

San Francisco Housing Guide for People with Disabilities

Introduction

Finding safe, affordable, and accessible housing in San Francisco can be challenging, especially for people with disabilities and those with low incomes. The housing market is complex and often overwhelming, making it difficult to know where to start or who to turn to for support. This *San Francisco Housing Resource Guide for People with Disabilities* is designed to simplify the process by providing clear, comprehensive information on housing resources, assistance programs, and supportive services available in the city.

Whether you are a resident, social worker, or community advocate, our goal is to equip you with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate the housing market. From finding affordable housing options to understanding your rights as a tenant, we aim to empower you with practical information and guidance.

This guide includes:

- **Affordable Housing Listings and Applications:** Learn how to access databases like DAHLIA, which lists affordable housing opportunities in San Francisco.
- **Financial Assistance Programs:** Discover resources to help cover rent, security deposits, and other housing-related expenses.
- **Emergency Shelters and Services:** Find immediate support if you are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of losing your housing.
- **Legal Aid and Tenant Rights:** Understand your rights as a tenant and where to get help if you face eviction or discrimination.
- **Accessibility and Home Modifications:** Explore services that can help make your living environment more accessible.

Additionally, we have included contact information for community-based organizations dedicated to assisting people with disabilities and enhancing the quality of life for low-income residents. Whether you need help with eviction defense, are searching for rental assistance, or require accessibility modifications, this guide will point you in the right direction.

We hope this resource provides you with the support you need to secure and maintain stable housing in San Francisco. Remember, you are not alone in this journey—there are many organizations and advocates ready to assist you.

1. Finding Accessible Housing

Finding accessible and affordable housing in San Francisco requires persistence and a proactive approach. The first crucial steps are to join relevant email lists and apply to housing waitlists and lotteries as early as possible. However, it's important to note that these waitlists and lotteries can take years, so starting early is key.

First Steps: Email Lists and Waitlists

1. Sign Up for Housing Opportunity Notifications

- The San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) sends out alerts about new housing opportunities, open waitlists, and affordable housing lotteries. Joining their mailing list ensures you stay informed and can act quickly when opportunities arise.
- **How to Sign Up:** Visit <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/y/C3BAFC742D47910> to subscribe.

2. Apply for Housing Waitlists Early

- Many affordable housing programs have long waitlists that can take several years to move through. Use the DAHLIA Housing Portal to search for and apply to these waitlists and lotteries.
- **DAHLIA Housing Portal:** Visit <https://housing.sfgov.org>

Housing Lotteries in San Francisco

The San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) frequently conducts lotteries for newly constructed affordable housing units. These lotteries provide eligible individuals and families with opportunities to secure affordable rental or homeownership units.

- **Eligibility Requirements:** Each housing lottery has specific eligibility criteria, including income limits, residency requirements, and preferences for certain groups (e.g., people with disabilities, seniors, or San Francisco residents).

- **Application Process:** To participate, you must submit your application through the DAHLIA Housing Portal before the lottery deadline. Carefully review each listing to ensure you meet the requirements.
- **Lottery Preferences:** Preferences may give certain applicants priority. Common preferences include:
 - **Neighborhood Resident Preference:** Applicants who live in the area where the housing is located may receive priority.
 - **Displacement Preference:** Priority may be given to those who have been displaced from their homes due to Ellis Act evictions or other qualifying reasons.
 - **Live or Work in San Francisco:** Applicants who live or work in San Francisco may have an advantage over non-residents.

For a detailed explanation of how the affordable housing lottery works, visit:

<https://www.sf.gov/information/how-affordable-housing-lottery-works>

Tips for Applying to Lotteries

1. **Apply to Multiple Lotteries:** Since demand is high, applying to as many eligible listings as possible can increase your chances.
2. **Keep Your Information Updated:** Ensure your contact information and application details are current in the DAHLIA Housing Portal.
3. **Check for Deadlines:** Housing lotteries have strict application deadlines. Set reminders to avoid missing these opportunities.

Resources for Assistance

- **Housing Counselors:** If you need help with your DAHLIA application or have questions about the lottery process, housing counselors are available to assist you. They can also provide guidance on your housing search.
 - **Learn More and Access Counselors:** <https://housing.sfgov.org/housing-counselors>

By staying informed and applying to housing lotteries regularly, you can improve your chances of securing affordable housing in San Francisco.

2. Understanding Affordable Housing

Navigating the affordable housing system can be challenging, especially with complex terms like lotteries and waitlists. Below are clear explanations of these concepts to help you better understand the process.

What is "Affordable Housing"?

Affordable housing refers to housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's income, making it financially accessible to individuals and families with low to moderate incomes. In San Francisco, affordable housing programs are designed to assist residents by offering rental units and homeownership opportunities at below-market rates. These programs are often funded by government agencies or nonprofit organizations.

Affordable housing units are typically reserved for households that meet specific income limits based on the Area Median Income (AMI).

Examples of Affordable Housing Programs:

- Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing
- Public Housing
- Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program

For current listings, visit the DAHLIA Housing Portal: <https://housing.sfgov.org>

Applying for Affordable Housing

Applying for affordable housing in San Francisco involves several steps. Understanding the process can help increase your chances of securing a unit.

Search for Housing Opportunities: Use the DAHLIA Housing Portal to find affordable housing listings.

Review Eligibility Requirements: Check income limits and other qualifications for each housing opportunity.

Submit Your Application: Apply online through DAHLIA or directly through the housing provider by the deadline.

Participate in Lotteries or Waitlists: Applications may enter a lottery or waitlist depending on the property.

