

BEAVER STATE APARTMENTS
STRATFORD APARTMENTS
TENANT SELECTION CRITERIA

Thank you for considering Stratford Apartments as your next residence. Stratford Apartments is a multifamily housing property that provides affordable units to households earning 60% and below the area median income in Jackson County.

Each adult must be screened for credit, criminal and eviction background checks when the application is selected from the waiting list for prospective tenancy. Applications may be submitted at the leasing office or interested parties may apply online through the property listing at www.viridianmgt.com.

This property is funded by the USDA Rural Development Multifamily Housing program and Section 42 of the IRC Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Eligible households must qualify under the restrictive income limits and regulations set out by this program.

For rental inquiries or other information, please contact us using the information below.

Phone: (541) 482-2366
Website: www.viridianmgt.com
Property Email: stratford@viridianmgt.com
Location: 553 Clay Street
Ashland, OR 97520

OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

Size	Minimum No. of Occupants	Maximum No. of Occupants
1 bdr	1	3
2 bdr	2	5
3 bdr	3	7

RENT AND SECURITY DEPOSIT

Rents are subject to change annually. Please speak to the site manager for current rental rates. The security deposit is: \$300 for a 1 bedroom, \$375 for a 2 bedroom, and \$450 for a 3 bedroom unit.



1. POLICY – NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Viridian Management is committed to Fair Housing Policy and Equal Housing opportunity for prospective applicants regardless of race, color, religion, sex (gender), -national origin, disabled status, familial or marital status, source of income, status as victim of domestic violence, sexual orientation, gender identification, or age. Viridian does not discriminate on the basis of disabled status in the admission or access to, treatment of, or employment in, its housing, programs or activities. Viridian complies with requirements of the Fair Housing Acts, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a person with a disability shall be provided with a reasonable accommodation to the extent necessary to provide such person with an opportunity to use, enjoy and occupy the apartment and apartment premises. A verification of disability as well as linking the accommodation to disability may be required. Under federal and state law, an individual is disabled if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including: walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, thinking, communicating, learning, performing manual tasks, and caring for oneself. Applicants should contact the Manager for further clarification related to reasonable accommodations, or how to make a request for reasonable accommodation.

2. APPLICATION AND WAITING LIST

All persons interested in Viridian-managed housing may request an application either in person, or through a designated individual, at the local on-site or regional designated site office during posted office hours; or request an application to be mailed by calling the local phone number listed on the cover sheet of this document. Fax requests for applications may be sent to the fax number listed on the cover sheet of this document. TTY telecommunication is available by calling the national relay number 711. It is Viridian Management's policy to assist wherever possible especially in the accommodation requests by persons with disabilities; applicants may request assistance in completing the application if necessary.

An application must be completed **in full** by the applicant and submitted either in person to the local site office or via mail to the local or regional office. All applicants will be contacted in writing within 10 days of receipt of the application, to inform them of status of their application. Applicants are placed on the waiting list in order by date and time the completed application is received.

Applicants that submit incomplete applications will be placed on the waitlist and contacted by mail with a request to complete the application in full. If the incomplete application is not returned completed within 10 days of notification, the household will be removed from the waiting list and sent notice of the removal.

Periodically the manager will send 10-Day Waiting List Update letters out to all applicants on the waiting list to determine continued interest. Recipients of this letter have 10 days to respond. If no response is received within 10 days, the manager will send the applicant a letter to notify them that they have been withdrawn from the waiting list. Applicants that respond and wish to be removed from the waiting list will be removed and sent a letter informing them that they have been withdrawn from the waiting list.

When the manager contacts an applicant to determine continued interest, the applicant will be asked if there is anything on the application that needs to be changed. If the applicant indicates that the information

provided has changed, the site manager will schedule an appointment for the applicant to update the application.

Applicants sent a notice of available unit may refuse to begin processing for eligibility for that unit one time. The household will be skipped for that unit, but remain on the waiting list by their original application date. Applicants that refuse the second offered unit will be sent a notice of withdrawal from the waiting list, unless the applicant can demonstrate a need to turn down the unit due to an extenuating circumstance outside of their control. Additionally, if the property has project-based rental assistance but not available to all units, the applicant may request to remain on the waiting list until a unit with rental assistance becomes available.

