Asheville Housing Authority
165 S. French Broad Ave,
Asheville, NC 28801

Work Requirement FAQ

Updated 07/20/2026

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1. **How many hours are required?**
    a. 15 hours per week per eligible adult in the household. Those not in compliance will automatically be placed on a three-month Action Period in which to submit documentation, bringing them into compliance. There is no minimum income limit required.

2. **What is the maximum income a family can earn before they are no longer eligible for the program?**
    a. Household income cannot exceed 50% of Area Median Income for the number of family members in the household. This is the requirement for the program as a whole, regardless of whether or not the household is subject to the work requirement.

    The chart below shows current maxes as of March 2026. The latest version is available on the haca.org homepage.

Number of Family Members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Shows the 50% of Median Family Income amount (MFI)	$32,600	$37,250	$41,900	$46,550	$50,300	$54,000	$57,750	$61,450

3. **What will the market rent be for families if they transition off the program?**
    a. For households on Project-Based Vouchers, they will be set according to the guidelines specified in Chapter 17, Part VIII.B. of the HACA Admin Plan. This amount will not exceed the lesser of:
        i. 110% of the applicable fair market rent
        ii. Reasonable Rent as compared to similar units in the area
        iii. A rent set and determined by the Agency
        iv. For households on Tenant-Based Vouchers, rent will be determined by the individual owner of the unit in accordance with lease terms, the local market, and applicable laws, standards, and practices.

    As an example, the contract rents at our Hillcrest development as of May, 2026, are as follows: 1bdr - $903, 2 bdr - $1019, 3-bdr - $1125, 4 bdr - $1219, 5 bdr - $ 1247. In the case of residents at this development, those whose income exceeds the 50% Area Median Income mark will pay these amounts monthly following their transition off the program.

4. **Can we confirm the applicable age range for the work requirement (e.g., 18 to retirement age (62))? As defined in 24 CFR §5.403, an "elderly family" includes**

households where the head, co-head, spouse, or sole member is at least 62 years old.

a. Correct. In terms of age, the work requirement is applicable to household members aged 18 to 61, who are not otherwise exempt.

5. **Who is eligible for stepped rent, and how does that process work?**
   a. Any household subject to the work requirement is eligible. Exempted households include:
      i. Households where the Head-of-Household or their spouse is elderly (defined as age 62 or older at point of determination), or disabled (verified in accordance with Chapter 7, Part II.F. of the HACA Admin Plan)
      ii. Households under special-purpose vouchers, including HUD-VASH, Non-Elderly Disabled Vouchers, 5-Year Mainstream Vouchers, Emergency Housing Vouchers, Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers, and Homeownership Vouchers. (NOTE: Several of these voucher types are already exempted for other reasons; HACA will consider requests for transfers to Stepped Rent from households with these voucher types if the family believes it may be beneficial to them; Stepped Rent voucher-holders who qualify for Homeownership after having enrolled in Stepped Rent will continue to with the Stepped Rent model of rent calculation)
      iii. Households grandfathered into the Traditional FSS Escrow model prior to HACA's adoption of Stepped Rent in 2023
      iv. Households participating in the Stepped and Tiered Rent Demonstration study and have been assigned to the Standard Rent Group for the duration of the study.

   Stepped Rent works by assigning households an initial rent portion based on income, and then adjusting rent by a set amount each year according to bedroom size rather than adjusting rent according to income increases and decreases at recertification. For households that increase their income, this allows them to plan for future increases and keep more of their earned income rather than paying it in rent. Hardship adjustments are available for households that experience severe decreases in income or other mitigating circumstances.

6. **Does HACA provide support for barriers to employment (e.g., transportation issues such as lack of a vehicle or car repairs)?**
   a. Per 24 CFR 982.451, HACA is only permitted to utilize HAP funds in accordance with the HAP Contract (form HUD-52641). This allows HACA to pay the appropriate subsidy towards rent for the household. Other uses such

as those suggested here are not allowable. HACA does maintain both a Family Self-Sufficiency Program and ongoing partnerships with local community resources, and will gladly make appropriate referrals to help residents experiencing these barriers.