Prepare Documentation: Be ready to provide proof of income, identification, and other documents if selected.

For application support, contact a housing counselor: <https://housing.sfgov.org/housing-counselors>

What is a "Lottery"?

A **housing lottery** is a random selection process used to allocate affordable housing units when there are more applicants than available units. This system is designed to give all eligible applicants an equal chance of securing a housing opportunity.

- How It Works:
 - Apply before the listed deadline through the DAHLIA Housing Portal.
 - If selected, you will be contacted to provide verification documents.
 - Preferences may apply, giving priority to certain applicants (e.g., San Francisco residents, displaced tenants, people with disabilities).

Learn more: <https://www.sf.gov/information/how-affordable-housing-lottery-works>

What is a "Waitlist"?

A **waitlist** is a list of applicants waiting for an affordable housing unit to become available. Due to high demand, many affordable housing programs have long waitlists, and it can take years to be offered a unit.

- How It Works:
 - You apply for housing and are placed on a waitlist.
 - When a unit becomes available, the housing provider contacts applicants in the order they were added to the list.
 - You must update your contact information and respond promptly when contacted.
 - Tip: Apply to multiple waitlists to increase your chances of securing housing.

For updates on available waitlists, visit: <https://housing.sfgov.org>

Tips for Securing Affordable Housing

1. **Apply Broadly:** Apply to as many housing sites and open waitlists as possible to increase your chances. The demand for affordable housing is very high, so it's essential to pursue multiple opportunities at once.
2. **Organize Your Documents:** Gather important documents such as utility bills, ID cards, income verification (pay stubs, benefits statements), and proof of residency. Having these ready will help you submit complete applications quickly.
3. **Track Application Deadlines:** Carefully note application deadlines and where to submit applications. Sometimes, the application drop-off location is different from the housing site.
4. **Maintain References:** Keep a list of previous landlords and their contact information to provide strong references when required.
5. **Keep Records:** Make copies of all applications you submit and check in with building managers or property owners at least once a year to confirm your status on waitlists.
6. **Follow Up Regularly:** Contact housing developers or property managers periodically to inquire about upcoming vacancies and maintain visibility as a proactive applicant.
7. **Get Help When Needed:** Don't hesitate to reach out to social workers, case managers, or housing counselors for help with referrals and applications. They can provide guidance and may have access to housing resources not widely advertised.

3. Affordable Housing Programs

Affordable housing programs in San Francisco offer a variety of options for low-income residents and individuals with disabilities. Understanding these programs and how to apply is essential for securing stable, affordable housing. Below is an overview of key programs and agencies that can assist you.

San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA)

The San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA) provides rental assistance programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) and public housing for low-income families and individuals. These programs help reduce housing costs by allowing

residents to pay a percentage of their income toward rent, while the remainder is subsidized.

- **Programs Offered:**
 - **Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8):** Provides vouchers to eligible families, allowing them to rent from private landlords.
 - **Public Housing:** Affordable housing units managed by SFHA.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 715-5200
 - Email: CustomerCare@sfha.org
 - Fax: (415) 406-3823
 - TTY: (415) 467-6754
 - Address: 1815 Egbert Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94124 (Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
 - Website: <https://sfha.org>

San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)

MOHCD is responsible for creating and maintaining affordable housing for low-income residents, first-time homebuyers, and people with disabilities. MOHCD also funds housing development projects and offers various financing programs.

- **Programs and Services:**
 - **Affordable Housing Lotteries:** MOHCD manages lotteries for newly developed affordable housing units.
 - **Homeowner Assistance:** Programs to help low-income homeowners with repairs and financial stability.
 - **First-Time Homebuyer Programs:** Assistance for low- to moderate-income residents looking to purchase a home.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Main Office Address: 1 South Van Ness Avenue, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 701-5500
 - Email: sfhousinginfo@sfgov.org
 - Website: <https://www.sf.gov/departments/mayors-office-housing-and-community-development>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD plays a key role in providing affordable housing through funding, policy development, and supportive programs. The San Francisco Multifamily Hub office offers resources for both renters and landlords, helping to create and maintain affordable housing in the city.

- **Services Provided:**
 - Assistance for affordable housing developments.
 - Information on federal housing programs and tenant rights.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 1 Sansome Street, Suite 1200, San Francisco, CA 94104
 - Phone: (415) 489-6400
 - TTY: Dial 7-1-1 (Not available in all areas)
 - Website: <https://www.hud.gov/states/california>

Additional Affordable Housing Resources

1. **Nonprofit Housing Organizations:**
 - Many nonprofit organizations develop, manage, and advocate for affordable housing in San Francisco. Some notable organizations include:
 - **Mercy Housing California:** <https://mercyhousing.org/> | Phone: (415) 355-7100
 - **Chinatown Community Development Center:** <https://www.chinatowncdc.org> | Phone: (415) 984-1450
 - **Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation:** <https://www.tndc.org> | Phone: (415) 776-2151
2. **Affordable Housing Websites and Portals:**
 - **DAHLIA:** A one-stop resource for affordable housing listings and applications in San Francisco.
Website: <https://housing.sfgov.org>
3. **Doorway Housing Portal:**
 - A program of the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA), this portal provides a central place for housing seekers to find and apply for affordable housing throughout the Bay Area.
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 375 Beale Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94105
 - Email: doorway@bayareametro.gov
 - Website: <https://housingbayarea.mtc.ca.gov>

Important Considerations

- **Apply Early and Widely:** Given the high demand for affordable housing, it's crucial to apply to as many programs and waitlists as you qualify for.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep track of application deadlines and updates through the MOHCD and other housing portals.
- **Seek Assistance:** Housing counselors are available to help you with applications and navigating the affordable housing system.

