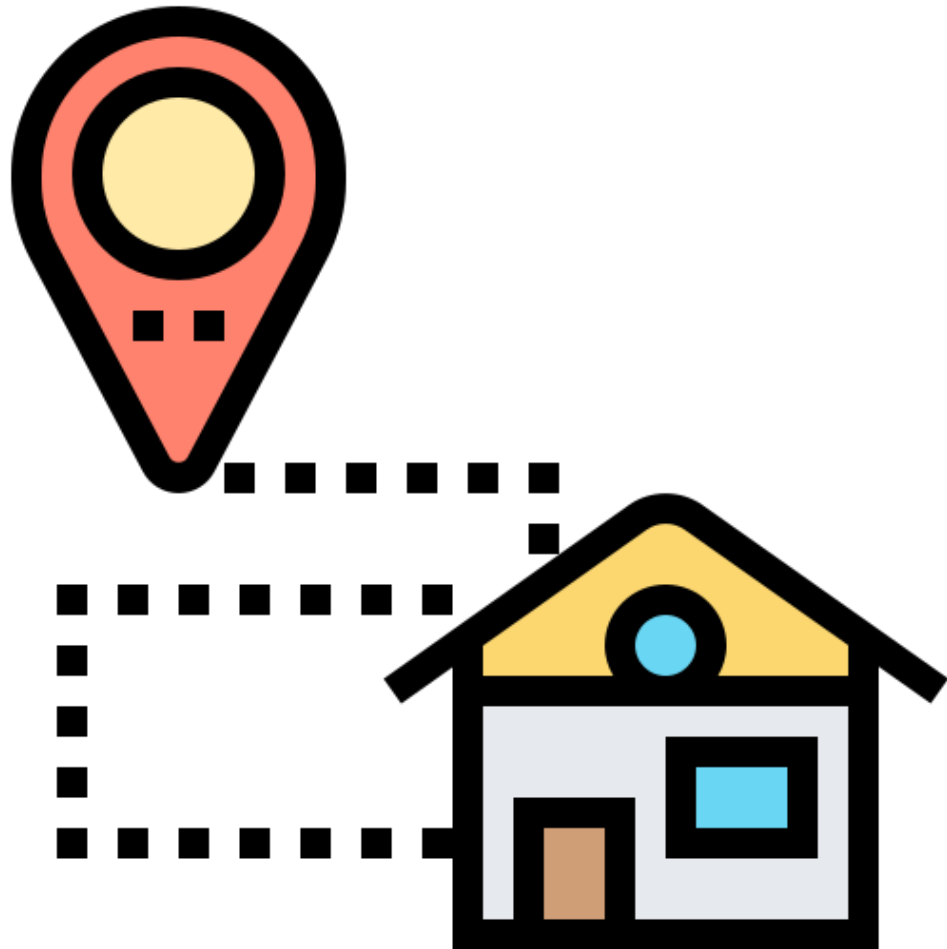



# Housing Choice Voucher Program Orientation



# Welcome!



Your path to housing  
begins today, and  
we're here to help!

- 
- ▶ Follow this presentation to complete your orientation to the Housing Choice Voucher program.
  - ▶ It should take about 20 minutes to view the entire presentation, but you may go at your own pace and stop and come back.

# Orientation Topics



Voucher Program Information



Housing Search



Seattle Landlord/Tenant Law



Leasing a Unit!

# For Your Information



If you require an accommodation to a policy or the way we communicate, let SHA know and we will review your request.



SHA will also provide language interpretation upon request at no charge to you.



# Orientation Packet

As part of your voucher issuance, you will receive an orientation packet including

- ▶ This presentation
- ▶ SHA's policies and participant program obligations
- ▶ SHA contact information
- ▶ Community resources
- ▶ Tenant rights and responsibilities
- ▶ Lease addendum
- ▶ Benefits of the program for landlords



# Voucher Program

# Housing Choice Voucher Topics

- ▶ How does the voucher program work?
- ▶ What price range should I look for in a rental?
- ▶ How much in rent and utilities will I have to pay?
- ▶ Can I rent a smaller or larger unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?



