

February 3, 2025

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Recertification of Section 8 Subsidies at the Lambert Houses

Please Note: *This document is intended to address frequently asked questions regarding recertification of Section 8 subsidies at the Lambert Houses, managed by Phipps Houses Services, Inc. (“Phipps”). It is not a complete set of information needed to complete the recertification process. You must also review the recertification package sent to you via mail, which includes important information and forms for you to review, complete, and return.*

General

1. Where is the Lambert Houses Management Office (“Management Office”) located?

The Management Office is located at 1048 East 180th Street, Bronx, NY 10460.

2. What are the office hours?

The Management Office is open Monday - Friday from 9am - 5pm.

3. What kinds of help with recertification will be available during office hours?

Phipps will scan tenant recertification documents for electronic submission at the tenant’s request; answer recertification related questions; help tenants with disabilities submit requests for special assistance; translate for tenants; go over tenants’ files; and make tenants’ files available for review and copying. Some of the help that Phipps can give in the office requires making an appointment in advance, but other help does not. Please see the question below.

4. Do I need to make an appointment to get help with recertification in the Management Office?

That depends on what help you need. Tenants with general questions do not need to schedule an appointment to speak with staff. Some examples of general questions about recertification include: Where should I submit my recertification documents? Can I recertify in person?

Tenants who need in-person help with recertification, would like their documents scanned, or would like to review their tenant file must schedule an appointment with staff. You can do that by calling 718-542-0072 or emailing PHSI-BTappointments@phippsony.org.

5. Who can I communicate with about my annual recertification?

If you have received a reminder notice about your annual recertification, then you should contact the telephone number or email address listed on the notice.

If you can't find your notice, or you've tried the number on the notice and can't get the help you need, please call the Management Office at 718-542-0072.

6. Who is Nan McKay?

Nan McKay & Associates ("Nan McKay") is a company hired by Phipps to improve the process for completing your annual recertification. Nan McKay is experienced in the administration of affordable housing programs. None of the rules or policies of the Section 8 program have changed due to the retention of Nan McKay.

7. Why did I get a letter about recertification from Kentucky? Why am I being told to mail my recertification documents to Kentucky?

Nan McKay, which is handling the Lambert Houses recertification, is located in Kentucky. If you mail your recertification packet and supporting documents, they should be sent to their offices in Kentucky. Don't worry. The documents you send to Kentucky will get processed for your recertification here in New York City.

8. How can I talk to staff at Nan McKay if I have a question or need help?

The paperwork you receive in the mail from Nan McKay shows a customer service phone number you can call during regular business hours at 332-240-4129. If you call at other times, you can leave a voicemail and Nan McKay staff will call you back promptly and within no later than two business days. You can also reach Nan McKay by email at phippsrecerts@phippsny.org or by mail at Phipps Housing Recerts, C/O Nan McKay Processing Center, PO Box 4090, Frankfort, KY 40604, or at specific contact information provided in letters to you regarding recertification.

9. I have a problem with my recertification. I asked Nan McKay for help, but I am still having the problem. What can I do?

The staff at Nan McKay oversee the processing of Lambert Houses recertifications and are available to answer questions. They should be able to help you with almost all questions or problems you have with recertification.

If you cannot get the help you need from Nan McKay, contact the staff at the Management Office at 718-542-0072 and ask to speak with someone about recertification (and mention that you have tried but have been unable to resolve your issue after contacting Nan McKay).

10. I would like to review my tenant file. How can I do that?

Contact the Management Office by calling 718-542-0072 or emailing PHSI-BTappointments@phippsny.org to make an appointment. This will allow staff time to pull the tenant file from Phipps records ahead of your scheduled appointment.

You will have an opportunity to review your file and request a copy of anything in the file that might be useful to take with you.

11. How can I contact Phipps? How can they contact me?

Phipps generally communicates with all tenants by phone, email and mail and can be reached at 1048 East 180th Street, Bronx, NY 10460, PHSI-BTHAdmin@phippsony.org, and 718-542-0072.

Annual Recertifications of Section 8 Eligibility

12. What is Section 8 recertification?

Every year, Lambert Houses tenants who receive Section 8 subsidies are required to verify their family household composition and their income. This process allows Phipps to calculate their tenant share of the rent. The formula for calculating a tenant's share of rent is included in the recertification package that is sent to you by mail.

Tenants whose households have a change in income or a change in the number of people residing in their home can submit an "interim" recertification, even before their annual recertification anniversary. Tenants' share of rent should be no more than 30% of their household income.

13. When do I have to recertify?

Every Section 8 Lambert Houses tenant has their own anniversary date—that is, the date each year by which they must recertify. If you don't know your anniversary date, you can look at the notice you signed during last year's recertification process or contact the Management Office.

Generally, a tenant's recertification process starts 120 days (around 4 months) before their recertification anniversary date. For example, if your anniversary date is December 3, 2024, Phipps is required to send you your First Reminder Notice by August 5, 2024.

Your recertification must be completed 30 days before your anniversary date. This will allow Phipps to mail the required 30-day Notice of Rent Change if there is an increase to your tenant share.

14. When do I have to start preparing for my annual recertification?

You should start gathering your recertification documents when you receive your first reminder notice. You will receive this notice at least 120 days (around four months) before your recertification anniversary date. It's very important to move quickly to get all your documents ready and submit them. As you send in your documents, try to keep a record of what you submitted and when.

15. I received a “First Reminder Notice” from Nan McKay or Phipps and submitted documents. Why did I receive a “Second Reminder Notice”?

