

PICAYUNE HOUSING AUTHORITY

821 Sixth Avenue

Picayune MS 39466

Phone: (601) 798-3281 Fax: (601) 799-5123

Email: applications@pichouse.org

Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Applications are accepted in the office 9:00 a.m – 4:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays ONLY

Applications can also be faxed, mailed, or emailed.

Applicant is required to notify Picayune Housing Authority (PHA) of any changes in income, family size, preference status, or contact information (current residence, mailing address, and phone number), in writing, within 10 business days of the change.

Please do not contact this office to check on the status of your application while it is being processed.

The PHA will send written notification within 10 business days from the date of the completed application as to the applicant's preliminary eligibility or their ineligibility.

If eligible, you will be placed on a waiting list. You will be contacted when an apartment becomes available that is the appropriate size for you.

At the time you are offered an apartment, you should be prepared to pay:

- \$100 down toward the \$300 Security Deposit
- \$40 Key Deposit
- \$10 Hall Door Key Deposit (Pines only)
- First month's rent
- \$300 deposit with Mississippi Power (Family Unit) or \$340 deposit with Coast Electric (Pines)
- \$170 deposit with the City of Picayune (gas)

Utilities must be connected in the head of household, spouse, or co-head's name.

Failure to pay the above-mentioned deposits and/or rent within 7 calendar days of apartment offer will waive your acceptance of that apartment and count as a rejection.

While funds are available, the following organizations may be available for possible assistance with the above-mentioned deposits:

PRVO (assists with Electric Deposits)

St. Vincent's (assists with partial Security Deposit)

We do NOT offer emergency housing



PICAYUNE HOUSING AUTHORITY APPLICATION / SCREENING CRITERIA

ALL APPLICANTS INTERESTED IN ADMISSION TO PUBLIC HOUSING AT THE PICAYUNE HOUSING AUTHORITY MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Qualify as a family as defined by HUD and the PHA.
2. Have an annual income at or below HUD-specified limits.
3. Qualify on the basis of citizenship or the eligible immigrant status of family members.
4. Provide social security number information for household members as required.
5. Consent to the PHA's collection and use of family information as provided for in PHA-provided consent forms.
6. Not currently be receiving a duplicative subsidy.
7. Meet net asset and property ownership restriction requirements.

STEP ONE – APPLICATION

1. Applications may be obtained from the Picayune Housing Authority's website or from the PHA's office during normal business hours. Families may also request – by telephone, mail, or email – that an application be sent to the family via first class mail or via email.
2. The application and all supplemental forms must be filled out in full and signed by all adult family members age 18 and older.
3. Completed applications must be returned to the PHA by mail, email, fax, or submitted in person during normal business hours.
4. Applications must be filled out completely in order to be accepted by the PHA for processing. If an application is incomplete, the PHA will notify the family of the additional information required.

Failure to provide all required documents within 14 calendar days will result in denial of the application.

All applicants must provide the following ORIGINAL documents:

- **Picture identification for all adults (18 years and older)**
- **Social Security cards for everyone in the household**
- **Birth Certificates for everyone in the household (if not available, may provide passport, military i.d., DD214, school records, or driver's license if birth year recorded)**
- **Proof of income for everyone in the household (examples include, but are not limited to, a current SSA Award letter, at least 2 current and consecutive paycheck stubs, a notarized contribution letter, etc.)**



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- **Assets (examples include, but are not limited to, copies of checking and/or savings account statements for last 3 months, proof of retirement, whole life insurance cash value, CDs, etc.)**
- **Childcare expenses and Medical Expenses (if applicable)**
- **Citizenship status of everyone in the household (Declaration of Section 214 Status)**
- **Authorization Release Form (HUD-9886-A)**
- **Debts Owed form (signed by all household members 18 years and older)**
- **EIV Brochure and Fraud Notice (signed by Head of Household, Spouse, and Co-head)**

STEP TWO – SCREENING PROCESS

To begin eligibility processing, the information provided to the Picayune Housing Authority by the applicant will then be verified for accuracy and eligibility, and a criminal background check will be ran.

Placement on the Waiting List

Applicants will be placed on the waiting list according to the Picayune Housing Authority's preferences and the date and time their completed application is received by the PHA.