# How the Voucher Program Works

- ▶ SHA will issue you a Housing Choice Voucher allowing you to rent a unit from any landlord.
- ▶ You are not restricted to certain buildings or neighborhoods.
- ▶ Once you locate a unit you want to rent, it will need to be reviewed and inspected by SHA to ensure its rent reasonable, affordable and passes Housing Quality Standards.

# How a Voucher Works



SHA sends Housing Assistance Payment directly to landlord



Rent

Tenant pays rent portion directly to landlord



Tenant may also pay utilities to provider



Utilities

# What Price Range Should I Look For?

To answer this question you will need to know three things:

- 1) SHA will determine the unit size your voucher can be used to rent based on your household size.
- 2) The maximum that SHA can provide as a subsidy is called the Voucher Payment Standard (VPS). As you'll see in the next slide, the VPS varies by unit size and whether the unit is in the private rental market (Market Rate) or owned by an affordable housing organization (Affordable)
- 3) Your rent portion is based on 30-40% of your income.

You cannot rent an apartment if the rental price exceeds the total of the VPS and your portion.

# Voucher Payment Standards

- ▶ The maximum SHA will pay towards rent
- ▶ The amounts are not the maximum rent you can be charged
- ▶ Your subsidy level ultimately depends on your income, rent, and utilities

| Bedrooms      | Market Rate    | Affordable     |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Studio</b> | <b>\$1,363</b> | <b>\$1,095</b> |
| <b>1</b>      | <b>\$1,529</b> | <b>\$1,173</b> |
| <b>2</b>      | <b>\$1,878</b> | <b>\$1,407</b> |
| <b>3</b>      | <b>\$2,719</b> | <b>\$1,772</b> |
| <b>4</b>      | <b>\$3,219</b> | <b>\$2,130</b> |
| <b>5</b>      | <b>\$3,702</b> | <b>\$2,450</b> |
| <b>6+</b>     | <b>\$4,185</b> | <b>\$2,679</b> |

# How Much Rent/Utilities Will I Pay?

- ▶ Tenants pay 30-40% of their adjusted income to their landlord, with a minimum of \$50 a month.
- ▶ The remaining portion, called the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), is calculated using the total rent for the unit plus an average for cost of utilities. It is paid by SHA to the landlord.
- ▶ The HAP varies by whether the tenant or landlord pays utilities.

# How Much Can I Afford?

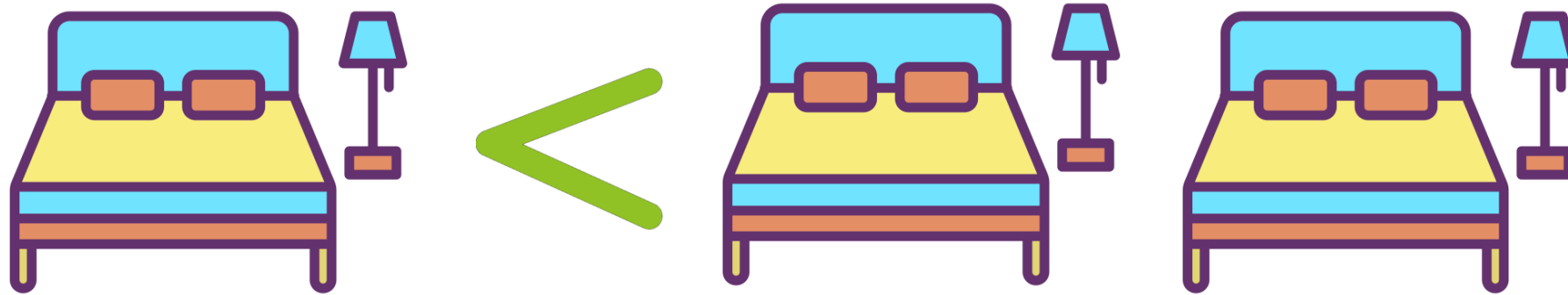
With your voucher you will also receive an Estimated HAP (example below). This provides key information such as the maximum rent you can afford depending on utilities and if the unit is owned by a private or affordable landlord.