By utilizing these affordable housing programs and staying proactive in your search, you can improve your chances of securing stable housing in San Francisco.

4. Housing Counseling Services

Navigating San Francisco's housing landscape can be challenging, especially for individuals with disabilities. Housing counseling services offer personalized guidance to help you understand your options, prepare applications, and secure suitable housing. Below is an overview of key organizations providing these services.

Renter Resources

1. DAHLIA Housing Counseling Support

Counselors can assist you with your DAHLIA application and provide guidance on your housing search. They can help you navigate the application process and understand how to use the DAHLIA Housing Portal to apply for affordable housing.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Assistance with DAHLIA housing applications
 - Apartment search support
 - Housing counseling
- **Website:** <https://housing.sfgov.org/housing-counselors>

2. Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco (HRCSF)

HRCSF provides tenant counseling services to help residents understand their rights and navigate housing issues, such as eviction defense and rent control laws.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Tenant rights counseling
 - Assistance with eviction defense
 - Guidance on rent control laws
- **Contact Information:**

- Address: 11 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102
- Phone: 415-703-8644
- Website: <https://hrcsf.org>

3. Chinatown Community Development Center (Chinatown CDC)

Chinatown CDC offers housing counseling services, including assistance with eviction issues, rent increases, and affordable housing applications.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Tenant rights counseling
 - Assistance with affordable housing applications
 - Translation and filing of forms
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 615 Grant Avenue, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94108
 - Phone: (415) 984-1450
 - TTY: (415) 984-9910
 - Website: <https://www.chinatowncdc.org>

4. Tenderloin Housing Clinic (THC)

THC provides legal assistance and housing counseling to low-income tenants, focusing on preventing displacement and supporting renters.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Legal representation for tenants
 - Housing counseling
 - Supportive housing services
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 126 Hyde Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 885-3286
 - Website: <https://www.thclinic.org>

5. Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities offers comprehensive housing assistance and counseling to individuals and families facing homelessness or housing instability. Their services focus on providing immediate relief and long-term stability through case management and rental assistance.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Rental assistance and eviction prevention
 - Case management and housing counseling
 - Supportive services for low-income families and seniors
- **Contact Information:**

- Address: 990 Eddy Street, San Francisco, CA 94109
- Phone: (415) 972-1200
- Website: <https://catholiccharitiessf.org>

6. Openhouse

Openhouse offers housing assistance tailored to LGBTQ+ seniors and adults with disabilities, providing guidance on affordable housing and support services.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Housing workshops
 - One-on-one housing counseling
 - Assistance with affordable housing applications
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 65 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 296-8995 ext. 306
 - Email: housing@openhousesf.org
 - Website: <https://www.openhousesf.org/support-services>

7. 211 for Housing-Related Help in the Bay Area

If you are in the Bay Area and need assistance with housing concerns, dialing **211** (or **311** in San Francisco) will connect you to a specialist for personalized, free, and confidential help. Available 24/7 and in multiple languages, 211 can guide you to appropriate housing resources and services. You can also visit <https://211bayarea.org> to browse for helpful organizations.

211 can assist with a wide range of housing-related services, including:

- Affordable housing
- AIDS-HIV focused housing
- Anti-discrimination support
- Filing complaints
- Counseling services
- Disabilities and independent living resources
- Down payment and deposit assistance
- Emergency housing and eviction prevention
- First-time homebuyer programs
- Home foreclosure prevention
- Homeowner support and repairs
- Home sharing arrangements
- Landlord-tenant issues
- Legal assistance and advice
- Mediation services

- Mortgage and rental assistance
- Section 8 and voucher programs
- Veterans housing services
- Women's housing services

Homeownership and Buyer Resources

8. HomeownershipSF

HomeownershipSF is a collaborative of nonprofit housing counseling agencies dedicated to supporting low- and moderate-income residents in achieving housing stability through education and counseling.

- **Services Offered:**
 - First-time homebuyer education
 - Financial capability workshops
 - Foreclosure intervention
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 275 5th Street, Suite 314, San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 202-5464
 - Email: info@homesanfrancisco.org
 - Website: <https://homeownershipsf.org>

9. San Francisco Housing Development Corporation (SFHDC)

SFHDC provides comprehensive housing counseling services, including financial education and assistance with affordable housing applications. They also assist first-time homebuyers.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Financial education workshops
 - One-on-one housing counseling
 - Assistance with affordable housing applications
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 4439 Third Street, San Francisco, CA 94124
 - Phone: (415) 822-1022
 - Email: info@sfhdc.org
 - Website: <https://sfhdc.org>

10. Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)

MEDA offers housing counseling services focusing on financial education, rental

readiness, and homeownership opportunities, particularly for low- to moderate-income Latino families.

