

1

Five Steps to Home

Date:

Choose a Path

Your Original Staff copy

WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS STEP?

You'll complete an assessment with your case manager so that they can help you choose the best path home.

WHEN DO I GO TO THE NEXT STEP?

Go to Step 2 when you've chosen a rehousing path and are ready to begin meeting requirements.

WHAT IS A REHOUSING PATH?

There are several ways to move from shelter to home. The best path for you will be determined by things like your housing history, income, employment status, and medical needs.

DISCUSS OPTIONS

- Did you meet with your case manager to **DISCUSS YOUR PAST LIVING SITUATION**, existing resources, and potential medical needs?
- Did you and your case manager **REVIEW POTENTIAL REHOUSING PATHS**?
- Have you worked together to **CHOOSE A PATH** that's right for you, based on your current needs and resources?

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WHAT IS AN ILP?

An ILP is an agreement between you and your case manager which outlines the things you must do to meet the terms of your chosen rehousing path and move into permanent housing. See the back side of this sheet for a list of available paths.

MAKE A PLAN

- Has your case manager worked with you to **MAKE AN INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN (ILP)**?
- Do you **KNOW YOUR IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS** to begin meeting the requirements of your chosen path?
- How often will you continue to **MEET WITH YOUR CASE MANAGER** to check in on your progress and get support?
- Does your path require you to **PREPARE TO FIND YOUR OWN PLACE**?

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DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?

If your rehousing path does not require that you find your own place to live, you may skip to Step 5: Move In.

1

Five Steps to Home Resources

DOE STH
[SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV](https://schools.nyc.gov)

KEEP YOUR KIDS IN SCHOOL

If you have kids, **THEY MUST CONTINUE TO GO TO SCHOOL** while you are in shelter. Shelter staff will connect you with a **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE) LIAISON** or **STUDENTS IN TEMPORARY HOUSING (STH) BOROUGH CONTACT** who can help ensure school attendance is not disrupted.

YOU SHOULD KNOW that **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KEEP THEM IN THEIR OLD SCHOOL**, even if the shelter is in a new area. **IF YOUR KIDS ARE UNDER SCHOOL AGE**, the shelter will either have childcare on site or your case manager will connect you with a local childcare provider.

WHAT IF I NEED INFORMATION IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE?

Free interpretation services are available when communicating with DHS or shelter staff. You can also request that documents are translated to your preferred language.

START SAVING MONEY

If you are already making money, you should **CREATE A BUDGET AND SAVE EACH MONTH**. Your case manager may work with you to set up an **INCOME SAVINGS PLAN (ISP)** so that you are ready with some savings when you move into your new home.

- If you cannot work, you should try to save part of your monthly SSI/SSDI.
- Maintain your source of income and stick to your budget.
- Save your pay stubs or other proof of income—you'll need it when applying.

UNSUBSIDIZED

INDEPENDENT LIVING

You can secure your own room/unit with your own funds.

REUNIFICATION

You can find a family or friend willing to share a living arrangement with you.

TRANSITIONAL SETTING

Temporary housing including shelters, safe havens, drop-ins, nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals, and rehabilitation facilities.

ONE-TIME PAYMENTS

PROJECT RECONNECT

One-way travel assistance.

EOSD

4 months of rental assistance paid upfront, security deposit, broker's fee, storage/moving expenses, furniture allowance.

SOTA

1 year of rental assistance paid upfront, broker's fee, furniture allowance, if applicable.

TIME-LIMITED SUPPORT

PATHWAY HOME

Host receives compensation on a monthly basis for up to a year.

CITYFHEPS

Up to 5 years of rental assistance, unit hold, security deposit, broker's fee, storage/moving expenses.

FHEPS A AND B

Up to 5 years of rental assistance, 3 months paid upfront, unit hold, security deposit, broker's fee, landlord bonus, storage/moving expenses, furniture allowance.

LONG-TERM SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

HUD-VASH

Section 8 rental voucher.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Affordable housing facility with support services.