The Picayune Housing Authority will send written notification of the preliminary eligibility determination within 10 business days of receiving a completed application. If applicable, the notice will also indicate the waiting list preference(s) for which the family appears to qualify.

Preferences:

Picayune Housing Authority gives preference(s) to applicants who qualify for them. Having preference(s) affects the order in which your application is considered – it does not determine whether or not you will receive assistance. All applicants have to meet other requirements to receive assistance, regardless of their preference status.

Picayune Housing Authority uses the following local preferences: (see attachment for definition of each preference.)

1. Preference for Working Families
2. Preference for Veterans
3. Preference for Rent Burden
4. Preference for Victims of Domestic Violence
5. Preference for Disaster Victims



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Ineligible for placement on the Waiting List

If the Picayune Housing Authority can determine from the information provided that a family is ineligible, the family will not be placed on the waiting list. When a family is determined to be ineligible, the PHA will send written notification of the ineligibility determination within 10 business days of receipt of the completed application. The notice will specify the reasons for ineligibility and will inform the family of its right to request an informal hearing and explain the process in doing so.

STEP THREE – Unit Offer:

Once the screening process is completed, the Picayune Housing Authority will offer available units in the appropriate bedroom size. Once an apartment is offered and accepted by the applicant, they will have 5 business days to provide proof of utilities and pay the rent and security deposit. Failure to present that information within 5 business days will waive the applicant's acceptance of that apartment and count as a rejection.

Once an applicant rejects 3 offers of an apartment, their application will be removed from the waiting list.

GROUND'S FOR DENIAL OF ADMISSION

The Picayune Housing Authority is required to deny assistance in the following cases:

1. Any member of the household has been evicted from federally assisted housing in the last three years for drug-related criminal activity.
2. The PHA determines that any household member is currently engaged in the use of illegal drugs. *Currently engaged in* is defined as any use of illegal drugs during the previous three months.
3. The PHA has reasonable cause to believe that any household member's current use or pattern of use of illegal drugs, or current abuse or pattern of abuse of alcohol, may threaten the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.
4. Any household member has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the production or manufacture of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.
5. Any household member is subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state lifetime sex offender registration program.

The Picayune Housing Authority will deny admission to applicants who:

1. If any household member is currently engaged in or has engaged in any of the following criminal activities within the past three years, the family will be denied admission.
 - a. *Drug-related criminal activity*, defined by HUD as the illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or the possession of a drug with intent to manufacture, sell distribute, or use the drug.

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assistance, they must provide a copy of the information used to the head of household and ineligible applicant.

If an applicant is denied admission, the Picayune Housing Authority will notify the applicant, in writing, of its determination and inform the applicant that they have an opportunity for an informal meeting on such determination. The denial letter will allow the applicant ten (10) business days to request in writing an Informal Review with the Picayune Housing Authority. The applicant may bring any person he/she wishes to represent them at the informal meeting. In making its decision to deny admission, the Picayune Housing Authority will consider mitigating factors, on a case-by-case basis, and may decide not to deny admission.

The PHA will use the following preferences:

Working Families: Working families will be given preference on the Public Housing waiting list. PHA defines “working” as a head, spouse, cohead, or sole member is employed at least 20 hours per week. As required by HUD, families where the head, spouse, cohead, or sole member is a person age 62 or older, or is a person with disabilities, will also be given the benefit of the working preference.

Veterans: Veteran families will be given a preference on the waiting list. PHA defines “veteran” as an individual with an honorable discharge status or is currently on active duty with the following branches of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and the National Guard (if deployed during war). This definition includes (1) tenant or spouse is a disabled Veteran; (2) tenant is the spouse of a deceased Veteran; (3) tenant or spouse is a Veteran; (4) tenant or spouse is currently serving in the military or National Guard.

Rent Burden: This preference is for families who pay more than 50% of the family income for rent and have been doing so for at least 90 days. “Rent” means the actual monthly amount due under a lease or occupancy agreement between a family and the family’s current landlord, and for utilities purchased directly by tenants from utility providers.

Victim of Domestic Violence: The Housing Authority will offer a Domestic Violence preference to families or individuals that have been subjected to or victimized by a member of the family or household within the past (6) months. The Housing Authority will require evidence that the family has been displaced as a result of fleeing violence in the home. Families are also eligible for this preference if there is proof that the family is currently living in a situation where they are being subjected to or victimized by violence in the home.

