

Frequently Asked Questions

- ***If I am offered a unit and I do not take it, do I lose my place on the waitlist?***

Every applicant has three chances to turn down a unit that is offered to them. If an applicant has been offered an available unit on three separate occasions and chooses not to accept any of them, they are moved to the bottom of the list. Once an applicant accepts a unit they are removed from the waitlist. This means that if an applicant moves out or wants to transfer to a different unit, they will need to reapply in order to be eligible for future units, unless there is a disability or safety-related need for a transfer or if there is a change in household size requiring a different size unit.

- ***What happens if my household size changes?***

A family will never be required to leave the program because their household size changes, however, we may require them to move to a larger or smaller unit if necessary, to comply with our occupancy rules and/or local law. If a household increases in size, we require all adult members of the household to be on the lease and we will require income information from additional occupants to confirm that the combined household income still falls within the eligible income range. If a household size shrinks, we may ask the tenant to move to a smaller unit in order to free up the larger unit for a larger household. For example, a tenant in a three-bedroom unit whose adult kids move away from home may be required to move to a smaller unit that is appropriate for her new household size so that a larger family can occupy her unit.

- ***Are current Bolinas residents given priority?***

No, current Bolinas residents are not given priority, tenants are selected due to their placement on our waitlist, which is open to anyone who meets our income eligibility.

- ***Can I know my exact placement on the waitlist?***

We currently do not share with applicants their exact placement on the waitlist as the placement does not determine whether the applicant will receive housing in that order due to income eligibility and occupancy requirements. If an applicant has questions about their placement on the waitlist, we will tell them their placement for specific unit types.

- ***A unit was just rented, why wasn't it offered to me?***

You will only be offered spaces that you are eligible for, based on your preferences, household size, and income. Therefore, you should make sure you keep your income, household size and preferences up to date so that you do not miss a housing opportunity that you may be eligible for. All applicants are responsible for keeping their application current and contact information current. If we are unable to reach you, you may miss an opportunity for housing.

- ***What is the process once I am offered a space and accept the offer?***

Once an applicant is offered a space, they have 36 hours to respond. If they decide to accept, the BCLT verifies their income, contacts the applicants references and then signs a lease if everything comes back in line with our eligibility guidelines. The tenant and property manager will do a walk-through of the space and record any damage at time of move in.

- ***How are rent amounts set?***

When the BCLT uses public funding, we have to comply with the MHA's measure of low-income margins. Each property's rent amount is set at different percentages of Marin County's average median income (AMI); this is dictated by what the property needs from rent to support its financing, upkeep and staffing. Some properties may have units that are set at a variety of AMI percentages. As a non-profit, each property is designed to fund itself from the rent brought in. Before purchasing a property, the BCLT determines whether or not it could be offered at affordable rates using the MHA's income levels as a reference point. There are three tiers of income that are set by the MHA to identify income amounts by household size (extremely low 30% AMI, very low 50% AMI, low 80% AMI). The BCLT offers housing at all three tiers and determines tenant eligibility based roughly on these amounts. This process can be flexible based on the funding used to purchase or renovate the property. If the BCLT uses any public funds we are held to the guidelines set by MHA. If the BCLT offers a property that is completely privately funded we have more freedom to determine income eligibility.