Finally, if notices mailed to the applicant are returned as undeliverable, management will attempt to contact the applicant by any provided phone number or email address to obtain updated mailing information. If these attempts to contact the applicant fail, the household will be withdrawn from the waiting list.

All applicants must be willing to sign a release form to authorize verification of all items contained in the application, inclusive of; all income, assets and allowances along with credit, personal and landlord references. All households must provide positive identifications, as required by the funding program related to this project, of all persons who will be part of the household. Preliminary eligibility will be satisfied by using information on the application; placement of an application on the waiting list does not denote final tenant selection. Applicants may request information concerning the current status of their application by writing or calling the local site office at the number listed on the first page of this document or the Central Office at 1(541) 426-3820.

Applicants who have indicated the need for and requested the features of an accessible unit designed to assist individuals with disabilities, and have verified the need for the features of this type of unit and meet the definition of disabled, will have priority for those units. In the event, no households apply who would benefit from the features of an accessible unit, it will be offered to a non-disabled and income-eligible person on the waiting list. In this circumstance the applicants, as tenants, will be asked to sign a lease addendum agreeing to transfer (at their own expense) to another unit should an appropriately sized unit become available, and if there are households needing the features of the accessible unit.

Any applicant who requests modifications or accommodations related to their disability to non-adapted units will have consideration on those requests when selected, but with no priority for selection.

3. NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS

The number of occupants residing in the unit must be in accordance with unit density standards as set forth by the Owner/Manager. In determining unit density standards, the intent of property policy is to neither overcrowd nor underutilize space. Different properties may have different density standards depending on federal or state funding for the property, bedroom sizes, unit square footage and any local ordinances and restrictions; see page one for a table of the unit density standards. The Owner/Manager may change the unit density standard during the lease term if changes in laws, ordinances or regulations make such change necessary. Households who become under or over-housed due to changes in household composition or changes in local, state or federal ordinances or restrictions will be asked to transfer to a more suitably sized unit within 30 days. If there are no suitably sized units existing at the property, the

household will be asked to vacate the property within 30 days or at the end of their lease, whichever is longer. The unit density standard is based on the number of persons in the household and includes all full-time members of the household, persons who are away at school but live with the applicant at recesses, unborn children or children in the process of being adopted or secured by custody action, foster children and live-in attendants. Children who live in a household 50% of the year or more are also counted; however, visitors, permanently confined/institutionalized household members and children on active military duty are not counted in this determination for occupancy eligibility.

A disabled applicant who would need a larger unit to accommodate a disability would be given such consideration, even if disallowed by the property unit density standard. For specifically designed units (i.e. barrier free), applicants needing those features would be given priority even if occupancy would otherwise be considered underutilization.

4. ELIGIBILITY – GENERAL

Applicants who meet the income/occupancy guidelines and have come to the top of the income and/or other preference lists still must meet all other eligibility criteria before being approved to move in. Management will notify the applicant when their application is ready to be processed for residency. Applicants will receive notice that they must contact the manager within 10 days to begin processing or they will be issued a letter of withdrawal from the waiting list.

Applicants, in addition to any property program requirements, must also meet application, interview and reference criteria as defined below.

Applicants who have been rejected for occupancy will receive a letter detailing any applicable appeal rights and a description of the reasons for the rejection.

As previously stated, any application which is incomplete will not be processed if the applicant fails to respond to the incomplete application notice within 10 days of notice. An applicant who refuses to sign any release to allow the verification of all items contained in the application, including all income, assets and allowances along with credit, personal and landlord references, will be withdrawn from the waitlist and sent notice of withdrawal.

Applicants who exceed the maximum allowable income limits or unit density standards for a property, or who are found to have provided false answers on the application or at the interview, will be rejected.

Applicants who fail to come to a scheduled interview, unless there are extenuating circumstances, or who come to the interview under the influence of illegal drugs, intoxicated, or whose conduct is abusive, threatening, or disruptive will be rejected.

Total monthly unit rent should not exceed 50% of the household's net income (income after withholdings required by law or as a condition of employment). Food stamps will be included in the household income for this calculation. This requirement is waived if a portion of the rent will be paid by a rental subsidy. Applicants should contact the property manager if further explanation is required.

Applicants will be rejected if it is determined that their presence or the presence of any of their household members would create an unsafe environment.

