

Housing Choice Voucher Wait List FAQs

What is the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program?

The HCV Program, commonly referred to as Section 8, is a federally funded tenant-based rental assistance program designed to assist low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private rental market. The HACC subsidizes a portion of the rent directly to the property owner.

When will the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Waiting List open and close?

The HCV Program Wait List will open on October 19th at 8:30am and close on November 2nd at 4:30pm.

Where can I access the online application?

You can access the online application by going to myportal.thehacc.org and clicking the “Applicant Login” button in the top right-hand corner of the screen.

Are there instructions available to help me with the application process?

Yes, there will be downloadable instructions in the form of a .pdf on the home screen of the Applicant Portal.

Is there a cost to submit an application for the HCV Program?

There is no cost to submit an application for any of HACC’s housing programs. The HACC will never ask for any payment information from you. Additionally, do not provide any personal information to anyone claiming he or she can guarantee you a place on the wait list or improve your position on the wait list.

How many applications will the HACC accept?

The HACC will accept all completed applications submitted between October 19th – November 2nd. However, only 10,000 applicants will be added to the HCV Wait List.

In what order will applicants be placed on the HCV Wait List?

Applicants will be selected by a random computerized -lottery process and placed accordingly on the HCV Wait List.

Are there any preferences for placement on the HCV Wait List?

No. There are no preferences for placement on the HCV wait list. A randomized lottery process is used to place applicants on the wait list.

Can more than one person in my household submit an application?

Yes, but each applicant must be 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor in accordance with Illinois law.

What are the eligibility requirements to be admitted into the HACC’s HCV Program?

In order to be eligible for the HCV Program, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must be 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor

- Must meet all eligibility requirements as outlined in the HACC’s Administrative Plan – you can find a copy of HACC’s Administrative Plan on the home page of the HACC’s website at www.thehacc.org
- Must meet income guidelines set by Department of Housing and Urban Development for the HACC’s metropolitan area. Maximum income may not exceed the very-low income level of 50% area median income (AMI)

Persons in Family:	Income Limit:
1	31,850
2	36,400
3	40,950
4	45,500
5	49,150
6	52,800
7	56,450
8	60,100

Can I apply for the HCV waiting list if I was previously terminated from the program?

Anyone can apply for the HCV wait list. However, when selected from the wait list, your application will be processed in accordance with federal regulations and the HACC’s Administrative Plan. You can find a copy of HACC’s Administrative Plan on the home page of the HACC website at www.thehacc.org.

Can I be selected for the HCV Waiting List if I am on another waiting list?

Yes. Placement on any one wait list does not affect your ability to be selected from any other wait list.

If I am currently on a HACC Waiting List, does placement on the HCV Wait List affect my status on any other wait list?

No. Your placement on any other wait list does not change.

What happens after I submit the application for the HCV Waiting List?

Once you submit the application, you will get a notification that your application was submitted successfully via email. The initial email indicates your application was successfully completed, not that you are on the HCV wait list. The notification will explain the next step in the process for selection to the HCV Wait List.

Do I have to have an email address to submit an application?

Yes. HACC requires applicants to have an email address. Applicants may create a free email address using gmail, yahoo, or some other free source. The HACC is communicating more and more with families using email. It is faster and more secure than regular mail and typically will not change as much as a physical address.

Will I be notified either way if I am selected or not for the HCV Wait List?

Yes. You will be notified either way.

What should I do if I did not receive notification?

Please log on to our application portal (rent café) to confirm status.

When will I be notified whether I made the HCV Waiting List?

You will be notified within 30 days of the closing of the waitlist application period.

If selected for a waiting list, do I automatically qualify for housing?

Anyone selected for the wait list must be processed for eligibility. All applicants selected for the wait list may not qualify for housing and must still meet eligibility requirements once the household is pulled off of the waitlist. Placement on the HCV wait list does not guarantee you will receive assistance.

If selected for a waiting list, how do I check my application status?

You will receive an email letting you know you've made the wait list. You can also check your status online by logging onto the Rent Café portal.

If I make the HCV Waiting List will I lose my spot on another waiting list?

No. You may be on more than one wait list at the same time. Placement on the HCV wait list does not affect your position on any other wait list.

If selected for a waiting list, when will I receive housing assistance?

Selection for the HCV Waiting List does not guarantee housing. Once placed on the Wait List, applicants are selected for eligibility determination based on the order in which they were placed on the Wait List and the availability of HACC funding. Only eligible applicants will receive housing assistance. The HACC expects to process all applicants within 4 years of placement on the Wait List.

