



Mercer County Housing Authority

Housing Choice Voucher Program Applicant Handbook

Revised: May 2013

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Mercer County Housing Authority

Our Location:

Mercer County Housing Authority
80 Jefferson Avenue
Sharon, PA 16146
724-342-4000

Working Hours:

Monday 8:30 — 4:030 Saturday (Closed)
Tuesday ~~8:30 10:00~~ — 4:030 Sunday (Closed)
Wednesday 8:30 — 4:030
Thursday 8:30 — 4:030
Friday 8:30 — 4:030

Housing Choice Voucher Department

Name	Position	Phone Number
Cheryl D. Artis	Section 8 Coordinator	724-342-4014
Lynn I. Loudin	Housing Inspector	724 342 4015
Jesse C. Sealand	<u>Angela M. Miller</u> Clerk II	724-342-4013

Appointments:

~~Appointments are not required. We do ask that if you are planning on coming in the first 3 or last 3 business days of each month to call us in advance. At these times we are ensuring that your portion of the rent is correct and that your landlord is getting paid accordingly. Due to the number of families we assist and the size of our staff, appointments required, this is our busiest time of the month.~~

Documents Available for Review

Copies of the payment standard and utility allowance schedules are available for review in the PHA's offices during normal business hours.

Your Voucher

The voucher is the family's authorization to search for housing. It specifies the unit size for which the family qualifies, and includes both the date of voucher issuance and date of expiration. It contains a brief description of how the program works and explains the family obligations under the program. The voucher is evidence that the PHA has determined the family to be eligible for the program, and that the PHA expects to have money available to subsidize the family if the family finds an approvable unit. However, the PHA does not have any liability to any party by the issuance of the voucher, and the voucher does not give the family any right to participate in the PHA's housing choice voucher program [Voucher, form HUD-52646]

The Term Your Voucher

The initial term of your voucher will be 60 calendar days. The family must submit a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease within the 60-day period unless the PHA grants an extension.

Our Policy on Extensions

A family may request, in writing or phone, an extension of the voucher time period. All requests for extensions must be received prior to the expiration date of the voucher.

Extensions are permissible at the discretion of the PHA up to a maximum of an additional 60 days primarily for these reasons.

- Extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization or a family emergency for an extended period of time, which has affected the family's ability to find a unit within the initial sixty-day period. Verification is required.
- The PHA is satisfied that the family has made a reasonable effort to locate a unit, including seeking the assistance of the PHA, throughout the initial sixty-day period. A completed search record is required.
- The family was prevented from finding a unit due to special need accessibility requirements or large size 4 or over bedroom unit requirement. The Search Record is part of the required verification.

The PHA extends in one or more increments. Unless approved by the Section 8 Existing Coordinator, no more than 2 extensions of 30 calendar days or less will be granted and never for a total of more than an additional sixty days.

Our Policy on Suspensions

When a Request for Tenancy Approval and proposed lease is received by the PHA, the term of the voucher will not be suspended while the PHA processes the request.

Expiration of Your Voucher

If an applicant family's voucher term or extension expires before the family has submitted a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA), the PHA will require the family to reapply for assistance. If an RTA that was submitted prior to the expiration date of the voucher is subsequently disapproved by the PHA (after the voucher term has expired), the family will be required to reapply for assistance.

Within 10 business days after the expiration of the voucher term or any extension, the PHA will notify the family in writing that the voucher term has expired and that the family must reapply in order to be placed on the waiting list.

Searching for Housing

Where You May Lease a Unit

There are a number of criteria that a unit must meet in order to be eligible for assistance under the voucher program. Generally, a voucher-holder family may choose any available rental unit on the market in Mercer County. This includes the unit they are currently occupying.

Where You May Not Lease a Unit

The PHA may not assist a unit under the voucher program if the unit is a:

- Public Housing or Indian housing unit
- Unit receiving project-based assistance under section 8
- Nursing home
- Board and care home
- Facility providing continual psychiatric, medical, or nursing services
- College or other school dormitory
- Unit on the grounds of penal, reformatory, medical, mental, and similar public or private institution
- Unit occupied by its owner or by a person with any interest in the unit.