NYC AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing from NYCHA or HPD.

2

Complete Requirements

Your Original Staff copy

WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS STEP?

With your case manager’s help, you’ll identify requirements for your rehousing path and meet them.

WHEN DO I GO TO THE NEXT STEP?

Go to Step 3 when you’ve obtained your requirements and are ready to search for housing.

DO I HAVE TO ENROLL?

If your rehousing path does not include a subsidy, you may not be required to enroll in public benefits. It is still worth applying, however, if you could use help paying for food, transportation, and/or healthcare.

MEET ELIGIBILITY RULES

- Have you spoken with your case manager to **CLARIFY THE REQUIREMENTS** of your rehousing path? There may eligibility rules for some programs.
- Has your case manager helped you identify which benefits you qualify for? Do you need help to **ENROLL IN PUBLIC BENEFITS**?
- Are you required to **MAINTAIN AN ACTIVE CASH ASSISTANCE (CA) CASE**? Do you have any sanctions you need help resolving?
- If you are not working, are you required to **FIND WORK** or be referred to job training?
- If you have a job, has your case manager helped you figure out if you need to **INCREASE YOUR HOURS**?

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WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED?

Your case manager will tell you what documents you will need based on your chosen rehousing path and current resources.

Some common examples are:

- Personal identification (like your ID, drivers license, passport, or birth certificate)
- Family member identification
- Proof of your HRA case
- Pay stubs
- Bank records
- Disability or Social Security Award Letter, if applicable
- School records, if applicable

SUBMIT PROOF

- Do you **KNOW THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS** and personal identification you’ll need?
- Do you need help to **GATHER DOCUMENTS** or replace forms, like birth certificates?
- Did your case manager **SUBMIT THE DOCUMENTS THAT PROVE YOUR ELIGIBILITY**? Have they given you the go-ahead to begin looking for housing?

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2

Five Steps to Home Resources

CHOSEN REHOUSING PATH *(Please list all that apply.)*

REQUIREMENTS *(Please list all eligibility requirements.)*

APPLY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Depending on your housing path, you may need to open a public assistance case with HRA.

To do this, create an **ACCESS HRA** account online, download the app to your phone, or go to an **HRA OFFICE**.

YOUR ACCOUNT WILL ALLOW YOU TO:

- Apply or re-certify **SNAP BENEFITS**
- Check current **EBT BALANCE**
- Apply or re-certify **CASH ASSISTANCE**
- Access a **MEDICAID RENEWAL** form
- Enroll in **FAIR FARES NYC**
- Find **HRA OFFICE** locations

REPLACE LOST DOCUMENTS

If you are missing any identification documents or vital records, you can find information about how to replace them by visiting the website on the left.

THESE INCLUDE:

- Your Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, Driver's License or State-Issued ID Card, Passport, Green Card or citizenship/naturalization papers, and Marriage, Divorce, or Death Certificates (if applicable)

ACCESS HRA
[NYC.GOV/ACCESSHRA](https://nyc.gov/accesshra)

If you did not receive benefits before entering shelter, you may now be eligible. If you were receiving benefits before, the amounts may change.

If you need help at any time opening or maintaining your case, call:

HRA Infoline **(718) 557-1399** or 

USA.gov
[USA.GOV/REPLACE-VITAL-DOCUMENTS](https://usa.gov/replace-vital-documents)

Make multiple copies of each!

3

Five Steps to Home

Date:

Look for Housing

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WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS STEP?

With support from your case manager or housing specialist, you'll look for a new home.

WHEN DO I GO TO THE NEXT STEP?

Go to Step 4 when you find a place and are ready to submit an application.

WHAT IS MY PRICE RANGE?

If you will be using a voucher to help pay your rent, your housing specialist will make sure you know what you will have to contribute each month, based on your existing income and the number of people in your household. On the back of this sheet is a place where you can calculate your rent contribution together.