- **Services Offered:**
 - First-time homebuyer workshops
 - Rental readiness counseling
 - Financial capability coaching
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 2301 Mission Street, Suite 301, San Francisco, CA 94110
 - Phone: (415) 282-3334 ext. 126
 - Email: homeownership@medasf.org
 - Website: <https://medasf.org/programs/housing-opportunities/>

5. Homeless Shelters & Services

San Francisco offers a range of shelters and services to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness. These resources provide temporary housing, meals, counseling, and assistance in transitioning to stable living conditions. Below is an overview of key organizations and services available:

1. Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)

HSH aims to make homelessness in San Francisco rare, brief, and one-time by providing coordinated, compassionate, and high-quality services.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Access to temporary shelters
 - Supportive housing programs
 - Outreach and case management
 - Coordinated Entry System for housing placement
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 440 Turk Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (628) 652-7700
 - Website: <https://hsh.sfgov.org/>

2. San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT)

A service offered by the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. SFHOT engages and stabilizes the most vulnerable individuals by voluntarily placing them into shelter and housing or connecting them with other available resources.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Outreach and case management
 - Medical and behavioral health services
 - Assistance with shelter placement
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (628) 652-8000
 - Website: <https://hsh.sfgov.org/services/the-homelessness-response-system/outreach/homeless-outreach-team/>

3. Episcopal Community Services (ECS)

ECS provides essential services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness, utilizing a holistic approach that addresses multiple causes leading to homelessness.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Supportive housing
 - Interim housing
 - Workforce development programs
 - Behavioral health services
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 165 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 487-3300
 - Website: <https://ecs-sf.org/>

4. St. Vincent de Paul Society of San Francisco – Multi-Service Center South (MSC-South)

MSC-South is San Francisco's largest and most extensive homeless shelter, providing emergency shelter and support services.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Emergency shelter with 24-hour access
 - Meals and hygiene facilities
 - Case management and support services
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 525 5th Street, San Francisco, CA 94107
 - Phone: (415) 597-7960
 - Website: <https://svdp-sf.org/what-we-do/msc-shelter/>

5. Project Homeless Connect

Project Homeless Connect links individuals experiencing homelessness with the care they need to move forward.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Resource line for information and referrals
 - On-site services including medical, dental, and vision care
 - Employment and legal assistance
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 1031 Franklin Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109
 - Resource Line: 1-855-588-7968
 - Website: <https://www.projecthomelessconnect.org/>

6. Compass Family Services

Compass Family Services helps homeless and at-risk families in the San Francisco Bay Area become stably housed, emotionally and physically healthy, and economically self-sufficient.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Family shelter and transitional housing
 - Rental assistance and eviction prevention
 - Childcare and parenting support
 - Employment and educational services
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 37 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 644-0504
 - Email: info@compass-sf.org
 - Website: <https://www.compass-sf.org/>

7. Adult Shelter Reservation System

Adults experiencing homelessness can access shelter by signing up for the adult shelter reservation waitlist for a bed at three of HSH's sites: Next Door, MSC-South, or Sanctuary.

- **How to Access:**
 - Call the SFHOT and Adult Shelter Access Line at (628) 652-8000
 - Sign up online: [Adult Shelter Reservation Form](#)

8. Interfaith Winter Shelter

The Interfaith Winter Shelter provides additional shelter capacity during the winter months, operating from November through March.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Overnight shelter
 - Evening meals
 - Case management services
- **Contact Information:**
 - For details on locations and availability, contact the Episcopal Community Services at (415) 487-3300
 - Website: <https://ecs-sf.org/>

9. Dolores Shelter Program

The Dolores Shelter Program emergency shelter and meals service. They offer overnight-only shelter that operates from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. seven days a week. Walk-up guests can begin lining up at 5:30 p.m. (first-come, first-serve).

- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 1050 South Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110
 - Phone: (628) 652-8000
 - Email: info@dscs.org
 - Website: <http://www.dscs.org>

6. Legal Rights and Eviction Defense

Understanding your legal rights as a tenant in San Francisco is crucial, especially when facing potential eviction or needing accessibility accommodations. The city offers robust protections and resources to help tenants navigate housing challenges and advocate for their rights. Below is an overview of key resources and services available.

Reasonable Accommodations and Accessibility Modifications

Independent Living Resource Center of San Francisco (ILRCSF)

ILRCSF provides legal assistance to help individuals with disabilities secure reasonable accommodations and accessibility modifications in their housing. The Paralegal and Director of Legal Services offer brief services or representation in various areas, including:

- Obtaining reasonable accommodations in housing

- Filing ADA access complaints

Legal services are available at no charge to qualified consumers, and flexible appointment times can be arranged to accommodate different schedules.

- **Contact Information:**
 - Legal Program Assistant/Paralegal: Lilia Schwartz
 - Phone: 628-231-2785
 - Email: lilia@ilrcsf.org

Key Legal Resources

1. San Francisco Rent Ordinance

The San Francisco Rent Ordinance provides tenants with protections against unwarranted evictions and regulates rent increases. Key provisions include:

- **Just Cause Evictions:** Landlords must have a valid reason, known as "just cause," to evict a tenant. Just causes include non-payment of rent, breach of lease terms, or the landlord's intention to occupy the unit. For a comprehensive list of just causes, refer to the San Francisco Rent Board's guidelines.
[San Francisco Government](https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco) <https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco>
- **Rent Control:** The ordinance limits the amount and frequency of rent increases for covered units. For detailed information on rent control provisions, consult the San Francisco Rent Board.
[San Francisco Government](https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco) <https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco>

2. Eviction Process in San Francisco

The eviction process involves several steps, each with specific legal requirements:

- **Notice to Vacate:** The landlord must provide a written notice stating the reason for eviction and the time frame to vacate. The notice period varies depending on the cause. For example, a 3-day notice is typically given for non-payment of rent.
[San Francisco Government](https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process) <https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process>
- **Unlawful Detainer Lawsuit:** If the tenant does not comply with the notice, the landlord can file an Unlawful Detainer lawsuit to seek a court order for eviction. Tenants have five days to respond to the lawsuit.
[San Francisco Government](https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process) <https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process>

- **Court Proceedings:** Both parties present their case in court. If the court rules in favor of the landlord, a Writ of Possession is issued, allowing the sheriff to remove the tenant.

