



# Community Corporation of Santa Monica

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## How to apply for affordable rental housing with CCSM Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Q: I am looking for affordable rental housing and heard about Community Corporation of Santa Monica (CCSM). How do I apply for an apartment?**

**A:** The first step is to join CCSM's Marketing List (the "Marketing List"). The Marketing List is completely renewed every year in January. Please follow these steps to join the Marketing List:

Step # 1: **Get an Appointment Card:** Contact CCSM during the month of December to find out where to pick up an Appointment Card.

The Appointment Card will give you an **exact date and time** in January for you to attend a 1-hour Marketing List Seminar (the "Seminar") where you will use a CCSM computer to complete an online Questionnaire. If you do not have an Appointment Card, you will not be allowed to attend the Seminar. These Seminars are generally held at various times throughout the month of January.

Step # 2: **Attend a Seminar on the date/time specified on the Appointment Card:** At the Seminar, staff will show you how to complete the online Questionnaire and will be available to answer questions. Please arrive on time to ensure you will have enough time to complete the Questionnaire during the 1-hour Seminar. Latecomers cannot be guaranteed entrance to the Seminar.

Step # 3: **Answer the Questionnaire completely:** If you are unable to complete the Questionnaire on-line, you can request a hard copy. Incomplete Questionnaires will not be accepted. If you make a mistake, do not use white out. Instead, cross out the wrong information and correct it, and initial the correction.

Step # 4 **Wait for a postcard:** By the end of February or beginning of March you should receive a postcard confirming that you are on the Marketing List. If you attended a Seminar and did not receive a postcard by the end of March, please contact CCSM's main office at (310) 394-8487.

Step # 5 **If and when you receive a written invitation from CCSM to view a vacant unit, follow all instructions in the letter.**

**Q: What do I need to bring to my scheduled Seminar in January?**

**A:** Bring a pen – not a pencil, a photo ID, and your **Appointment Card**. If you have a social security number, know your social security number, bring a list of your sources of "monthly income" before taxes (gross) or deductions (including Social Security payments, SSI, Disability, TANF, child support, etc.), a list of your bank account balances, other assets such as pensions, 401k's, etc.

**Please bring a translator if you do not speak/understand English.**

Please **DO NOT BRING** food or beverages to the Seminar.

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**Q: What if something unexpected happens and I cannot attend my scheduled Seminar?**

A: If you miss your scheduled Seminar, CCSM cannot guarantee if or when you can receive an appointment for another Seminar. We expect about 4,000 people to attend Seminars in January, therefore, attending the Seminar during your scheduled date and time is important. In December, if you realize you cannot attend your originally scheduled Seminar, please come into the CCSM office to get a new appointment card. If there is no availability for another Seminar, you will be given a Questionnaire stamped with "Applicant Assumes Responsibility" for you to fill out and submit before the January deadline. Applicants will be responsible for complying with all deadlines and requirements.

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**Q: I was on the Marketing List this year and did not get an apartment what should I do to get on the Marketing List for the following year?**

A: At the end of the year the Marketing List is deleted once the next year's Marketing List becomes effective. You will have to follow the same procedure as any other person who joins the Marketing List. You must reapply every year if you do not get called for an apartment.

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**Q: Once I am on the current Marketing List, what is the next step? How long does it take to submit a formal Application for rental housing?**

A: You should receive a postcard in February, confirming that you are on the Marketing List. When a vacant unit becomes available, CCSM will match the different criteria for the unit (such as minimum income, maximum income, # of persons in the household, etc). CCSM will then contact approximately 40-80 people on the Marketing List who match the unit's criteria. Once you receive this written invitation, you must follow all instructions and meet all deadlines. You will be asked to attend an open house to view the vacant unit, where you will be given the Application that needs to be completed and returned to CCSM's main office within (3) business days. If you submit an application that is processed and you are not offered an apartment, your name stays on the Marketing List and you will be eligible to receive future open house invitations.

