

CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN



*Catholic Charities Housing Office*

TENANT SELECTION PLAN

Updated: December 1, 2011

*Catholic Charities Housing Office and the facilities it manages are pledged to the letter and the spirit of U.S. policy of achievement of equal housing opportunity throughout the nation. We encourage and support affirmative advertising and marketing programs in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or marital status for familial status.*

**Applications are accepted in person or by mail at Catholic Charities Housing Office, 41 North Main Avenue, Albany, New York 12203.** Requests for applications may be made by calling (518) 459-0183 OR by contacting individual buildings. Interviews and apartment showings are conducted at each building, by appointment only.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be accepted as a resident, each applicant must provide third-party verification for required information in each of the categories listed below. Failure to meet eligibility requirements in any one or more of these categories will result in the rejection of the applicant.

1. **Income**

CCHO sponsors Low Income Housing where **in the Capital Region** the applicant’s maximum annual income must not exceed:

Number of people	Income
One	\$27,350
Two	\$31,250
Three	\$35,150
Four	\$39,050

Number of people	Income
Five	\$42,200
Six	\$45,300
Seven	\$48,450
Eight	\$51,550

*(These income limits were updated in December 1, 2011 and are subject to periodic change by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]).*

In **Otsego County** (Oneonta) the applicant’s maximum annual income must not exceed:

Number of people	Income
One	\$20,350
Two	\$23,250

*(These income limits were updated December 1, 2011 and are subject to periodic change by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD]).*

2. **Rent**

The Household **MUST** have a verifiable income (e.g. Employment, Public Assistance, Social Security, Social Security Disability, etc).

## CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN

### 3. **Background Checks**

Applicants to Catholic Charities Housing must agree to a Criminal Background Check. In the family apartments all adults in the household applying must agree to a Criminal Background Check. Any conviction or adjudication other than an acquittal of a violent crime may be cause for rejection of an application to housing in any community managed by CCHO. Examples of such crimes include:

- Murder/ Manslaughter
- Sex offenses, including forcible rape, child molestation, and aggravated sexual battery
- Arson
- Armed robbery

### 4. **Rental History**

- During the screening process, we will ask for verification of rental history with two landlord references of a year's duration and longer.
- We will mail reference forms to each landlord. The form(s) must be completed and mailed or faxed to the office by the landlord.
- The option of a waiver to this requirement is offered via a Lease Addendum after application review by Case Manager and Property Manager.

### 5. **Tenant Selection for Standard Units is Done in this Order:**

The next eligible qualified applicant on the Screening List.

### 6. **Personal Interview**

The applicant must successfully complete a personal interview with the Case Manager and the Property Manager. He/she must respond appropriately to a standard questionnaire.

## **APPLICANT SCREENING**

Applicant screening is targeted to determine the likelihood that an applicant will be able to meet the essential requirements of tenancy as expressed in the lease. These essential requirements are summarized as follows:

- ♦ To pay rent and other fair charges in a timely manner.
- ♦ To care for and avoid damaging the unit and common areas.
- ♦ To use facilities and equipment in a reasonable manner.
- ♦ To create no health, safety or sanitation hazards for self or others.
- ♦ To avoid criminal activity that threatens the health, safety or rights of others including any drug-related criminal activity.
- ♦ To comply with health and safety codes and to report maintenance needs.
- ♦ To support in actions and behaviors the quiet enjoyment of premises by self and other residents.

### **Student Status:**

Full time students may not live at either of the Tax Credit SRO's (DePaul & Waldorf). Full time students who are head of Households at Third Avenue must meet a regulatory exception in order to be able to live there.

### **Family Composition**

**Single Room Occupancy (SRO) dwellings** the applicant must be an individual who is 18 years of age or older.

### **Family Apartments - these units are open as follows:**

Housing Quality Standards allow two persons per living/sleeping room. CCHO does not limit who shares a bedroom/sleeping room. Guidelines for occupancy are:

- The head (and partner, if applicable) of household will be eligible for a separate bedroom.
- All other family members will use the standard of two persons per bedroom.
- Single persons are eligible for a studio or one bedroom.

## CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN

These general guidelines are used in determining bedroom classification:

Unit Size	Minimum # of Persons in Household	Maximum # of Persons in Household
SRO	1	1
Studio	1	1-2
1 Bedroom	1	2
2 Bedrooms	2	4
3 Bedrooms	4	6
4 Bedrooms	6	8

*Exceptions from the standard may be granted if it is determined that the exceptions are justified by the health of family members, and/or other individual circumstances necessary for reasonable accommodation.*

### TERMS OF RESIDENCY

- Each eligible qualified applicant who accepts an apartment will be required to sign a rental lease for a period of one year. Thirty days written notice is required to terminate the lease agreement. This unit must be the applicant's primary residence.
- SRO's may use a month to month lease.
- Tenants are not permitted to add additional members to their household without first seeking, in writing, the permission of the landlord. Please note in Tax Credit units and those with subsidies the addition of any adult to the household may increase the rent.

### REJECTION CRITERIA

An applicant will not be accepted for tenancy for any one of the following reasons:

- Current violent criminal behaviors or other criminal behaviors, or a history of such, that would threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents, or of the site's employees, contractors or agents.
- Lack of income at time of interview.
- Any applicant/household member whom Catholic Charities Housing Office has reasonable cause to believe is involved in illegal use or a pattern of illegal use of a drug which may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- Any applicant/household member whom CCHO has reasonable cause to believe abuses or has a pattern of alcohol or substance abuse which may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- Any applicant/household member who is a Level 3 sex offender.
- Any applicant/household member who has previously been evicted by, or was in the process of being evicted from Catholic Charities Housing when they left.

### REJECTION PROCEDURE

A letter is sent to the applicant, informing him/her of the rejection and the reason(s) for the rejection. Further direction will be given on the rejection letter should you wish to lodge an appeal.

CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN

**HOW TENANT RENT IS CALCULATED**

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>RENT</b>
<i>SRO'S</i>	
<b>DePaul Residence Section 8 Program</b>	Rent is 30% of Income or approved DSS shelter rate with Section 8 making up the difference to the unit rental rate.
<b>Waldorf Residence Section 8 Mod Rehab</b>	Rent is 30% of Income or approved DSS shelter rate, with Section 8 making up the difference to the unit rental rate.
<b>St. Peter's Residence Shelter Plus Care</b>	Rent is 30% of Income with disability allowance of \$400 off gross annual, or approved DSS shelter rate, with SPC making up the difference to the unit rental rate.
<b>St. Peter's Residence -Low Income</b>	Rent is 30% of Income or approved DSS shelter rate whichever is higher.
<b>Oneonta programs Family Apts. Programs</b>	Rent is 30% of income or the approved DSS shelter rate whichever is higher
<b>Supportive Housing Program</b>	Rent is 30% of income with child allowance of \$480 for each off gross annual income, with SHP making difference up to contract rent.
<b>Shelter Plus Care</b>	There are no SPC vouchers attached to CCHO housing but tenants with SPC are welcome to use them for the family apartments.
<b>Section 8</b>	There are no Section 8 vouchers attached to CCHO housing but tenants with Housing Choice vouchers are welcome to use them for the family apartments.
<b>Tax Credit</b>	Rent is 30% of gross income minus a utility allowance, or a flat rate, whichever is higher. No subsidies are attached.

