

PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

Project-based MRVP Supportive Housing Initiative
A program of South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
7 Bishop Street, Framingham Ma 01702
Phone: 508-872-0765 Fax: 508-620-2697

Thank you for your interest in Project-based MRVP Supportive Housing Initiative.

There are twenty-eight (28) units in the MRVP Supportive Housing Initiative. All of these units are for families who are currently living in an EA shelter/motel. Participation in this program requires that applicants meet certain qualifying standards established by the government and the managing agent and owner, South Middlesex Non Profit Housing Corporation.

Participation in the program is limited to those households having incomes under the income limits listed below. In addition to standard wages, income includes monies received from many sources such as alimony, child support, pensions, and social security. Rents are controlled by regulation. The maximum allowable incomes (by household size) are as follows:

INCOME LIMITS EFFECTIVE March 2016

Household Size	Max Income
2 Persons	\$39,400
3 Persons	\$44,350
4 Persons	\$49,250
5 Persons	\$53,200
6 Persons	\$57,150

Assets are limited to one and one half times the applicant's gross household income or \$15,000, whichever is greater.

Maximum occupancy limits will be based on the state sanitary code and public housing regulations. All information on income provided by applicants must be verified before occupancy. This qualification and certification process must also be completed annually upon renewal.

There are no fees to obtain or submit a rental application. The security deposit and rent will be determined based on income and other factors. The security deposit is based on one month's full contract rent.



HOW TO APPLY

Applicants can pick up an application package for units during regular business hours at:
South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
7 Bishop Street
Framingham, MA 01702
Phone 508-872-0765

Applications will also be available at shelter locations. Shelter residents should contact staff for an application. Applications can also be downloaded and printed from www.smoc.org

All applicants must submit a written application. Assistance is available for applicants who might have difficulty completing the application. All adults (18 yrs or older) in the household must sign the completed application. Completed applications can be delivered either in person or by mail to South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. at the address above. *Incomplete applications will not be eligible.*

Applications will be accepted for 30 days from date of initial posting at SMNPHC's family shelters. All postings will date stamped. For example, if a unit is posted on June 1, applications will be accepted until June 30, regardless of how or where an applicant learns of a unit's availability. Flyers advertising the units will also be distributed to SMNPHC's Affirmative Fair Marketing Distribution List. *Incomplete applications will not be eligible.*

Accessible units will be listed for a minimum of 30 days on the *MassAccess Accessible Housing Registry*.

Persons in need of accessible units will have priority for those units.

LOTTERY PROCEDURE

Upon vacancy, each unit in the MRVP Supportive Housing Initiative will be filled using a DHCD approved lottery process. Applications submitted as described above will eligible to participate. Included in this packet are the DHCD Lottery Guidelines.

SCREENING PROCEDURES AND DETERMINING QUALIFICATION

When an applicant's name comes up for an available unit, the owner/agent will complete the qualification procedure and determine if the applicant is suitable as a tenant for the unit. Sources of information regarding suitability for tenancy will include the content of the application and other documents as required.



To qualify all applicants, including victims of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, must, at a minimum:

- be income eligible;
- Record of prior criminal history. An Owner or its agents may obtain the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) reports as part of the tenant selection process, but access and use of the CORI reports are subject to the provisions of 803 CMR 25 et seq. An Owner or its agent should ensure that none of the information it obtains is collected in violation of the law. However, the Agent may not consider criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence or stalking, engaged in by a member of a tenant's household or any guest or other person under the tenant's control, if the tenant or an immediate member of the tenant's family is the victim or threatened victim of that abuse;
- Have no outstanding debt to previous landlord; unless such rental and employment history is directly related to the situation of domestic violence sexual violence, dating violence, or stalking or would jeopardize the safety of the applicant or the applicant's children.
- Meet all other qualification criteria set forth in this Tenant Selection Plan.

The Agent will consider the following factors:

Safety and Security

An application will be rejected if qualifying procedure indicates that any member of the applicant household:

- Was evicted from federally-assisted housing by reason of drug-related criminal activity within the past five years;
- Is currently engaged in the illegal use of drugs;
- Illegally uses or shows a pattern of illegal use of a drug that may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents;
- Abuses or shows a pattern of abuse of alcohol that may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents;
- Engaged in any violent behavior, violent criminal activity, drug-related criminal activity, or any other criminal activity that would adversely affect the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of other residents, the Owner's employees, the Agent's employees, or persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the Development. This criminal activity includes but is not limited to a felony conviction, a violent crime against another person or a crime that included the use of a deadly weapon;



- Is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program;
- Has been convicted of a Felony in the last 7 years. (moved this from below the paragraph)
- If an application is rejected for reasons of safety and criminal history, the Agent may consider admitting an applicant despite the presence of one of the concerns above, based on mitigating factors that indicate a reasonable probability of future favorable conduct, including the nature and seriousness of the conduct, the length of time since the conduct occurred, evidence of rehabilitation, and whether or not the culpable household member continues to live with the household. See the provisions regarding recertification for additional guidelines on accepting and rejecting prospective tenants with a criminal record.