Applicants who wish to be a tenant or co-tenant must possess the legal capacity to sign all documents unless an accommodation determination for the individual to allow a guardian signature, if otherwise eligible, is made.

5. ELIGIBILITY – CRIMINAL HISTORY

Applications containing a household member who is subject to, or whose name is contained in any federal, state or local sex offender registry will be rejected.

A single conviction, guilty plea, plea of no contest or pending charge for any of the following offenses may be grounds for rejection of your rental application. If there are multiple convictions, guilty pleas or no contest pleas on the applicant's record, Owner/Agent may increase the number of years by adding together the years in each applicable category. Expunged records will not be considered.

- a) Felony involving: murder, manslaughter, arson, rape, kidnapping, child sex crimes, manufacturing or distribution of a controlled substance unless applicant provides evidence acceptable to the Owner/Agent that the applicant has been crime-free for at least 10 years since the later of: i) the date of release from incarcerations; or ii) completion of parole.
- b) Any other felony charge not listed above involving: drug-related crime, person crime, sex offense, crime involving financial fraud, including identity theft and forgery, or any other crime if the conduct for which applicant was convicted or is charged with is of a nature that would adversely impact the property of the landlord or a tenant, or the health, safety or right of peaceful enjoyment of the premises of the tenant, the landlord or landlord's agent, where the date of disposition has occurred in the last seven years.
- c) Misdemeanors involving: drug-related crimes, person crimes, sex offense, weapons, violation of a restraining order, criminal impersonation, criminal mischief, stalking, possession of burglary tools, financial fraud crimes, where the date of disposition has occurred within the last five years.
- d) Misdemeanors not listed above involving: theft, criminal trespass, property crimes or any other crime in the conduct for which applicant was convicted or is charged is of a nature that would adversely affect property of the landlord or a tenant, or the health, safety or right of peaceful enjoyment of the premises of a the residents, the landlord or landlord's agent, where the date of disposition has occurred in the last three years.

Pending charges or outstanding warrants for any of the above listed offenses will cause the application to be suspended until the charges are resolved. No unit will be held awaiting the result of pending charges.

Exceptions may be made regarding some criminal charges and extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration. Reasonable Accommodation requests may be made as to any policy or criteria. Do not be afraid to ask the property manager for more information, or for further clarification, if needed.

6. ELIGIBILITY – CREDIT HISTORY

To determine eligibility, credit history will be reviewed; however, lack of credit history will not be cause for denial. Credit reports containing unpaid utility collections or judgments or other housing-related debt will be cause for denial. Cable, cell phone, and internet debts are not considered utility or housing related expenses.

If you can provide proof of extenuating circumstances around specific debts, or can demonstrate actively working on debt resolution goals, it will be taken into consideration during the application review process.

7. ELIGIBILITY – PUBLIC RECORDS AND RENTAL REFERENCES

Third party rental history will be verified. Please provide references that can be contacted. Lack of rental history will not be cause for denial. Some applicants may have no previous, or current, rental or credit references, but can still offer personal non-related references. Public records or rental history, including but not limited to, the following may be grounds for rejection of your rental application:

- a) Eviction from a residence within the past five years.
- b) Eviction from more than one residence, regardless of how long ago the evictions occurred.
- c) Rental references which indicate the applicant caused significant damage to the unit, vacated the unit owing rent, were late paying their rent on four or more occasions, caused disturbances at the rental on more than one occasion, or maintained their unit in an unsanitary condition.
- d) References indicating the applicant used the rental for illegal activities or were found in non-compliance of their lease agreement on four or more occasions during the tenancy.

Applicants should be honest and disclose any information that may provide further context for an eviction, including past extenuating circumstances such as job loss and/or major medical. Successful completion of an approved second chance renters program, or proving circumstances that led to an eviction no longer exist, will be taken into consideration during the application review process.

Any rejection would be issued in a written statement to the applicant with notification of Grievance and Appeal rights, when applicable.

8. VAWA-VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

That an applicant is or has been a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking is not an appropriate basis for denial of program assistance or for denial of admission, if the applicant otherwise qualifies for admission.

In determining eligibility for housing in cases where the Agent, acting on behalf of the Project Owners, has become aware that the household includes a victim of domestic violence, and when screening reveals negative and potentially disqualifying information, such as poor credit history, previous damage to an apartment, or a prior arrest, inquiries will be made regarding the circumstances contributing to this negative history, to ascertain whether these past events were the consequence of domestic violence against a member of the applicant household.