[San Francisco Government](https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process) <https://www.sf.gov/step-by-step/eviction-process>

3. Eviction Defense Resources

Several organizations offer legal assistance and support to tenants facing eviction:

- **Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC):** EDC provides emergency legal services and rental assistance to low-income tenants. They assist with responding to eviction lawsuits and offer counseling.
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 976 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 947-0797
 - Website: <https://evictiondefense.org/>
- **San Francisco Tenants Union:** This organization provides counseling on tenant rights, eviction defense strategies, and advocacy.
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 558 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA 94110
 - Phone: (415) 282-6622
 - Website: <https://sftu.org/>
- **Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco (HRCSF):** HRCSF offers tenant counseling, assistance with eviction defense, and guidance on rent control laws. [HRC San Francisco](https://hrclf.org/know-your-rights-as-a-tenant-in-sf/eviction-relocation-money-just-cause-fire-issues/) <https://hrclf.org/know-your-rights-as-a-tenant-in-sf/eviction-relocation-money-just-cause-fire-issues/>
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 11 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 (main office)
 - Phone: (415) 703-8644
 - Website: <https://hrclf.org/>

4. Tenant Right to Counsel

San Francisco guarantees legal representation to tenants facing eviction through the Tenant Right to Counsel program. This initiative ensures that all tenants have access to legal assistance during eviction proceedings.

- **How to Access:**
 - Contact the [Eviction Defense Collaborative](https://evictiondefense.org/) to be connected with an attorney.
 - 976 Mission St. San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 947-0797

- Website: <https://evictiondefense.org/services/right-to-counsel/>

5. Additional Legal Resources

- **San Francisco Rent Board:** Provides information on rent control, eviction regulations, and tenant rights.
[San Francisco Government https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco](https://www.sf.gov/evictions-san-francisco)
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 320, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 252-4600
 - Website: <https://www.sf.gov/departments/rent-board>
- **Legal Assistance to the Elderly (LAE):** Offers free legal services to seniors and adults with disabilities facing eviction or housing issues.
 - **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 1663 Mission Street, Suite 225, San Francisco, CA 94103
 - Phone: (415) 538-3333
 - info@laesf.org
 - Website: <https://laesf.org/>

6. Important Considerations

- **Respond Promptly:** If you receive an eviction notice or Unlawful Detainer lawsuit, respond within the specified time frame to avoid default judgments.
- **Seek Legal Counsel:** Consult with an attorney or legal aid organization to understand your rights and options.
- **Document Everything:** Keep records of all communications with your landlord, notices received, and any repairs or issues with the rental unit.

By understanding your legal rights and utilizing available resources, you can effectively navigate eviction proceedings and protect your housing stability in San Francisco.

7. Financial Assistance Programs

San Francisco offers various financial assistance programs to support residents facing housing-related financial challenges. These programs aim to prevent homelessness, assist with utility bills, and provide emergency aid. Below is an overview of key financial assistance programs available to San Francisco residents:

1. San Francisco Emergency Rental Assistance Program (SF ERAP)

SF ERAP provides financial assistance to eligible San Francisco residents at high risk of homelessness or housing loss. The program assists with past-due rent, move-in costs, and future rent payments to help maintain housing stability.

- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - San Francisco residency
 - Demonstrated financial hardship
 - Income at or below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI)
- **Application Process:**
 - Apply online through the SF ERAP portal: <https://sferap.com/>
 - For assistance, contact community partner agencies listed on the website
- **Contact Information:**
 - SF ERAP Helpline at (415) 653-5744 or help@sferap.org
 - Website: <https://sf.gov/renthelp>

2. Season of Sharing (SOS) Program

The SOS Program offers one-time financial assistance to individuals and families facing unexpected crises, such as job loss or medical emergencies, to prevent homelessness.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Rental assistance
 - Security deposit assistance
 - Utility payments
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - San Francisco residency
 - Demonstrated financial need
 - Income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
- **Application Process:**
 - Apply through a community partner agency
 - For a list of agencies and contact information, visit: <https://www.sf.gov/get-help-pay-housing-or-other-emergency-needs>
- **Contact Information:**
 - Email: seasonofsharing@sfgov.org
 - Phone: (415) 701-5653

3. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP provides financial assistance to low-income households to help manage energy costs, ensuring continued access to heating and cooling.

- **Services Offered:**

- One-time payment to assist with energy bills
- Energy crisis assistance for households facing immediate utility disconnection
- Weatherization services to improve energy efficiency
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Income at or below 60% of the state median income
 - Priority given to households with elderly, disabled, or young children
- **Application Process:**
 - Contact San Francisco-Peninsula Energy Services to apply
 - Phone: (415) 416-6660
 - Website: <https://sfpes.org/>

4. Customer Assistance Program (CAP) – San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)

The SFPUC's CAP offers discounts on water, sewer, and Hetch Hetchy Power bills for eligible low-income customers.

- **Services Offered:**
 - 25% to 40% discount on water and sewer bills
 - 30% discount on Hetch Hetchy Power bills
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - SFPUC account holder
 - Income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
- **Application Process:**
 - Apply online or request a paper application
 - For more information and to apply, visit: <https://www.sfpuc.gov/accounts-services/bill-relief/customer-assistance-program-waterwastewater>
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 551-3000
 - Email: customerservice@sfgwater.org

5. Relief for Energy Assistance through Community Help (REACH) Program

The REACH program provides one-time energy assistance to low-income customers who have received a 15-day or 48-hour disconnection notice.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Up to \$500 towards overdue PG&E bills
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level
 - Received a disconnection notice

- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (800) 933-9677
 - Website: <https://www.cleanpowersf.org/billhelp>
- **Application Process:**
 - Contact the Dollar Energy Fund to apply
 - Website: <https://www.dollarenergy.org/about/>
 - Phone: (888) 282-6816

6. Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

HEAP provides financial assistance to eligible households to offset the costs of heating and cooling.

