



Frequently Asked Questions for Property-Based Waitlist Application Process

What is a property-based waitlist?

A property-based waitlist is for rent assistance that is tied to a Home Forward apartment community instead of a person. To receive this assistance, you must live at the property associated with the waitlist.

This assistance cannot be transferred to another property.

What is the purpose of the waitlist application?

Property-based assistance helps families, seniors, people with disabilities, and anyone with low income afford safe and stable housing.

The lottery gives applicants an equal chance of being selected for placement on a property-based waitlist. Home Forward expects to select enough applicants to maintain the property-based waitlists for approximately the next three years. The number selected will be based on anticipated unit turnover, the number of people currently on each waitlist, and other factors.

When will the property-based waitlist application process be open?

Online applications will be accepted from 9:00 AM Wednesday, September 9 to 11:59 PM Monday, September 21, 2026 (Pacific Time).

How does the lottery work?

Application: Apply for one or more property-based waitlists between September 9 and September 21.

Lottery: After the application period closes, Home Forward will select applicants for placement on each waitlist.

Notification: Home Forward will notify all applicants whether they were selected for placement on a waitlist.

Wait: Wait times vary by property and depend on when units become available.

Selection from the Waitlist: When a unit becomes available, Home Forward will select applicants from the waitlist.

Eligibility: Home Forward will screen selected applicants to make sure they meet all eligibility requirements at that time.

How do I know if I'm eligible?

Please review our Applicant Guide to make sure you have everything you need before you begin your application.

To be eligible for assistance, applicants must meet the following requirements when they are selected from the waitlist:

- Your household must earn less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- The head of the household must be at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor.
- At least one person in the household must be a U.S. citizen or have eligible immigration status.
- All household members age 18 and older must agree to a criminal background check.

Senior/Disabled-designated properties

At Senior/Disabled designated properties, the head of household, co-head, or spouse must be 55 years of age or older at the time of application or have a verified disability. Disability status must be indicated in the application and will be verified during the eligibility screening process.

What are Occupancy Standards?

Home Forward uses guidelines to determine how many family members fit into a specific bedroom size. In general, 1 bedroom or studio is assigned to the head of household and their co-head or spouse. Then one bedroom is allocated for every two additional members.

RentCafe sorts households into appropriate bedroom sizes. If an applicant is selected to be put on a waitlisting, instructions on how to request a review of unit size for unique circumstances will be addressed in the notification letter.

What do I need to apply?

You will need the following information for everyone in your household:

- Names
- Birth dates
- Income information
- Social Security number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) information

You will also need:

- A mailing address
- An email address
- A phone number

For more information about what you need to apply, please review the Applicant Guide

How do I apply?

Visit our <https://connect.homeforward.org/> to register your account.

Save time and register your account before the waitlist opening date. You will not be able to apply to the waitlist until it opens.

What if I don't have all the required information?

- Social security or ITIN: If you or other members of the household don't have this number, enter 999-99-9999.

- Phone number: If you don't have a permanent phone number, enter a friend's number, or 999-999-9999 if no other phone options are available.
- Email address: You must have an email address to create an account and submit your application. You can set up a free email address following instructions in the application portal.

Do I have to live in Multnomah County to apply?

No. You do not have to currently live in Multnomah County to apply. However, residency and other connections to Multnomah County may affect your priority on the waitlist.

Is the application available in other languages?

Yes. The online application is available in English, Spanish, Somali, Russian, and Vietnamese.

Translation services are available by phone during the application period. Call the Applicant Helpline at 503-415-8050, Monday–Friday, September 9–21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. PT.

Can I create an account before the waitlist opening?

Yes. You can create your RentCafe account before the waitlist opens on September 9. You will not be able to apply to a waitlist until the application period opens, but you can have your account ready to use.

After you create an account, you may receive a message that no waitlists are open. During the open application period, log back in to submit your application.

Is this a first-come, first-served process?

No. The lottery is not first-come, first-served. All qualified applications submitted during the application period have an equal chance of being selected in the lottery.

If you are selected for placement on a waitlist, your position on the waitlist will be determined by the number assigned through the lottery. Certain applicants may receive a preference when applicants are selected from the waitlist for an available unit

Are my chances better if I apply more than once?

No. Submit only one application and select the waitlists you wish to apply for.

Your application enters you into the property-based waitlist lottery. It does not guarantee rent assistance or housing.

Duplicate applications will be removed from the lottery.

If I have a question about the application process, who can I contact?

Home Forward staff will be available to assist you by phone from September 9 through September 21.

Call the Applicant Helpline at 503-415-8050, Monday–Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. PT.

Will I be able to save the application and complete it later?

Yes. You can save your application and log in later to complete and submit it by the application deadline: 11:59 p.m. PT Monday, September 21, 2026.

How can I get help with the application process if I am unable to access internet or use a computer?

If you cannot access the internet or use a computer, you can apply by phone with a Home Forward staff member by calling the Applicant Helpline at 503-415-8050.

You can also visit your local library for computer and internet access.

Here is a list of [Multnomah County libraries](#) and locations.

Do you require a paper application?

Paper applications are available upon request. Requests for paper applications are due September 14 and must be returned or post marked by September 21.

Applicants who need disability-related accommodation, language assistance, or other assistance can call the Applicant Helpline.

Can I submit my application over the phone?

Yes. Call the Applicant Helpline at 503-415-8050 during the open application period to submit your application over the phone with a Home Forward staff member.

Translation services are available.

What if I already have a RentCafe account NOT through Home Forward?

If you have an existing RentCafe account, register for a Home Forward account. Once you enter your personal information you should see a prompt to use your existing account. Login with that email address.

How will I know that my application was submitted successfully?

An automated message will be sent to the email address on file. Please keep this email for your records.

What if I need to update my application?

During the open application period, you can update your application to add household members or select additional waitlists.

You can log in to RentCafe and update your application. If you completed your application over the phone, call the Applicant Helpline and let staff know you need to update your application.

What happens after I apply?

Lottery: All qualified submitted applications will be entered into a random lottery. Applicants selected in the lottery will be placed on the appropriate waitlist.

Waitlist: Applicants selected for placement on a waitlist will remain on the waitlist while Home Forward waits for units to become available. Wait times vary by property.

Notification: Home Forward plans to notify applicants of their waitlist status in late fall 2026. We will announce on our website when notifications are available. Applicants who applied online may also receive a notification through their RentCafe account. Home Forward expects to notify applicants by mail, email, and by posting a copy of the notification letter in their RentCafe account.

Please let us know right away if your contact information or household composition changes. If a communication from Home Forward is returned, your name may be removed from the waitlist.

Home Forward may also periodically contact applicants to confirm that they are still interested in remaining on the waitlist. If you do not respond, your name may be removed from the waitlist.

What if my contact information (phone number, email, mailing address) changes after I apply to the waitlist?

We periodically send communications asking applicants if they are still interested in being on the waitlist. Please ensure your contact information including email, phone, and mailing address remains up to date. If you do not respond to communications, your name will be removed from the list.

How do I let you know if my contact information changes?

If you have a RentCafe account, you can update your contact information there. This is the most effective way to keep your information up to date.

You can also fax changes to 503.802.8330 or email waitlistinfo@homeforward.org.

You may also send your updates by mail or deliver your updates to:

Home Forward
Attention: PB Waitlist
1605 NE 45th Ave
Portland, OR 97213