Any such inquiries will make clear that members of applicant households have a right to keep any history of domestic violence against them confidential.

When inquiries reveal that the negative history was the consequence of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking against a member of the applicant household, the applicant household will not be denied housing assistance on the basis of this reporting, provided that the perpetrator of domestic violence is not a member of the applicant household.

The Agent may ask for documentation establishing that the negative history was the consequence of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking. The applicant shall have fourteen business days (i.e. weekends and holidays will not count in determining the deadline) to provide such documentation. The Agent may grant extensions to the fourteen-day-deadline if the applicant demonstrates good cause. The applicant can satisfy the documentation requirement in any of the following ways:

- 1) Completing a certification form verifying that the individual is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, and that the incident or incidents in question are bona fide incidents of actual or threatened abuse. Such certification shall include the name of the perpetrator, if it is known; OR
- 2) Providing documentation signed by any of the following third parties:
 - a) an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider;
 - b) an attorney;
 - c) a medical professional; or
 - d) other knowledgeable professional.

The person signing the documentation must have assisted the victim in addressing domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, or the effects of the abuse. The person signing the documentation must attest under penalty of perjury to his or her belief that the incident or incidents in question are bona fide incidents of abuse. The victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking must also sign the documentation; OR

- 3) Producing a Federal, State, tribal, territorial, or local police or court record.

All denial of assistance letters will notify applicants of VAWA's protections and that they may seek an informal review if they believe that the denial of assistance was related to acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking committed against the applicant.

If because of safety concerns a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking is unwilling or unable to provide information or identification ordinarily required to confirm eligibility, efforts will be made to otherwise establish eligibility and alternative sources and methods of verification will be accepted.

9. PREFERENCES

This property has one or more waiting list preferences, which means that priority placement is given to applicants who qualify for a specific preference category. Applicants that meet one or more of the preferences will receive the first opportunity to qualify for available units, and may skip over applicants on the waiting list that do not qualify for any preference. The following list preference or preferences apply to the waitlist at this property:

- a) Households Displaced by Government Action or Natural Disaster. Households or individuals that are forced to move from their home as a result of federal, state, or local government action, or if the household or individual was forced to move from their home as a result of a federally declared natural disaster such as a fire or flood.

10. NON-DISCRIMINATION

No person, applicant or resident shall be discriminated against or segregated on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex (gender), familial or marital status, source of income, status as victim of domestic violence, sexual orientation or gender identification. Applications may not be rejected, and applicants and/or residents may not be denied housing, treated differently than others, harassed, or evicted from housing based on any of these discriminatory criteria.

To report a fair housing complaint, please contact:

Fair Housing Council of Oregon
506 SW Sixth, Suite 1111
Portland, OR 97204
Information@FHCO.org
(503) 228-8197 Ext. 2
(800) 424-3247 Ext. 2 (TTY and translation available)

Alternatively, you may call HUD at 800-877-0246.

USDA RD SELECTION CRITERIA

This document is intended to be an addendum to the Tenant Selection Criteria. It explains additional selection criteria based on requirements posed to the owner/agent by state and/or federal regulations due to funding used in the construction, acquisition and/or rehabilitation of the property.

Applicants who do not meet USDA Rural Development income limits will be rejected (see page one of the Tenant Selection Criteria for more information).

Where there is layered funding at a property and conflicting tenancy criteria, the most restrictive standards will be used.

1. STUDENTS

Project Eligibility:

1. A student household is not eligible for tenancy except where:
 - a. The student is of legal age in accordance with the applicable state law or is otherwise legally able to enter into a binding contract under state law;
 - b. The person seeking occupancy has established a household separate and distinct from the person's parents or legal guardians;
 - c. The person seeking occupancy is no longer claimed as a dependent by the person's parents or legal guardians pursuant to Internal Revenue Service regulations, and evidence is provided to this effect; and
 - d. The person seeking occupancy signs a written statement indicating whether or not the person's parents, legal guardians, or others provide any financial assistance and this financial assistance is considered as part of current annual income and is verified in writing by the borrower.

