

APPLYING TO & OBTAINING A NYCHA APARTMENT



NYCHA: NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

NYCHA is the NYC public housing provider.

NO PRIORITY CODE

Pronounced "N-Zero"



Youth aging out of foster care are eligible for an "NO" Priority Code which expedites the application process.

NYCHA HOUSING: IMPORTANT NOTES

YOUTH CAN APPLY TO NYCHA STARTING AT 18 YEARS OF AGE.

There is a long wait for NYCHA, and young people with an **APPLA goal** should apply as close to their 18th birthday as possible.

RENT is based on 30% of gross income (before taxes) and is re-evaluated annually. *(After taxes, this is closer to 50% of income!)*

SSI and **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE** are acceptable means of paying rent to NYCHA.

NYCHA TENANTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE FULL-TIME STUDENTS.

The enforcement of this rule varies by building/Case Manager: If during the annual renewal a young person has an acceptable source of income (a paycheck or public assistance) then it may not matter if they are a full-time student.

- Therefore, the Coach should assist youth enrolled in school with applying for work/study programs or getting **HRA Benefits** to cover rent payment.

HRA BENEFITS allow for students enrolled in an Associate or Bachelor degree program to receive benefits. Some students may not have enough hours to fully exempt them from the HRA work requirement

- HRA will count each hour of class, as well as one hour per credit for homework.
- Recipients may be required to either attend the Back to Work program or gain part time work to remain eligible. In these cases, Coaches should assist the young person in getting Work/Study, which is easier to manage with their course load.

Note: HRA cannot count scholarship money as overall income when making eligibility determinations.

APPLICANTS CAN SELECT BOROUGH PREFERENCES, NOT SPECIFIC NYCHA DEVELOPMENTS:

The young person can select their first and second borough preferences and will be placed on the waitlist for one of those boroughs (often the first selection).

The borough preference selection is final once the eligibility interview is complete and cannot be changed after. Therefore, before beginning the eligibility interview the young person must be sure of their borough preference request.

ELIGIBILITY

YOUTH MUST FIT ONE OF THE BELOW DESCRIPTIONS:

- In foster care with an APPLA goal and be between 18-21 years old
- In foster care over 21 years old under an approved CCS21+
- Discharged from foster care with an APPLA goal, are under 21 years old, and do not have stable housing
- Discharged to APPLA but continue to receive ACS College Room and Board exceptional payments, over 21 years old

NO PRIORITY CODE ELIGIBILITY:

Youth aging out of foster care are eligible for an **NO Priority Code** which expedites the application process.

Youth cannot apply to NYCHA with the **NO Priority Code** after their 21st birthday (unless on an approved CCS21+ or ETP)

Once the application is submitted to NYCHA, youth can remain on the waitlist and secure the apartment even after their 21st birthday

NYCHA: POINTS TO CONSIDER

BENEFITS:

- While it is a long wait, it can be quicker than other housing options
- No age limit to remaining in housing, young people can stay in their NYCHA apartment as long as needed/desired
- Young people can transfer to larger NYCHA apartments as family size increases
- More availability for young parents
- Young people can apply without employment with a Presumptive Budget Letter

CONS/CONSIDERATIONS:

- Youth do not have a say in location (outside selecting borough)
Some youth do not want to live in “the projects” as there can be safety concerns and a negative stigma/environment
- Many of the apartments are not in good living conditions
- Must have source of income (paychecks or public assistance) at the time of the NYCHA eligibility interview or can be rejected and unable to apply for one year from the date of denial
- It is difficult for students to juggle coursework with working to meet the rent requirement
- NYCHA can start eviction proceedings after two months of non-payment
- Must be residing in NYC
- Youth with a criminal history or pending charges may be denied

NYCHA HOUSING POINT OF CONTACT AT ACS FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Paul Williams: paul.williams@cs.nyc.gov or 212-676-6779



APPLYING

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY MAIL

While anyone can apply for NYCHA by submitting an application online, this is NOT how youth aging out of care must apply.

Youth aging out of care will not be granted the **NO Priority** unless the application is submitted through ACS by mail to:

ACS Housing
150 William Street, 8th floor
New York, NY, 10038

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS INCLUDE:

- NYCHA application**
- Proof of Identification**
- Original vital documents**
- Proof of Income:** Pay stubs or a Presumptive Budget Letter
- Proof of Residence (must be in NYC)**
- APPLA Certification Letter**
[See Appendix I3_APPLA Certification Letter](#)
- Memorandum of Attestation**
[See Appendix I4_Memorandum of Attestation](#)

APPLICATION PROCESS

Youth must accompany an agency representative to submit the electronic NYCHA application at the ACS Housing office. Exceptions may be made for youth who are working and/or in school. If an exception is made, the agency worker must come with a photocopy of the youth's government issued photo ID.

Agency representative must bring the **Housing Subsidy Memorandum of Attestation**, signed by the foster care agency director, and the **APPLA certification letter**, signed by the case planner.

Please note that not all aspects of the Memorandum need be completed - there are areas that Paul Williams will fill in later, once the apartment has been secured. However, this form must be signed by the agency Director at the application stage.