## Estimated HAP Example

| <b>Private for-Profit Building</b><br>Estimated Totals for Rent and Utilities |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Bedrooms  | 2               |
| Voucher Payment Standard  | \$ 1,878        |
| 30% Minimum Family Portion  | \$ 59           |
| Housing Assistance Payment  | \$ 1,819        |
| 40% Maximum Family Portion  | \$ 79           |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay No Utilities</b>                         | <b>\$ 1,898</b> |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay Heat and Electricity</b>                 | <b>\$ 1,858</b> |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay All Utilities W/S/G</b>                  | <b>\$ 1,743</b> |

| <b>Affordable Housing Building</b><br>(non-profit, tax credit, government, etc.)<br>Estimated Totals for Rent and Utilities |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Bedrooms  | 2               |
| Voucher Payment Standard  | \$ 1,353        |
| 30% Minimum Family Portion  | \$ 59           |
| Housing Assistance Payment  | \$ 1,294        |
| 40% Maximum Family Portion  | \$ 79           |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay No Utilities</b>   | <b>\$ 1,373</b> |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay Heat and Electricity</b>   | <b>\$ 1,333</b> |
| <b>Maximum Rent Total<br/>If you pay All Utilities W/S/G</b>  | <b>\$ 1,218</b> |

# Can I rent a smaller unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?



You may choose a smaller unit, however this will lower the utility allowance that SHA factors into determining your Housing Assistance Payment (HAP).

# Can I rent a larger unit than what my voucher qualifies me for?



You may choose a larger unit as long as the total rent does not exceed your portion plus SHA's portion, as explained in previous slides.





# Housing Search

# Housing Search Topics

- ▶ How soon do I have to use my voucher?
- ▶ Where can I live using my voucher?
- ▶ What neighborhoods should I choose if I qualify for the Family Access Supplement?
- ▶ How do I search for housing?
- ▶ Housing search tips and assistance

# Time Limit

You have 120 days to use your voucher.

However, you may request a 60-day extension in writing before your voucher expires.

