

GOVERNMENT HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Government housing assistance is available to low-income elderly through several programs in the form of affordable housing or rental assistance. Most government housing assistance for the elderly is administered by local public housing authorities (PHAs). Other agencies include the local Department of Housing and Community Development, the respective State Housing Finance Agencies and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Office. Funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and USDA's Rural Housing Services also support some housing assistance programs. All government housing assistance for the elderly are over-subscribed, with waiting lists that vary in length. Government housing assistance available to low-income older persons include the following: the HOPE for Elderly Independence Program, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, Local Rental Assistance Programs, Public Housing, the Rural Housing Service Rental Assistance Program, and the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program.

IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING ASSISTANCE TO OLDER PERSONS

- Provides assistance to a majority of older renters who have excessive housing costs.
- Provides low-income elderly with service-enriched options to live independently.

TYPES OF GOVERNMENT HOUSING ASSISTANCE

HOPE for Elderly Independence Program

Some PHAs administer the Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE) program which provides a combination of HUD Section 8 rental assistance with case management and supportive services to low-income elderly persons. The aim is to expand access to Section 8 rental assistance to the frail elderly tenant population and help them avoid nursing home placement or other restrictive settings when home and community-based options are appropriate. Contact the local PHA for availability and more information about the program. To locate the local PHA, refer to the blue pages of the local telephone directory or call HUD at (202)708-1112. Eligibility: Elderly persons, aged 62 or older, who have difficulty performing at least three activities of daily living (e.g., eating, bathing, grooming, dressing) and home management activities (e.g., housekeeping, laundry, shopping or getting to and from one place to another).

Housing Choice Voucher / Section 8 Program

The Housing Choice Voucher (or "Section 8") program, administered locally by PHAs, provides very low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disability affordable, decent, and sanitary housing in the private market. Participants are free to find their own housing that meets the requirements of the program. Housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual. To locate the local PHA, refer to the blue pages of the local telephone directory or call HUD at (202)708-1112.

Eligibility: In general, the family's income may not exceed 50% of the median income for the county or metropolitan area in which the family chooses to live. This is determined by the PHA based on the total annual gross income and family size and is limited to U.S. citizens and specified categories of non-citizens. The local PHA can provide information about income limits for the area and family size.