



Seattle Social Housing Income and Asset Qualifications

Income Qualification Criteria

To qualify for our affordable units, the household must:

- Meet the applicable income limit for the unit size and AMI designation.
- Meet minimum occupancy requirements:
 - One bedroom: one occupant at minimum
 - Two bedroom: two occupants at minimum
- Disclose **all income from adult applicants and unearned income from minors.**
- Provide verification for each source of income.
- Have income calculated based on **anticipated gross income for the next 12 months** from the lease start date.
- Include any known future changes such as:
 - Raises
 - Bonuses
 - Cost-of-living adjustments
 - Seasonal employment
 - New employment
 - Recurring benefit increases
- Income certification should be completed before move-in, as close as possible to the lease start date, and within 120 days prior to the initial lease date. Management should not enter into any lease agreements for restricted units based on a partial or preliminary income certification.
- Complete an Income Declaration Form.

Acceptable Income Verification Methods

SSHD allows income to be verified using one or more of the following:

Employment Income

Source documents such as:

- A minimum of three (3) months of consecutive paystubs

- Verifiable offer letters (for new employment)
- W-2 or previous year's tax return

Management may also use verifications such as:

- Third party verification forms

Self-Employment Income

- Most recent federal tax return

Fixed Income Sources

- Social Security Award Letters
- SSI/SSDI Benefit Letters
- Pension Statements
- Annuity Statements
- Unemployment Benefit Statements

Other Income Sources

- Gift income affidavits and supporting bank statements

Housing Voucher Holders

- Applicants receiving a housing subsidy must still be income qualified.
- Housing subsidies are not counted as household income.
- Subsidy information must be documented in the certification file, and the subsidy amount must be included on the TIC (Rent).

Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) Section 8 Voucher Holders

- The SHA Calculation Summary may be used in lieu of all other income verification documents during initial certification, provided it is dated within 120 days of the lease start date.
- Use the SHA Calculation Summary to complete the Tenant Income Certification (TIC).
- Transfer income totals to the TIC excluding noted deductions.
- If assets are listed on the SHA Calculation Summary, do not include them on the TIC unless the household is regularly drawing from them for living expenses.

Income from Assets

Income from assets is **not counted** unless a household is regularly drawing from asset accounts to pay for living expenses. If the household has deposits from asset accounts in bank

statements, document these deposits or sales of assets and annualize as part of the income calculations for the household.

Acceptable Asset Verification Methods

Assets may be verified through:

- Current bank statements
- Financial institution statements
- Online account statements
- Investment account statements
- Retirement account statements
- Trust documentation
- Life insurance annuities

Income Sources That Count

Employment Income

- Wages
- Salaries
- Overtime
- Commissions
- Tips
- Bonuses
- Shift differentials
- Military pay

Self-Employment Income

- Business income
- Contract work
- Gig work
- Freelance earnings

Public Benefits & Unearned Income

- Social Security Retirement
- SSDI
- SSI
- Direct payment assistance such as TANF
- VA benefits
- Pension income
- Annuities

- Unemployment benefits
- Worker's Compensation
- Long-term disability payments
- Alimony
- Court-ordered child support
- Tribal payments

Other Income

- Regular gifts or contributions from family/friends
- Recurring cash assistance
- Rental income
- Recurring trust distributions

Gift Income Policy

SSHHD considers recurring financial assistance from a third party to be income.

Gift Income Definition

Gift income is generally established when financial support is received from the same source:

- Three (3) times within a three (3) month period, or
- Demonstrates an ongoing pattern of support that is expected to continue.

Examples include:

- Rent assistance from family members
- Monthly cash assistance from parents
- Recurring Venmo, Cash App, or Zelle transfers
- Regular bill payments made on behalf of the applicant

Gift Income Limit

- Gift income may not exceed 30% of the household's total annual income.
- If recurring gift income exceeds 30% of total income, the household may not qualify unless additional qualifying income sources are present.

Verification of Gift Income

Gift income may be verified through:

- Bank statements
- Gift affidavits
- Written third-party verification
- Electronic payment histories
- Documentation showing frequency and amount of support

Income Sources That Do NOT Count

Assets Themselves

The following are not counted as income:

- Savings account balances
- Checking account balances
- Retirement account balances
- Stock values

Educational Assistance

Generally excluded:

- Pell Grants
- Scholarships
- Educational grants
- Student loans used for education expenses

Other Common Exclusions

- Food benefits such as SNAP and WIC
- Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) income
- Transfers between personal accounts
- One-time gifts that are not expected to continue
- Tax refunds
- Loan proceeds
- Reimbursements for expenses
- Lump-sum insurance settlements (unless producing ongoing income)
- Foster care payments

Student Status Requirements

SSHHD requires verification of student status for all household members.

Student Status Rules:

- Students are not automatically ineligible for this program.
- An "adult student" is defined as an individual who:
 - Is 18 years of age or older, and
 - Is attending a post-secondary educational institution.
- Full-time or part-time status is determined by the educational institution, not by a set number of credits. Verification must come from the school's registration or registrar records.

Full-Time Undergraduate Students

To qualify, a full-time undergraduate student must:

- Be receiving **need-based financial aid or need-based loans** through:
 - FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), or
 - WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid).

Required verification generally includes:

- Current enrollment verification.
- Student Aid Report (SAR), FAFSA documentation, or WASFA documentation showing receipt of need-based aid.
- Providing previous year's tax return

Graduate Students

- Graduate students can qualify in two ways:
- The same as outlined above for undergraduate students
- Providing previous year's tax return to demonstrate their independent tax filing status

Students Claiming No Earned Income

When a student reports little or no employment income, management must perform additional verification to determine:

- How living expenses are being paid.
- Whether the student receives:
 - Family support,
 - Gifts,
 - Scholarships,
 - Grants,
 - Loans,
 - Other financial assistance.

Financial Aid Treatment

- Scholarships, grants, and educational assistance used for tuition, books, and required educational expenses are generally excluded from income calculations.

Self-Certification

Initial income self-certification may be permitted only in limited circumstances when required income and/or asset documentation is unavailable. Approval to accept self-certification is determined by management and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.