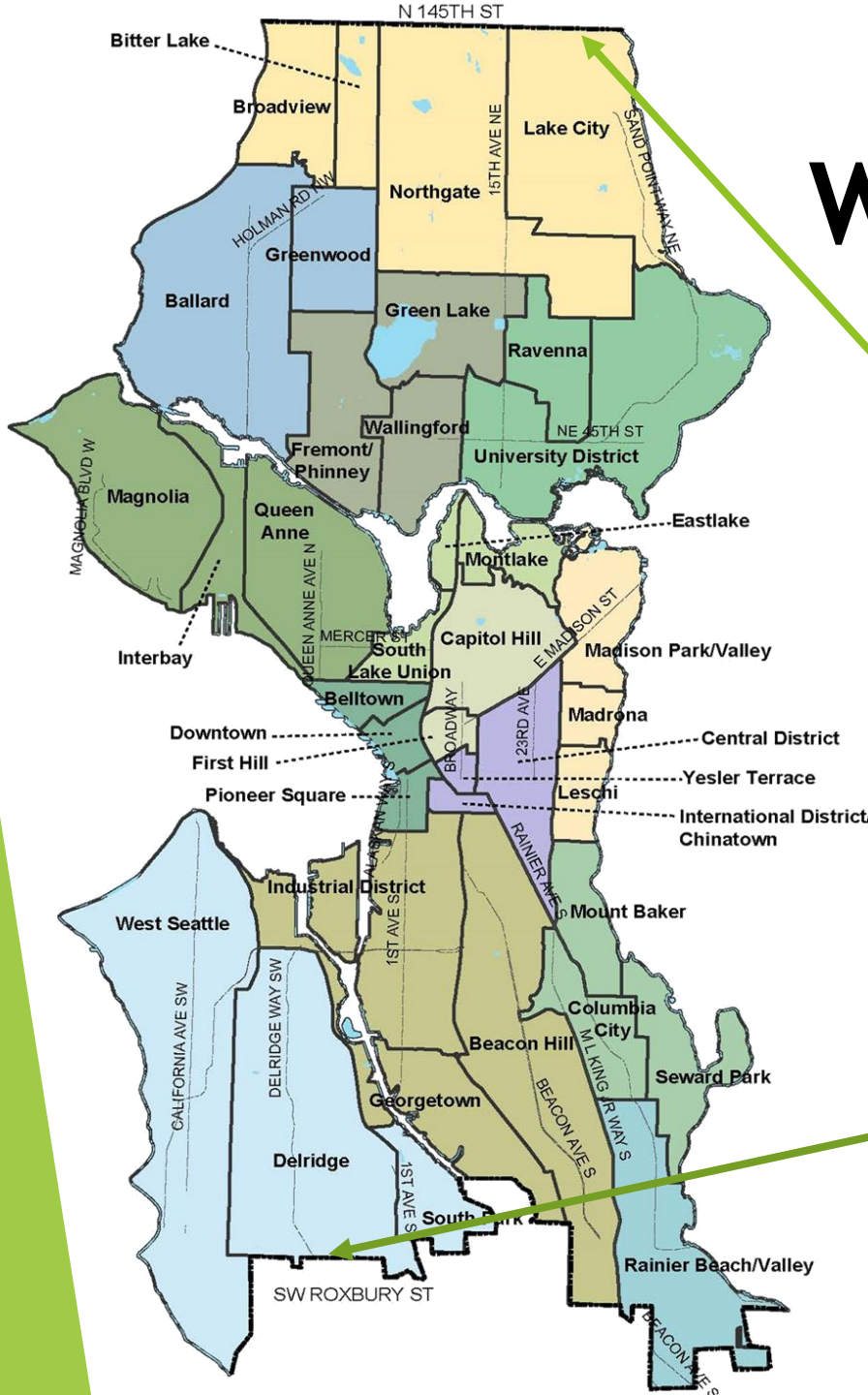