Can I submit more than one application to increase my chances of being selected for the lottery?

No. Applications with duplicate Social Security numbers will not be accepted.

When did the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Waiting List close?

The HCV Program Waitlist officially closed on November 2nd.

In what order will applicants be placed on the HCV Wait List?

Applicants will be selected by a random computerized - lottery process and placed accordingly on the HCV Wait List. This process will take place within 30 days after the closing of the waitlist application period.

Can I be selected for the HCV Waiting List if I am on another waiting list?

Yes. It is possible to be selected for more than one waiting list, but assistance may be provided in one program only.

Are there any preferences for placement on the HCV Wait List?

No. There are no preferences for placement on the wait list.

Will I be notified either way if I am selected or not for the HCV Wait List?

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If selected for a waiting list, how do I check my application status?

You will receive a registration code where you can log in and create an account in the Rent Café portal. You will use that account to check your status or update any information on your application.

If I make the HCV Waiting List will I lose my spot on another waiting list?

No. You may be on more than one wait list at the same time. Placement on the HCV wait list does not affect your position on any other wait list.

If selected for a waiting list, when will I receive housing assistance?

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I missed the waitlist application period, when will you open the HCV waitlist again?

The timelines for waitlist openings are dependent on federal funding allocated on an annual basis, therefore HACC cannot provide specific dates for when another waitlist opening will occur. We encourage you to regularly check our website at www.thehacc.org and subscribe to our social media channels (facebook and twitter) for notifications regarding waitlist openings.

General HCV Program FAQs

What is the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program?

Formerly known as Section 8 – provides housing assistance to low income individuals and families using a voucher in the private rental market with the HACC subsidizing a portion of the rent to the owner.

How is my rent portion determined?

Income for all household members is considered when determining rent portion. The participant's share of the rent is generally 30-40% of their monthly Adjusted Gross Income (AGI).

Is there a minimum rent requirement?

Yes. The HACC has a minimum rent requirement of \$50.00. The minimum rent will be taken into consideration when calculating the participant's Total Tenant Payment (TTP) based on the household income.

What is Portability?

The portability feature allows an eligible family that has been issued a Housing Choice Voucher to use the voucher and lease a unit anywhere in the United States providing that the unit is located within the jurisdiction of a Public Housing Authority that administers an HCV Program.

If I am eligible for a HACC voucher can I port right away to another jurisdiction?

If a participant lived in HACC's jurisdiction at the time the participant submitted an application for the HACC's HCV waiting list, then the participant can port to another jurisdiction immediately. If not, the participant must remain in HACC's jurisdiction for one year with the voucher. After one year of being assisted, the participant can port out.

How long does the move process take?

The time it takes to complete the process depends on how soon the complete move documentation is submitted, how long it takes the unit to pass an HQS inspection, and how long it takes the prospective landlord to approve the rent offer. Note: if the participant moves into the unit before the HACC approves the unit and rent, the tenant will be 100% responsible for any rent due to the owner before approval date.

How does HACC determine the voucher size for the participant?

Voucher issuance is based solely on the number of people residing in the household. The HACC will issue one bedroom per two people in the household. HACC does not determine who shares a bedroom/sleeping room.

For example:

Five people in a household = 3 bedroom voucher.

Four people in a household = 2 bedroom voucher.

Three people in a household = 2 bedroom voucher.

Two people in a household = 1 bedroom voucher.

How long is an HCV move voucher valid?

A voucher is issued with 120 days of search time. The participant must find a new unit and return a completed move package by the end of the 120 day period. However, participants that

are actively searching for a unit, but are unable to find one in the 120 day period due to good cause, can request an additional 60 days of search time on the voucher.

Can a participant rent from a relative?

Participants may not lease a unit from immediate family (such as parents, child, grandparents, grandchild, sister, brother, spouse or domestic partner) or any family member of the participant's extended family, unless HACC provides a written approval based on a reasonable accommodation.

Once a participant receives a voucher, can the participant rent from their current landlord in their current unit?

If the unit is in HACC's jurisdiction, once the unit passes inspection and the rent offer is accepted, the HACC can approve a tenant to live in his/her current unit.

How does someone become a landlord on the HACC's HCV program?

Email landlord@thehacc.org for more information on being a HACC HCV landlord.

Who is responsible for paying the security deposit?

The participant is responsible for paying the security deposit. However, the HACC does offer a security deposit grant for eligible participants enrolled in the HACC's Community Choice Program. For more information about the HACC's Community Choice Program, visit the website at www.thehacc.org.

Will the participant have to pay for utilities?