Eligibility for the USDA RD rental assistance program (if applicable):

1. Assistance shall not be provided to households where any household member:
 - a. Is enrolled as either a part-time or full-time student at an institution of higher education for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or other program leading to a recognized educational credential;
 - b. Is under the age of 24;
 - c. Is not married;
 - d. Is not a veteran of the United States Military;
 - e. Does not have a dependent child;
 - f. Is not a person with disabilities, as such term is defined in 3(b)(3)(E) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(3)(E)) and was not receiving section 8 assistance as of *November 30, 2005.* (See Definition E in Figure 3-6);
 - g. Is not living with his or her parents who are receiving Section 8 assistance; and
 - h. Is not individually eligible to receive Section 8 assistance and has parents (the parents individually or jointly) who are not income eligible to receive Section 8 assistance.

1. For a student to be eligible independent of his or her parents (where the income of the parents is not relevant), the student must demonstrate the absence of, or his or her independence from, parents. While owners may use additional criteria for determining the student's independence from parents, owners must use, and the student must meet, at a minimum all of the following criteria to be eligible for Section 8 assistance. The student must:
 - a. Be of legal contract age under state law;
 - b. Have established a household separate from parents or legal guardians for at least one year prior to application for occupancy, or, meet the U.S. Department of Education's definition of an independent student;
 - c. Not be claimed as a dependent by parents or legal guardians pursuant to IRS regulations; and
 - d. Obtain a certification of the amount of financial assistance that will be provided by parents, signed by the individual providing the support. This certification is required even if no assistance will be provided.
2. If an ineligible student is a member of an existing household receiving assistance, the assistance for the household will not be prorated but will be terminated.

2. INCOME TARGETING

USDA Rural Development regulations give priority for available units first to households who have an annual income at or below 50% of the area median income (Very Low), second to households who have an annual income at or below 80% of the area median income (Low), then to households who have an annual income at the Low-income plus \$5,500 (Moderate).

Priority for assigning available rental assistance follows these guidelines: First priority is always to eligible very low-income tenants paying the highest percentage of their adjusted annual income in shelter costs. Second priority is to very low-income applicants on the waiting list, considering the applicant's unit size and type needed. Third priority is to eligible low income-tenant paying the highest percentage of their adjusted annual income in shelter costs. Fourth priority is to eligible low-income applicants on the waiting list. Final priority is to households that are residing in a rental unit for which they don't qualify on the basis of an occupancy waiver or other special approval situations.

3. UNIT DENSITY

The unit density standard is listed on page one of the Tenant Selection Criteria. The Owner/Manager will make exceptions to the minimum number of occupants in the unit density standard should there be any instance where there are applicants on the waiting list but none who would qualify for the larger unit size. In this case the applicant would have to sign an agreement to transfer to a more suitably sized unit, at their own expense, when one comes available in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Tenant Selection Criteria, Number of Occupants.

4. TRANSFERS BETWEEN UNITS

Transfers between units will be authorized only if: required due to a reasonable accommodation, changes in family size or composition, the over or under-utilization of the unit or a transfer is needed to maintain

an appropriate unit mix if the household's income coincides with a specific income set-aside of another unit. Transfers based on other compelling reason may also be approved by management after verifying that the existing household does not have any record of lease violations, late rent payments and the unit is being maintained in accordance with the lease agreement.

5. DISCLOSURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Family members 6 years of age and older must provide the borrower with a complete and accurate social security number. For any members of the family who do not have a social security number, the applicant or family member must certify that the individual has never received a social security number.

6. NON-DISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form.

Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

LIHTC (IRC SECTION 42) SELECTION CRITERIA

This document is intended to be an addendum to the Tenant Selection Criteria. It explains additional selection criteria based on requirements posed to the owner/agent by state and/or federal regulations due to funding used in the construction, acquisition and/or rehabilitation of the project.

Applicants who do not meet LIHTC income limits will be rejected.

Where there is layered funding at a project and conflicting tenancy criteria, the most restrictive standards will be used.

1. STUDENTS

The LIHTC program prohibits the rental of set-aside units to entirely full-time student households not qualifying for a specific exception.

A. Student Defined.

A Student is defined as “an individual who during each of five calendar months during the calendar year is a full-time student at an educational institution.”

A full-time student is one who is enrolled for some part of five calendar months for the number of hours or courses, which is considered to be a full-time attendance. The five calendar months need not be consecutive. School attendance exclusively at night does not constitute full-time attendance. However, full-time attendance at an educational institution may include some attendance at night in connection to a full-time course of study.