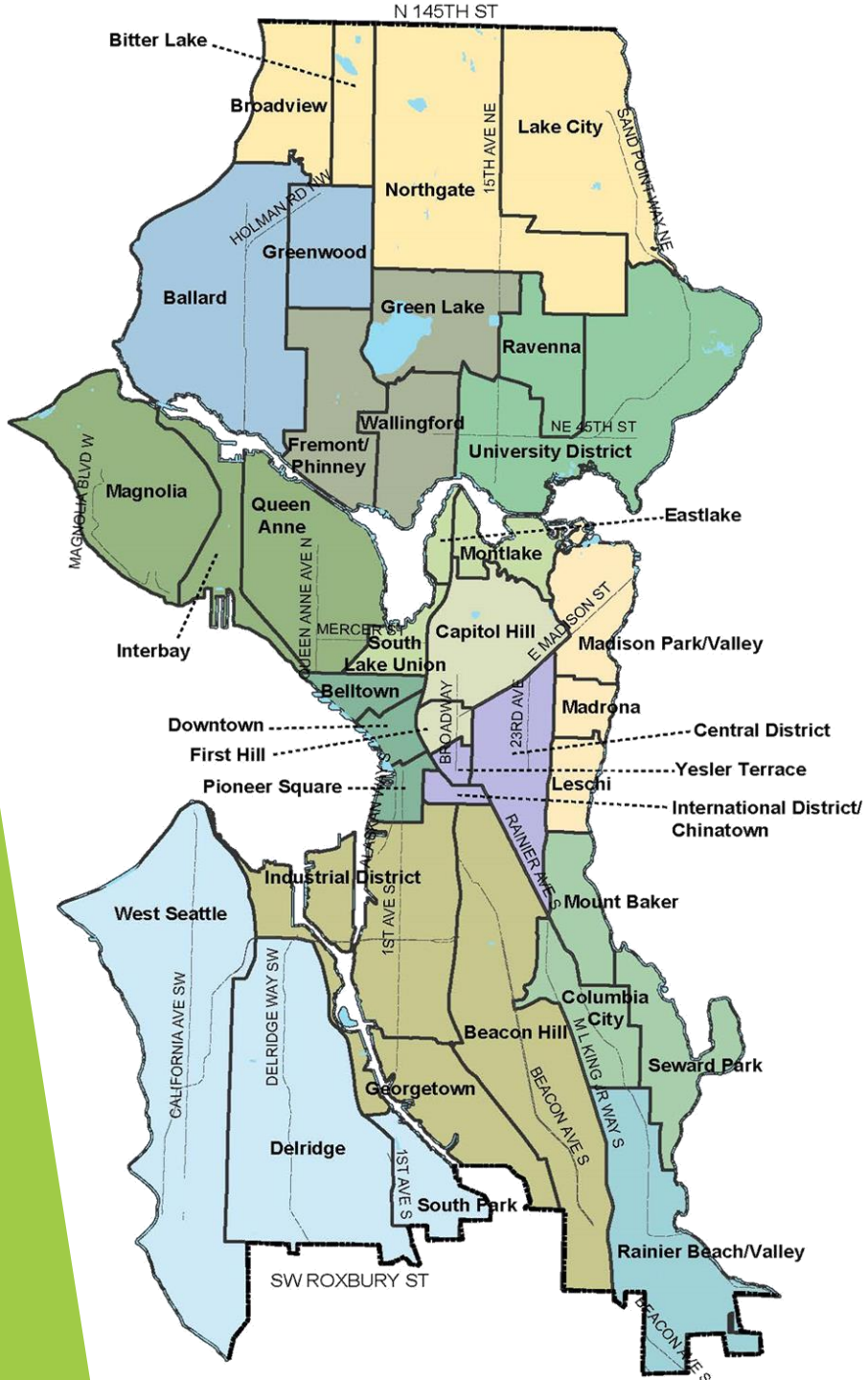
# Where Can I Live?

