



Row House Community Development Corporation Resident Selection and Screening Plan

I. OVERVIEW

Row House Community Development Corporation (RHCDC) is an affiliate of Project Row Houses (PRH), which was founded in 1993 with *the mission to create community through the celebration of art and African American history and culture*. Both PRH and RHCDC's work is founded on the principle that art and the community that creates it can revitalize even the most depressed of inner-city neighborhoods, for the mutual good of existing and future residents.

The mission of RHCDC is to develop housing for low to moderate income residents; create public spaces and facilities; and preserve and protect the historic character of the Third Ward. Residents living on RHCDC property are an important part of creating a safe dwelling and a sense of community, which is done through each resident's active participation in community-building initiative.

There currently are 25 rental units, 14 that are two-bedrooms with one-bathroom (approximately 600 square feet), 10 are three bedrooms with two bathrooms (approximately 800 square feet), and one single family home. All rental units, designed with historical and architectural characteristics of the neighborhood, are located on the 2400 block of Division and Francis Streets in the northern part of Houston's Third Ward. All 25 units have hardwood floors, an electric range, refrigerator, and central air conditioning and heating. The resident is responsible for the monthly rent, security deposit, and all utilities, except water.

Over 70% of the units are designated for very low-to-low income households. RHCDC welcomes Section 8 Voucher holders.

II. REQUIREMENTS

General Eligibility Requirements:

Intake applications will be accepted from all interested persons wanting to make RHCDC their home. All applicants must be:

- 18 years of age or older.
- Provide proof of U.S. residency or legal temporary residency.
- Provide verifiable proof of income (this includes disclosure of all income sources).
- Not have any felony convictions, unresolved judgments, or evictions.
- RHCDC and applicant comply with the unit size standards.
- All information provided by the family is subject to verification.

- Be willing to participate in community building initiatives such as public art projects, neighborhood clean-ups, and be an active attendee of meetings and participate in Residents Council activities.

City of Houston HOME (HOME) and Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) Program Eligibility Requirements:

- Meet all above General Eligibility Requirements
- The households annual income does not exceed the current HUD approved income limits.
- The applicant agrees to pay the rent required by the subsidy program under which the applicant will be admitted.
- The unit will be the applicant's only residence.
- Only U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens may receive assistance under Section 8 programs.
- Applicant must disclose Social Security Numbers for all family members 6 years of age or older.
- All adults in each family must sign an authorization for the release of information prior to receiving assistance and annually thereafter.

Social Security Number Requirements:

Each member of the Applicant's Household 6 years of age or older, **MUST** disclose their Social Security Number or Certify that no Social Security Number has been issued. In cases of a minor, a parent or legal guardian **MUST** certify for the minor.

If an Applicant certifies to RHCDC that the documentation of a disclosed Social Security Number is not available, the Applicant **MUST** provide the required Social Security Number documentation within 60 days. During this 60-day period, if all other eligibility requirements have been satisfactorily met, the applicant may retain his or her place on the waiting list.

RHCDC may extend the time period for an additional 60 days if the applicant is at least 62 years old and unable to submit the required documentation within the first 60-day period.

Applicants not providing the required documentation may not become a participant in the program for which they have applied. Failure to comply with providing Social Security Number documentation will be grounds for rejection.

III. INCOME

Income Limits:

For minimum income, the total gross income per month must meet or exceed 2.65 times the amount of monthly rent. For example, if the monthly rent is \$525, the applicant must have gross monthly income equal to or above \$1391. All income must be verified with the employer and other income sources.

For maximum income, HUD establishes the maximum yearly gross incomes.

The income limits for RHCDC for **HOME Program APPLICANT'S ONLY** will be Extremely Low, Very Low and Low. Applicants with combined incomes that fall below the Very Low and Low Income Limit will only be considered for occupancy for the designated units.



Income Requirements:

HOME AND FHLB PROGRAM APPLICANT'S ONLY must provide verifiable proof of income (this includes disclosure of all income sources) including but not limited to six recent pay stubs, social security award letters, and child support. Applicants will be required to annually re-certify income for all Household members.

IV. ACCEPTING INTAKE APPLICATIONS, RENTAL APPLICATIONS, AND WAITING LIST REQUIREMENTS

Accepting Intake Applications:

RHCDC will accept an intake application from any and all interested persons during normal business hours, except in the event that a notice is posted indicating no intake applications are being accepted. Completed and signed intake applications will place an applicant on the waiting list.

