

FALL RIVER HOUSING RENT POLICIES

The Fall River Housing Authority has analyzed the QWHRA and is implementing the following rent structures for its Federally Aided Developments.

- 1) Percentage of Income
- 2) Flat Rents

FAMILY CHOICE

At admission and each year in preparation for their annual reexamination, each family is given the choice of having their rent determined under the formula method or having their rent set at the flat rent amount.

- A. Families who opt for the flat rent will be required to go through the income reexamination process every three years, rather than the annual review they would otherwise undergo.
- B. Families who opt for the flat rent may request to have a reexamination and return to the formula based method at any time for any of the following reasons:
 1. The family's income has decreased.
 2. The family's circumstances have changed increasing their expenses for child care, medical care, etc.
 3. Other circumstances creating a hardship on the family such that the formula method would be more financially feasible for the family.

THE FORMULA METHOD

The total tenant payment is equal to the highest of:

- A. 10% of monthly income;
- B. 30% of adjusted monthly income; or
- C. The welfare rent which does not currently exist in Massachusetts

The family will pay the greater of the total tenant payment or the minimum rent of \$50, but never more than the Flat Rent.

In the case of a family who has qualified for the income exclusion at Section 11.2(H)(11), upon the expiration of the 12-month period described in that section, an additional rent benefit accrues to the family. If the family member's employment continues, then for the 12-month period following the 12-month period of disallowance, the resulting rent increase will be capped at 50 percent of the rent increase the family would have otherwise received.

MINIMUM RENT

The Fall River Housing Authority has set the minimum rent at \$50. However if the family requests a hardship exemption, the Fall River Housing Authority will immediately suspend the minimum rent for the family until the Housing Authority can determine whether the hardship exists and whether the hardship is of a temporary or long-term nature.

- A. A hardship exists in the following circumstances:

1. When the family has lost eligibility for or is waiting an eligibility determination for a Federal, State, or local assistance program;
 2. When the family would be evicted as a result of the imposition of the minimum rent requirement;
 3. When the income of the family has decreased because of changed circumstances, including loss of employment;
 4. When the family has an increase in expenses because of changed circumstances, for medical costs, childcare, transportation, education, or similar items;
 5. When a death has occurred in the family.
- B. No hardship. If the Housing Authority determines there is no qualifying hardship, the minimum rent will be reinstated, including requiring back payment of minimum rent for the time of suspension.
- C. Temporary hardship. If the Housing Authority reasonably determines that there is a qualifying hardship but that it is of a temporary nature, the minimum rent will be not be imposed for a period of 90 days from the date of the family's request. At the end of the 90-day period, the minimum rent will be imposed retroactively to the time of suspension. The Housing Authority will offer a repayment agreement in accordance with the Section 19 of this policy for any rent not paid during the period of suspension. During the suspension period the Housing Authority will not evict the family for nonpayment of the amount of tenant rent owed for the suspension period.
- D. Long-term hardship. If the Housing Authority determines there is a long-term hardship, the family will be exempt from the minimum rent requirement until the hardship no longer exists.
- E. Appeals. The family may use the grievance procedure to appeal the Housing Authority's determination regarding the hardship. No escrow deposit will be required in order to access the grievance procedure.

THE FLAT RENT

The Fall River Housing Authority has set a flat rent for each public housing unit. In doing so, it considered the size and type of the unit, as well as its condition, amenities, services, and neighborhood. The Fall River Housing Authority determined the market value of the unit and set the rent at the market value. The amount of the flat rent will be reevaluated annually and adjustments applied. Affected families will be given a 30-day notice of any rent change. Adjustments are applied on the anniversary date for each affected family

The Fall River Housing Authority will post the flat rents at each of the developments and at the central office and are incorporated in this policy upon approval by the Board of Commissioners. Current Flat Rents are attached as Appendix 1.

RENT FOR FAMILIES UNDER THE NONCITIZEN RULE

A mixed family will receive full continuation of assistance if all of the following conditions are met:

- A. The family was receiving assistance on June 19, 1995;
- B. The family was granted continuation of assistance before November 29, 1996;
- C. The family's head or spouse has eligible immigration status; and
- D. The family does not include any person who does not have eligible status other than the head of household, the spouse of the head of household, any parent of the head or spouse, or any child (under the age of 18) of the head or spouse.

If a mixed family qualifies for prorated assistance but decides not to accept it, or if the family has no eligible members, the family may be eligible for temporary deferral of termination of assistance to permit the family additional time for the orderly transition of some or all of its members to locate other affordable housing. Under this provision, the family receives full assistance. If assistance is granted under this provision prior to November 29, 1996, it may last no longer than three (3) years. If granted after that date, the maximum period of time for assistance under the provision is eighteen (18) months. The Fall River Housing Authority will grant each family a period of six (6) months to find suitable affordable housing. If the family cannot find suitable affordable housing, the Fall River Housing Authority will provide additional search periods up to the maximum time allowable.

Suitable housing means housing that is not substandard and is of appropriate size for the family. Affordable housing means that it can be rented for an amount not exceeding the amount the family pays for rent, plus utilities, plus 25%.

The family's assistance is prorated in the following manner:

- A. Determine the 95th percentile of gross rents (tenant rent plus utility allowance) for the Fall River Housing Authority. The 95th percentile is called the maximum rent.
- B. Subtract the family's total tenant payment from the maximum rent. The resulting number is called the maximum subsidy.
- C. Divide the maximum subsidy by the number of family members and multiply the result times the number of eligible family members. This yields the prorated subsidy.
- D. Subtract the prorated subsidy from the maximum rent to find the prorated total tenant payment. From this amount subtract the full utility allowance to obtain the prorated tenant rent.

FLAT RENTS

FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS

BEDROOMS	Sunset Hill New	Heritage Heights New	Diafario New	Turnkeys New
1BR	\$375	\$390	\$460	\$460
2BR	\$425	\$460	\$525	\$525
3BR	\$460	\$495	\$555	\$555
4BR	\$495	\$525	\$595	\$595
5BR	\$620	\$650	\$730	\$730

ELDERLY DEVELOPMENTS

BEDROOM CATEGORY	RENT New
0BR	\$390
1BR	\$495
2BR	\$560