



## Housing Ladder Frequently Asked Questions

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) cover common questions about the housing ladder program.

If you have other questions about the housing ladder program, please visit [HSH’s housing ladder webpage](#) or contact the Department of Homelessness & Supportive Housing (HSH) at [housingladderprogram@sfgov.org](mailto:housingladderprogram@sfgov.org).

Housing Ladder Overview ..... 1

Adult Housing Ladder..... 3

Family Housing Ladder..... 4

### HOUSING LADDER OVERVIEW

#### What is the housing ladder program?

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The housing ladder is a program funded by the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) that offers tenants in HSH-funded permanent supportive housing (PSH) an opportunity to move into more independent settings. To apply for the housing ladder program, you must meet program eligibility criteria.

#### What are the eligibility requirements for the housing ladder?

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To be eligible for the housing ladder program, you must:

- Have been a tenant in HSH-funded PSH for at least 24 months.
- Be in good standing, not owe any unpaid rent, or have any lease violations in the last 24 months.
- Have displayed the readiness to move into more independent living.

#### What if I transferred to a different permanent supportive housing program or building?

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If you’ve transferred to a different PSH program or building in the last 24 months, you are still eligible if the new program or building is HSH-funded. If you’re unsure, ask the supportive services team about the permanent supportive housing program.

#### Is the housing ladder program open to the public?

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No. The housing ladder program is open to households residing in HSH-funded permanent supportive housing (PSH).

#### What housing types are a part of the housing ladder program?

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- Housing ladder includes both site-based and scattered-site housing models. The site-based model refers to entire buildings leased to housing ladder tenants. The scattered-site housing model refers to leasing units in the private rental market.



- When applying for the housing ladder program, applicants cannot choose which program model they want to participate in. Placement in a scattered-site or site-based model is based on program availability.

#### What happens if I submit more than one application to a housing ladder program?

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Please DO NOT submit more than one application for this opportunity per household. This does not increase your chances of being referred to the program. HSH will only honor one application per household and will remove duplicate submissions.

#### How will the Online Navigation Entry System (ONE System) be used for the housing ladder?

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- The ONE System is HSH's primary recordkeeping system for HSH-funded permanent supportive housing providers. It will also collect all application information.
- HSH advises all service providers to support clients with maintaining accurate information in the ONE System. This information helps confirm completed applications, ensures we have updated referral contact information, and safeguards confidential client records.
- If you are not a permanent supportive housing onsite service provider submitting the application, you must partner with the onsite service provider to get all documents submitted into the ONE System.

#### Are mixed immigration status households eligible for the housing ladder?

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- Yes. Mixed immigration status households are eligible for the housing ladder program.
- Mixed immigration status is a term used to categorize families whose members include individuals with different immigration or citizenship statuses. For example, this includes a family in which the parents are undocumented and the children are U.S.-born citizens.

#### How much rent do I have to pay?

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The housing ladder will support you with 100 percent of the move-in cost. You are responsible for paying 30 percent of your total household income. The subsidy will cover the remaining portion of the total rent approved through rent reasonableness.

#### If I have zero income, can I apply to the housing ladder?

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You can apply and are eligible for the housing ladder program if you have zero income.

#### Is the housing ladder program permanent?

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You can remain enrolled in the housing ladder program for as long as needed if you remain in good standing with the program.

#### Will I receive case management support?

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Yes, but case management support is much less involved than in permanent supportive housing.

#### What happens if I am selected to be referred to the housing ladder program, but I cannot be contacted?

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- HSH will make three documented attempts within three business days of each other to contact you.



- If HSH is not able to contact you within the time frame noted above, your lottery opportunity will be redistributed to another applicant. You will then receive a written denial for the housing ladder program. Please make every effort to keep your information updated. *If there are any changes, please contact your PSH case manager/services team to update your phone number in the ONE System within two business days.*

#### What is rent reasonableness?

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- Rent reasonableness is a term used to describe whether the rent tenants are being charged for the unit is reasonable and affordable to the household. If a unit does not meet rent reasonableness, it cannot be leased through the scattered-site housing ladder program.
- The family housing ladder uses a 100 percent Fair Market Rent (FMR) rate as a standard for rent reasonableness. FMR is determined based on unit size and location.

#### What if I have lease violations from more than 25+ months ago?

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You are eligible for the housing ladder program if you have a lease violation from more than 24 months ago. The eligibility period is under review is only 24 months from the application date. However, if you owe money for rent, from any point within your tenancy, you must pay that prior to being accepted to the housing ladder program. Even if it was from three years ago.

#### What if I owe rent on my current property?

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If you owe rent to the current unit, you are not eligible for the housing ladder program. However, if the owed rent is due to job loss and delayed reporting, please note this in the application when applying. This will be investigated during the application review process to determine eligibility.

## ADULT HOUSING LADDER

#### How do I apply for the adult housing ladder program?

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With the support services team's help, you must complete the [housing ladder application](#) and include all required documentation. The application has multiple sections, including personal information, a case management form, and a property management form. These ALL need to be completed to process the application. If information is missing, it will be returned as incomplete.