North Boundary:  
N 145<sup>th</sup> St

Your voucher can be used  
**anywhere** in Seattle!

South Boundary:  
SW Roxbury St





# Can I Live outside of Seattle?

You must rent a unit in Seattle for your first year in the voucher program

After one year, you may use your voucher in another city or state

# Family Access Supplement (FAS)

The Family Access Supplement provides an additional subsidy for families to reduce their rent portion to 40 percent of monthly income. To qualify a household must:

- ▶ Have at least one child under 18 years old and
- ▶ Lease a unit in one of the neighborhoods on the following slide

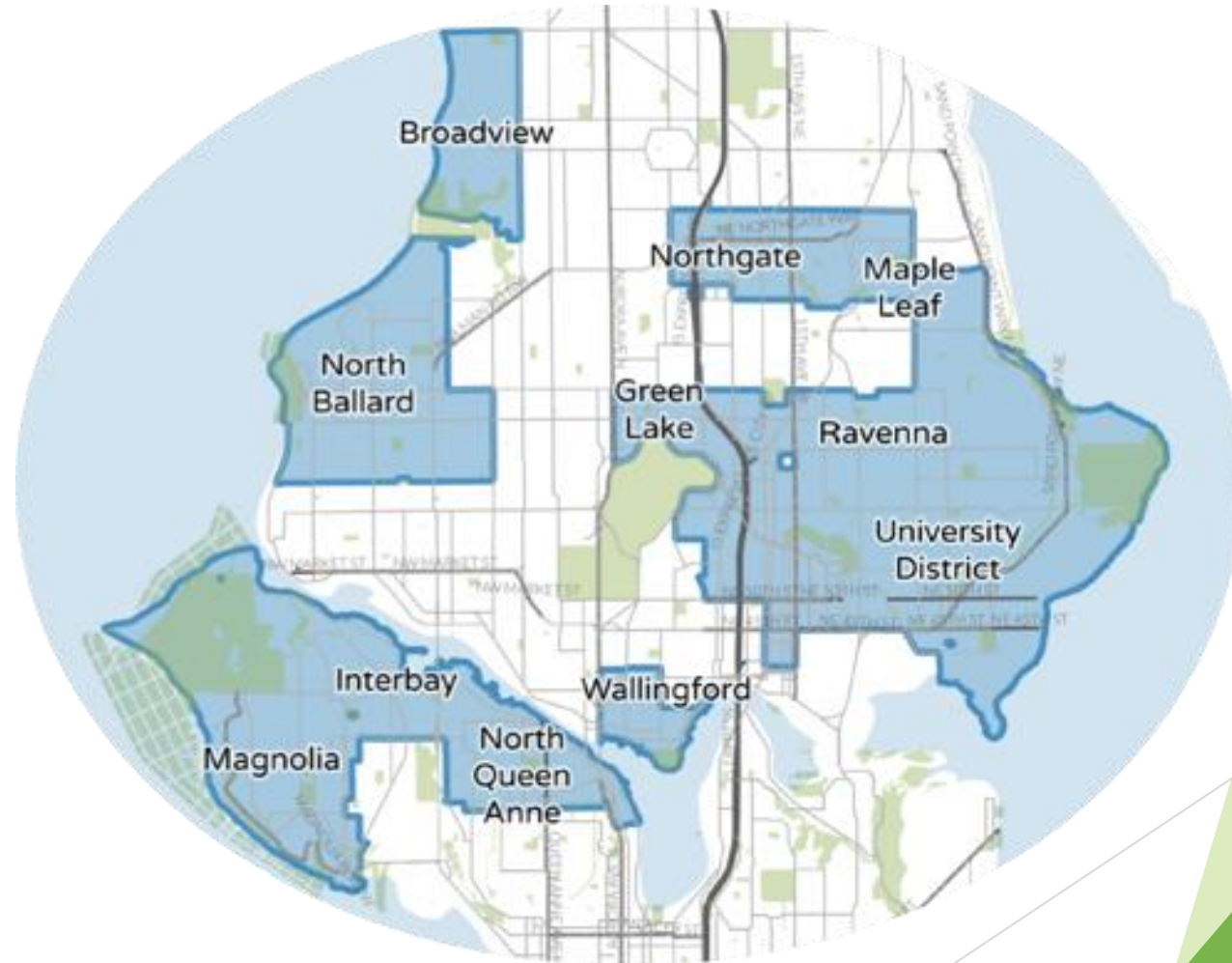
## Maximum FAS by Unit Size

| Voucher Size       | 1 Bedroom | 2 Bedroom | 3 Bedroom | 4 Bedroom | 5 Bedroom |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Additional Subsidy | \$300     | \$400     | \$500     | \$600     | \$700     |

# FAS-Eligible Neighborhoods

## SEATTLE

- Broadview
- Green Lake
- Interbay
- Magnolia
- Maple Leaf
- North Ballard
- N. Queen Anne
- Northgate
- Ravenna
- University District
- Wallingford



# How Should I Search for Housing?

You can find housing search tips and links to rental listings at [SeattleHousing.org/Find-Rental-Listings](http://SeattleHousing.org/Find-Rental-Listings). Additionally, the following websites offer free online rental listings:





# Other Ways to Search for Housing?

- ▶ Walk or drive around neighborhoods.
- ▶ Look through apartment guides.
- ▶ Ask friends or relatives about available units.
- ▶ Check community bulletin boards for listings.

# Sample SHA Rental Listing Site

Link - [seattleha.gosection8.com/Tenant/tn\\_Results.aspx](http://seattleha.gosection8.com/Tenant/tn_Results.aspx)

The screenshot shows the Seattle Housing Authority website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Seattle Housing Authority logo, the text "Seattle Housing Authority Find Affordable Rentals", and buttons for "Sign Up", "Sign In", and "List Your Property". Below the navigation bar is a search bar with fields for "Enter City", price range "\$0 to \$20,000+", "All Property Types", "All Beds", "All Baths", and a "More" dropdown. There is also a "Save Search" button and a search icon. Below the search bar, there are options to "Sort By" (set to "Last Updated"), "1-14 of 53 Listings", and buttons for "List", "Map", and "Print Listings".

The main content area is titled "FEATURED LISTINGS" and contains two listing cards:

- Listing 1:** \$1,550 / Month, Available Now, 1 Bed, 1 Bath Apt. Includes a "No Voucher Necessary" badge and the text "ELEVATED MFTE 1 BD - WALK TO EVERYTHING! 101 6TH S AVE, SEATTLE, WA 98104".
- Listing 2:** \$1,425 / Month, Available Now, Efficiency Bed, 1 Bath Apt. Includes a "No Voucher Necessary" badge and the text "BRAND NEW MFTE APARTMENTS IN THE HEART OF THE INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT!!! 101 6TH S AVE, SEATTLE, WA 98104".