The participant and the landlord decide who will be responsible for each utility. If the participant is responsible for paying utilities, the HACC provides a utility allowance that can reduce their share of rent.

How long does the participant have to remain in the subsidized unit?

The HACC requires a participant to remain in the unit for one year, which typically corresponds with the term of the initial lease. If the participant remains in the unit after the first year, the length of the lease term is between the landlord and tenant. Any time a participant moves, the participant must remain in the new unit for at least one year.

Rent Café and Technology Related FAQs

Why am I getting an invalid account error when I try to register for the Rent Café portal?

HACC has different portals for some of their properties. Some properties require you to register for a new account in order to access the property's online application.

What should I do if I receive an error message “The social security number you entered does not match our records” when I try to register for a Rent Café account?

You received this error because you have a record in their system. Please email HCVWaitlist2020@thehacc.org with the subject “Registration – SSN Mismatch” and provide your full name, DOB, email, full SSN and phone number.

Do I need a registration code in order to register for a Rent Café account?

You do not need a registration code to register for a Rent Café account. During the registration process, there is an option to select ‘I do not have a registration code.’

Why am I getting an alert that says I have an existing Rent Café account. I don’t recall signing up for a Rent Café account with your agency?

Other companies and agencies use Rent Café. This alert will come up if the email you are trying to register with is already registered with Rent Café. The alert lets you know which company you have an account with. You may proceed with by selecting the option to ‘Use My Existing Account’ or create a new account with a different email address.

Why am I receiving an error that says my email address is associated with a Rent Café Landlord User? How can I proceed?

Your email address is registered in Rent Café as a landlord account. You cannot use this email address. You must use a different email address. If you do not have another email address, you can create one through a free email provider such as Gmail, Yahoo, or any other email provider you wish to use.

What should I do if I can’t remember my user name.

Agent: Your user name is your email address. If you cannot remember your user name, please email HCVWaitlist2020@thehacc.org with subject – Forgot User Name with your full name, date of birth and last four digits of your SSN. Please allow 48 hours for a response from the agency.

What should I do if I need to reset my password for Rent Café?

There is an option to recover your password on the log in page. Select *Forgot Password*. Enter your User Name. Your user name is your email address. You will receive an automated email with a link to reset your password. Please check your spam and junk folders if you do not see the email in your inbox. Click the *reset password* link. Enter your new password. All passwords must be a minimum of 10 characters and contain all of the following: one lowercase letter, one uppercase letter, one number and one symbol.

What should I do if I am receiving an alert with the message ‘You have exceeded the maximum login failures. You may use the Forgot Password Link to reset your password’ when I try to log into my Rent Café account.

Your account is currently locked. To unlock your account, follow the instructions on the prompt and Select Forgot Password. See Question 8 for password reset instructions and screenshots.

What are the password requirements for a Rent Café account?

All passwords must be a minimum of 10 characters and contain all of the following: one lowercase letter, one uppercase letter, one number and one symbol.

Why am I getting an invalid log in error when I try to log into Rent Café?

This means your password or user name is incorrect. Select Forgot Password on the log in page to reset your password (refer to question 8 for screenshots). All passwords must be a minimum of 10 characters and contain all of the following: one lowercase letter, one uppercase letter, one number and one symbol.

What should I do if my Rent Café account is locked?

Your account was locked because you exceed the number of times you can enter incorrect log in credentials. Your account will automatically unlock after 30 minutes. If you know your password, you may try to log in again after 30 minutes. If you don’t know your password or would like to try and log in now, go back to the log in page and reset your password. Resetting your password will unlock your account immediately. Refer to Question 8 for reset password.

How do I complete the online application on Rent Café?

HACC has applications instructions on their Rent Café Log In Page. Click ‘CLICK HERE’ to access the instructions. Application instructions begin on page 11.

This URL is the link to the instructions.

<https://thehacc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/How-to-Register-and-Submit-an-Application-Online-2020.03.09.pdf>

Do I need a computer to fill out the application?

No. You can use any device that has a modern web browser.

Can I apply with my phone?

As long as your phone has a working mobile data and/or wi-fi connection and a working internet browser such as Chrome, Firefox, Samsung Internet, etc. you will be able to fill out the application.

Can I use a tablet to fill out the application?

Your tablet will need to have either a mobile data connection or access to wi-fi in order to access the application and a working internet browser such as Chrome, Firefox, Samsung Internet, etc. for you to be able to fill out the application.

Do I need a specific browser to fill out the application?

As long as you have an up to date web browser such as Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Chrome, Opera, etc. you can fill out the application.