

BARANOF ISLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY



STUDENT HOUSING VOUCHER PROGRAM POLICY

A. Purpose

As with all BIHA programs, the Baranof Island Housing Authority Student Housing Voucher Program, is subject to the same income eligibility requirements as BIHA Admissions & Occupancy.

This program has been developed to increase opportunities and encourage tribal members to seek higher education and professional training.

B. Amount of Assistance

BIHA shall provide up to \$1,000.00 per school year to income qualifying full-time students, and \$500.00 per academic year to part-time students. The purpose is to assist students by reducing housing costs associated with obtaining higher education or professional training. Funding for this program is limited and awards will be based on the date of completed application and preferences.

C. Application Process

A new application must be submitted each year for the applicable academic year until funding for the program year is exhausted. The closing date for acceptance of applications and verifications will be established annually, and will provide sufficient time for applicants to provide required forms and documentation.

D. Application Steps

A BIHA Student Housing Voucher application form must be filled out and certified as complete by a staff member. Incomplete applications will not be accepted or considered when awarding funds.

Completed applications will be reviewed by the BIHA screening committee, who will confirm the applications are complete, and the applicant meets all of the eligibility criteria.

E. Eligibility

i. BIHA's Admissions & Occupancy:

Meet the basic requirements of the BIHA Admissions & O Policy.

ii. Income Eligibility:

Applicants for this program must be at or below 80% of the Area Median Income as determined by HUD (see Attachment A).

iii. Income Calculation:

For the purpose of determining Income, only the Independent Students income and that of his or her household. Calculation of annual income for applicant students shall be based on independent student status or dependent student status.

iv. Income Documentation:

Applicants will be required to provide documentation of income and their parents' (or) legal guardians' income for the applicable year. To verify earned income, signed copies of students' and parents' most recent Federal Income Tax Return (1040) must be submitted. Non-taxable income can be verified by submitting the appropriate agency letter for the applicable year. The type of income that will be counted for the purpose of this program shall be determined in line with the BIHA Admissions & Occupancy Policy, Section XII, Income and Deductions.

v. Student Status:

Must qualify as a "student" based on any of the following definitions:

a. Student

A student is an individual who has been accepted for enrollment, or who is enrolled, as a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) seeking student in an accredited technical or vocational school, 2-year or 4-year college or university, or graduate or professional school.

b. Independent Students

- a) To determine income, only the independent student's income and that of his or her household shall be counted. The income of his or her parents is not counted when determining the eligibility of an independent student.
- b) According to Federal standards, Section 480(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, a student is considered an independent or self-supporting student, when they meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - i. Is at least 24 years of old by December 31st of the award year;
 - ii. Is a student that has children who receive more than half of support from the student;
 - iii. Is an orphan or ward of the court;
 - iv. Is a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States or on active military duty;
 - v. Is a married student;
 - vi. Is a graduate or professional student;
 - vii. Is a student who has legal dependents other than a spouse;
 - viii. Is a student who is no longer claimed as a dependent by a parent or guardian on the current year's federal income tax return, and has filed his or her tax return the year;

c. Dependent Student

A student who does not meet the federal definition of an independent student is considered a dependent student and must submit his/her parent's income and asset information on the application form.

F. Selection Preference

- i. Indian/Tribal Preference will be implemented as follows:
 - a. First Priority- Local Tribal Citizens who are enrolled with Sitka Tribe of Alaska who have been determined program eligible.
 - b. Second Priority- Local residents who are enrolled members of another federally recognized tribe who have been determined program eligible.
 - c. Third Priority- Enrolled members of Sitka Tribe of Alaska who have established residency outside of Sitka, Alaska.

G. Payment

Funds granted are to be used for payment of school provided dormitory housing or rental of off-campus housing only. Payment shall be made directly to the school or landlord in a single payment. A current phone number and the physical address of the student will be kept on file. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure this information is current and correct

H. Required Academic Performance

Students receiving assistance must maintain passing grades in all classes to remain eligible under this program. Should the student fail in any one of his or her classes, prior to exhaustion of the funds granted, the remaining balance must be repaid to BIHA. It is the responsibility of the student to notify BIHA immediately of any such change, and ensure any funds remaining are repaid to BIHA.

Failure to do so, may result in denial of future assistance from BIHA, civil action in court, and as an extreme, criminal prosecution for the misuse of federal funds.

FY 2021 Income Limits Summary

Addendum A

	1 person	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons	6 persons	7 persons	8 persons
80%	52,400	59,850	67,350	74,800	80,800	86,800	92,800	98,750
50%	32,750	37,400	42,100	46,750	50,500	54,250	58,000	61,750
30%	19,650	22,450	27,450	33,130	38,810	44,490	50,170	55,850