



Common Questions about Affordable Housing

What is affordable housing?

Community Corp's model of affordable housing is a permanent, high-quality rental home that provides a platform for people to live and thrive. Affordable housing provides families of modest means with stability. **Rents are set to no**



more than 42% of monthly household income, which leaves enough for households to pay the rest of their living expenses. Rents range anywhere from about \$450 a month to \$1500 a month, depending on the size of the apartment and the household income level. Income ranges for households range approximately from \$18,000/year for a 1-person household to \$70,000 for a 4-person household.

This model offers **working families** the opportunity to build a brighter future by being situated in a high resource neighborhood with jobs, quality schools and transit. On the Westside, we welcome people from different socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. Affordable housing serves individuals and families, and seniors aging in place.

Why do we need affordable housing?

Affordable housing keeps our communities diverse, sustainable, and inclusive.

More than 65,000 people are currently experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County, due in large part to unaffordable rents. Affordable housing is a vital component to reducing homelessness across our region, as well as making cities and parts of Los Angeles County more inclusive.

What is Community Corporation of Santa Monica?

Community Corp of Santa Monica is a non-profit that restores, builds, and manages affordable housing for people of modest means. For more than three



decades, Community Corp has worked to make Santa Monica a more inclusive and environmentally sustainable city. This work changes lives and contributes to the distinct character of our city and community. We recognize, though, that complex issues like the housing affordability crisis do not stop at city limits, and we have recently begun to develop affordable housing properties in other Westside communities like Culver City, Mar Vista, and Westchester.



We are a private, nonprofit public benefit corporation that is not affiliated with City of Santa Monica. We are also not exclusive to Santa Monica, although our offices are located there. We are governed by a 15-member Board of Directors.

Does affordable housing increase traffic in our neighborhoods?

Affordable housing allows families to live near their workplaces and schools, reducing commutes and easing traffic. Expanding access to affordable housing options gives individuals the ability to walk, bike, or take public transit from their homes to their work. This helps take cars off the road and builds a sustainable future for our community. Lower income households tend to have fewer cars and utilize public transit more frequently.

Does affordable housing bring down property values in the area?

Affordable housing does not decrease property values. There have been national studies conducted on this topic that have concluded that property values either stay neutral or increase near affordable housing. Here is one example of a [study](#) completed by researchers at New York University.

Does Community Corp. respect the character of the neighborhoods in which it restores existing or builds new developments?



Community Corp. works with award-winning local architects to construct modern, sustainable affordable housing properties that blend seamlessly into the surrounding communities. We preserve historically significant structures and replace neglected properties with innovative buildings at the forefront of



architectural innovation and green design. New construction buildings are thoughtfully designed to integrate and complement the surrounding neighborhood. Our LEED-certified developments come equipped with solar panels, drought-tolerant landscaping, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and recycled materials.

Community Corp. is committed to being a good neighbor. When planning a new development, we work with our neighbors to incorporate feedback and community amenities—like green screens or cafes—into our designs. The more community members engage in constructive dialogue at the beginning, the more we can incorporate specific suggestions into our developments.

Our maintenance and property management divisions ensure that the long-term maintenance and upkeep of our buildings meets our high standard. **We have on-site property management that live at the property full-time to ensure rules are being followed, to answer any questions or concerns, and to promote a friendly, neighborly community.**

How does affordable housing benefit me if I make too much money to live there?

Community Corp. uplifts neighborhoods by redeveloping and revitalizing often underutilized or dilapidated properties with high quality, beautifully designed housing. Many neighbors view our buildings as an asset to their block. In addition, by providing affordable housing, we create the opportunity to stably house more people so that they don't end up being homeless. Fewer individuals experiencing homelessness having to live on the streets makes better communities



for us all. Our housing often helps people who have entry level jobs – your kids – or your parents who are looking to retire near their grandchildren.



In addition, when we work with neighbors early on, we can understand any needs of the community and work on assisting – whether it be by providing an affordable small business space for local businesses, allowing the community to use our community rooms, creating lush landscaping to beautify neighborhoods, or improve pedestrian mobility in the neighborhoods. **We invite you to engage with us to make a better development for all!**

Do residents need to earn a lot of money to live in Community Corp. housing?

Affordable housing is just that—affordable for people with low incomes. That said, our tenants pay a monthly rent to live in their units. Households must have a minimum income so that we know residents will be able to pay rent and live stably in our housing. However, we don't have a minimum credit score requirement.

Is Community Corp. housing Section 8 housing?

While we do happily accept Section 8 vouchers, Community Corp. buildings are not “Section 8 housing” as the term is commonly understood. Our affordable housing is typically funded with City of Santa Monica or City of LA affordable housing trust funds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, State or County funds, or a combination thereof. Community Corp's model of affordable housing is long-term, permanent, independent living.

How does Community Corp choose who can live at the building?

In Santa Monica, applicants may apply on the [City of Santa Monica's Below Market housing list](#). The City prioritizes people who live or work in Santa Monica, but anyone may apply.



For buildings outside Santa Monica, Community Corp manages our own waiting list per property. Our first building outside Santa Monica, in Mar Vista, will be completed in Fall 2021. We will have additional information on how to apply closer to construction completion.

The criteria for residing at one of our properties are designed to have low barriers, you must fall within the income guidelines, set by multiple government agencies. There are no preferences for people who work in any particular job, or what the source of their income is. While



we do screen for credit and background, our criteria are more lenient than most other landlords. We do not ask immigrations status. We have ADA-accessible units designed for people with physical or other disabilities. The only other criteria is the number of people per household – overcrowding is not permissible by our government funding sources, and occupancy is set at 2 per bedroom plus 1 person maximum. So for a two-bedroom apartment, that would be 5 people maximum.

Are there supportive services at Community Corp’s buildings?

Community Corp has a residential services division that has tailored onsite service programs to the specific needs and interests of residents at our properties. While many lower income households enjoy affordable rents at our buildings, their incomes don’t necessarily provide extras for things like tutoring, fitness classes, or recreational activities. We run our own academic enrichment programs for the children at our properties, community engagement opportunities via our Resident Council, fitness programs like Zumba, yoga and hip-hop dance classes, and gardening programs – all free of charge to our residents. For residents who need additional support with any health or wellness issues, we partner with organizations that have deep experience in these areas and can assist as needed.