Once the application is complete, the support services staff will upload it to your personal Online Navigation Entry (ONE) System profile. It's okay if you don't know what this is - staff are familiar with this system. Once they upload the documents, they will email HSH staff at [housingladderprogram@sfgov.org](mailto:housingladderprogram@sfgov.org) to report that the application is complete and to include the unique identifier. The HSH staff will then retrieve the application from the ONE System, review it, and communicate an outcome within one month or less.

The referral may take time. Referrals depend on unit availability. If no unit is currently available, you will be placed on the list for referral when the next unit becomes available.



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Is there an age requirement for the adult housing ladder program?

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You must be at least 18 years old.

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If I currently live with my partner, can I apply for the adult housing ladder?

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Yes. If you and your partner reside in the unit and meet the housing ladder eligibility criteria, you can apply for the program.

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Can I use the same application if I recently applied to one of the other housing ladder programs?

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No. Please use the updated housing ladder program application provided on the [HSH housing ladder webpage](#). Other forms of housing ladder applications will NOT be honored.

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Where are the adult housing ladder buildings located?

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There are three adult housing ladder buildings and currently no private rental market housing ladder units for adults. The three buildings are located at:

- 270 Turk St., San Francisco, CA
- The Abigail: 246 McAllister St, San Francisco, CA 94102
- The Bristol: 56 Mason St, San Francisco, CA 94102

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What community-based organization provides adult housing ladder services?

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Tenderloin Housing Clinic (THC) and Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (TNDC) provide adult housing ladder services.

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Do the units have their own bathroom and kitchen?

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All the housing ladder units have a private bathroom. Not all the units have their own kitchen, but some do. If the unit does not have a kitchen, there are shared kitchen facilities in the building.

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Do adult housing ladder units have Wi-Fi?

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Yes, all adult housing ladder buildings have Wi-Fi for residents.

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Do I have to sign a lease agreement for the adult housing ladder program?

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Yes, you will sign a new lease agreement with the property manager of the housing ladder building.

## FAMILY HOUSING LADDER

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How many family housing ladder slots are there?

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There are 70 family housing ladder slots. HSH conducts an open waitlist and lottery process to fill vacancies. Please refer to the [housing ladder program webpage](#) for the status of waitlist openings.

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What community-based organization provides family housing ladder services?

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Compass Family Services provides light touch case management, housing location, housing coordination, subsidy administration, and landlord liaison services.



### What categorizes a “family” for the family housing ladder?

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HSH defines family households in three ways:

- Adult(s) with custody of one or more children under 18 who reside with the adult on a regular basis.
- Adult(s) living together, including a pregnant person.
- Adult(s) with at least one minor child not currently in their care who are involved with San Francisco’s child welfare services.

The family must currently be living in permanent supportive housing (PSH). If the household does not have any minor children but has an adult child of the head of household who resided in a PSH site before turning 18 years old and wishes to remain living with the head of household, the household is eligible for the family housing ladder.

### Does the family housing ladder conduct background checks?

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Background checks will not be used to determine program eligibility. However, property owners will often require this as part of the process in the private market when selecting a rental applicant. A conviction history does not exclude someone from being eligible for the housing ladder program.

### What happens after I submit my application to the family housing ladder?

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When the waitlist application process opens, you can submit the application according to the instructions. Your support services staff and you will be notified of the outcome of the open waitlist lottery via mail and other contact information provided on the application.

HSH posts the unique ID (waitlist number) associated with the applicants selected in the lottery on the HSH website for applicants to review. No confidential or identifying information will be posted.

If you do not hear back within 2 months from the close of the waitlist, or if you have additional questions regarding the housing ladder program, please email HSH at [housingladderprogram@sfgov.org](mailto:housingladderprogram@sfgov.org). If selected applicants do not respond or engage in the process, HSH uses the waitlist to recruit new applicants for any remaining vacancies.

### What should I expect after receiving confirmation that I was selected in the lottery?

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If you are selected in the lottery, HSH will issue you an assigned unique ID number and written confirmation indicating that you have been selected. The document will contain guidance about the next steps for your turn to be referred to the program provider, Compass Family Services, for program enrollment.

The referral process takes some time. Referrals are based on the waitlist number. For example, if you are #4, you could be referred within a month. If you are #30, it could be a few months before you are referred.

### What services are included in the family housing ladder?

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All selected applicants will be connected to Compass Family Services, the program provider. Applicants will receive housing location assistance, light-touch housing-focused case management, and monthly subsidy administration. The case manager will refer you to external resources if additional support is needed.



Can I live anywhere with the subsidy?

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Households enrolled in the family housing ladder can live in or outside San Francisco County if preferred. Households must be housed within the public transportation system area in the San Francisco Bay Area.

What if I currently live in a single adult permanent supportive housing site with my minor child?

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If you meet all other housing ladder eligibility requirements, you may apply for the family housing ladder.

What if I currently live in a single adult permanent supportive housing site without my minor child, but want my child to move in with me?

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- You must have at least 51% custody of your child or have ongoing involvement with San Francisco's child welfare services regarding your child to be eligible for the family housing ladder.
- You can apply for the family housing ladder program if you have initiated a reunification process. Your situation will be assessed when the application is reviewed and the time of program referral.
- More information regarding your reunification status will be requested. If it is provided, your application will be allowed.

I most recently applied to one of the other housing ladder programs. Can I use that application?

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No. Please use the provided **housing ladder program universal application** on the [HSH website](#). Other forms of housing ladder applications will NOT be honored.