Youth should receive a hard copy of the application packet at the time of submittal.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

16-18 YEARS OLD

Advise youth to attend the **4 Core Trainings** at the **ACS Housing Academy** to learn about housing options and be prepared for applying

17-18 YEARS OLD

Ensure youth has all vital documents (originals) and proof of identification

Prior to application appointment with ACS: request Presumptive Budget Letter from the respective ACS department in order to satisfy the income requirement (see below)

18 -19 YEARS OLD:

Accompany youth to ACS Housing to complete online application and submit all documentation requirements (see previous section "Applying")

- An **ACS Housing Specialist will submit the electronic application.**
Gather this person's contact information to aid in follow up on the application status within the first month or two to ensure errors and/or delays do not incur.
- **ACS submits a signed independent living referral form to NYCHA, recommending the N0 priority**

NYCHA reviews the application and looks for previous residence with NYCHA

- Youth must be removed from any existing NYCHA lease before an eligibility interview will be scheduled!
[See Appendix I2 Youth Consent to NYCHA Advocacy](#)

NYCHA schedules eligibility interview with youth

- Must have source of income or **Presumptive Budget Letter**

If found eligible, youth is placed on a borough-wide waiting list, based off borough selection made in application

- Youth will be contacted via letter in the mail, and often an email to ACS, when an apartment is available.

ONCE THE YOUTH ACCEPTS AN APARTMENT

- The caseworker/housing specialist should **apply for the ACS move-in/furniture grant**
[See Appendix I11 ACS Housing Subsidy for more information.](#)
- The caseworker/housing specialist should **schedule a trial discharge conference** (for youth still in care)
This must take place in order to **apply for the discharge grant.**
[See Appendix I12 ACS Discharge Grant for more information.](#)

PRESUMPTIVE BUDGET LETTER

Youth must have income at the time of the NYCHA eligibility interview or their application will be denied.

In order to receive a Presumptive Budget Letter the youth must be at least eighteen years old and show that either s/he was employed and lost that job, or has been actively seeking employment for the last six months.

To receive the **Presumptive Budget Letter**, an email must be sent to: **Shamika Perkins** (shamika.perkins@acs.nyc.gov) copied to **Paul Williams** (Paul.Williams@acs.nyc.gov), with the youth's **legal name, date of birth, and social security number.**

Note: the Presumptive Budget Letter does not generate income.

This shows NYCHA the maximum cash and shelter allowances the youth will be eligible to receive after aging out of care, if not employed at that time. In order to physically receive these benefits, the youth must be taken to Public Assistance to apply. This can be done at any point prior to discharge from care.

Youth who are newly aging out of care are eligible to apply for Public Assistance through the Special Projects Center.

The staff at this HRA location are knowledgeable about aging out of foster care, the wait time is significantly lower, and the experience is overall less stressful for the young person.

Youth in any borough are eligible to apply for Public Assistance at the **Special Projects Center** located on **109 East 16th Street, 12th floor, New York, NY.**

To make an appointment, contact Marsha Davis (Marsha.Davis@acs.nyc.gov).
You can select a morning or afternoon appointment but will be assigned the specific time.

TIPS FOR HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE APPLY TO NYCHA

The following are tips to ensure that the process is expedited.

DEPENDING ON THE AGENCY, THE COACH, CASE PLANNER, OR HOUSING SPECIALIST WILL COMPLETE THESE STEPS:

- Before applying, verify that youth has all necessary documents.**
For example, if missing the original birth certificate or social security card, the Case Planner should request ACS' assistance in getting this prior to turning 18.
- Assist youth in getting an ID prior to applying.**
- After the application has been submitted, verify with Paul Williams that all documents were included and that the packet was able to be sent on to NYCHA for processing**
- Advise youth that they must be in care at the time of eligibility interview**
AWOL or trial discharge status can disrupt the NO Priority
- Prepare youth for eligibility interview**
NYCHA will ask about any drug use in the last three years and criminal history
For parenting youth, the criminal history of a partner may be asked even if the partner will not be residing in the home, especially when named on the birth certificate.
Criminal and/or drug history can prevent a youth's application from being approved. Youth with a criminal history or pending charges may be denied at the outset and an appeal pursued.
- If deemed 'pending ineligible', applicants have 30 days to respond to NYCHA.**
This can be showing proof of rehab for drug use or court disposition documents regarding criminal court cases.
- If found 'ineligible', have 90 days to appeal NYCHA's determination.**
- The youth, Coach, and/or Specialist should periodically call the NYCHA hotline: 718-707-7771 to verify that youth is (and remains) on the borough-wide wait list**
Will need social security number and DOB of applicant to call on their behalf
If the phone number or address on the application changes (youth changes foster homes for example), coach should assist youth in updating NYCHA to any changes.
- When called for an apartment, the Coach should accompany youth to view the home.**
If youth will accept, it is good to know the layout to determine which furniture will fit in the home.
If the apartment is very small or of an unusual shape, it is best to measure for furniture.
- If youth is uncomfortable with the apartment or neighborhood, counsel youth on pros and cons of denying.**
Youth are granted only one denial; if the first apartment is not accepted the second offer must be. Therefore, the youth must be prepared to accept the second apartment. The second offer typically comes very quickly, often within a week.
- Once youth accepts an apartment, take them to view furniture that will fit in the home.**