Resources to Help You Find a Place to Rent

As a general rule, if a unit is available to rent in Mercer County, you are eligible to rent it. This excludes the list of places listed above where you may not lease a unit. We provide you a list of properties we know are available when you attend orientation. That list may change and you can request a new one at any time by stopping into our office to pick one up. In addition to this, you may consider using the following resources:

Local Newspapers
For Rent signs
Word of Mouth

Property Management Companies
Apartment Complexes
Real Estate Agencies

Landlord Screening Process

The owner is responsible for screening and selection of the family to occupy the owner's unit. HUD requires the PHA to provide prospective owners with the family's current and prior address (as shown in PHA records) and the name and address (if known) of the owner at the family's current and prior addresses. MCHA will not provide any additional information to the owner, such as tenancy history, criminal history, etc.

Selecting a Unit to Rent

Choosing the Number of Bedrooms

There are two factors to consider when deciding the number of bedrooms you are searching for. Your voucher is for a certain number of bedrooms. This is the number of bedrooms MCHA will pay for. This does not mean that you are only allowed to rent a unit with this number of bedrooms though. You may rent a unit with any number of bedrooms as long as we do not qualify it as overcrowded and the landlord is willing to accept the contract rent we are allowed to pay. Consider the following examples based on your voucher size:

Voucher Size – 1:

You will most likely have less space than you would like. Some families choose this route because of the area or the school district and use the next 12 months to search for a larger unit in the same area. The landlord will receive in rent what other landlords with similar units are receiving in the same area.

Voucher Size:

You should have enough bedrooms and space based on your family composition. In most circumstances, this is easiest to find because the landlord will receive in rent what other landlords with similar units are receiving and the tenant should have ideal space for their family.

Voucher Size + 1:

You should have more than enough bedrooms and space based on your family composition. This is the most difficult to find because the landlord will receive less in rent based on what other landlords with similar units are receiving in the same area.

Selecting the Location

Long term studies by the Department of Housing and Urban Development has led to the hypothesis that a concentration of low-income families of the same race, in the same area, will provide fewer opportunities than an area of racially mixed families with the same income because of weaker ability to access services and weaker employment networks. As a result of these statistics, HUD encourages each Housing Authority to encourage families to live outside of these concentration areas by providing higher rents to landlords who have properties in these areas. This policy is known as “deconcentration”.

As a result of United States Census Data, Mercer County has identified the cities of Sharon and Farrell as areas with a concentration of low-income families of the same race. ~~MCHA offers a~~

~~higher rent amount to landlords outside of these areas in order to offer its families a greater ability to access services and stronger employment networks.~~

Who is Responsible for paying Utilities?

There is almost no advantage to how the utilities are shared between the tenant and the landlord. As a tenant, in general, you should be paying no more than 30% of your income toward rent and our estimate of your utilities to live where you are at. This mean the more you pay in utilities the less you pay towards rent. There are only two cases in which there may be an advantage.

If the tenant were paying all utilities, the landlord would not have to worry about an excessive use of utilities by the tenant. This is because our estimate of your utilities is based on an energy conservative household. This may pose an advantage to the landlord.

If the landlord were paying all utilities, the tenant would not have to worry about and excessive cost of utilities per month, since your rent is based on our estimate of utilities of an energy conservative household. This may pose an advantage to the tenant.

Portability

What is Portability?

A family that has been issued a voucher has the right to use the assistance to lease a unit anywhere in the United States. The process a family takes to lease a unit outside of Mercer County is known as “portability”.

Are you Eligible?

MCHA will determine whether the move is approvable in accordance with the regulations and policies set forth in sections 10-I.A and 10-I.B of its Administrative Policy. The family will be notified in writing of its determination within 10 business days following receipt of the family’s notification. Some of the factors we consider when deciding to approve your request are:

Applicants

The head of household of an applicant family had legal residence in the MCHA’s jurisdiction at the time the family’s application for assistance was submitted

Current Tenants

The family must live in the PHA’s jurisdiction with voucher assistance for at least 12 months before requesting portability.

- The family is eligible to move from their current unit
- The family has been issued a voucher
- The family must not be in violation of any “Family Obligations”
- The family must not owe and money to their landlord or the MCHA
- The family must provide at least 30 days written notice of moving to their landlord
- MCHA must have sufficient funding to support your transfer

Special Note:

The PHA will provide the name, address, and phone of the contact for the PHA in the jurisdiction to which they wish to move. The PHA will advise the family that they will be under the RHA’s policies and procedures, including subsidy standards and voucher extension policies.

You're Portion of the Rent

What is Your Rent Based on?

Calculating a family's rent so that it is considered affordable for the family can be complicated given the family's circumstances. It can also be very simple, if there are no special circumstances, but either way the three factors that are mainly used to determine your portion how your rent is calculated.