*These rents are subject to periodic review by the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR).*

CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN

**PROGRAMS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:**

	PROOF OF LOW INCOME (Eg. Budget sheet, SS award letter, employer verification, child support etc).	LANDLORD REFERENCES/ LEASE ADDENDUM	DISABILITY (Mental Health, Substance Abuse, AIDS)	HOMELESS STATUS – (Certification signed by shelter or HATAS)	Have Utilities Switched on in <u>OWN</u> name	ID for each member of household	Criminal Background Check
DePaul Residence Section 8 Program	X	X				Birth Cert Soc Sec card Picture ID Soc	X
Waldorf Residence Section 8 Mod Rehab	X	X		X		AS ABOVE	X
St. Peter’s Residence Shelter Plus Care	X	X	X	X		AS ABOVE	X
St. Peter’s Residence Low Income	X	X		X		AS ABOVE	X
Oneonta Programs	X	X		X		AS ABOVE	X
Fam Apts Low Income	X	X			X	AS ABOVE	X
Supportive Housing Program (SHP)	X	X	X	X	X	AS ABOVE	X

**NOTE:** In all buildings, in order to ensure that the rent paid by a resident is an accurate reflection of income, each resident is re-certified annually to determine their current income prior to determining the rent amount. If there is a change in status an interim certification is required at the Tax Credit properties and will be required with subsidized programs. Tenants must notify their property manager of any changes in income.

**SECURITY DEPOSITS:**

A Security Deposit equal to the first month’s unit rent (not the tenant’s share of the rent but the full rent for the unit) is required at lease signing.

## CCHO TENANT SELECTION PLAN

### **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Many applicants call with questions once their applications have been submitted concerning the timeline around potential housing placement. Several factors impact when you will be called for interview and how quickly the process will advance.

**This is permanent housing not emergency housing.** The typical process can take 2-4 weeks *once you are called for interview*. If you need emergency housing you should contact Homeless and Travelers Aid: (518) 463-2124 or toll-free 1 (866) 201-7399.

- 1) Availability of Housing: CCHO has 135 SRO units and 21 family apartments therefore depending on your requirements (an SRO unit or a 4-bedroom apartment) there may be a wait period for an available unit at the size needed for your household.
- 2) Applicants are screened in order of when their applications were received. Those received earliest will be screened first. If you move or change telephone number please call the Housing Office and update your contact information so you may be reached. **Please note however that currently Homeless Applicants will receive priority in screening.** A household is considered homeless if they live in a place not meant for human habitation such as a car, park, sidewalk or abandoned building, or in an emergency shelter. Documentation of such from the shelter where the household resides or a homeless verification from HATAS or other approved outreach will be required.
- 3) When units become available the Screening & Intake Coordinator (SIC) will review applications for completeness forwarding those that qualify to a property agent for screening.
- 4) Do not call the Site Manager/Property Agent until your application is forwarded to them. Screenings cannot be scheduled until they have your application.
- 5) The process moves much faster if applicants obtain their paperwork in advance of screenings: that is income documentation & ID. Applicants for SPC & SHP must also prove homeless status and disability.
- 6) *Should the applicant meet eligibility criteria* then the site manager/property agent will forward their application to the case manager property screening.
- 7) If an offer of Housing is made then a move in date will be selected and new tenants must have first month's rent and security prior to signing a lease. If requesting assistance from DSS for rental assistance/security you must allow time for them to prove eligibility and for them to inform the landlord that they will assist you.
- 8) Take note that CCHO receives on average 60 applications a month. Should you not hear from a property agent after submitting your application, do not be alarmed – you have not been overlooked. Applications are processed in the order in which they are received. You will be called when your application proceeds further up the screening list.
- 9) Administrative staff at CCHO simply log in the receipt of your application and forward it to the SIC. They cannot assess when you will be called for interview.
- 10) We appreciate that housing searches and finding decent affordable housing can raise anxiety and frustration levels and it is natural for people to be interested in the status of their application, the reality is the more inquiries we receive, the less time we have to devote to processing. Therefore we would appreciate your assistance in keeping calls to the Screening and Intake Coordinator to a minimum.
- 11) PLEASE NOTE THAT CCHO STAFF TRIES TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE ONCE HOUSING BECOMES AVAILABLE. YOU CAN HELP THIS PROCESS BY BEING PREPARED.