Rental History

- Past rental history will be examined to determine that the applicant will not damage the unit or the common areas of the Development, disturb the neighbors, interfere with management or fail to comply with the terms of the lease, the House Rules, or the rules of the financing programs for the Development.
- Applicants who owe their present or previous landlord a balance from a present or prior occupancy will not be considered for admission until the account is paid in full.
- Applicants who owe funds or judgment debts to any utility company or cannot obtain utility connections will be rejected.

Credit History

The Agent will examine the applicant's credit history to determine if there is a history of deficiencies in overall credit in the past 60 months. In applying this criteria, the Agent will consider such factors as whether the applicant's credit report and other verification indicates a consistent, severe, recent, or repeated history of non-payment of housing related costs, the age, size and number of debts, whether the credit history resulted from disability or illness, or high rent burdens or other factors that indicate the applicant is likely to pay rent and occupancy-related charges in the future. Applicant will not be responsible for payment of the cost of a credit report.

If an applicant is denied admission based on a credit report, the written notification of denial will be in accordance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Please refer to the "Notice of Rejected Application" included in the Exhibits.

Verification

All factors affecting eligibility must be verified. In general, only third party verification is acceptable. In circumstances where verification is unavailable after two weeks, the Agent may accept alternative forms of documentation, including copies of original documents and the self-declaration of the applicant.



APPROVAL OR REJECTION FOR OCCUPANCY

Approval

If an applicant is selected for admission at the conclusion of the application process, the household will be assigned to a unit based on occupancy standards and the household's need for a unit with accessibility features, if any. An applicant must accept any unit offered within 5 days of the postmarked date of the unit offer letter.

Upon acceptance of the unit the applicant must move into the unit no later than 30 days after the date the lease is signed.

Security Deposits

An applicant must pay a security deposit in the amount one full month's contract rent. The security deposit will be held by the Agent in a manner that conforms to all applicable federal, state and local laws.

Rejected Applications

If an application is rejected, the applicant will be notified in writing of the reasons for rejection. The notice will offer the family an opportunity for a conference with the owner/agent.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Every family residing in a MRVP Supportive Housing Initiative unit will be required to participate in case management/supportive services as appropriate and subject to reasonable accommodation.

Once a family has been determined eligible for and has accepted a supported unit, they will meet with a SMOC case manager to do an assessment and develop an individual service plan. Using the HomeBASE Provider and Assessment and Disposition Form, the HomeBASE Program Participation Agreement and the HomeBASE Service Plan as templates, SMNPHC will assess the needs and goals of each family member. Parents will be assisted in arranging for appropriate programs for their children, including signing them up for school or participation in the Head Start program, or helping them to coordinate appropriate child care so parents can seek employment. Adults will be helped to assess their employment options based on their skill set, location and available opportunities. They will be offered the opportunity to participate in educational and personal development workshops that are offered through various SMNPHC programs. The case manager will also be able to direct tenants to programs and assistance offered by a variety of agencies across Metrowest Boston and the state. A participant can take workshops on how to be a good tenant, budgeting, goal-setting and planning, self-esteem development, parenting, and how to fix bad credit, to name a



few. A comprehensive list of workshops and resources is included in this information packet.

Tenants will be required to meet with a case manager least once a month to assess and document their progress, and determine areas that need further support. Tenants will be provided with regular reports on their progress.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

SMNPHC is committed to providing outreach and services to minority populations in Metrowest Boston including a range of racial and ethnic groups, and individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). SMNPHC has a long history of providing interpreter and translation services to those individuals, within the Framingham / Marlboro and Blackstone Valley areas with Limited English Proficiency so that they can access necessary medical and social services.

SMNPHC understands that language can be a barrier to accessing benefits and services, understanding and exercising rights, and understanding information about federally funded programs. Often those in need are not aware of the services and/or programs that can help them. Adding a language barrier to this situation presents another set of challenges.

Executive Order 13166 requires that administrators of federal funded projects assess and address the needs of otherwise eligible persons seeking access to federally conducted programs and activities who, due to LEP, cannot fully and equally participate in or benefit from those programs and activities. SMNPHC will incorporate United States Census Language Identification "I Speak" Cards in our corporate and project offices. These cards allow SMNPHC to quickly determine the specific language needs of potential and current residents.

On the frontlines we have reception staff available to translate for Spanish and Portuguese speakers. If a family needs an application in a different language, they may use the DHCD Universal Application which has been translated into 6 languages (Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Chinese, Russian and Vietnamese).

Please call 508-872-0765 if you need assistance with translation or have limited English proficiency.