Household Income

The total amount of household income ~~is~~ counted is before any taxes or deductions are taken out.

Contract Rent

MCHA determines the maximum amount of rent that a landlord is allowed to receive for his property.

Our Estimate of Utilities

The amount we factor in is our estimate of your monthly utilities; this is called a "utility allowance".

Determining Household Income

"Income" is defined as the amount of money received or expected to be received over a period of 12 months, by any member of the household. There are certain types of income we will not count, for instance:

- Hostile Fire Pay, received by a member of the Armed Forces.
- Sporadic income that is not received periodically and cannot be reliably predicted.
- Income earned by children under the age of 18.
- Income greater than \$480 year for each full time student 18 years or older. This does not apply to the head of household, spouse, or co-head.
- Income earned by a live-in aide.

Income Earned under Certain Federal Programs

- Payments to volunteers under the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 5044(g), 5058)
- Payments received under programs funded in whole or in part under the Job Training Partnership Act (29 U.S.C. 1552(b))
- Awards under the federal work-study program (20 U.S.C. 1087 uu)

- Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1985 (42 U.S.C. 3056(f))
- Allowances, earnings, and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12637(d))
- Allowances, earnings, and payments to participants in programs funded under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2931)

We may decrease the amount of income we count even further by deducting amounts based on either family composition or certain costs to the family. These are called “deductions” and include:

Family Composition:

- \$480 for each minor or full time student over 18
- \$400 if the head of household is disabled or elderly

Family Expenses:

- Medical For elderly and disabled family, we subtract the entire amount paid by the family when it exceeds %3 of the Annual Income for the household.
- Childcare Only for children 12 years and younger, when it enables a family member to work, attend school or seek employment.
- Disability For disabled family, we subtract the entire amount paid by the family when it exceeds %3 of the Annual Income for the household. This expense must allow the family member to work.

Determining Contract Rent

This is based on what other landlords with properties in the same area and with the same number of bedrooms are charging. Our Housing Inspector takes into account the unit’s quality. A lower quality rental will receive a lessor amount than a higher quality rental in the same area with the same number of bedrooms. If the landlord request a lessor amount than what we can approve they will receive the lessor amount.

We take into account our estimate of your monthly utilities. This is done to ensure the rent and the utilities are affordable for your family.

Determining Utility Allowance

This is our estimate of your monthly utilities based on a household which conserves energy. Your actual utilities may be higher than this based on your usage. The “actual” costs of your utilities have no effect on the amount of rent you pay. Utilities are considered:

- Gas
- Electric
- Water
- Sewage
- Trash Collection

Any other additional bills or financial responsibilities have no effect on this amount and are not considered. For instance: auto insurance, auto payments, child support payments, cable and internet costs, and telephone and cell phone bills.

How Your Rent is Calculated

After we determine what income is counted and deduct all the amounts that your family is entitled to, based on family composition and family expenses, this is what your portion of the rent is based on. This amount is called “Annual Adjusted Income”.

Since rent is paid monthly, we divide this by 12 to determine the amount your monthly rent will be based on.

It is considered “affordable” for a family to pay 30% of their monthly income towards rent and utilities. Therefore we determine what 30% of your monthly income is. This is called your “Total Tenant Payment”, which means this is the total amount you should be paying each month between rent and utilities.

If you subtract our estimate of your monthly utilities, then we are left with your portion of the rent. The Housing Choice Voucher program will pay the difference to the landlord.

Termination of Assistance

There are certain offenses of which we are required to terminate a family's assistance and there are circumstances where we may terminate a family's assistance. For example:

- If a family is responsible for paying the full amount of rent for 180 consecutive calendar days the family's assistance terminates automatically.
- The family may request to give up their assistance at any time.
- We must terminate assistance whenever a family is evicted from a unit assisted under the HCV program for a serious or repeated violation of the lease.
- We must terminate assistance if any family member fails to sign and submit any consent form they are required to sign for a reexamination.
- We must terminate assistance Failure to Document Citizenship
- We must terminate assistance Failure to Disclose and Document Social Security Numbers
- The PHA must terminate assistance if any household member has ever been convicted of the manufacture or production of methamphetamine on the premises of federally-assisted housing
- The PHA must immediately terminate program assistance for deceased single member households.
- The PHA will terminate a family's assistance if any household member is currently engaged in any illegal use of a drug, or has a pattern of illegal drug use that interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- The PHA will terminate a family's assistance if any household member has violated the family's obligation not to engage in any drug-related or violent criminal activity during participation in the HCV program.
- The family has failed to comply with any family obligations under the program. See Exhibit 12-1 for a listing of family obligations and related PHA policies.
- Any family member has been evicted from federally-assisted housing in the last five years.
- Any PHA has ever terminated assistance under the program for any member of the family.

