

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Occupancy Standards

SCOPE: This section applies to all federally-funded public housing programs and units and all other non-federal programs and units administered by the Seattle Housing Authority, except for the Seattle Senior Housing Program (SSHP). It shall not apply to residents of public housing units subject to partnership agreements, regulatory agreements and/or financial agreements that have been incorporated into a management plan approved by HUD and/or SHA; the policies set forth in those documents shall take precedence for residents of such units.

POLICY:

The Seattle Housing Authority has an Occupancy Standard in full compliance with HUD rules, that does not discriminate against families with children, and that specifies the minimum and maximum number of persons allowed per bedroom. In order to avoid over-crowding and excessive wear and to obtain the optimum use of dwellings and avoid under-utilization, the following principles shall govern the determination of the number of bedrooms for which a household will qualify for both tenants that are new to public housing and in connection with continued occupancy. Insofar as practicable, these standards shall govern. If circumstances require deviation from these standards, such deviation shall be recognized and documented, and property management shall be responsible for correcting the condition as soon as feasible.¹

1. Occupancy Standard

- a. Families shall be assigned to a unit with the least number of bedrooms suitable to their household size as defined herein.
- b. Exceptions to the unit size determination, based on maximum number of persons, may be made in case of reasonable accommodations for a person with disabilities.
- c. An adult Head of Household will not be required to share his/her bedroom with a minor, but may do so at the request of the household. A household that chooses to occupy a unit with less bedrooms than could be allowed per the Occupancy Standard, must sign a statement agreeing to occupy the unit assigned at his/her request until his/her household composition size or circumstances change.
- d. A Live-in Aide shall be assigned a bedroom, unless the disabled or elderly household agrees to accept a smaller unit. See SHA's Manual section on Live-in-Aides.
- e. The unit size that a household may be offered would provide that there would be at least one person per bedroom.
- f. If at any point it is determined an applicant no longer qualifies for the unit size corresponding to the waiting list he/she is on, the applicant will be moved to the appropriate waiting list, in accordance with SHA's Manual section on Waiting List and Tenant Selection.

¹ Management's past practice of allowing an additional bedroom in consideration for a household's business as a certified daycare provider, will no longer be allowed as good cause to deviate from the occupancy standards.

Occupancy Standard

No. of Bedrooms	Minimum Number of Persons	Maximum Number of Persons*
0	1	2
1	1	2
2	2	4
3	3	6
4	4	8
5	5	10

* or in compliance with the City Of Seattle's Occupancy Code, regarding floor area, minimum space and occupancy standards. This may increase or decrease the maximum number of persons to be assigned to a unit.

2. When determining unit size, SHA shall include all children anticipated to live in the unit in the coming year as verified by third-party, court papers, or other such legal documents. These shall include:
 - Unborn child of a pregnant household member
 - Children who are in the process of being adopted by an adult household member
 - Children whose custody is being obtained by an adult household member
 - Children who are temporarily² absent from home due to placement in foster care.
3. Conditions of Underhoused and Overhoused. When the household composition reduces in the number of household members as listed on the dwelling lease and results in the unit size being no longer appropriate according to the above "Minimum Number of Persons"; OR

When the household composition increases in the number of household members as listed on the dwelling lease³ and results in the unit size being no longer appropriate according to the above "Maximum Number of Persons", then these cases shall be handled in accordance with SHA's Transfer policy.

² Temporarily shall mean for a period of six months or less.

³ Management approval is required before any person is added to the household. Refer to SHA's Manual of Operation and the terms of the Dwelling Lease.

Recinds L12.1-1, effective 3/15/71. Change in policy