



# TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

For immediate release  
December 17, 2009

**Contact:**  
Michael Mirra (253) 207-4429  
mmirra@tacomahousing.org

Nancy Vignec (253) 207-4455  
nvignec@tacomahousing.org

## **Tacoma Housing Authority Opens Public Housing Wait List: Thousands Apply**

Approximately 1,000 people stood in line on Saturday, November 14, when Tacoma Housing Authority opened its wait list for Public Housing. The last time THA opened its wait list was in March 2008. By the end of the first week, THA received 4,000 applications. THA will continue to accept applications. It receives 50 – 75 applications daily. Applications are available at THA offices at 902 South L Street or on-line at [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).

THA publicized the wait list opening in The News Tribune. It posted notices at its main administration office at 902 South L Street. It also distributed notices and applications through several community-based organizations located throughout the city of Tacoma.

After THA receives an application, THA staff stamp it with the date and time of its receipt. They review it for completeness and send a letter of receipt to the applicant.

When THA opened its wait list, it had a limited number of immediate openings in newly constructed houses at New Salishan. THA quickly filled these openings with eligible applicants. In general, however, THA's vacancy rate is very low. THA estimates most applicants will be on the wait list two to five years before they are housed. Michael Mirra, THA's Executive Director, noted, "The number of applicants we received in such a short period of time is yet another measure of the region's dire shortage of decent and affordable housing for low wage households and those on fixed incomes." Other measures of this shortage are available. For example, it takes an hourly wage of \$17.61 to afford a two bedroom apartment on the private rental market in Tacoma. See *Out of*

*Reach* (National Low Income Housing Coalition 2009)([www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org)) This contrasts with the median hourly wage of renting families in Tacoma of \$12.35 or the state's minimum wage of \$8.55. Additional data about Tacoma's housing market are attached.

---

---

### **About Tacoma Housing Authority**

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority engages in a wide range of efforts to help its City meet the growing need for affordable housing. THA develops and manages real estate. It provides rental housing. In partnership with thousands of private landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market. It delivers supportive services to help families succeed as tenants, parents, students and wage earners who can live without assistance. It helps them purchase their first home. THA seeks to do its work in ways that help neighborhoods be attractive places to live, work, attend school, shop and play, and that help its city be prosperous, healthy and just. For more information about THA, go to [www.tacomahousing.org](http://www.tacomahousing.org).



## Washington

In Washington, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$874. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn \$2,914 monthly or \$34,964 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a Housing Wage of \$16.81.

In Washington, a minimum wage worker earns an hourly wage of \$8.55. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment, a minimum wage earner must work 79 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, a household must include 2.0 minimum wage earner(s) working 40 hours per week year-round in order to make the two bedroom FMR affordable.

In Washington, the estimated mean (average) wage for a renter is \$14.71 an hour. In order to afford the FMR for a two-bedroom apartment at this wage, a renter must work 46 hours per week, 52 weeks per year. Or, working 40 hours per week year-round, a household must include 1.1 worker(s) earning the mean renter wage in order to make the two-bedroom FMR affordable.

Monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for an individual are \$674 in Washington. If this represents an individual's sole source of income, \$202 in monthly rent is affordable, while the FMR for a one-bedroom is \$713.

*A unit is considered affordable if it costs no more than 30% of the renter's income.*

	Washington	Tacoma HMFA *
--	------------	---------------

**Number of Households (2000)** data, see [How to Use the Numbers / Where the Numbers Come From](#).

Total	2,271,398	260,800
Renter	804,413	95,177
% Renter	35%	36%

If necessary, use the scroll bar at the bottom of the table to view additional jurisdictions.

### 2009 Area Median Income<sup>1</sup>

Annual	\$71,582	\$68,100
Monthly	\$5,965	\$5,675
30% of AMI <sup>2</sup>	\$21,475	\$20,430