- Any family member has committed fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with any federal housing program.
- The family currently owes rent or other amounts to any PHA in connection with the HCV, Certificate, Moderate Rehabilitation or public housing programs.
- The family has not reimbursed any PHA for amounts the PHA paid to an owner under a HAP contract for rent, damages to the unit, or other amounts owed by the family under the lease.
- The family has breached the terms of a repayment agreement entered into with the PHA.
- A family member has engaged in or threatened violent or abusive behavior toward PHA personnel.
- If the family is absent from the unit for more than 180 consecutive calendar days, the family's assistance will be terminated.
- If the PHA must terminate HAP contracts due to insufficient funding

Appeals

When the PHA makes a decision that has a negative impact on a family, the family is often entitled to appeal the decision. For applicants, the appeal takes the form of an informal review; for participants, or for applicants denied admission because of citizenship issues, the appeal takes the form of an informal hearing.

Informal Review

The PHA will only offer an informal review to applicants for whom assistance is being denied. Denial of assistance includes:

- denying listing on the PHA waiting list
- denying or withdrawing a voucher
- refusing to enter into a HAP contract or approve a lease
- refusing to process or provide assistance under portability procedures

The PHA will not offer an informal review for the following reasons:

- Discretionary administrative determinations by the PHA
- General policy issues or class grievances
- A determination of the family unit size under the PHA subsidy standards
- A PHA determination not to grant approval of the tenancy
- A PHA determination that the unit is not in compliance with the HQS
- A PHA determination that the unit is not in accordance with the HQS due to family size or composition

Scheduling an Informal Review

A request for an informal review must be made in writing and delivered to the PHA either in person or by first class mail, by the close of the business day, no later than 10 business days from the date of the PHA's denial of assistance.

Informal Hearing

The PHA will only offer participants the opportunity for an informal hearing when required to by the regulations. For instance when:

- A determination of the family's annual or adjusted income, and the use of such income to compute the housing assistance payment
- A determination of the appropriate utility allowance (if any) for tenant-paid utilities from the PHA utility allowance schedule
- A determination of the family unit size under the PHA's subsidy standards

- A determination that a certificate program family is residing in a unit with a larger number of bedrooms than appropriate for the family unit size under the PHA's subsidy standards, or the PHA determination to deny the family's request for exception from the standards
- A determination to terminate assistance for a participant family because of the family's actions or failure to act
- A determination to terminate assistance because the participant has been absent from the assisted unit for longer than the maximum period permitted under PHA policy and HUD rules
- A determination to terminate a family's Family Self Sufficiency contract, withhold supportive services, or propose forfeiture of the family's escrow account [24 CFR 984.303(i)]
- A determination to deny admission based on an unfavorable history that may be the result of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.

The PHA will not offer an informal hearing for the following reasons:

- Discretionary administrative determinations by the PHA
- General policy issues or class grievances
- Establishment of the PHA schedule of utility allowances for families in the program
- A PHA determination not to approve an extension or suspension of a voucher term
- A PHA determination not to approve a unit or tenancy
- A PHA determination that a unit selected by the applicant is not in compliance with the HQS
- A PHA determination that the unit is not in accordance with HQS because of family size
- A determination by the PHA to exercise or not to exercise any right or remedy against an owner under a HAP contract

Scheduling an Informal Review

A request for an informal hearing must be made in writing and delivered to the PHA either in person or by first class mail, by the close of the business day, no later than 10 business days from the date of the PHA's decision or notice to terminate assistance.

Attachment 1:

Family Obligations

Obligations of the participant:

Purpose This section states the obligations of the participant under the Section 8 Voucher program:

Supplying required information:

1. The family must supply any information that the HA or HUD determines is necessary in the administration of the program, including submission of the required evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status, "information" includes any requested certification, release or other documentation.
2. The family must supply an information requested by the HA or HUD for use in regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition in accordance with HUD requirements.
3. The family must disclose and verify social security numbers and must sign and submit consent forms for obtaining information.
4. Any information must be true and complete.
5. The family must notify the HA of any changed within the first five (5) business days.