GET READY TO LOOK

- Have you been assigned a case manager or housing specialist, and have they helped you **UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS** of finding suitable housing?
- Has your case manager or housing specialist helped you **DEFINE A PRICE RANGE AND POTENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**, based on your income and household needs?
- Have staff helped you **PREPARE TO MEET WITH LANDLORDS AND BROKERS** by practicing tough questions about past evictions, your source of income, or how the voucher process works?
- Have you **DECIDED WHO IS RESPONSIBLE** for finding apartment listings? *(Please check all that apply.)*
 - You are responsible
 - Case manager or housing specialist is responsible

WHERE SHOULD I LOOK?

On the back of this sheet is a list of ways that you can search for places on your own.

FIND PLACES TO RENT

- Has your case manager or housing specialist given you information on ways to **FIND AVAILABLE ROOMS** or apartments to view?
- Has your case manager or housing specialist told you about how to **JOIN GROUP VIEWINGS** coordinated by the shelter?
- Have you **PLANNED HOW MANY APARTMENT VIEWINGS** to attend each week? *(Please write a range.)*
- Have you **DISCUSSED METHODS TO FIND LISTINGS?** *(Please check all that apply.)*
 - Talk to brokers
 - Ask friends and family
 - Search the websites on the back of this sheet
 - Apply to affordable or supporting housing

HOW DO I KEEP TRACK?

Your case manager or housing specialist will provide you with a form to document your viewings. This is so that you can keep a record of where you've been.

3

Five Steps to Home

Resources

SEARCH FOR THE RIGHT APARTMENT

PRICE: Consider what rent you can manage given your household income.

- Monthly household income:
- Affordable price range:
- Approximate income leftover after rent:

SIZE: Consider the number of members in your household, but be flexible with the size of your room or apartment. You may need to stick with the number of rooms you can afford.

- Number of bedrooms needed:

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: Be sure to discuss any disabilities or medical constraints with your case manager, and gain formal medical documentation if needed.

- Amenities needed, such as elevators or air conditioning
-

Shelter staff may also use an internal tool called HOME to help find apartments or rooms.

WHERE SHOULD I LOOK?

- Use the **NYC HOUSING CONNECT** portal
- Use websites like **STREETEASY** or **PADMAPPER**
- Visit realtor's offices in neighborhoods where you want to live
- When you meet landlords, ask if they own other buildings with vacancies

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

It is illegal for a potential landlord to ask you questions regarding past evictions or discrimination. If a question seems out of line, bring it up with your case manager or housing specialist.

PREPARE FOR TOUGH QUESTIONS

Talk to shelter staff about what **KINDS OF QUESTIONS** you might be asked.

Have you been **EVICTED** before?

Did your landlord follow legal eviction procedures?

Have you experienced **DISCRIMINATION** from a previous landlord based on your race, family status, source of income, or the age of your children?

4

Five Steps to Home

Date:

Get Approved

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WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS STEP?

You'll finalize your paperwork, submit your housing packet to DHS, and get approved.

WHEN DO I GO TO THE NEXT STEP?

Go to Step 5 when you receive approval to move in.

DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?

If your rehousing path does not require a walk-through or involve a lease, your case manager or housing specialist will begin preparing your housing packet right away.

SECURE HOUSING

- Have you been offered, and are you ready to **ACCEPT A UNIT**?
- If applicable, has your case manager or housing specialist helped you **GET AN AGREEMENT** from your new landlord to make sure the room or apartment is held for you while your paperwork is processed?
- If required, has your case manager or housing specialist helped you **ARRANGE A WALK-THROUGH**?
- If applicable, has your case manager or housing specialist helped you carefully **REVIEW THE LEASE**?

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SUBMIT PACKET

- Has your case manager or housing specialist reviewed your case file to **DOUBLE-CHECK ALL YOUR DOCUMENTS** and verify that you have identification ready?
- Has your case manager or housing specialist made sure you **UNDERSTAND THE TERMS** of your rental assistance program?
- Did staff **SUBMIT THE HOUSING PACKET TO DHS** for approval? Do you know when you can expect to hear back?
- Has your case manager or housing specialist suggested ways for you to **BEGIN PREPARING TO MOVE** while you are waiting for approval?