### Maximum Affordable<sup>3</sup> Monthly Housing Cost by % of Family AMI

30%	\$537	\$511
50%	\$895	\$851
80%	\$1,432	\$1,362
100%	\$1,790	\$1,703
<b>2009 Fair Market Rent (FMR)<sup>4</sup></b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$623	\$636
One-Bedroom	\$713	\$743
Two-Bedroom	\$874	\$926
Three-Bedroom	\$1,237	\$1,349
Four-Bedroom	\$1,458	\$1,518
<b>% Change from 2000 Base Rent to 2009 FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	26%	40%
One-Bedroom	26%	41%
Two-Bedroom	26%	41%
Three-Bedroom	26%	41%
Four-Bedroom	26%	41%
<b>Annual Income Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$24,923	\$25,440
One-Bedroom	\$28,521	\$29,720
Two-Bedroom	\$34,964	\$37,040
Three-Bedroom	\$49,497	\$53,960
Four-Bedroom	\$58,327	\$60,720
<b>Percent of Family AMI Needed to Afford FMR</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	35%	37%
One-Bedroom	40%	44%
Two-Bedroom	49%	54%
Three-Bedroom	69%	79%
Four-Bedroom	81%	89%
<b>2009 Renter Household Income</b>		
Estimated Median Renter Household Income <sup>5</sup>	\$39,036	\$37,671
Percent Needed to Afford 2 BR FMR	90%	98%
Rent Affordable at Median	\$976	\$942
% Renters Unable to Afford 2 BR FMR <sup>6</sup>	44%	49%
<b>2009 Renter Wage</b>		
Estimated Mean Renter Wage <sup>7</sup>	\$14.71	\$12.35
Rent Affordable at Mean Wage	\$765	\$642
<b>2009 Minimum Wage</b>		
Minimum Wage	\$8.55	\$8.55
Rent Affordable at Minimum Wage	\$445	\$445
<b>2009 Supplemental Security Income</b>		
Monthly SSI Payment	\$674	\$674
Rent Affordable at SSI	\$202	\$202
<b>Housing Wage</b>		
Zero-Bedroom	\$11.98	\$12.23
One-Bedroom	\$13.71	\$14.29
Two-Bedroom	\$16.81	\$17.81
Three-Bedroom	\$23.80	\$25.94
Four-Bedroom	\$28.04	\$29.19

**Housing Wage as % of Minimum Wage**

Zero-Bedroom	140%	143%
One-Bedroom	160%	167%
Two-Bedroom	197%	208%
Three-Bedroom	278%	303%
Four-Bedroom	328%	341%

**Housing Wage as % of Mean Renter Wage**

Zero-Bedroom	81%	99%
One-Bedroom	93%	116%
Two-Bedroom	114%	144%
Three-Bedroom	162%	210%
Four-Bedroom	191%	236%

**Work Hours/Week at Minimum Wage Needed to Afford FMR**

Zero-Bedroom	56	57
One-Bedroom	64	67
Two-Bedroom	79	83
Three-Bedroom	111	121
Four-Bedroom	131	137

**Work Hours/Week at Mean Renter Wage Needed to Afford FMR**

Zero-Bedroom	33	40
One-Bedroom	37	46
Two-Bedroom	46	58
Three-Bedroom	65	84
Four-Bedroom	76	95

**Full-time Jobs at Minimum Wage Needed to Afford FMR**

Zero-Bedroom	1.4	1.4
One-Bedroom	1.6	1.7
Two-Bedroom	2.0	2.1
Three-Bedroom	2.8	3.0
Four-Bedroom	3.3	3.4

**Full-time Jobs at Mean Renter Wage Needed to Afford FMR**

Zero-Bedroom	0.8	1.0
One-Bedroom	0.9	1.2
Two-Bedroom	1.1	1.4
Three-Bedroom	1.6	2.1
Four-Bedroom	1.9	2.4

Washington Tacoma HMFA \*

If necessary, use the scroll bar to view additional jurisdictions.

C H A R T   F O O T N O T E S	
1.	Fiscal Year 2009 Area Median Income (HUD, 2009).
2.	Annual income of 30% of AMI or less is the federal standard for Extremely Low Income households. Does not include F
3.	"Affordable" rents represent the generally accepted standard of spending not more than 30% of gross income on gross
4.	Fiscal Year 2009 Fair Market Rent (HUD, 2008; final as of October 1).
5.	Census 2000 median renter household income, projected to 2009 using HUD's income adjustment factor.
6.	Estimated by comparing the percent of renter median household income required to afford the two-bedroom FMR to the household income as a percent of the median within the state, as measured using 2007 American Community Survey F housing file.
7.	Based on 2007 BLS data, adjusted using the ratio of renter to overall household income reported in Census 2000, and
*	50th percentile FMR (See <a href="#">Appendix A</a> ).
†	Wage data not available (See <a href="#">Appendix A</a> ).
	For a listing of towns within FMR areas in New England States, <a href="#">click here</a> .

## Receive Data

To download an Excel file with the data for each state below, click its name.

- [Washington](#)

To download an Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) file with the data for each state below, click its name.

- Washington

---

[Back to \*Out of Reach 2009\* Table of Contents.](#)



**National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)**

727 15th Street NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202/662-1530 | Fax 202/393-1973  
[contact](#) | [site map](#) | [terms of use](#) | [privacy statement](#)  
©2006 National Low Income Housing Coalition.