- **Services Offered:**
 - One-time payment to assist with energy bills
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Income at or below 60% of the state median income
- **Application Process:**
 - Contact San Francisco-Peninsula Energy Services to apply
 - Phone: (415) 416-6660
 - Website: <https://sfpes.org/>

7. Arrearage Management Plan (AMP)

AMP is a debt forgiveness program for eligible PG&E customers with past-due balances.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Forgiveness of past-due balances after on-time payment of current bills
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Enrolled in CARE or FERA programs
 - Owe at least \$500 (\$250 for gas-only customers)
 - At least one bill over 90 days past due
 - Have been a PG&E customer for at least six consecutive months.
 - Have made at least one on-time payment, within the past 24 months.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (877) 660-6789
 - Website: <https://www.pge.com/en/account/billing-and-assistance/financial-assistance.html>

Rental Assistance / Rent Subsidies / Assistance with Past-Due or Back Rent / Move-in Costs

Finding affordable and stable housing in San Francisco can be overwhelming, particularly when financial challenges threaten your housing security. Fortunately, various organizations and programs are available to provide rental assistance, subsidies, and support with past-due or back rent, eviction prevention, and move-in costs. Below is a detailed guide to these resources, which can be invaluable for individuals and families experiencing financial hardship.

Key Rental Assistance Programs

1. Compass Family Services

Compass Family Services works to support families facing homelessness or housing instability by offering rental assistance and comprehensive emergency housing services.

- **Services:** Assistance with rent payments, eviction prevention, and guidance on securing stable housing.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 644-0504
 - Email: info@compass-sf.org
 - Website: <https://www.compass-sf.org/get-help/>

2. Hamilton Families

Hamilton Families provides a variety of housing services, including rental subsidies and support with move-in costs, to help families transition from homelessness to stability.

- **Services:** Emergency rental assistance, help with security deposits, and eviction prevention.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 321-2612
 - Email: contact-us@hamiltonfamilies.org
 - Website: <https://hamiltonfamilies.org/get-help>

3. Season of Sharing (SoS) Program

The Season of Sharing program is designed to keep residents housed and provide

financial relief during emergencies. It offers one-time financial assistance to help with housing and critical needs.

- **Types of Assistance:**
 - Back rent or mortgage payments
 - Move-in costs, including security deposits and first month's rent
 - Utility bill assistance and limited support for medical expenses
- **Website:** <https://seasonofsharing.org>
- **Additional Info:** <https://www.sf.gov/get-help-pay-housing-or-other-emergency-needs>

4. Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities offers rental assistance and a range of supportive services for families and individuals facing housing instability.

- **Services:** Financial assistance for rent and housing stabilization services.
- **Website:** <https://catholiccharitiessf.org>

5. Glide

Glide provides emergency rental assistance for eviction prevention, back rent, and deposits. Applicants must attend a housing readiness workshop before receiving aid.

- **Location:** 330 Ellis St, Room 101
- **Contact:** Danielle Cato, Email: Dcato@glide.org, Phone: (415) 674-6012
- **Website:** <https://www.glide.org/programs/walk-in-center/>

6. St. Anthony's

St. Anthony's provides rental assistance and case management services. Appointments are required for most services, though limited drop-in hours are available.

- **Address:** 150 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102
- **Contact:** (415) 592-2855
- Email: info@stanthonysf.org
- **Website:** <https://www.stanthonysf.org>

7. Young Community Developers (YCD)

YCD's Housing Stabilization Program offers emergency rental assistance, move-in support, and resources for housing applications to help families at risk of eviction or homelessness.

- **Contact:** Phone: (415) 697-5186, Email: housing@ycdjobs.org
- **Website:** <https://ycdjobs.org>

8. Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC)

The EDC's RADCo program provides rental assistance and eviction prevention support. Tenants can access financial aid for back rent or help with legal eviction issues.

- **Location:** 976 Mission St, 1st Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103
- **Drop-In Hours:** Mon, Wed, Fri: 10-11:30 am and 1-2:30 pm
- **Contact:** RADCo Intake Line: (415) 470-5211, Email: edcradco@evictiondefense.org
- **Website:** <https://evictiondefense.org/services/rental-assistance/>

9. PRC – Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA)

PRC supports low-income San Francisco residents living with HIV/AIDS by providing financial assistance and eviction prevention grants.

- **Programs:**
 - **Emergency Assistance (EA):** Grants up to \$500 for housing, medical, or utility expenses.
 - **Eviction Prevention (EP):** Grants up to \$1,000 for eviction prevention or move-in costs, with a referral required.
- **Contact:**
 - Martin Muneton, Email: Martin.muneton@prcsf.org, Phone: (415) 972-0857
 - Evelyn Castro, Email: Evelyn.castro@prcsf.org, Phone: (415) 972-0858
 - Natassja Ramich, Email: natassja.ramich@prcsf.org, Phone: (415) 972-0837
- **Website:** <https://prcsf.org/emergency-financial-assistance/>

10. San Francisco Emergency Rental Assistance Program (SF ERAP)

SF ERAP offers one-time financial support to residents facing recent financial hardships. Assistance is provided to cover back rent or move-in costs for new housing.