7. **Who is exempt?**
    a. Households where the Head-of-Household or their spouse is elderly (defined as age 62 or older at point of determination), or disabled (verified in accordance with Chapter 7, Part II.F. of the HACA Admin Plan)
    b. Households where the Head of Household is the primary caretaker for a child or children under the age of six. Adults who are classified as full-time students may request an exemption from the requirement.
    c. Households under special-purpose vouchers, including HUD-VASH, Non-Elderly Disabled Vouchers, 5-Year Mainstream Vouchers, Emergency Housing Vouchers, Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers, and Homeownership Vouchers.
    d. Households participating in the Stepped and Tiered Rent Demonstration study (NOTE: as the study is scheduled to conclude on May 31, 2029, households exempted under this criterion will be required to comply with the work requirement following this date).

8. **What if I don't get a job in three months' time?**
    a. All households not in compliance with the work requirement after three months will be granted an additional three months by either signing up for HACA's Family Self-Sufficiency Program or enrolling in a different employment assistance program and submitting verification.

9. **What if I need more time?**
    a. Households that are still not in compliance after six months may request an additional three-month extension if they can demonstrate having made diligent efforts to comply in that time

10. **What else can I do besides work?**
    a. If the household member is a student, they may submit verification of a minimum of nine credit-hours (or equivalent if using a non-credit-based institution) at an accredited university, community college, technical college, or active enrollment in a jobs training or high school equivalency program.
    b. Household members that are self-employed and properly report income from their active business will also be considered in compliance without attestation of specific hours worked. Independent contractors, gig-workers, and under-the-table employees can also qualify by providing verification of hours worked, as can volunteers.

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11. Can you provide resources on public transportation?

a. Public transportation resources can be found on the websites for the City of Asheville (https://www.ashevillenc.gov/department/transit/) and Buncombe County (https://www.buncombenc.gov/605/Transportation). Additionally, many of our residents enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program have received referrals to and assistance from local community partners in receiving or purchasing bus passes, cars, and bicycles.

12. How will this impact my WIC services?

a. Households qualifying for NC WIC must already be pregnant or have children aged five or younger. They should thus already be exempted from the work requirement per the previous stipulation regarding children under the age of six.

13. How will this impact my Medicaid Services?

a. In January of 2027, those receiving Medicaid Expansion benefits in Buncombe County will be subject to a slightly more stringent work requirement of 80 hours per calendar month, so benefit reductions beyond what is already present will not occur.

14. How will this impact my SNAP Benefits (Food stamp) services?

a. Those receiving SNAP benefits in Buncombe County are already subject to a similar work requirement of 60 hours per calendar month, so benefit reductions beyond what is already present will be minimal if at all. Call Buncombe County Intake Call Center at 828-250-5500 or go to 40 Coxe Street and meet with case workers to learn more about the the impact of your services.

15. How will this will impact my childcare vouchers with the County?

a. Buncombe County's Childcare Subsidy Program already specifies that qualifying households would meet the income requirements and be working, seeking work, or attending school. The income requirements for Buncombe County are households under 200% of the federal poverty line, which is generally higher than the anticipated income for families under this work requirement.

   For example, a two-person household qualifying for the County's childcare assistance can earn no more than $28,128 per year in gross income before being designated over-income. A two-person household with one adult working a $15 per hour job for 30 hours per week (double the work

requirement minimum), and no other income, will only gross $23,400. HACA does acknowledge that as income increases, the amount of assistance received for childcare will decrease, but our belief is that the higher income and the gradual increase in rental portion afforded by the Stepped Rent calculation will offset this.

b. Call Buncombe County Intake Call Center at 828-250-5500 or go to 40 Coxe Street and meet with case workers to learn more about the the impact of your services.