Housing Quality Standards:

The family is responsible for a breach of the HQS that is caused by the following:

1. The family fails to pay for any utilities that the owner is not required to pay for, but which are to be paid by the tenant.
2. The family fails to provide and maintain any appliances that the owner is not required to provide but which are to be provided by the tenant, or
3. Any member of the household or guest damages the dwelling unit or premises (damages beyond ordinary wear and tear)

Allowing HA inspection:

The family must allow the HA to inspect the unit at reasonable times an after reasonable notice.

Violation of Lease

The family may not commit any serious or repeated violation of the lease.

Family Notice of Move or Lease Termination

The family must notify the HA and the owner thirty days or more before the family moves out of the unity, or terminates the lease.

Owner Eviction Notice

The family must promptly give the HA a copy of any owner eviction notice.

Use and Occupancy of the Unit:

1. The family must use the assisted unit for residence by the family. The unit must be the family's only residence.
2. The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by the HA. The family must promptly inform the HA of the birth, adoption or court-awarded custody of a child. The family must request HA approval to add any other family member as an occupant of the unit.
3. The family must promptly notify the HA if any family member no longer resides in the unit.
4. If the Ha has given approval, a foster child or live in aide may reside in the unit. The HA has the discretion to adopt reasonable policies concerning residence by a foster child or a live in aide, and define when HA consent may be given or denied.
5. Members of the household may engage in legal profit making activities in the unit, but only if such activities are incidental to the primary use of the unit for residence by members of the family.
6. The family must not sublease or lease the unit
7. The family must not assign the lease or transfer the unit.
 - (i) Absence from Unit – the family must supply any information or certification requested by the HA to verify that the family is living in the unit, or relating to family absence from the unit, including any HA requested information or certification on the purposes of family absences. The family must cooperate with the HA for this purpose, the family must promptly notify the HA of absence from the unit.
 - (j) Interest in unit – The family must not ~~own~~ or have any interest in the unit.
 - (k) Fraud and other program violation – the family or members of the family must not commit fraud, bribery or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program.
 - (l) Crime by family members – the members of the family may not engage in drug-related criminal activity, or violent criminal activity.
 - (m) Other housing assistance – an assisted family, or members of the family, may not receive Section 8 tenant-based assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or for a different unit, under any duplicate (as determined by HUD or in accordance with HUD requirements) federal, state, or local housing assistance programs.

Attachment 3:

MERCER COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

SHARON, PENNSYLVANIA 16146

PHONE: (724) 342-4000

POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP STATUS

Mercer County Housing Authority has taken certain affirmative steps to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794) --- commonly known as Section 504, which provides that:

“No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps be excluded from the participation in, being denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance.”

A Coordinator for compliance with nondiscrimination requirements to handicapped under Section 504 is:

Mr. Ken Chuzie, Modernization Coordinator
Mercer County Housing Authority
80 Jefferson Avenue
Sharon, PA 16146

Phone: 724-342-4025
Fax: 724-342-4029

Attachment 4:

Landlords with Handicap Accessible Units

1. Centennial Place
Address: 102 Wallis Avenue
Farrell, PA 16121
Contact: Nicole DoraJoe Polite
Phone: 724-704-7219
Fax: 724-704-7499

2. Community Action Partnership of Mercer County
Address: 75 South Dock Street
Sharon, Pa 16146
Contact: Mary Brown
Phone: 724-342-3532
Fax: 724-342-6301

3. Shenango Park Apartments
Address: 1400 Bolde Dr.
Hermitage, Pa 16148
Contact: AlyssaDonna
Phone: 724-981-4900
Fax: 724-981-1061

4. Hermitage Senior Housing Limited Partnership
Address: 80 Jefferson Avenue
Sharon, Pa 16146
Contact: Rhona DunlapCeleste Merritt
Phone: 724-962-0953 ~~342-4000~~
Fax: 724-342-4029

5. Arlington Manor
Address: 835 Arlington Drive
Greenville, PA 16125
Contact: Mandy Mrasa
Phone: 724-646-3105
Fax: 724-376-3681

6. William A. Gargano Towers
Address: 941 Sharon New Castle Rd
Farrell, PA 16121
Contact: PeggyDebbie Shook
Phone: 724-347-1959 ~~347-1959~~
Fax: 724-342-1124

Attachment 6:

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

MERCER COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Dear Section 8 Tenant:

On January 5, 2006, President Bush signed into law the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA was designed to protect victims of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking and their household members, from being evicted from public housing or having their Section 8 voucher terminated based on acts of such violence against any member of the household. **This Act prohibits public housing agencies and owners, participating in the Section 8 tenant and project based voucher programs, from evicting or terminating the lease of any household containing a victim of domestic violence unless the incident in question presents an actual or imminent threat to other tenants, employees, or others providing services to the property.** Most importantly, VAWA does not protect perpetrators from eviction from the residence. If an individual is claiming to be a victim of domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, the Housing Authority or Section 8 landlord will request that the victim certify, via a HUD-approved certification form, that he/she is a victim of actual or threatened abuse. The certification must name the perpetrator and must certify that the incident in question is an authentic incident of actual or threatened abuse. **As per VAWA, the certification must be provided within 14 business days and must be accompanied by a federal, state, or local police or court record;** or documentation signed under penalties of perjury by an employee, agency, or volunteer of a victim service provider, and attorney, or a medical professional from whom the victim has sought assistance in addressing the domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. Except in specific circumstances, all information provided by the victim will be **maintained as confidential**. The consequence of the tenant/victim not providing the certification in a timely manner is that the Housing Authority or Section 8 landlord may evict or terminate the lease of the tenant or any lawful occupant that commits violations of the lease. If you have any questions pertaining to VAWA, please contact our office at (724)342-4014.

Attachment 10:

Payment Standards

What is a Payment Standard?

The payment standard sets the maximum subsidy payment a family can receive from the PHA each month [24 CFR 982.505(a)]. Payment standards are based on fair market rents (FMRs) published annually by HUD.

Exceptions to the Pay Standards

Unit-by-unit exceptions to the PHA’s payment standards generally are not permitted. However, an exception may be made as a reasonable accommodation for a family that includes a person with disabilities. (See Chapter 2 for a discussion of reasonable accommodations.) This type of exception does not affect the PHA’s payment standard schedule.

When needed as a reasonable accommodation, the PHA may make an exception to the payment standard without HUD approval if the exception amount does not exceed 110 percent of the applicable FMR for the unit size [HCV GB 7-9].

Payment Standards (Effective 1/1/2013)

Location 0 BR 1 BR 2 BR 3 BR 4 BR

<u>All Mercer County Sharon & Farrell</u>	<u>565479</u>	<u>600517</u>	<u>784665</u>	<u>981840</u>
<u>1034890</u>				
<u>All other Areas</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>545</u>	<u>701</u>	<u>885</u> <u>937</u>

Special Notes:

These amounts are the maximum rent a landlord is allowed to receive. The landlord must ~~be~~ paying for all utilities to receive this amount. For each utility the tenant ~~pays~~ pays ~~paying~~ we subtract an estimation of that amount from the Payment Standard to determine the contract rent.

How to Guide 1:

Report a Change of Income

MCHA Policy

Tenants are required to report any change of household income within 105 calendar days of it changing.

Procedure

To report a change of income you must come, in person, to the main office and sign a Notice of Change form declaring what has changed.

Decrease of Income

If the total household income has decreased, your rent will be adjusted for the first day of the following month.

Increase of Income

If the total household income has increased, your rent will be adjusted for the first day of the month following 360 days after the date of change. We are required to give you 30 days' notice that your rent will increase.

Special Notes:

- Your rent will not be adjusted until proper income verifications have been received by our office.
- If a decrease of income is reported at the end of the month, we will do our best to adjust your rent but if we are unable to get proper verification you will continue to be responsible for rent based on your previous income for the following month.
- ~~We do not accept phone calls to report changes of income. If you do not sign a Notice of Change form, you have not reported your income and your rent will not be adjusted.~~

How to Guide 2:

Request Portability

MCHA Policy

Permission to move will be denied if

- There is insufficient function to support the move.
- The family has violated a family obligation.
- The family has moved or been issued a voucher within the last twelve months.

Procedure

- You must come, in person, to the main office to request transferring your assistance outside of Mercer County.
- MCHA staff will determine if you are eligible to move from Mercer County.
- We will contact the receiving Housing Authority that covers the area you want to move to, in order to see if they are able to accept you.
- Your “Portability Packet” will be completed and sent to the receiving Housing Authority.

Time Frame

Days

- 0** Your request to “port-out” is approved, and you are issued a voucher.
- 10** Your Portability Packet is completed and sent to the receiving Housing Authority.
- 60** You have 60 days to find housing in the area you are moving to. If you are unable to do so, your voucher will expire.

Warning

- If your voucher expires and you have moved out of your current residence, your assistance will be terminated.
- If your voucher expires and you have not moved out of your current residence then your assistance will continue.