Getting on the Marketing List is NOT a guarantee that you will be invited to an open house or to submit an Application. It is also not a guarantee that you will qualify for an apartment with CCSM

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**Q: I am on the Marketing List and I need to change some of the information on my Questionnaire (such as address, household size or income). What should I do?**

A: An adult member of the household (over 18 years of age) must come to CCSM's office immediately to fill out the Declaration of Household Change form. You can also download the form from our website: [www.communitycorp.org](http://www.communitycorp.org) and bring the completed form to our main office at 1423 Second Street, Suite B, Santa Monica, CA.

Please make sure to update CCSM's records anytime there is a change to the household; such as income changes, the number of people in the household change, you move or change your contact information. Failure to update our records could result in your household not successfully meeting the requirements for an apartment, or delay information getting to you in a timely manner.

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**Q: I received my postcard confirming that I am on the Marketing List but I still have not received a written invitation to attend an open house and complete an Application. What does this mean?**

A: There are typically between 3,000-4,000 applicants on our Marketing List with only 80-120 vacancies every year, therefore, we cannot invite everyone to an open house. Do not be discouraged by the large number of applicants. The various programs and income requirements can accommodate many variations of income and household size.

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**Q: What are the income requirements for CCSM housing? How much are the rents?**

A: It is difficult to provide an exact answer to these questions as every apartment's income and rent requirements are subject to change based on Federal, State and Local housing programs. CCSM uses both minimum and maximum income limits. As an *estimate*, the lowest income for 1 person is approximately \$1,429 per month. If you have a Section 8 Voucher, there is no minimum income.

The amount of rent is different for each apartment. Typically, our studios rent from \$437 to \$1,195; 1-bedrooms from \$466 to \$1,366; 2-bedrooms from \$560-\$1,622; 3-bedrooms from \$647 to \$1,853; and 4-bedrooms from \$671 to \$2,092. These are only guidelines. **Actual rents can be higher or lower than any of these estimates.** The rent for an apartment is fixed and does NOT change based upon changes to the applicant/tenant's income.

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**Q: Does CCSM issue Section 8 Vouchers?**

A: No, CCSM does not issue Section 8 Vouchers, however, as a landlord we accept applicants with Section 8 Vouchers. If you would like to apply for a Section 8 Voucher, please contact the Santa Monica Housing Authority located at 1901 Main St., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Suite A, Santa Monica, CA 90405. Call (310) 458-8740 for more information.

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**Q: Is CCSM a part of the City of Santa Monica?**

A: No, CCSM is a private, non-profit organization. CCSM builds new buildings, purchases existing properties and rehabilitates them. New buildings and existing buildings that are purchased and rehabilitated are managed by CCSM, and rented at an affordable rate to qualified households.

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**Q: Can I still qualify if I have bad credit, criminal record and/or an eviction?**

A: CCSM has strict Tenant Selection Criteria. Among the many factors we check are credit history, criminal background and landlord history. We require that each applicant does not have more than \$2,500 in negative credit (past due bills, collection accounts, etc.). Bankruptcies or Evictions / Unlawful Detainers within the last 5 years and convictions for crimes against persons or property within specified time periods will be considered automatic reasons for denial, and landlord history for the past three years. If you do not meet the Tenant Selection Criteria, you may still apply at

your own discretion but will be taking the risk of going through a time-consuming process with the knowledge that your application will be denied if you do not meet the criteria.

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**Q: Can I choose which CCSM apartment I would like to live in?**

A: Unfortunately, you will not be able to choose which apartment you would like to live in. If you have a medical condition or a disability that requires you to have certain accommodations, such as a ground floor unit or a wheelchair-accessible apartment, please write that down on your Questionnaire under "Alternative Criteria". If you reject an apartment for reasons that do not meet our policy guidelines, your name may be removed from our Marketing List.

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**Q: Does CCSM allow pets?**

A: CCSM does NOT allow pets. There may be tenants who moved in prior to CCSM purchasing the property who may have had pets, but no pets are allowed for all new CCSM tenants. The only animals allowed on the property for new move-ins are assistive animals for the disabled with proper documentation from a health care professional.

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**Q: Is there an application fee for CCSM housing?**

A: No, CCSM does not charge an application fee. Once you have been approved for housing you will be asked to make a deposit and that deposit will be applied to your security deposit. You may ask for a receipt. Never pay in cash. Applicants who offer cash incentives or gifts to CCSM employees will be removed from the Marketing List.

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