Disaster Victims: Families who are being involuntarily displaced and required to vacate housing as a result of a disaster such as fire, flood, hurricane, etc.

**PICAYUNE HOUSING AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY POLICY**

A. Background

The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires that all nonexempt (see definitions) public housing adult residents (18 or older) contribute eight (8) hours per month of community service (volunteer work) or participate in eight (8) hours of training, counseling, classes or other activities that help an individual toward self-sufficiency and economic independence. This is a requirement of the public housing lease.

B. Definitions

Community Service – community service activities include, but are not limited to, work at:

- Local public or nonprofit institutions such as schools, head start programs, before or after school programs, child care centers, hospitals, clinics, hospices, nursing homes, recreation centers, senior centers, adult day care programs, homeless shelters, feeding programs, food banks (distributing either donated or commodity foods), or clothes closets (distributing donated clothing)
- Nonprofit organizations serving PHA residents or their children such as: Boy or Girl Scouts, Boys or Girls Club, 4-H clubs, Police Assistance League (PAL), organized children's recreation, mentoring or education programs, Big Brothers or Big Sisters, garden centers, community clean-up programs, beautification programs
- Programs funded under the Older Americans Act, such as Green Thumb, Service Corps of Retired Executives, senior meals programs, senior centers, Meals on Wheels
- Public or nonprofit organizations dedicated to seniors, youth, children, residents, citizens, special-needs populations or with missions to enhance the environment, historic resources, cultural identities, neighborhoods, or performing arts
- PHA housing to improve grounds or provide gardens (so long as such work does not alter the PHA's insurance coverage); or work through resident organizations to help other residents with problems, including serving on the Resident Advisory Board
- Care for the children of other residents so parent may volunteer

Note: Political activity is excluded.

Self-Sufficiency Activities – self-sufficiency activities include, but are not limited to:

- Job readiness or job training
- Training programs through local one-stop career centers, workforce investment boards (local entities administered through the U.S. Department of Labor), or other training providers
- Employment counseling, work placement, or basic skills training
- Education, including higher education (junior college or college), or reading, financial, or computer literacy classes
- Apprenticeships (formal or informal)
- English proficiency or English as a second language classes
- Budgeting and credit counseling

- Any other program necessary to ready a participant to work (such as substance abuse or mental health counseling)

Exempt Adult – an adult member of the family who meets any of the following criteria:

- Is 62 years of age or older
- Is blind or a person with disabilities (as defined under section 216[i][I] or 1614 of the Social Security Act), and who certifies that because of this disability they are unable to comply with the service provisions, or is the primary caretaker of such an individual
- Is engaged in *work activities*
- Is able to meet requirements under a state program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, or under any other welfare program of the state in which the PHA is located, including a state-administered welfare-to-work program; or
- Is a member of a family receiving assistance, benefits, or services under a state program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, or under any other welfare program of the state in which the PHA is located, including a state-administered welfare-to-work program and the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), and has not been found by the state or other administering entity to be in noncompliance with such program
- Is a member of a non-public housing over-income family.

PHAs can use reasonable guidelines in clarifying the work activities in coordination with TANF, as appropriate.

Work Activities – as it relates to an exemption from the community service requirement, *work activities* means:

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized private sector employment
- Subsidized public sector employment
- Work experience (including work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing) if sufficient private sector employment is not available
- On-the-job training
- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Community service programs
- Vocational educational training (not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual)
- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency
- Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate
- Provision of child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program

C. Requirements of the Program

1. The eight (8) hours per month may be either volunteer work or self-sufficiency program activity, or a combination of the two.
2. At least eight (8) hours of activity must be performed each month, or may be aggregated across a year. Any blocking of hours is acceptable as long as long as 96 hours is completed by each annual certification of compliance.
3. Family obligation:
 - At lease execution, all adult members (18 or older) of a public housing resident family must:
 - Sign a certification (Attachment A) that they have received and read this policy and understand that if they are not exempt, failure to comply with the community service requirement will result in a nonrenewal of their lease; and
 - Declare if they are exempt. If exempt, they must complete the Exemption Form (Exhibit 11-3) and provide documentation of the exemption.
 - Upon written notice from the PHA, nonexempt family members must present complete documentation of activities performed during the applicable lease term. This documentation will include places for signatures of supervisors, instructors, or counselors, certifying the number of hours.
 - If a family member is found to be noncompliant at the end of the 12-month lease term, they, and the head of household, will be required to sign an agreement with the housing authority to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period, or the lease will be terminated.
 - At annual reexamination, the family must also sign a certification certifying that they understand the community service requirement.
4. Change in exempt status:
 - If, during the twelve (12) month lease period, a nonexempt person becomes exempt, it is their responsibility to report this to the PHA and provide documentation of exempt status.
 - If, during the twelve (12) month lease period, an exempt person becomes nonexempt, it is their responsibility to report this to the PHA. Upon receipt of this information the PHA will provide the person with the appropriate documentation form(s) and a list of agencies in the community that provide volunteer and/or training opportunities.