Special Notes:

We will provide you a copy of your voucher and the name, address, telephone number and a point of contact for the Housing Authority who will handle your paperwork, answer any questions you have and guide you through the rest of the process.

Resource 1:

MERCER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Commodore Perry School District

3002 Perry Highway
Hadley, PA 16130

www.cppanthers.org

District Phone: 724.253.3255

District Fax: 724.253.3467

Farrell Area School District

1600 Roemer Blvd.
Farrell, PA 16121

www.farrellareaschools.com

District Phone: 724.346.6585

District Fax: 724.346.0223

Greenville Area School District

9 Donation Road
Greenville, PA 16125

www.greenville.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724.588.2502

District Fax: 724-588-5024

Grove City Area School District

511 Highland Avenue
Grove City, PA 16127

www.grovecity.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724.458.6733

District Fax: 724.458.5868

Hermitage Area School District

411 N. Hermitage Road
Hermitage, PA 16148

www.hermitage.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724.981.8750

District Fax: 724.981.5080

Jamestown Area School District

204 Shenango Street
Jamestown, PA 16134

www.jamestown.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724.932.5557

District Fax: 724.932.5632

Lakeview Area School District

2482 Mercer Street
Stoneboro, PA 16153

www.lakeview.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724.376.7911

District Fax: 724.376.7910

Mercer Area School District

545 West Butler St.
Mercer, PA 16137

www.mercer.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724-662-5100

District Fax: 724-662-5109

Reynolds School District

531 Reynolds Road
Greenville, PA 16125

www.reynolds.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724-646-5500

District Fax:

Sharon City School District

215 Forker Blvd
Sharon, PA 16146

www.sharon.k12.pa.us

District Phone: 724-981-6390

District Fax: 724-981-0844

Sharpsville Area School District
701 Seventh Street
Sharpsville, PA 16150

www.sharpsville.k12.pa.us
District Phone: 724.962.7874
District Fax:

West Middlesex Area School District
3591 Sharon Road
West Middlesex, PA 16159

www.wmasd.k12.pa.us
District Phone: 724.634.3030
District Fax: 724.634.3034

Resource 2:

Utility Assistance Programs

Customer Assistance Program (CAP)

1-800-720-3600

CAP helps residential customers maintain electric service. Participating customers are placed on a payment plan that requires a regular monthly payment based on a discounted rate.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

724-983-5022

LIHEAP provides customers help with paying winter heating bills, and occasionally summer cooling bills. LIHEAP has two components:

CASH

Provides a cash payment directly to the utility, to be applied toward bill reduction if certain guidelines are met.

CRISIS

Provides a grant to help avoid shut off of electric service, which resulted from an over-due bill. This grant also can be used to restore service during the winter months for service already shut off.

Project REACH

1-800-720-3600

Project REACH is an emergency hardship fund designed to help residential customers who have suffered a recent financial hardship and need temporary help in paying their electric bill.

Special Assistance Programs

Penn Power about the following programs:

Medical Certification

Customers with severe health problems may have a licensed physician certify that, for serious health reasons, service should not be disconnected for nonpayment.

Critical Customer Care Program

The program helps customers, who use certain electrically operated life sustaining medical equipment in their home, prepare for planned and unplanned power outages.

Resource 3:

Opportunities for Higher Education

Thiel College

Mission:

Thiel College, an academic institution in the Lutheran tradition, empowers individuals to reach their full potential by assuring educational excellence, stimulating global awareness, promoting ethical and responsible leadership, and preparing students for careers so that lives inspired by truth and freedom may be committed to service in the world.

Location: 75 College Avenue
Greenville, PA 16125

Admissions: Kate Bryant
Phone: 724-589-2185

Fax:

Website: www.thiel.edu

Email: kbryant@thiel.edu

Pennsylvania State University, Shenango Campus

Mission:

To provide a balanced portfolio of academic offerings; to establish a strong and diverse enrollment in a campus climate where dignity and respect for others, as enunciated in the Penn State Principles, are practiced by all; to create an attractive, technologically flexible, safe, and comfortable environment for teaching and learning; to offer an array of student-appropriate co-curricular activities; to exploit new models of academic program delivery; to strengthen ties to other units of the University; to spearhead economic development and technology transfer in this region; in short, to promote the benefits of a Penn State education.

Location: 147 Shenango Avenue
Sharon, PA 16146

Admissions: Office of Admissions
Phone: 724-983-2803

Fax: 724-983-2820

Website: www.shenango.psu.edu

Email: psushenango@psu.edu

Grove City College

Mission:

It seeks to provide liberal and professional education of the highest quality that is within the reach of families with modest means who desire a college that will strengthen their children's spiritual and moral character.

