

Ralph M. Perrey, Executive Director



Housing Choice Voucher Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and Answers

Requesting Information

The Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA), and in particular, the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. You may visit the THDA website at <https://thda.org/help-for-renters/housing-choice-voucher-hcv-program/> to view information regarding the Housing Choice Voucher Program Wait List and apply to an open wait list, if available. Applications must be submitted online. You may only submit an application for rental assistance when a county waitlist is open.

We currently do not have an open waitlist, and we cannot predict when a closed list will re-open. We post openings on <https://thda.org/help-for-renters-section-8/waiting-list-openings-and-closings>

Please note that THDA does not manage all housing vouchers in Tennessee including Shelby (Memphis area), Davidson (Nashville area) or Rutherford Counties. You will need to contact the local housing authorities in these counties for assistance directly.

Housing Programs across Tennessee

To locate other social service resources within the State of Tennessee you may call the 2-1-1 information hotline.

For Housing and Housing Resources throughout Tennessee, please also visit the following websites that have a variety of housing options.

1. www.TNHousingSearch.org
2. www.renterdefender.org

Emergency Housing Resource and Assistance

If emergency assistance is needed, please check with your local Public Housing Agency, Social Service Agencies. Also visit, <https://thda.org/emergency-housing>



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Applying for a Project Based Voucher (PBV)

THDA is onboarding properties to participate in the PBV Program. As new properties join the program, they will be announced on TNHousingSearch.org and the THDA website <https://thda.org/rental-housing-partn/project-based-vouchers-for-applicants-and-tenants/> **Applicants must apply directly to the property where a PBV waiting list is open.**

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD VASH)

The HUD-VASH program combines the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The VA and HUD jointly manage the VASH Program with local housing agencies. VASH provides both a rent assistance voucher and case management services to low-income veterans.

Veterans interested in applying may contact: Nashville VA Homeless Clinic 615-873-6400 or VA homeless hotline 877-424-3838.

Other Resources

Contact your local PHA for housing availability or to locate other social service resources within the State of Tennessee you may call the 2-1-1 information hotline.

HUD's Helping Americans website is a great resource for locating services in your area. Information and resources for homebuyers, homeowners, property residents/renters, and people experiencing homelessness, visit <https://www.hud.gov/helping-americans#close>.

What number am I on the waitlist?

Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) does not provide information regarding your place on potential waitlists; however, when your household name comes to the top of the waitlist you will receive notification via email to check the RentCafe portal. Please keep your email address current to avoid missing important mail correspondence from our offices.

How long do I wait or is the waitlist?

A Waitlist is the pre-application process for THDA's HCV Voucher Program. We understand that some households have been on a waitlist for a few years. However, waiting list times vary, and depend upon funding availability.

THDA does not provide information regarding your place on potential waitlists. However, when your household name comes to the top of the waitlist you will receive notification via email and the RentCafe portal.

Respond to any correspondence promptly to avoid being removed from the waitlist. Keep your email address and other contact information current to avoid missing important mail/email correspondence from our offices. You may update your contact information in the RentCafe portal using your registered email address.

To locate other social service resources within the State of Tennessee you may call the 2-1-1 information hotline. For Housing and Housing Resources throughout Tennessee, please also visit the following websites that have a variety of housing options.

1. www.TNHousingSearch.org
2. www.renterdefender.org

For emergency housing resources, please visit <https://thda.org/emergency-housing>

Client Asks When the Next Waitlist Will Open

THDA will post notice of waiting list openings on www.thda.org and in the local newspaper when a waiting list is open to the public.

Request to change household info

You may update any personal household information such as change in family size, income, social security numbers, etc. when you are contacted for a briefing when your household name comes to the top of the waitlist or by signing into the RentCafe portal with your registered email and password (must have already applied to use the portal).

Please keep your email address and other contact information current to avoid missing important mail correspondence from our offices. Further, please respond to any correspondence from our offices promptly to avoid being removed from the waitlist.

To Landlords Interested in our Program

The participation of private property owners is critical to the success of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. Your interest in providing an affordable housing option for low-income families is appreciated! The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is a three-way partnership between THDA, the tenant family and the Owner/Landlord. In order for the program to work, each party has unique responsibilities.

As the owner/landlord of a property leased under the Voucher program, you agree to provide a safe, decent and sanitary unit, charge a reasonable rent compared to other similar market properties, not charge side rent or rent not disclosed to the PHA and to fulfill other obligations outlined in the lease agreement and HAP Contract.

The family agrees to follow the Voucher program family obligations, which include adherence to the terms of their lease agreement and timely payment of their rent portion.

THDA agrees to make a timely rental subsidy payment on behalf of the family each month on or before the fifth day of the month and to enforce both the family obligations and the HAP Contract.

Important Facts:

- Tenant selection rests with the owner.
- Monthly subsidy payments are mailed to the owner on the last working day of the month prior to due date.
- Rental assistance promotes stable occupancy and reduces tenant turnover.
- There is no interference by THDA with the owner-tenant relationship except as mediator.
- Rents may be adjusted annually.
- Owner's current tenants may be eligible to participate in the program.

Listing Available Units

THDA invites owners to make dwelling units available for leasing by eligible Voucher families. You may list your property on THDA's online search engine, TNHousingSearch.org. Applicants and participants are referred to TNHousingSearch.org for available listings.

It is the responsibility of the landlord to determine the suitability of prospective tenants. Owners will be encouraged to screen applicants for rent payment history, eviction history, damage to units and other factors related to the family's suitability as a tenant.

