

New Start Voucher Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can we use the New Start Voucher?

New Start Vouchers can be used in the following communities:

- Anchorage
- Fairbanks
- Homer
- Juneau
- Ketchikan
- Kodiak
- Mat-Su
- Petersburg
- Sitka
- Soldotna
- Valdez
- Wrangell

2. Will every stabilization client receive a voucher?

There are 250 New Start vouchers available for households participating in the Housing Stabilization and Recovery Program.

3. What is the eligibility criteria for the New Start Voucher Program?

Households meeting the following criteria may apply for the New Start Voucher program.

- Must be a current Housing Stabilization and Recovery Program participant at the time of application.
- A household's income may not exceed 50 percent of area median income. The maximum income level varies depending on the community and household size. You can view the HUD household income limits by visiting the following link:
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>.
- Federal regulations prohibit AHFC from providing voucher assistance to persons with the following criminal history.
 - ✓ Anyone who is a fugitive, in violation of parole or probation, or fleeing to avoid prosecution.
 - ✓ Anyone who has been evicted from federally assisted housing for drug related criminal activity in the past 36 months.
 - ✓ Anyone convicted of the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
 - ✓ Anyone subject to a lifetime sex offender registry.
- Families are required to identify if they are a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National, a noncitizen with eligible immigration status, or ineligible noncitizen at the time of application.

- To avoid application processing delays, it is essential families have all required eligibility documents available to upload at the time of intake. These include:
 - ✓ Social Security Cards for all family members
 - ✓ Picture Identification for all adults
 - ✓ Birth Certificates for all minors
 - ✓ Current Proof of Custody Documentation
 - ✓ If an eligible-noncitizen, I-94 documents or Alien Registration Cards
 - ✓ Current, within 60 days, verification of all income received in the household

4. Should I wait until the client has exhausted their Housing Stabilization and Recovery Program assistance to apply for the New Start Voucher Program?

The waitlist for the New Start Voucher Program will open at 8:00 a.m. on January 21, 2025 and close at 5:00 p.m. on February 28, 2025. All current Housing Stabilization and Recovery Program participants are encouraged to apply before the waitlist closes on February 28th. Once the waitlist closes, applicants will be placed on the waiting list based on date and time of application.

5. How long is the voucher assistance?

Once a family is determined eligible for the New Start Voucher Program, the length of time for assistance is determined by the household's composition. If all adults in the household are 62 years of age or older, or persons with a disability, the household will receive long-term assistance. All other households will qualify for 5 years of assistance.

6. Will the voucher cover their entire rent?

Voucher program participants are responsible for paying a portion of the monthly rent directly to their landlord and AHFC pays a subsidy portion to the landlord. The household's rent portion will be calculated at the greater of 28.5% of their income or the program defined minimum rent. Households that are 62 years of age or older/ disabled have a minimum rent of \$25 per month. For households participating in the 5 year time-limited program, rent in the first year is the greater of 28.5% of their income or \$100 minimum rent. Then they will start to pay more of their income towards rent in years 2-5.

7. Can a client apply for this voucher program and other voucher programs at the same time?

We strongly encourage households to apply for assistance through AHFC's-owned housing or other voucher programs in addition to the New Start Voucher Program. Applying to multiple programs will provide households with more options and they may receive assistance through other programs before they reach the top of the waitlist for the New Start Voucher Program.

8. If enrolled in the New Start Voucher Program can the client stay in their current rental?

When a household receives their voucher, they may use it to rent a unit that meets the following criteria:

- The landlord must agree to participate in the voucher program.
- AHFC will evaluate the monthly rent established by the landlord to determine if it is reasonable.
- AHFC will conduct an inspection of the unit to ensure it meets federal housing standards.

If the household's current unit meets this criteria, they would be eligible to utilize their voucher for their current unit.

9. Will the application be available in Enki? Or will it be a paper application?

Navigators will submit applications for the New Start Voucher Program electronically to the Public Housing Department through a referral portal. When uploading any documents, please upload in PDF format and refrain from uploading pictures of documents. The Navigator's contact information has been shared with the Public Housing Department and has been set-up in the referral portal to ensure you have access to the application when the waitlist opens. If you have questions regarding submitting applications, please contact the New Start Voucher Program team at phdreferral@ahfc.us or the Housing Stabilization team at stabilization@ahfc.us.

10. Can previous stabilization clients apply for the New Start Voucher Program?

Current Housing Stabilization and Recovery Program participants are eligible to apply for the New Start Voucher Program.

11. If the client is able to remain in their current unit, how can their landlord prepare for this transition?

- Landlords may visit the following link to learn more about participating in AHFC's voucher programs: <https://www.ahfc.us/pros/landlords/housing-choice-voucher-program>
- Landlords are welcome to call 1-800-478-2432 or email landlord@ahfc.us with questions or for assistance.
- Landlords may also contact their local AHFC office. A list of locations and contact information can be found through the following link: <https://www.ahfc.us/contact-us/housing-assistance-locations>.

12. Can a client port (move) this voucher out of state?

The New Start vouchers do not have portability outside of Alaska.

13. Once referred, what can a client expect?

- After the Navigator submits the client's application through the AHFC referral portal, the client will be placed on the New Start Voucher Program waitlist.
- Once a family is selected from the waitlist, they will receive email correspondence from AHFC to complete an intake workflow through the RENTCafé online system
 - Client(s) must provide verification of social security numbers, identification for adults, and proof of custody for minors, i.e. birth certificates.
 - Clients must provide proof of federal income dated within 60 days.
 - [Social Security and Supplemental Security Benefit Letter Portal](#)
 - [Veteran Affairs Benefit Letter Portal](#)
 - [When uploading verifications, please upload documents in PDF format and refrain from uploading pictures of documents](#)
- AHFC will screen families and assign the assistance group: Classic or Step.

- Classic Program: All adult family members are at least 62 years of age or a person with a disability. These families may include minors, dependent full-time students under the age of 24, and persons residing with the family as live-in aides.
 - Step Program: All families that do not meet the Classic Program definition are placed in this category. These are families that contain a work-able adult.
- Clients will complete an online class to learn about the voucher
 - Upon completion of the class, the client will be sent a Voucher to sign
 - The fully executed Voucher and the Leasing Packet will be uploaded to the client's RENTCafé account
 - The Leasing Packet is filled out with the landlord to prompt an inspection. Upon successful inspection, assistance will begin