16. I need help finding a job, where can I go?

a. Our Family-Self Sufficiency program assists residents who sign up and need help with addressing all barriers to employment. We are also partnering with Land of Sky, NCWorks, the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, Buncombe County and AB Tech's More Than A Job Program, Mountain Area Workforce Development, Black Wall Street (Programs and Partnerships), MB Haynes, and Biltmore Estate to provide further assistance, resources, and referrals. An ongoing list of providers and partners is available here. By providing proof of working with one or more of these providers, voucher-holders will be entitled to the additional three-month extension.

17. In terms of who is exempt, what documentation is required? Are tenants pending Social Security claims for disability exempt?

a. For those who are exempt due to elderly status, STRD Study Participation, Special-Voucher utilization, or for having children under six, no documentation is required. For those exempt via full-time student status, a copy of the most recent class schedule is needed on an annual basis.

Those claiming disability may provide their most recent award letter of benefits. If a tenant has a pending disability claim, they may be granted a provisional exemption for one year by providing proof of their pending claim. They must subsequently provide documentation of the disability award or its status as still pending after the year to remain exempt.

18. What if my hours are not consistent week-to-week or are seasonally impacted? For example, many people working at restaurants in town get fewer hours and make significantly less during winter/off tourist season.

a. Seasonal or otherwise inconsistently working individuals may provide documentation from their employer estimating their total hours anticipated to be worked for the year, including these periods of ebb and flow. If total estimated hours meet or exceed 780 in a calendar year (15 hours x 52 weeks), the household will be considered in compliance. HCVP leadership

will also consider special circumstances for households clearly making a visible effort to comply with program requirements.

19. **Once someone has been given notice and eviction process started, if the resident finds income before the writ of possession has been filed, would HACA possibly drop the case and let them stay? Assuming there are no other lease violations.**
    a. To clarify, if a resident of a HACA-owned property has their assistance terminated due to non-compliance with the work requirement, they will not necessarily be immediately filed for eviction. They will simply be required to pay the full contract rent and will only be filed if they fail to do so.

       That said, if such a circumstance occurs and the resident finds employment, can bring the balance on the account up to $0 before the writ is filed, and there are no other outstanding lease violations, HACA will happily consider reversing the eviction.

20. **How many months of pay stubs do residents need to show as proof of employment?**
    a. At least two months are preferred, but as few as two consecutive pay stubs will be accepted. A letter from the employer (manager, owner, supervisor, HR professional, etc.) confirming start date, current employment status, pay rate/frequency, and an estimate of hours worked in a given pay period is also acceptable.

21. **If I don't meet the three-month work requirement, how will that affect future help if needed?**
    a. Voucher-holders terminated for non-compliance with the work requirement will be eligible to reapply for assistance immediately by completing an application at haca.org, contacting admissions@haca.org, or visiting our offices at the Aston Park Tower on Tuesdays from 9AM-1PM. These households will be subject to the current waitlist before having their assistance re-initiated.

22. **Do new admissions need to have a job in order to be accepted or is there a period of time in which they need to get a job once they are offered a unit?**
    a. New applicants will receive notification of the work requirement at the time of application submission, but do not need to be in compliance when their names are pulled and they lease up their unit. They will be given the same three-month Action Period as other residents in order to submit documentation for compliance at that time.

23. If someone is found to be eligible for this program, and disagrees with that determination, is there an appeals process - if so what does that look like?

a. If a household believes that they should be exempted from the work requirement under the standard exemption criteria (see Question 7 above), they may submit documentation of their exemption status to their Housing Specialist. If this is impossible, but they still believe that they should be exempted under special circumstances, they may request an appeal hearing with the Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Program by submitting the request in writing to Noele Tackett at ntackett@haca.org or by mail to PO Box 1898, Asheville, NC 28802, Attn: Director, HCVP.