FSS Homeownership Voucher INQUIRIES:

Effective April 1, 2023, THDA will no longer accept new families onto FSS Homeownership Voucher program. While we are no longer offering the homeownership subsidy assistance provided by this program, THDA's Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) team will continue to assist families with counseling and other resource assistance to reach the goal of homeownership. If you are interested in purchasing a home using other resources, we encourage you to sign up for the FSS Program. Please visit [Family Self-Sufficiency \(FSS\)](#) for more information and to sign up.

REQUEST TO UPLOAD DOCUMENTS:

To ensure that certifications are processed timely and accurately, the online portal must be utilized to attach and submit documents. The online portal, RentCafe is available for you. It benefits you with:

- ✓ Faster processing times
- ✓ No mail delivery delays via the postal service
- ✓ You can share documents online with your case worker.
- ✓ Receive updates right to your email inbox

Documents or reporting via email will not be accepted. Utilize the online portal, RentCafe.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Situations involving domestic violence can be very hard. At this time, THDA does not collect or use a Domestic Violence or Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) form during the application or waiting list stage. Information about VAWA is shown in the application portal to explain applicant rights, but those protections only apply if and when a person is receiving housing assistance.

THDA does not have a preference for applicants who are victims of domestic violence. All applications are reviewed in the order they are received, based on the date and time submitted. Submitting information about domestic violence will not change or speed up the review process.

Please make sure your contact information is up to date in the application portal so we can reach you if your application is selected for review.

Formal Complaints

THDA does not accept verbal complaints for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and its staff. All complaints must be submitted in writing. THDA's formal complaint process provides staff 30 days to investigate and provide you with a formal response to your complaint. Please submit all written complaints to: HCVComplaints@thda.org

Portability

Have a Voucher and Want to Port or Relocate

If you are interested in relocating your Housing Choice voucher through portability please communicate with your current Housing Agency where you have a voucher for instructions on Portability and questions on how to port to your THDA.

Once THDA receives your Portability Packet from your current Housing Agency, an appointment will be **emailed** to you for a Portability Briefing Appointment with THDA. At this appointment you will learn about the THDA Voucher Program, and your information will be reviewed to be issued a THDA Voucher and provide you with your voucher information.

THDA is absorbing all regular vouchers at this time. The Portability Coordinator contact information is: THDARAPortability@thda.org Fax: 615 564-2299

Is THDA billing or absorbing?

THDA is currently absorbing all incoming portables except for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers. VASH will be billed.

Do you have the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program?

Yes. Please visit [Family Self-Sufficiency \(FSS\)](#) for more information and to sign up.

How do I transfer my voucher to Tennessee?

The process starts with your case worker at your current housing authority. Contact them directly and tell them where you want to take your voucher.

What documents do my Caseworker need to send to THDA?

A copy of your voucher; HUD Form 52665; most recent HUD Form 50058; verification of your income; copies of your family members' birth certificates, IDs, and Social Security Cards; your current phone number and **email address. (THDA's primary form of communication is email. All participants must have a working email address and will be required to use the THDA Rent Café portal for all certifications.)**

Where do they send all those documents?

Email to THDARAPortability@thda.org.

What happens after my case worker sends my voucher to THDA?

A member of THDA's portability team will contact you within 10 business days after receiving your documents by sending an invitation to your email address to log in and register for the THDA Rent Café portal and complete your Intake Certification. The email will come from CDR@Yardi.com, so please be on the lookout for it. If you do not see it, you may want to check your spam folder. You will complete some more forms and submit all documents through the portal. Once all documentation is received and reviewed by your assigned Specialist. You will be issued the voucher and sent notification to go into the Portal to sign and receive the voucher and further instructions. You can then start searching for a home in Tennessee.

*** Please do not call or email THDA to ask about your status until at least 10 business days have passed since your housing authority sent your documents.**

*** Ask your case worker for verification whether they emailed your documents to THDA as instructed above.**

Do I have to make this appointment in-person?

No, THDA does not conduct any in-person appointments.

What size voucher will I receive?

The maximum number of persons who may share a sleeping room is two and the number of bedrooms allocated is determined as follows:

- I. Two adults of the same or opposite genders, with or without a familial relationship, will be issued a one bedroom, except a high school student who turns 18 will not be subject to this rule until the recertification after they graduate or should have graduated.

- II. Two minors of the opposite gender will be issued one bedroom until one of the minors reaches the age of ten (10) years old.
- III. Two minors of the same gender will be issued one bedroom regardless of age.
- IV. A minor with a single, custodial parent will be given one bedroom until the child reaches the age of four (4).
- V. A single, pregnant head of household is considered a two-person family but will be issued one bedroom until the child reaches the age of four (4).
- VI. Minor children of any age will be issued a bedroom separate from a non-custodial parent or other adult

How much is my voucher worth?

Please note that vouchers do not have monetary value. You will be given information so that you can go onto the THDA Affordability calculator and see if you may qualify for your desired unit (<https://thda.maxrent.org/>) based on your family composition and family income. THDA's current payment standards are listed on the THDA website: <https://thda.org/rental-housing-partn/hcv-landlords-and-owners/>

Where can I live?

THDA's jurisdiction can be found on the THDA website: [Cover Map](#)

What if I want to live in Shelby, Davidson, or Rutherford Counties?

You would have to port your voucher to a different housing authority that covers those areas.

Where should I search for housing?

THDA's housing market is exceptionally challenging for renters with vouchers. THDA cannot steer you to any specific housing options, nor can we assist you in your housing search once you arrive here. You may find this resource helpful to start your search but be vigilant for scams. <https://www.tnhousingsearch.org>

What if I need help completing these different tasks?

If you or anyone in your household is a person with disabilities and requires a specific accommodation in order to fully comply with this notice or if you are a victim or threatened victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, you have certain protections under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), please contact 615.815.2165 or RARrequest@thda.org.