- **Eligibility:** Households at risk of eviction or homelessness.
- **Website:** <https://www.sf.gov/renthelp>
- **Helpline:** (415) 653-5744, Email: help@sferap.org

For a full list of Community Partners and more information, visit:
<https://www.sf.gov/information--rent-relief-resources>

11. Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP)

If you are a pregnant woman or a family with children experiencing housing instability, HPP provides rental assistance and a range of supportive services to promote family stability. They focus on helping families secure housing and prevent eviction through direct assistance and case management.

- **Services:** Back rent assistance, eviction prevention, housing search support, and case management services.
- **Address:** 2500 18th St, San Francisco, CA 94110
- **Contact:** Main: (415) 546-6756, Client Services: (415) 754-0581, Email: info@homelessprenatal.org
- **Website:** <https://www.homelessprenatal.org>

Additional Housing Resources

Get Help Finding a Roommate

Home Match San Francisco

Home Match San Francisco is a free home sharing program that connects homeowners and master tenants who have available rooms with individuals seeking affordable housing opportunities. This program helps facilitate mutually beneficial living arrangements, providing affordable housing solutions while supporting homeowners or tenants with extra space.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Matching services for homeowners/master tenants and individuals seeking affordable rooms
 - Assistance with setting up agreements and ensuring compatibility between roommates
- **Contact Information:**

- Phone: (415) 351-1000
- Email: HomeMatchSF@FrontPorch.net
- Website: <https://frontporch.net/live/home-match/>
- **For Immediate Assistance:** (800) 233-3709

8. Housing Discrimination and Advocacy

Understanding your rights as a tenant is crucial when it comes to combating housing discrimination. Federal, state, and local laws prohibit landlords from discriminating against tenants or potential renters based on protected characteristics. If you feel you have been a victim of housing discrimination, there are several resources and advocacy groups that can help.

Understanding Housing Discrimination Laws

Housing discrimination occurs when a landlord or housing provider treats a person unfairly based on characteristics protected under the law. Key laws include:

- **Federal Fair Housing Act:** Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.
- **California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA):** Provides additional protections, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, source of income, and more.
- **San Francisco Rent Ordinance:** Offers further protections for renters, such as safeguarding against discrimination based on age or the presence of children in certain cases.

For more details on your rights under these laws, visit the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) website](#) or the [California Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(DFEH\)](#).

What Constitutes Housing Discrimination?

Examples of discriminatory practices include:

- Refusing to rent or sell housing based on a protected characteristic.
- Offering different terms, conditions, or privileges for housing.
- Falsely claiming that a housing unit is unavailable.
- Harassing tenants or applicants based on a protected status.

- Denying reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

If you believe your rights have been violated, consider seeking assistance from one of the following organizations:

Organizations That Provide Support and Advocacy

1. Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California works to eliminate housing discrimination and promote equal housing opportunities for all.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Assistance with filing fair housing complaints.
 - Investigations of discrimination claims.
 - Counseling and education on tenant rights.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Mailing address: 1314 Lincoln Avenue, Suite A, San Rafael, CA 94901. They no longer meet with clients in person as most of the staff works remotely.
 - Phone: (415) 457-5025, TDD: (800) 735-2922
 - Website: <https://www.fairhousingnorcal.org>

2. Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco (HRCsf) HRCsf provides tenant counseling and advocacy services, particularly for renters experiencing discrimination or harassment from landlords.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Free tenant counseling.
 - Assistance with discrimination complaints.
 - Education on tenant and fair housing rights.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Main Office: 11 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 703-8644
 - Website: <https://hrcsf.org>

3. San Francisco Human Rights Commission (HRC) The HRC investigates and resolves complaints of discrimination in housing and provides resources to tenants facing discriminatory practices.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Investigation of discrimination complaints.
 - Mediation between landlords and tenants.
 - Education and outreach programs on housing rights.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94102
 - Phone: (415) 252-2500
 - Website: <https://sf-hrc.org>

4. California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) DFEH enforces California's civil rights laws, including those related to housing discrimination. Tenants can file a complaint if they experience discrimination.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Investigation and resolution of complaints.
 - Guidance on fair housing laws.
- **How to File a Complaint:**
 - Visit <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/complaint-process/>
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (800) 884-1684
 - Website: <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov>

5. Legal Aid at Work – Disability Rights Program This organization provides legal assistance to tenants with disabilities facing discrimination, ensuring that housing providers accommodate their needs.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Legal representation and consultation.
 - Assistance with reasonable accommodation requests.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 864-8848
 - Website: <https://legalaidatwork.org>

Filing a Housing Discrimination Complaint

If you have experienced discrimination, you have the right to file a complaint. Here are steps you can take:

1. **Document Everything:** Keep records of all interactions with the landlord, including emails, text messages, and any discriminatory statements.
2. **File a Complaint:** You can file a complaint with HUD, DFEH, or the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. Be sure to file within the time limits specified by each agency.
3. **Seek Legal Assistance:** Organizations like the Eviction Defense Collaborative and Legal Assistance to the Elderly can provide additional support and guidance.

HUD Contact Information:

- Phone: (800) 669-9777, TDD: (800) 927-9275
- Website: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint

By being aware of your rights and knowing where to turn for support, you can better advocate for yourself and combat housing discrimination effectively.

9. Accessibility and Assistive Technology

Living in a home that meets your accessibility needs can significantly enhance your quality of life, especially if you have a disability. Fortunately, there are several resources in San Francisco and California to help make your living environment more accessible through assistive technology and home modifications. This section outlines key services, funding options, and resources to support independent living.