D. Authority Obligation

1. To the greatest extent possible and practicable, the PHA will:
 - Provide names and contacts at agencies that can provide opportunities for residents, including residents with disabilities, to fulfill their community service obligations.
 - Provide in-house opportunities for volunteer work or self-sufficiency activities.
2. The PHA will provide the family with a copy of this policy, and all applicable exemption verification forms and community service documentation forms, at lease-up, lease

renewal, when a family member becomes subject to the community service requirement during the lease term, and at any time upon the family's request.

3. Although exempt family members will be required to submit documentation to support their exemption, the PHA will verify the exemption status in accordance with its verification policies. The PHA will make the final determination as to whether or not a family member is exempt from the community service requirement. Residents may use the PHA's grievance procedure if they disagree with the PHA's determination.
4. Noncompliance of family member:
 - At least thirty (30) days prior to the end of the 12-month lease term, the PHA will begin reviewing the exempt or nonexempt status and compliance of family members;
 - If, at the end of the initial 12-month lease term under which a family member is subject to the community service requirement, the PHA finds the family member to be noncompliant, the PHA will not renew the lease unless:
 - The head of household and any other noncompliant resident enter into a written agreement with the PHA, to make up the deficient hours over the next twelve (12) month period; or
 - The family provides written documentation satisfactory to the PHA that the noncompliant family member no longer resides in the unit.
 - If, at the end of the next 12-month lease term, the family member is still not compliant, a 30-day notice to terminate the lease will be issued and the entire family will have to vacate, unless the family provides written documentation satisfactory to the PHA that the noncompliant family member no longer resides in the unit;
 - The family may use the PHA's grievance procedure to dispute the lease termination.

All adult family members must sign and date below, certifying that they have read and received a copy of this Community Service and Self-Sufficiency Policy.

EXHIBIT 11-2: DEFINITION OF A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY UNDER SOCIAL SECURITY ACTS 216(i)(I) and Section 1416(excerpt) FOR PURPOSES OF EXEMPTION FROM COMMUNITY SERVICE

Social Security Act:

216(i)(1): Except for purposes of sections 202(d), 202(e), 202(f), 223, and 225, the term "disability" means (A) inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months, or (B) blindness; and the term "blindness" means central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of a correcting lens. An eye which is accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees shall be considered for purposes of this paragraph as having a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less.

Section 1416 (excerpt):

SEC. 1614. [42 U.S.C. 1382c] (a)(1) For purposes of this title, the term "aged, blind, or disabled individual" means an individual who—

(A) is 65 years of age or older, is blind (as determined under paragraph (2)), or is disabled (as determined under paragraph (3)), and

(B)(i) is a resident of the United States, and is either (I) a citizen or (II) an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence or otherwise permanently residing in the United States under color of law (including any alien who is lawfully present in the United States as a result of the application of the provisions of section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act), or

(ii) is a child who is a citizen of the United States and, who is living with a parent of the child who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States assigned to permanent duty ashore outside the United States.

(2) An individual shall be considered to be blind for purposes of this title if he has central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of a correcting lens. An eye which is accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees shall be considered for purposes of the first sentence of this subsection as having a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less. An individual shall also be considered to be blind for purposes of this title if he is blind as defined under a State plan approved under title X or XVI as in effect for October 1972 and received aid under such plan (on the basis of blindness) for December 1973, so long as he is continuously blind as so defined.

(3)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C), an individual shall be considered to be disabled for purposes of this title if he is unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment which can be expected to result in death or which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than twelve months.