In addition, individuals pursuing a full-time course of institutional on-farm training under the supervision of an accredited agent of such educational institution, of a state or political subdivision of the state, are also deemed full-time students.

B. Student Status Exemptions.

As a general rule, the household may not be occupied in its entirety by full-time students. Thus, if any one single individual in the household is not a full-time student, the application will still qualify under the student status requirements.

If all household members are full-time students, the applicants may still qualify for residency if:

- The students are married and file a joint federal income tax return. A copy of the joint tax return or marriage license should be included in the file; or
- The household consists of a single parent (with custody) and a school age child or children, all of whom are not dependents of a third party; or
- One or more of the students receive assistance under the TANF program as such program activities and participation are related to families with dependent children; or
- One or more students is enrolled in and receiving assistance under the Workforce Investment Act or similar governmental job-training program, or

- One or more students previously received foster care assistance under part B or E of Title IV of the Social Security Act.

If at any time during the term of the lease agreement, or any extension thereof, the entire household becomes composed of full time students, the entire household will no longer qualify and will be asked to move within 30 days or at the end of their lease term; whichever is longer.

Students in K-12 are not considered an exception solely by virtue of their age and grade in school.

C. Income of Students.

For LIHTC purposes, all financial assistance received in excess of tuition is INCLUDED as income if the household receives Section 8 assistance, unless:

- A. The student is over the age of 23 with dependent children, or
- B. The student is living with his or her parents who are applying for or receiving Section 8 assistance.

2. ADDING MEMBERS AFTER MOVE-IN

No additional household members may apply and be screened to be added to a household within the first six (6) months of the initial lease, except in the event of pregnancy, adoption and live-in aides qualified via the reasonable accommodation process.

3. RENT TARGETING REQUIREMENTS

If this property has designated deeper rent set-asides in order to provide lower rents to lower income tenants, reasonable attempts will be made to ensure that these units are being utilized in the best manner possible.

If during the income recertification process it is determined that a lower set-aside unit household's income has increased to the point where it meets a higher set-aside within the property, the lower set-aside the household currently has will be floated to another unit.

First priority to receive the lower rent set-aside will be given to existing households who meet the lower set-aside income restriction and would benefit from the lower rent. If multiple existing households would qualify for the lower set-aside, the household with the greatest rent-burden (paying the highest percentage of income for current rent) will be selected for the designation. If multiple households have the same rent-burden, then the household who has been rent-burdened for the longest time will receive the designation.

Second priority for designation of the lower rent set-aside will be given to the next person on the wait list who meets the lower set-aside limits.



Rural Housing and Community Programs

Things You Should Know About USDA Rural Rental Housing

Don't risk losing your chances for federally assisted housing by providing false, incomplete, or inaccurate information on your application or recertification

Penalties for Committing Fraud

You must provide information about your household status and income when you apply for assisted housing in apartments financed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA places a high priority on preventing fraud. If you deliberately omit information or give false information to the management company on your application or recertification forms, you may be:

- Evicted from your apartment;
- Required to repay all the extra rental assistance you received based on faulty information;
- Fined;
- Put in prison and/or barred from receiving future assistance.

Your State and local governments also may have laws that allow them to impose other penalties for fraud in addition to the ones listed here.

How To Complete Your Application

When you meet with the landlord to complete your application, you must provide information about:

- **All Household Income.** List all sources of money that you receive. If any other adults will be living with you in the apartment, you must also list all of their income. Sources of money include:
 - Wages, unemployment and disability compensation, welfare payments, alimony, Social Security benefits, pensions, etc.;
 - Any money you receive on behalf of your children, such as child support, children's Social Security, etc.;
 - Income from assets such as interest from a savings account, credit union, certificate of deposit, stock dividends, etc.;
 - Any income you expect to receive, such as a pay raise or bonus.
- **All Household Assets.** List all assets that you have. If any other adults will be living with you, you must also list all of their assets. Assets include:
 - Bank accounts, savings bonds, certificates of deposit, stocks, real estate, etc.;
 - Any business or asset you sold in the last 2 years for less than its full value, such as selling your home to your children.

- **All Household Members.** List the names of all the people, including adults and children, who will actually live with you in the apartment, whether or not they are related to you.

