

APPLYING DIRECTLY TO SECTION 8 FROM FOSTER CARE



OVERVIEW

NYCHA SECTION 8 IS ADMINISTERED BY NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA).

NYCHA Section 8 provides Section 8 vouchers to youth ages eighteen and older who are transitioning out of foster care with a goal of **Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)**.

NYCHA SECTION 8 VOUCHER

A **Section 8 voucher** allows a young person to rent a **market-rate apartment** (for 30% of their gross income) anywhere that has a private landlord who accepts Section 8 vouchers.

In general, this pathway is not recommended for youth aging out of care unless they have very stable employment and good credit, which is not often the case.

Vouchers for foster youth aging out are limited and there is a waiting list. Some supportive housing providers also get access to Section 8 vouchers for residents so they can transition out by/before age 26.

See [Appendix 117 Transitioning to Permanent Housing - Using a Portable Section 8 Voucher](#) for more information.

NYCHA SECTION 8: POINTS TO CONSIDER

BENEFITS

- Can locate apartment in various neighborhoods, not limited to 'projects'
- May be able to secure a one bedroom instead of a studio
- There is no age limit
- Apartments must pass inspection so are often better maintained than NYCHA units
- Section 8 program can be transferred to other states after participating in the program for one year

CONS/CONSIDERATIONS:

- ACS has over 1,500 applicants on the waitlist
- Cannot remain on NYCHA waitlist if you have a Section 8 voucher
- It can be difficult to locate an apartment
- Young people will need stable employment; public assistance and/or scholarship funding is not an accepted form of income for landlords
- Most youth will need a broker, which ACS will not pay for unless the youth is under 21.5 years of age or on an approved CCS21+
- Credit score of over 500 is recommended to secure an apartment (some brokers can locate one with less though)
- Must pay 30% of gross income (closer to 50% of "take-home pay")
- Young people will often also be responsible for some cost of utilities (this will vary by apartment)
- Rent must be paid in full by the first of the month (NYCHA can make payments in installments as long as the rent is paid by the end of the month)

ELIGIBILITY

- ☑ **Between 18-24 years old**
- ☑ **In foster care or history of foster care for at least one year past 16th birthday**
- ☑ **Proof of income**
If in care, a Presumptive Budget Letter is accepted

APPLYING

ACS MAINTAINS AN INTERNAL WAITLIST FOR SECTION 8.

Housing Specialists can place youth on the waitlist by contacting: Ronette Short (ronette.short@acs.nyc.gov, 212-676-6838) with the following information: clients full name, DOB, social, mailing address, cell number, email, and emergency contact.

HPD SECTION 8 VOUCHERS*

ACS has recently partnered with New York City's Housing Preservation & Development Department to receive HPD Section 8 vouchers for a limited number of youth.

Eligibility requirements are the same for both Section 8 vouchers and HPD Section 8 vouchers, though income is not expressly required to apply for HPD Section 8 vouchers.

Youth must apply in person at the ACS office for HPD Section 8 vouchers. *To apply, the young person must bring:*

- A state ID, birth certificate, social security card;
- Previous months bank statement;
- Proof of income: if working, last six weeks of paystubs; if not working, HRA budget letter, SSI award letter, or child support is accepted.

**ACS has stated they are not accepting applications for this program until further notice.*

TIMELINE

YOUNG PERSON IS 18 YEARS OLD:

Housing specialist should contact Ronette Short to add youth to ACS waitlist

YOUNG PERSON IS APPROACHING 24TH BIRTHDAY:

Contact Ronette Short for an exception to expedite the application

YOUNG PERSON RECEIVES SECTION 8 VOUCHER:

There is **only 3-5 months** to locate an apartment before the voucher will expire

SECTION 8 VOUCHER: COACH TIPS

- ☑ **Good credit is crucial for securing a Section 8 apartment.**
Once a youth is 18 years old, the coach should be running a credit check with the youth to assess for any credit issues and to work on increasing the credit score.
- ☑ **Coaches (and/or Housing Specialists) can build relationships with brokers who are willing to assist youth aging out of foster care.**
- ☑ **Coaches can search the app Street Easy with the young person for no broker fee apartments**
- ☑ **Security deposit will often be needed to begin the section 8 packet process. However, ACS will not pay any fees until a signed lease is signed.**
The agency or youth need to be prepared to pay the security in order to move the process forward. ACS will pay the broker fee after a signed lease is secured.