Location: 100 Campus Drive
Grove City, PA 16127

Admissions: Jeff Mincey, Director
Phone: 724-458-2100
Fax: 724-458-3395
Email: admissions@gcc.edu

Website: www.gcc.edu

Resource 4:

Opportunities for Career-Based Education

Laurel Business Institute of Pennsylvania

Mission:

Laurel Technical Institute will provide the highest quality education and professional certifications for individuals seeking employment in various career fields in response to the needs of the regional employer community.

Location:	200 Sterling Avenue Sharon, PA 16146-3843	Admissions: Phone:	724-983-0700
		Fax:	
Website:	www.laurel.edu	Email:	lti.admission@laurel.edu

Mercer County Career and Technical Center

About:

Location:	776 Greenville Road Mercer, PA 16137	Admissions: Phone:	724-662-3000
		Fax:	724-662-1025
Website:	www.mccc.tec.pa.us	Email:	Info@mccc.tec.pa.us

Penn State Cosmetology Academy

About:

Location:	2200 East State Street Hermitage, PA 16148	Admissions: Phone:	(724) 347-4503
		Fax:	(724) 347-5431
Website:	www.pscacademy.com	Email:	admissions@pscacademy.biz

Sharon Regional Health System

Location: 740 East State Street
Sharon, PA 16146

Schools of Nursing

Phone: 724-983-3865
Email: SONAdmissions@srhs-pa.org
Website: www.sharonregional.com/schoolnursing.htm

School of Radiology

Phone: 724-983-5603
Email: rpiccirillo@srhs-pa.org
Website: www.sharonregional.com/schoolradiation.htm

Winner Institute of Arts and Sciences

About:

Located in a quiet, relaxed setting between Pittsburgh and Erie, with modern facilities and commercial training labs. Programs are 12 months in-house and 3 month off-site externships worked among top job demand areas according to US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Small lab classes with practical technical education taught in accordance with industry standards, career focused and skill specific.

Location:	One Winner Place Transfer, PA 16154	Admissions:	
		Phone:	724-646-2433
		Fax:	724-646-0218
Website:	www.papsa.org	Email:	info@winner-institute.edu

Resource 5:

Mercer County Pennsylvania Government Homepage

A comprehensive site for all programs, offices and services in Mercer County.

Website: www.mcc.co.mercer.pa.us

Northwestern Legal Services

Northwestern Legal Services (NWLS) is a private non-profit corporation dedicated to providing free legal representation to low income people with civil legal problems.

Location: 1031 Roemer Boulevard
Farrell, PA 16121

Phone: 724-346-6112

Website: www.nwls.org

Email: nwls@nwls.org

Mercer County Community Transit

MCCT is a door to door, advanced registration program that services all persons of Mercer County. Transit is funded by state and federal grants and the Mercer Co. Area Agency on Aging, Inc. Discounted service is available to Senior Citizens age 60 or older and qualified disabled residents.

Website: <http://mcct.mercog.com>

Phone: 724-981-6222

Mercer County Assistance Office

The agency administering Pennsylvania's Department of Public Welfare seven program offices here in Mercer County.

Location: 2236 Highland Road
Hermitage, PA 16148

Phone: 724-983-5000

Fax: 724-983-5706

Website: www.dpw.state.pa.us

Child Care Information Services

Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies are the hub of child care information in your local area. CCIS agencies provide you and your family with information on quality child care and personalized child care referrals to child care providers based on your specific needs or preferences. CCIS agencies also administer the [Child Care Works](#) subsidized child care program.

Location: 825 Sharon-New Castle Rd
Farrell, PA 16121

Phone: 724-346-6171

Fax: 724-346-0789

Resource 6:

Hospitals Serving Mercer County

UPMC Horizon

Location: UPMC Horizon–Greenville
110 North Main St.
Greenville, PA 16125

Location: UPMC Horizon–Shenango Valley
2200 Memorial Drive
Farrell, PA 16121

Website: www.upmc.com
Phone: 1-800-533-UPMC

Sharon Regional Health System

Location: 740 East State Street
Sharon, PA 16146

Website: www.sharonregional.com
Phone: 724-983-3911

United Community Hospital

Location: 631 N. Broad Street Ext.
Grove City, PA 16127

Website: www.gcmcpa.org
Phone: 724-450-7000