On the right side of the page, there is an advertisement for xfinity, titled "Best Internet provider in America." with a "Learn More" button. Below the advertisement is a section for "Local Sponsors" with a placeholder image and the text "Advertise Yourself Here".

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the logo for "lgi homes.com" and the text "New Homes From \$1399/mo - Immediate Move-In Available".

# Sample Craigslist Rental Listing

Link - [seattle.craigslist.org/](https://seattle.craigslist.org/)

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the following elements:

- Browser Address Bar:** [https://seattle.craigslist.org/search/apa?query=seattle&min\\_price=500](https://seattle.craigslist.org/search/apa?query=seattle&min_price=500)
- Navigation:** File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, Help
- Breadcrumbs:** seattle > all seattle > housing > apts/housing for rent
- Search Bar:** seattle, save search
- Filters:**
  - search titles only
  - has image
  - posted today
  - bundle duplicates
  - include nearby areas
  - MILES FROM ZIP: miles, from zip
  - PRICE: 500 - 1529
  - BEDROOMS: 1 - 1
  - BATHROOMS: min - max
  - FT<sup>2</sup>: min - max
  - AVAILABILITY: all dates
  - cats ok
  - dogs ok
  - furnished
  - no smoking
  - wheelchair access
  - EV charging
  - no application fee
  - no broker fee
- Listing Grid:**
  - Listing 1:** **Community Nature Around Every Corner!** \$1250 1br - 800ft<sup>2</sup> - (Kent)
  - Listing 2:** **1/2 Off First Month Rent! Look & Lease Today!!!** \$1327 1br - 625ft<sup>2</sup> - (Tukwila)
  - Listing 3:** **Adorable AND Affordable! This Lake City 1x1 Apartment Could Be Yours!** \$1495 1br - 710ft<sup>2</sup> - (13725 32nd Ave NE Seattle, WA)
  - Listing 4:** **Available Soon!! Lease Today w/ our Reduced Deposits!!!** \$1450 1br - 620ft<sup>2</sup> - (13725 32nd Ave NE Seattle, WA)
  - Listing 5:** **Top Floor Remodeled Alki Apartment** \$1450 1br - 700ft<sup>2</sup> - (Alki Beach West Seattle)
  - Listing 6:** **Looking for new student housing in Shoreline? We got you covered.** \$825 1br - 1130ft<sup>2</sup> - (Shoreline)
- Map View:** see in map view

# Housing Search Tips: Know the Law



Landlords *cannot* refuse unit rental because you have a voucher



Landlords must include *all sources of income* (i.e. housing assistance payments) in their income screening criteria



*First in Time* - Landlords must offer tenancy to the 1st qualified applicant

If you believe you've been discriminated against call Seattle Office of Civil Rights at 206-684-4500 or visit [seattle.gov/civilrights/](http://seattle.gov/civilrights/)

# Housing Search Tips: Know the Law



**EQUAL HOUSING  
OPPORTUNITY**

In Seattle it is illegal to discriminate in the rental or sale of housing due to:

- Age
- Ancestry
- Breastfeeding in a public place
- Color
- Creed
- Disability
- Gender Identity
- Marital Status
- National Origin
- Parental Status
- Political Ideology
- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Use of a Section 8 voucher
- Use of a service animal
- Military status or Veteran

If you believe you've been discriminated against call Seattle Office of Civil Rights at 206-684-4500 or visit [seattle.gov/civilrights/](http://seattle.gov/civilrights/)

# Need Housing Search Help?

SHA's Housing Counselor Team is here to help!

1-on-1  
appointments

Emails with  
affordable units

Limited security  
deposit assistance



Call or email us anytime at 206-239-1739 or  
[HCVHousingCounselors@seattlehousing.org](mailto:HCVHousingCounselors@seattlehousing.org)



Leasing a Unit

# Once your rental application is accepted, Don't sign a lease before following the steps below!

Complete and submit Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) to SHA



SHA determines if rent is reasonable & affordable



SHA inspects unit to ensure it meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS)



Once unit is approved and passes inspection, sign a lease and move in!





