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Tens of thousands of Houstonians in need apply for housing assistance, break record for applications via mobile phones
Applicants seeking help with rent can check wait list status beginning September 30 at www.GetOnTheHHAList.com

HOUSTON – Tens of thousands of Houston families, senior citizens, people with disabilities and others in need seized the opportunity to apply for housing assistance last week when the **Houston Housing Authority opened the wait list for the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and a record 69 percent of applications were submitted on mobile phones.**

The Houston Housing Authority received 68,831 applications for the Housing Choice Voucher Program during the one-week enrollment period, Sept. 19-25. A computer-generated lottery scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 29, will randomly select 30,000 applicants for the wait list.

Applicants can check their status beginning Friday, Sept. 30, at www.GetOnTheHHAList.com. Eligible families drawn from the lottery may receive housing vouchers as early as the end of this year. HHA expects to go through the wait list in its entirety within five years.

Houston has a critical shortage of affordable housing. More than 400,000 families in the Greater Houston area are estimated to be eligible for the voucher program (formerly known as Section 8), but there is only space to add 30,000 more on the wait list.

“With a rising cost of living and a limited supply of affordable homes across the city, we hope the Housing Choice Voucher Program will help ease the burden for thousands of people who need help,” said Houston Housing Authority President and CEO Tory Gunsolley.

The applications were available entirely online in English, Spanish, Mandarin and Vietnamese. The online submission allowed families to apply at a time and place convenient for them, regardless of their work schedules, and eliminate the need to stand in long lines in the summer heat.

Libraries and community centers around the city coordinated with the Housing Authority to help make sure people had ready access to computers if they didn’t have internet access at home, and officials made sure Houstonians learned they could apply for the help on their cell phones.



“We wanted the application to be simple, accessible and fast. This year, we saw the highest percentage of applicants on record applying on their mobile devices, which is a testament to the ease and accessibility of the application. And the average amount of time applicants spent on the website was only about 10 minutes,” HHA’s Housing Choice Voucher Program Vice President Mark Thiele said.

HHA also advertised with local media, made announcements through social media and worked with other community organizations, government entities, school districts and individuals throughout the Greater Houston area to help get the word out about this opportunity.

Under the Housing Choice Voucher Program, a participating family finds a suitable home of their choice, which may include their current residence if the owner agrees to rent in accordance with program criteria, including standards of health and safety. A portion of the rent is paid to the landlord on behalf of the participating family, and the family pays the difference.

Income thresholds will be determined at the time that applicants are accepted for assistance, but the current guidelines set the annual income limits for assistance from the Housing Choice Voucher Program at \$24,250 for an individual and \$34,600 for a family of four.

ABOUT THE HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY:

The Houston Housing Authority provides affordable homes and services to more than 60,000 low-income Houstonians, including over 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program and another 5,500 living in 25 public housing and tax credit developments around the city. HHA also administers the nation’s third largest voucher program exclusively serving homeless veterans. More information about the Houston Housing Authority can be found at www.housingforhouston.com.

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