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WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Whether or not you will be using a rental assistance program, now is a good time to confirm that you understand the ongoing eligibility conditions of your rehousing path.

4

(929) 221-6576
SOI@HRA.NYC.GOV

If you think you have been discriminated against, contact HRA's Source of Income Discrimination Unit

Five Steps to Home Resources

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

YOU SHOULD KNOW that **A LANDLORD CANNOT REFUSE TO RENT YOU AN APARTMENT** because you are paying with a public assistance voucher such as: **FHEPS, CITYFHEPS, OR SECTION 8**. To recognize source of income discrimination, listen for phrases like:

- "We don't take programs."
- "We'd prefer another source."
- "Ok, that program is fine, but can someone else guarantee the rent?"
- "We take that program, but you still have to pay first month's rent, security deposit, and a broker's fee in cash upfront."

UNDERSTAND THE WALK-THROUGH

If you are renting an apartment with a time-limited subsidy, like **CITYFHEPS** or **FHEPS**, shelter staff will conduct a walk-through to look for things like:

- Adequate lighting
- Working heat and plumbing
- Accessible fire exits
- Usable locks and windows
- Any potential health or safety hazards.

Note that the utilities must be connected by the landlord before the walk-through can take place.

Talk to your housing specialist if you have questions about the process.

5

Five Steps to Home

Date:

Move In

Your Original Staff copy

WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS STEP?

You'll take part in an exit interview and prepare to move.

WHEN AM I DONE?

You're done when you've moved into your new place!

HOW WILL I MOVE?

If you have things to move, you should pack up and list your furniture items and the number of boxes that will be moved. Be sure to leave your shelter space clean for the next client.

WHO DO I CALL?

Your case manager will make sure you know who the utility providers are in your new neighborhood.

WHAT'S NEXT?

On the back of this sheet is a list of local businesses and services that you should be aware of.

PREPARE TO MOVE

- Has your case manager helped you **PLAN FOR YOUR MOVE** and, if applicable, explained about the furniture allowance and moving services?
- Do you know how to **CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS** with the post office and HRA? What other agencies should you inform of your new address?
- Did you **TRY OUT YOUR NEW COMMUTE**?
- If you have kids, has your case manager helped you **ENROLL IN NEW SCHOOLS OR CHILDCARE?** (Kids have rights to stay in their current school.)
- Do you need support to **PACK AND CLEAN** your shelter space? Has your case manager helped to **BOOK MOVING SERVICES** for you?
- Have you started to **GET BASIC HOME ITEMS**? Has your case manager given you tips on where to look for affordable furniture and housewares?
- Did you **TURN ON YOUR UTILITIES** and put them in your name?

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SETTLE IN

- Has your case manager made sure you know where to **FIND THE NEAREST COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES** in your new neighborhood?
- Did you **SAVE YOUR LANDLORD'S CONTACT INFORMATION** and the building superintendent's phone number?
- Have you taken some time to **EXPLORE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**?

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5

Five Steps to Home

Resources

GET BASIC HOME ITEMS

Start to **GATHER THE ESSENTIALS:**

- Bed and bedding
- Cleaning products
- Plates, cups, and silverware
- Pots and pans
- Coffee maker
- Shower curtain
- Towels
- Hangers

EXPLORE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

GET TO KNOW THE AREA:

- Subway and bus stop
- Food pantry
- Grocery store
- Laundromat
- Pharmacy
- Public library
- Place of worship
- Public park
- Urgent care clinic
- Child care

WHAT IF I NEED HELP?

You are not alone. There are many city agencies and community-based organizations dedicated to helping you stay in your home. Refer to the list of local resources your case manager created for you if you run into any issues.

If you are concerned about eviction or are in need of short-term financial assistance, visit or call the nearest Homebase location.

NEAREST HOMEBASE:

Homebase
[NYC.GOV/HOMEBASE](https://nyc.gov/homebase)