases after they move in, the family is not disqualified from staying in the unit-even if the increase is above the unit's income requirements.**

# Recertifying During COVID

# ***Current BHA Recertification Process***

- Public Housing Residents - Contact Property Manager

Management offices at the public housing developments are all staffed. Residents can be seen by appointment as BHA has made physical modifications to ensure social distancing.

- Mobile Subsidy Residents - Contact Leasing Officer

## **SPECIAL NOTES:**

- Residents may mail, fax, or email new income information.
- 52 Chauncy offices are closed to the public at this time, but all staff are available by email and telephone.
- A number of the forms are available on the BHA website as fillable. Leased Housing: [www.bostonhousing.org/lhforms](http://www.bostonhousing.org/lhforms) is a good link for some of those forms.

# ***Metro Housing Boston Recertification Process:***

Have you recently lost your job? Or have you had your hours reduced? Are you unable to pay your current tenant share? If so, you may be eligible for a change in the tenant share you pay your property owner. **To get started, email the Leased Housing Gateway Team at [gateway@metrohousingboston.org](mailto:gateway@metrohousingboston.org).**

Be sure to include the name of the head of household and current address. *Please note: This process only applies to current voucher program participants with Metro Housing through Section 8, MRVP, or COC.*

<https://www.metrohousingboston.org/what-we-do/voucher-programs/massachusetts-rental-voucher-program/mrvp-forms/>

# RESOURCES

## Financial Assistance

### **Metro Housing Boston**

<https://www.metrohousingboston.org/what-we-do/specialized-services/raft/>

### **Office of Housing Stability**

[housingstability@boston.gov](mailto:housingstability@boston.gov) or 617-635-4200

### **Lend a Hand**

Must have a referral from a Community Partner/ Case Manager/ Social Worker

Address: 89 South St #203, Boston, MA 02111

Phone: (617) 338-5301

### **Trustees of Charitable Donations for the Inhabitants of Boston**

Robin Charlotin

[tcdib@boston.gov](mailto:tcdib@boston.gov)

617-635-3692\_(Call just once and leave a message with your need or send an email)

# OFFICE OF HOUSING STABILITY CONTACT US.



*[WWW.BOSTON.GOV/HOUSINGSTABILITY](http://WWW.BOSTON.GOV/HOUSINGSTABILITY)*



*[HOUSINGSTABILITY@BOSTON.GOV](mailto:HOUSINGSTABILITY@BOSTON.GOV)*



*617-635-4200*