

The
HOUSING AUTHORITY
of
The City of Grand Forks, North Dakota

**Working Preference
Responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

If I am not eligible for the Working Preference, will I ever get housing assistance?

You will still remain on the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list even if you are not eligible for the Working Preference. While it may take a bit longer to reach the top of the list, the Housing Authority is still obligated to admit at least 75% “Extremely Low-Income” families (30% area median income or less) to its Housing Choice Voucher Program, therefore we expect families who do not qualify for the preference to continue to be selected on a regular basis.

Do I need to keep the same job from the time I apply until my I start using my Voucher to be eligible?

No, we understand that employment is not always consistent and do not require applicants to be employed at the same location at both times. Eligible applicants will simply have to verify that they have worked 10 hours per week or more on average for at least 4 weeks prior to each date.

I work more in the summer and fall than during the winter. If I’m working less than 10 hours per week when I’m selected will I not be considered eligible?

In a case where you are still working, just for fewer than 10 hours per week, all you have to do is ask your employer to provide a signed letter indicating that you work over 10 hours per week on average throughout the year. When you begin utilizing your Voucher we will also “annualize” your income – using what you make throughout the whole year to verify your income rather than just what you are making when you are selected.

If you are not working at the time of your application/selection, your employer will need to provide a letter indicating that you are a seasonal employee and they intend to hire you back for the next season so that you average over 10 hours per week throughout the year. As with the situation above, your income in this scenario will be “annualized.”

I am a full-time student. Do I qualify for the Working Preference?

At this time, students are not considered “working” under the preference unless they are working in addition to receiving their education. If you are participating in AmeriCorps or work study, or if you are a VISTA member, your hours will count toward the 10 hours worked per week.

I do Work Study and also work part-time at another job. I don’t do either for 10 hours a week. Am I eligible?

Yes, as long as you are employed for a total of 10 hours per week you are eligible. If you work less than 10 hours between the two jobs, you would not be eligible. To verify this you would just need to provide pay stubs or letters from both employers.



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If being a VISTA member makes me eligible for this preference, will it affect the way my rent is calculated once I am utilizing my Voucher?

The calculation of rent has not changed because of this preference. The only requirement is that you remain eligible for the preference when you begin utilizing your Voucher. This will not change the way your rent is calculated.

I am a stay-at-home parent with young children. How will I reach the top of the waiting list if I do not qualify for this preference?

As noted above, not qualifying for the Working Preference does not make you ineligible for housing assistance or remove you from the waiting list. The majority of the families we select from our waiting list will still need to be considered "Extremely Low-Income," thus, while it may take a bit longer to receive assistance, we expect families who do not qualify for this preference to continue to be selected on a regular basis.

Why is the Grand Forks Housing Authority implementing this preference now?

Recent changes in Legislation and budgets have caused the Grand Forks Housing Authority to look for ways that will allow the organization to use funding as efficiently as possible. Providing a preference for those who are working, and thus have some income, allows the GFHA to spend less per family, which will in turn allow us to serve more families. While we understand that this is a hardship for some, we believe this change will allow our organization to serve our community as effectively as possible during these difficult economic times.

If you have additional questions or comments regarding the Working Preference, you are welcome to submit them in writing by sending an e-mail to WorkingPreference@grandforkshousingauthority.org, or mailing a letter to:

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