

Chicago Housing and Public Benefits: Resource Sheet

Accessing Emergency Shelter

EHARC

- **Call 3-1-1** from a police station or hospital or your current location. Request placement in a shelter and have your household names and size ready. Remember to record the request # provided by the operator.
- You may be asked to wait several hours or days before being placed in a shelter.

Shelter Placement

- Upon referral through 311, a family is placed in a shelter with available beds based on need.
- The city's system includes emergency and interim shelters with more than 3,000 beds across 50 facilities.
- Interim shelters are open 24 hours. Youth, families and individuals may stay up to 120 days at an interim shelter.
- To avoid going through 311, you can also search for low-threshold or emergency shelters that offer nightly beds (Franciscan, Ujima, The Crib, etc).

Coordinated Entry System (CES)--Connection to Permanent Housing

City-wide list that serves as a front door to connect individuals and families facing homelessness to long-term housing and support.

Eligibility:

- 1) Families that are living in a shelter, public place, or outside **or** fleeing domestic violence
- 2) Youth (14-24) that are living in a shelter, outside, or doubled-up **or** fleeing domestic violence

To get assessed: text 773-786-9916, call 312-361-1707, or visit www.csh.org/chicagoces for a list of CES Assessment appointments and locations

Homelessness Prevention Funds

Up to \$2,000 in one-time emergency assistance to Chicago residents facing an economic crisis. Funds may be used for rent, security deposit, mortgage, or utilities.

Eligibility:

- 1) Chicago residents
- 2) Must be able to document crisis (job loss, medical emergency, loss of public benefits etc.)
- 3) Resident must document ability to afford rent & utilities in the future without assistance

Access: Call 311 or 312-744-5000 and ask for "rental assistance" or the homeless prevention program.

DFSS Emergency Rental Assistance

One-time assistance towards rent or rent arrears.

Eligibility:

- 1) Chicago resident

- 2) Must be able to document imminent eviction due to loss of income, fire/flood, order to vacate, or domestic violence

Access: Apply for emergency rental assistance at one of the 6 DFSS Community Service Centers

Free Birth Certificates and State IDs

Individuals experiencing homelessness are eligible for free birth certificates and state ID's

Eligibility: Individuals living doubled-up, in shelter, or outside

Access: Request a homeless verification letter from your case manager or STLS liaison. Call the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless Law Project at 1-800-940-1119 for assistance.

SNAP/LINK, TANF, Medicaid, and WIC Benefits

Public benefits are grants to assist families with necessities such as food, clothing, and other household goods. Medicaid offers no-cost health insurance.

Eligibility: Individuals falling below the federal poverty level. US Citizens or individuals with children who are US citizens.

Access: Apply online at www.abe.illinois.gov. Call the CCH Law Project at 1-800-940-1119 for assistance with application process or loss of benefits.

Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS)

Students in unstable living situations are eligible for benefits through the Chicago Public Schools system. The program works to remove barriers to education such as transportation assistance, fee waivers, free uniforms, and more.

Eligibility: Students living doubled-up, in shelter, outside, motels, abandoned buildings, or any area not meant for habitation

Access: Notify your school clerk or STLS liaison that you want to be enrolled in the STLS program. Schools do not require any "proof" of homelessness. Students should be able to complete same-day enrollment.

Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)

Permanent housing funded by the local and federal government. Rent is subsidized and much cheaper than normal "market-rate" rent. Housing is provided either as a voucher or as placement in CHA-managed housing. Wait list for units can range from 6 months-20 years.

Eligibility: Certain criminal offenses will disqualify participants. Participants must be citizens OR meet immigrant status requirements. Must meet income guidelines.

Access: Apply for the site-based wait list at www.applyonline.thecha.org For better success chances, pick a wait list with the shortest estimated amount of time (ex: 6-12 months).

Tip: Apply for **both** the Project-Based Voucher (PBV) and Public Housing (PH) programs.

Check the eligibility requirements for each site (senior, disabled, etc.) to avoid disqualification.

Chicago Low Income Trust Fund

Voucher program that matches individuals to low-income housing. The program is city-funded but units are managed by private landlords or non-profits.

Eligibility: Individuals falling below certain income levels.

Access: Review the list of 600 properties included in the trust fund. Call each management group directly to ask for vacancy and the application. View the list of properties at <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/doh/provdrs/renters/svcs/affordable-rental-housing-resource-list.html>

You may also be matched through the CES system, although matches are rare.

Legal Aid Organizations

Both Legal Aid Chicago and Lawyer's Committee for Better Housing offer legal support for housing issues, such as eviction and housing discrimination.

Access:

Legal Aid Chicago can be reached by phone at (312) 341-1070 or applying online for housing legal advocacy. The intake line accepts calls weekdays beginning at 8 a.m. Legal Aid Chicago takes a limited number of calls each day, so it is best to call early.

Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing can be reached at (312) 347-7600.

Employment

Please see the following organizations for paid job-training and employment:

- GreenCorp Chicago – Green job training and landscaping training
- Safer Foundation – Employment resources for returning citizens
- Growing Home – Englewood-based farming program
- Greater West Town Community Development Project – Woodworking, Shipping & Receiving

Free GED/HiSET Courses

The City Colleges of Chicago offer free in-person and online GED classes for adults.

Access:

Apply online or in-person at any of the 6 city college locations.

Chicago Furniture Bank

The Chicago Furniture Bank allows a household to pick a home's worth of furniture from their warehouse for a low fee.

Eligibility:

individuals or households that are transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing.

Access:

There is a \$50 fee for the furniture package. Contact CCH at 312-641-4140 for a referral to the furniture bank.