- RHCDC prefers that a written intake application, on the properly prescribed form, be made in person in order to be considered for residency. The intake application may be sent out and returned via email and regular mail. For emailed applications, the date and time received will be when the email is received by RHCDC. For regularly mailed intake applications, the date and time received will be when the regular mail is processed in the RHCDC during normal business hours.
- The intake application must be completed in full, for spaces that do not apply marked N/A, and must be completed by the person(s) seeking the rental unit.
- All applicants must be 18 years and older.
- All applicants, 18 years and older, must complete a separate intake application.

Accepting Rental Applications:

A previously scheduled appointment must be made to complete a rental application. An appointment to complete the rental application is only made with clients that meet all eligibility requirements and there are vacant units to be filled. An appointment may take between 30-45 minutes. To the rental application appointment, the client must bring the application deposit, drivers license/ ID, Social Security card, six most recent pay stubs, most recent tax return if you are self-employed, SSI, Medicaid, scholarships, etc. award letters of income, and any documentation for other income

- All applicants must be 18 years and older.
- All applicants, 18 years and older, must complete a separate rental application if they are not married.
- All applicants must pay a non-refundable application deposit of \$30 in the form of a cashier's check, check, or money order. There will be a \$15 charge for all NSF checks and may make the applicant ineligible to apply. If the rental application is accepted, the application deposit amount will be put towards the security deposit amount.
- Proof of identity will be required of all applicants (such as valid Drivers License, valid state identification card etc.)



- Rental application must be completed in full. The applicant must note information not readily available to the applicant on the rental application form. Applicants will have five (5) calendar days to provide the information if occupancy is expected immediately.
- Management will conduct an Initial Screening Interview during the rental application appointment. Applicants receiving applications in the mail **MUST** contact RHCDC to schedule an Initial Screening Interview.
- If the applicant is unable to complete the rental application, the applicant **MUST** be present to provide the necessary information to the individual assisting in the completion of the rental application form.
 - a. The individual assisting in the completion of the rental application must sign and date the form, indicate it was completed at the direction of the named applicant and provide identification to management.
 - b. Rental application(s) may be mailed to an applicant upon written request. RHCDC will mail or email rental applications if one of the below listed items exist:
 - (1) Applicant is currently residing 50 miles or more from the property **OR**
 - (2) Applicant requests reasonable accommodations due to a physical disability.

SPECIAL NOTE: Title II or the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs, services and activities provided or made available by public entities. HUD enforces Title II when it relates to state and local public housing, housing assistance and housing referral.

Waiting List Requirements

An applicant on the waiting list who has not been housed and has met eligibility and screening requirements, and is still interested in housing, constitutes the project's waiting list.

Management will consider all factors in making offers from the record of applications/waiting list to appropriate sized units.

The applicant's name will be placed on the waiting list based on the date and time the intake application is received. RHCDC will maintain the waiting list by bedroom size needs.

RHCDC will also indicate on the waiting list the following about each applicant:

- a. Date and time of receiving intake application
- b. Applicant unit size need
- c. Name of the head of household, mailing address, contact phone numbers, and email addresses
- d. Annual income level (Extremely Low Income, Very Low Income and Low Income)



- e. Applicants need for an accessible unit
- f. Applicant unit preference type
- g. Comment and contact record information
- h. Action dates for the applicant status, which includes the following:
 - 1. Date applicant was contacted to complete a rental application
 - 2. Date applicant removed from waiting list
 - 3. Date applicant rejected from the waiting list
 - 4. General remarks

SPECIAL NOTE: In order to comply with the HOME PROGRAM applicants may be offered units by other than date and time or satisfy federal requirements.

RHCDC will remove an applicants name from the waiting list if one or more of the following reasons:

- a. Applicant no longer meets eligibility requirements for the property or program.
- b. Applicant fails to respond to a phone call, email, or written notice to come in for a rental application appointment within 48 hours unless another follow up deadline is specified by RHCDC.
- c. Applicant fails to respond to a phone call, email, or written notice for a rental application appointment within 48 hours unless another follow up deadline is specified by RHCDC.
- d. Applicant is more than 10 minutes late for the rental application appointment.
- e. Applicant misses the rental application appointment. Appointments can only be rescheduled one time if missed for valid reason.
- f. Applicant is offered and rejects three units in the property.
- g. Mail sent to the applicants address is returned as undeliverable.
- h. Applicant fails to contact the rental office every six months to notify management of their desire to remain in the waiting list and update any contact information if needed.