Ask for Help if You Need It

If you are having problems understanding any part of the application, let the landlord know and ask for help with any questions you may have. The landlord is trained to help you with the application process.

Before You Sign the Application

- Make sure that you read the entire application and understand everything it says;
- Check it carefully to ensure that all the questions have been answered completely and accurately;
- Don't sign it unless you are sure that there aren't any errors or missing information.

By signing the application and certification forms, you are stating that they are complete to the best of your knowledge and belief. Signing a form when you know it contains misinformation is considered fraud.

- The management company will verify your information. USDA may conduct computer matches with other Federal, State or private agencies to verify that the income you reported is correct;
- Ask for a copy of your signed application and keep a copy of it for your records.

Tenant Recertification

Residents in USDA-financed assisted housing must provide updated information to the management company at least once a year. Ask your landlord when you must recertify your income.

You must **immediately** report:

- Any changes in income of \$100 or more per month;
- Any changes in the number of household members.

For your annual recertification, you must report:

- All income changes, such as increases in pay or benefits, job change or job loss, loss of benefits, etc., for any adult household member;

- Any household member who has moved in or out;
- All assets that you or your adult housemates own, or any assets that were sold in the last 2 years for less than their full value.

Avoid Fraud, Report Abuse

Prevent fraudulent schemes through these steps:

- Don't pay any money to file your application;
- Don't pay any money to move up on the waiting list;
- Don't pay for anything not covered by your lease;
- Get receipts for any money you do pay;
- Get a written explanation for any money you are required to pay besides rent, such as maintenance charges.

Report Abuse: If you know anyone who has falsified an application, or who tries to persuade you to make false statements, report him or her to the manager. If you cannot report to your manager, call your local or state USDA office at 1 (800) 670-6553, or write: USDA, STOP 0782, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250.

If You Disagree With a Decision

Tenants may file a grievance in writing with the complex owner in response to the owner's actions, or failure to act, that result in a denial, significant reduction, or termination of benefits. Grievances may also be filed when a tenant disputes the owner's notice of proposed adverse action.

Notice of Adverse Action

The complex owner must notify tenants in writing about any proposed actions that may have adverse consequences, such as denial of occupancy and changes in the occupancy rules or lease. The written notice must give specific reasons for the proposed action, and must also advise tenants of the "right to respond to the notice within 10 calendar days after the date of the notice" and of "the right to a hearing." Housing complexes in areas with a concentration of non-English-speaking people must send notices in English and in the majority non-English language.

Grievance Process Overview

USDA believes that the best way to resolve grievances is through an informal meeting between tenants and the landlord or owner. Once the owner learns about a tenant grievance, the process should begin with an informal meeting between the two parties. Owners must offer to meet with tenants to discuss the grievance within 10 calendar days of receipt of the complaint. USDA encourages owners and tenants to try to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to the problem at the meeting.

If the grievance is not resolved, the tenant must request a hearing within 10 days of receipt of the meeting findings. The parties will then select a hearing panel or hearing officer to govern the hearing. All parties are notified of the decision 10 days after the hearing.

When a Grievance Is Legitimate

The landlord must determine if a grievance is within the established rules for the program. For example, "I want to file a complaint because the manager doesn't speak to me" is not a legitimate complaint. However, "I want to file a complaint because the manager isn't maintaining the property according to USDA guidelines" is a legitimate complaint. Below are examples of cases in which tenants may and may not file a complaint.

A complaint may not be filed with the owner/management if:	A complaint may be filed with the owner/management if:
USDA has authorized a proposed rent change.	There is a modification of the lease, or changes in the rules or rent that are not authorized by USDA.
A tenant believes that he/she has been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, familial status, or disability. Discrimination complaints should be filed with USDA and/or the Department of U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD), not with the owner/management.	The owner or management fails to maintain the property in a decent, safe, and sanitary manner.
The complex has formed a tenant's association and all parties have agreed to use the association to settle grievances.	The owner violates a lease provision or occupancy rule.
USDA has required a change in the rules and proper notices have been given.	A tenant is denied admission to the complex.
The tenant is in violation of the lease and the result is termination of tenancy.	
There are disputes between tenants that do not involve the owner/management.	
Tenants are displaced or other adverse effects occur as a result of loan prepayment.	

PA 1998
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To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.