Home Modification Resources

1. Rebuilding Together San Francisco

Rebuilding Together San Francisco provides free home repairs and modifications for low-income homeowners, seniors, and people with disabilities to ensure their homes are safe and accessible. Services may include installing ramps, grab bars, and other assistive devices.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Free home safety assessments.
 - Installation of accessibility features like handrails, ramps, and bathroom modifications.
 - Repairs to improve safety and mobility within the home.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 535 Mission Street 14th Floor San Francisco, CA 94105
 - Phone: (415) 905-1611
 - Email: info@rtsf.org
 - Website: <https://rebuildingtogethersf.org>

2. Center for Independent Living (CIL)

The Center for Independent Living (CIL) provides resources and support for people with disabilities, including guidance on home modifications and accessibility equipment.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Home modification advice and assistance.
 - Referrals to contractors specializing in accessibility.
 - Education on disability rights and independent living skills.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 3075 Adeline Street, Suite 100, Berkeley, CA 94703
 - Phone: (510) 841-4776
 - Website: <https://www.thecil.org>

Assistive Technology Programs

1. California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) – Assistive Technology Services

The DOR provides a range of assistive technology services to enhance the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. These services include evaluations, device demonstrations, and training.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Assistive technology evaluations and assessments.
 - Device demonstrations and lending libraries.
 - Training on the use of assistive devices.
 - Information and referral services.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (415) 802-2330, (800) 952-5544, TTY: (916) 558-5673
 - Website: <https://dor.ca.gov/Home/AssistiveTechnology>

2. Ability Tools

Ability Tools, formerly known as the AT Network, is California's Assistive Technology Act Program. It provides services for Californians with disabilities, such as device lending libraries, financial loan programs for assistive technology, and reuse programs.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Device lending and demonstration centers.
 - Financial loan programs for assistive technology.
 - Information and referral services.
 - Reuse programs in collaboration with partner organizations.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (800) 390-2699, TTY: (800) 900-0706
 - Website: <https://abilitytools.org>

Equipment Loan and Recycling Programs

1. Nick Feldman Device Lending Library

The Nick Feldman Device Lending Library, operated by the Independent Living Resource Center of San Francisco (ILRCsf), offers a variety of assistive technology solutions for short-term loan. This service allows individuals to try devices before purchasing, borrow equipment for short-term projects, or accommodate visiting friends or colleagues. The library's inventory includes both low-tech items, such as support canes and large print playing cards, and high-tech devices like tablets and laptops equipped with assistive technology software.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Short-term loans (up to 30 days) of various assistive devices.
 - Opportunity to test devices before making a purchase.
 - Access to both low-tech and high-tech assistive technology solutions.
- **Eligibility:**
 - People with disabilities residing in California.
 - Professionals serving people with disabilities.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Address: 825 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 (By Appointment Only)
 - Phone: (415) 543-6222
 - Email: info@ilrcsf.org
 - Website: <https://www.ilrcsf.org/programs/assistive/>

Smart Home Technology and Independent Living

1. Bay Area Smart Homes

Bay Area Smart Homes specializes in setting up smart home systems for people with disabilities. These systems can include voice-activated lighting, automated door locks, and environmental controls to increase independence and safety.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Consultation and setup of smart home technology.
 - Installation of devices such as smart thermostats, automated blinds, and emergency response systems.
 - Customizable solutions tailored to individual accessibility needs.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Contact: Forrest Holleman
 - Email: forrest@BayAreaSmartHomes.com
 - **Note:** Forrest Holleman is an independent contractor who assists with smart home setups for a nominal fee.

Financial Assistance for Accessibility Needs

1. Help Hope Live

Help Hope Live assists individuals in raising funds for medical and accessibility-related expenses, such as home modifications and assistive technology. They offer personalized fundraising support while ensuring funds do not affect eligibility for government benefits.

- **Services Offered:**
 - Fundraising support for assistive technology and home modifications.
 - Guidance on using funds without impacting disability benefits.
- **Contact Information:**
 - Phone: (800) 642-8399
 - Website: <https://helphopelive.org>

By leveraging these resources, individuals with disabilities can explore various assistive technologies and home modifications to enhance their independence and quality of life.

Conclusion

Securing safe, affordable, and accessible housing in San Francisco can be a complex and challenging process, particularly for individuals with disabilities. However, by taking advantage of the resources outlined in this guide, you can empower yourself to find housing that meets your needs and supports your independence. Whether you are in search of financial assistance, need guidance on housing rights, or are looking for home modifications and assistive technology, the programs and organizations listed are here to assist you every step of the way.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Be Proactive:** Start your search early, sign up for housing notifications, and get on waitlists as soon as possible. Remember, some waitlists can take years, so the sooner you start, the better.
2. **Know Your Rights:** Understanding your legal rights as a tenant can protect you from discrimination and unjust eviction. Utilize the legal resources provided to advocate for yourself.
3. **Leverage Support:** From home modifications to assistive technology loans, there are numerous programs dedicated to making your living situation more accessible and comfortable. Don't hesitate to reach out for help.
4. **Stay Connected:** Keep in touch with local organizations and support networks to stay informed about new opportunities and services that may become available.

Moving Forward

We encourage you to use this guide as a starting point in your housing journey. Remember, you are not alone. San Francisco is home to a strong community of advocates, service providers, and organizations committed to helping individuals with disabilities live independently and with dignity. By staying informed and utilizing the available resources, you can overcome obstacles and achieve your housing goals.

If you need further assistance, many of the listed organizations offer personalized support to help you navigate the housing landscape. Keep advocating for your needs, and don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

Together, we can work toward a more inclusive and accessible housing environment for all residents of San Francisco.

This guide was created by Brianna Sendziak at ILRCSF and was last updated in February 2025.