## **Signing a Lease**

You must initially sign a 1-year lease with your landlord

SHA and the landlord will sign a separate contract related to our portion

# Your Responsibilities

- ▶ Pay your rent portion to your landlord on time each month
- ▶ Be a good tenant
  - Tell your landlord if a repair is needed
  - Send SHA copies of any notices you give to your landlord
- ▶ Complete regular income reviews and unit inspections
- ▶ Report all changes in your income and household in writing within 2 weeks
- ▶ Request approval from SHA before you:
  - Let someone move in with you
  - Move out of your home



**Additional Resources**



SHA's JobLink program connects tenants to employment, education and resources. Any adult 18+ is eligible for services.

JobLink can help you:

- ▶ Find a job right away
- ▶ Enroll in training and education; then find a job
- ▶ Get a better job
- ▶ Start a small business

Visit [seattlehousing.org/joblink](https://seattlehousing.org/joblink) to complete a JobLink interest form.

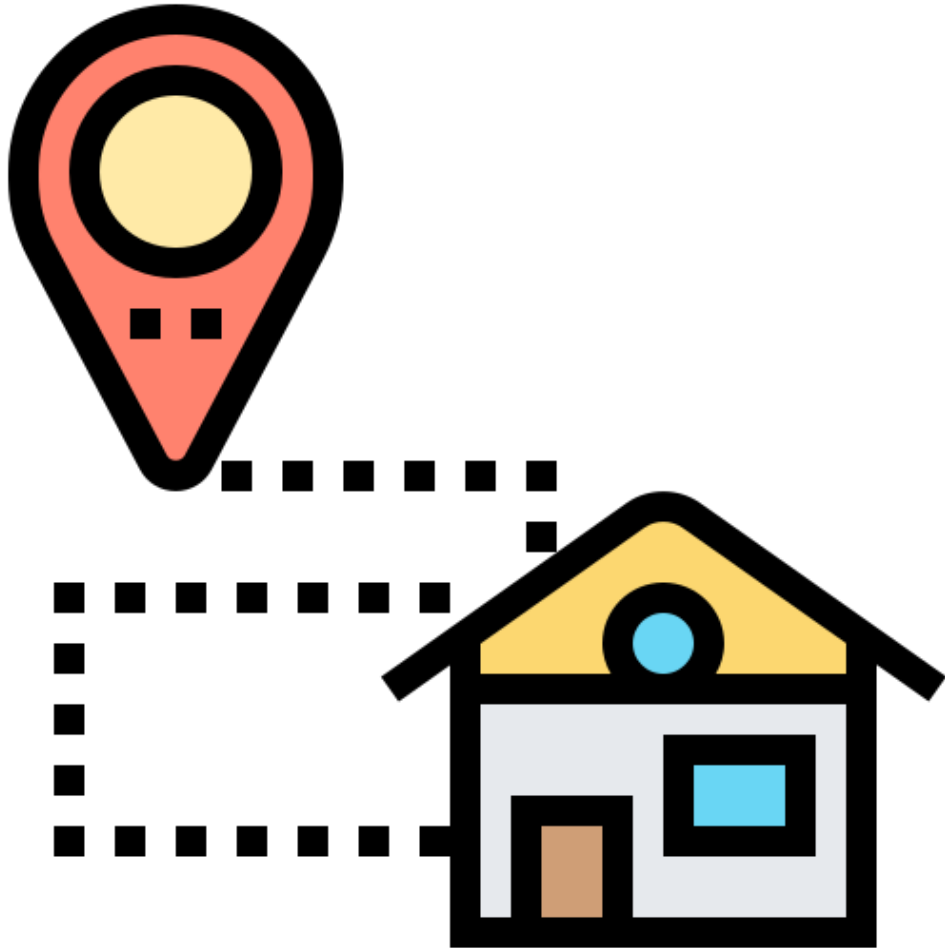
# Services from Other Organizations

You may be contacted by selected community service agencies about free benefits and opportunities for your household.

If you have any questions about this or would rather not be contacted, call 206-239-1524.

Opting out will not impact your housing assistance in any way.

# Congratulations!



You've completed the orientation.

Your path to housing begins **NOW**