V. OFFERING OF UNITS

- If an Applicant is offered an apartment of appropriate size and type and more than one such apartment vacant, the applicant will be given a choice of the vacant units. If an applicant rejects three available units, the applicant will be removed from the waiting list. Upon receipt of the rental application removal notice, applicants may request in writing to have their rental application reinstated with the new eligibility date of the third rejection.
- Applicants may reject offers of vacancies without being moved from their place on the waiting list if eligible applicant documents a case of hardship or disabling condition not related to race, color, religion, sex, familiar status, handicap, or national origin. The applicant is willing to move in but is unable to do so at the time of the offer and presents clear evidence of his/her inability to move to management's satisfaction.



VI. PREFERENCES

RHCDC may give preference to some previous participants in the Project Row Houses Young Mothers' Residential Program, artists, existing residents, and displaced households that meet the income requirements.

VII. APPLICANT SCREENING CRITERIA

Screening Guidelines:

Eligible applicants will be screened, and those who meet the screening criteria will be considered for housing. Those applicants meeting the screening criteria are those:

- a. Who have satisfactory past performances in meeting financial obligations, especially rent.
- b. Who have no record of disturbance of neighbors, destruction of property, living, or housekeeping habits, which adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of other residents.
- c. Who has not been evicted from a federally assisted housing for drug-related criminal activity, for three years from the date of the eviction.
- d. Who meet the minimum and maximum income requirements.
- e. Who presents no reason for the RHCDC to believe there is reasonable cause that a household members illegal use or a pattern of abuse of illegal use of a drug may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- f. Who have not been indicated as a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program.
- g. Who have not exhibited a reasonable cause for the RHCDC to believe that a household members abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol interferes with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
- h. Whose household has at least one family member that is a citizen, national, or an eligible non-citizen for the HUD program chosen to receive financial assistance.
- i. Who are willing to participate in community building initiatives such as public art projects, neighborhood clean-ups, and be an active attendee of meetings and participate in Residents Council activities.
- j. A criminal background check will be requested for the first year during the application process. RHCDC reserves the right to request a criminal background check for each renewing year. A criminal background check will be requested that confirms the following:
 - I. No household member shall have been convicted of a felony or have been subjected to deferred adjudication for a felony unless at least ten (10) years has elapsed since the date that any deferred adjudication period has been concluded.
 - II. No household member shall have been convicted of a class A or B misdemeanor, unless at least five (5) years has elapsed since the date that incarceration, parole, or deferred adjudication period has concluded, with the exemption of traffic violations.
 - III. No household member shall have ever been convicted of any form of assault of any kind.
 - IV. No household member shall have been convicted for distribution, sale, or manufacturing of any illegal drug, or possession with intent to sell an illegal drug.



- V. The Executive Director of RHCDC may waive any restriction in this section due to a substantial change in circumstances of the applicant, provided the reason for the waiver is sufficiently documented. A substantial change in circumstance would be documentation that the applicant is not currently illegally using or addicted to any drug or illegal or federally controlled substance. Sufficient documentation may include a letter from a physician or treatment facility or a sworn statement of a leader in a recognized 12-step program such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

SPECIAL NOTE: If an applicant has engaged in drug-related criminal activity has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program or circumstances leading to the eviction no longer exist, RHCDC will evaluate the circumstances for possible admission.

Further Consideration

In the event of receipt of unfavorable information regarding conduct of the applicant, management will give consideration to the time, nature, and extent of the applicants conduct, and to the factors, which might indicate a reasonable probability of favorable future conduct or financial prospects in determining the eligibility of the applicant. Factors, to be considered in such a case may include the following:

1. Evidence of rehabilitation. (**Exception:** In the sale of drugs or certain drug related activity.)
2. An indication that the family is likely to improve it's financial situation because it's rent will be lower once the family is admitted to subsidized housing.

VIII. REJECTING APPLICANTS

Reasons for Rejection:

1. Is ineligible for occupancy in this particular property.
2. Is unable to disclose and document social security numbers for all eligible household members.
3. All adult family members 18 years or older do not sign and submit verification consent forms or the authorization for release of information. (9887-9887-A)
4. Household's income exceeds HUD's income limits for the designated units available on the property. In such case, applicant will be offered an available unrestricted unit if all other criteria is met.
5. Applicant provided false information necessary in the determination of eligibility.
6. Household has characteristics that are not appropriate for the specific type of unit available or has a family of a size not appropriate for the unit sizes that are available in this complex.
7. Applicant's household does not have any citizens, nationals, or eligible non-citizens to receive financial assistance for the HUD program chosen.
8. Applicant does not meet the RHCDC eligibility requirements and/or resident screening criteria.

Notification of Rejection:

1. Applicants will be notified within five business days.



2. Applicants will be provided the grounds for the rejection.
3. Management will notify applicants in writing by first class mail.

IX. OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

The Occupancy Standards are as follows for the assigning of appropriate bedroom size based on the number of projected family members. **SPECIAL NOTE:** Families requesting larger bedroom sizes **MUST** request the additional bedroom space in writing.

Bedroom Size	Family Size	
	Minimum	Maximum
2	2*	4
3	3	6

*RHDC may limit 25% of the two bedroom rental units to family sizes of one and/or elderly individuals.

X. UNIT TRANSFER PROCEDURES

Residents will be transferred into the next available unit of the appropriate size in the following circumstances **ONLY:**

- Residents unit is uninhabitable.
- Residents requiring an accessible unit.
- Residents requiring a unit transfer for medical reasons.
- Residents must request to transfer to a new unit at least 60 days before the current lease expires.
- The transfer request must be put in writing and signed by all residents on the lease agreement.
- All requests will be handled on a first come first serve basis, availability, and meeting of the eligibility requirements of the requested unit.
- RHDC may consider transfer requests for residents that have had an increase or decrease to household size.
- A transfer fee would be charged as well as a new security deposit.
- The transfer request must be agreed to in writing by RHDC.

NOTE: Medical unit transfer will require a statement from a licensed physician or medical facility.
Residents requiring a unit transfer due to over or under housing conditions will be placed on the appropriate size waiting list. Available units will be occupied by alternating from the waiting list between residents and applicants.

XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES

Row House Community Development Corporation is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of race/ethnicity, color, religion and/or sex (including marital status and/or sexual orientation) national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status.



RHCDC will comply with the following policies:

Section 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program activity receiving federal financial assistance from HUD. This Act applies to both Applicants and Residents.

RHCDC will comply with the following actions:

- Make the property physically accessible as well as operating and administering the property to enable persons with disabilities to have equal access to participate in the program.
- Make available effective communications with applications, residents, and the public. Ensure that policies regarding how the property is operated do not adversely affect applicants, residents, and the public.
- Make reasonable accommodations to allow applicants with disabilities to meet the requirements of tenancy. This includes admission of assistance animal (s) to person (s) requesting the need of an assistance animal. The approval to admit assistance animal (s) **MUST** be verified by a licensed physician or a medical facility prior to admission.
- Make sure that all accessible units meet the requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards. Make sure that all accessible units are on an accessible route.

The Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing and housing related transactions based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability and familial status. It applies to housing, regardless of the presence of federal financial assistance.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from HUD.

Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Contact Information

Any applicant/resident who thinks his/her rights have been violated under the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity laws should contact the HUD Regional Office, Attn. Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Post Office Box 2905, Fort Worth Texas 76113, or call toll free 1-800-424-8590.

XII. OPENING AND CLOSING OF WAITING LIST

Closing of Waiting List

Management will advertise in various media and to community partners of Project Row Houses and RHCDC in the event that the waiting list is closed for an excessive number of applicants on the waiting list.

Opening of Waiting List

Management will advertise in various media and to community partners in the event the waiting list is to re-open after being closed. The advertisement will address the requirements of the prospective applicants in regard to the dates and



times the rental office will be open to accept intake applications and rental applications.

XIII. PRIVACY STATEMENT

Any information provided to the RHCDC's would only be used to determine eligibility, the recommended unit size, and the amount the resident(s) must pay toward rent, and utilities. The RHCDC will only use this information to assist in managing the property, protect the government's financial interest and to verify the accuracy of the information furnished. This information may be released to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, when relevant, and to civil, criminal, or regulatory investigators and prosecutors. You must provide all of the information requested. Failure to provide any information may result in a delay or rejection of your eligibility approval.





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**Row House Community Development Corporation Resident
Selection and Screening Plan
*Acknowledgement Page***

I HAVE RECEIVED, READ, AND UNDERSTAND THE RHCDC RESIDENT SELECTION AND SCREENING PLAN.

Applicant

Date

Co-applicant

Date