If you received a Second Reminder Notice, it is possible that staff have not received your documents, OR the documents you submitted are incomplete. If you think you submitted all of the required documents, you should start by calling the phone number on the notice. If you still need help after that, call the Management Office to figure out the status of your recertification.

At any time, you can ask Nan McKay or the Management Office for a list of all the documents you still need to provide, and they will provide that list to you promptly.

16. I received a “Second Reminder Notice” and submitted documents. Why did I receive a “Third Reminder Notice”?

If you received a Third Reminder Notice, it is possible that staff has not received your documents, OR the documents you submitted are still incomplete. If you think you submitted all of the required documents, you should start by calling the phone number on the notice. If you still need help after that, call the Management Office to figure out the status of your recertification.

The third reminder notice is also a notice of termination of your section 8 subsidy. You have a right to request an in-person meeting to discuss your recertification and subsidy termination. You should schedule this meeting as soon as possible after receiving your third reminder notice.

At any time, you can ask Nan McKay or the Management Office for a list of all of the documents you still need to provide; and you can ask the Management Office for an in-person appointment to review your recertification.

17. I received a “courtesy reminder notice” from Phipps. What does it mean?

These are notices that go out to tenants who have an upcoming recertification anniversary. These reminders are meant to ensure your recertification is done on time and there is no interruption in your rent subsidy.

If you received a notice like this and you are not clear what you need to do to recertify, you should reach out to the customer service number at Nan McKay listed on the notice or ask the Management Office for an in-person appointment to review your recertification.

18. I want in-person help with my recertification. What should I do?

You can always call (718-542-0072) or email (PHSI-BTappointments@phippsny.org) the Management Office to schedule an in-person appointment for help with recertification if you need it.

19. What happens if my recertification is delayed past the deadline?

It's very important that you do everything to submit all your documents and information before the deadline. If you need help doing that, speak with staff at the

Management Office right away! If you submit everything on time but there are delays in processing your recertification, your subsidy will not be terminated.

If you run into trouble and are not able to submit your paperwork before the deadline, Phipps will work with you to complete it promptly. Phipps can help you by working with you in-person, giving you a detailed list of all the documents you still need to submit, and translating documents for you or helping you access a language line.

If you are not able to recertify on time, it is possible that an eviction case could eventually be filed against you, so it is very important that you try your best to submit all of the recertification documents on time.

20. I submitted all my recertification documents but have not received my new lease and notice. What should I do?

Once you have submitted your recertification documents, Nan McKay or Phipps must verify your family income, assets, and other family circumstances, then use that information to calculate your tenant share of the rent.

All households will receive a notification about any changes to their tenant share of the rent after the recertification process is complete. If there are any increases in your tenant share, you should receive a 30-day Notice of Rent Change 30 days before your rent changes. If you haven't received anything and you think you should have, reach out to Nan McKay or the Management Office right away.

21. What happens if I fail to recertify on time?

If you fail to recertify on time, but your family is still eligible for a Section 8 subsidy, you may be able to work cooperatively with Phipps to have your subsidy restored, and, on a case by case basis, it may be possible to have the subsidy cover the time period you were late. It is important to act quickly about this! Please contact the Management Office immediately and ask for an in-person appointment to review your recertification.

If you fail to recertify on time, and you are not able to work with Phipps to recertify late, your subsidy will end. If your subsidy ends, you may remain in your apartment, but you will pay the full contract rent, which appears on your lease.

Phipps is required to give you a notice outlining the date your subsidy ended, the reason why it ended, your new rent amount, and a warning that if you fail to pay the new monthly rent, Phipps may end your tenancy, and you would have to leave your apartment. If you receive this notice, you have a right within 10 days from the date of the notice to meet with Phipps to discuss it. You should request an appointment to meet with Phipps as soon as possible after receiving your notice of subsidy termination.

If you are disabled you can request a reasonable accommodation, such as an in-person appointment (or an in-home appointment), to help complete your recertification.

22. What happens if I submit my recertification paperwork, but I am found to be not eligible for a Section 8 subsidy anymore?

If your recertification paperwork shows that you are not eligible for a Section 8 subsidy anymore, for example because your household income has gone up above a certain level, your subsidy will end.

If you get a notice that you are not eligible for a Section 8 subsidy anymore, and you think this might be a mistake, please contact the Management Office immediately, and ask for an in-person appointment to review your recertification.

If your subsidy ends because you are ineligible, you may remain in your apartment, but you will be charged the full contract rent, which appears on your lease.

Phipps is required to give you a notice outlining the date your subsidy ended, the reason why it ended, your new rent amount, and a warning that if you fail to pay the new monthly rent, Phipps may end your tenancy, and you would have to leave your apartment. If you receive this notice, you have a right within 10 days from the date of the notice to meet with Phipps to discuss it.

Submitting Documents for Recertifications

23. How do I know what documents I am required to submit for my annual recertification?

As part of the recertification process, you will receive a list of documents you are required to submit. Please consult that list. If you receive public benefits, you will need to submit documents that relate to your benefits. The recertification package that you receive in the mail will also include forms to complete and return. Please follow the instructions in that package.

24. How do I submit my recertification documents?

*You can **mail copies** or **email scanned copies**.*

Mail: First, make copies of your documents. If you need access to a copy machine, make an appointment at the Management Office and someone there will make copies for you. Then, mail the documents to the address listed on the reminder notice. Always keep the originals for yourself!

Email: First, scan the documents. If you need access to a scanner or help scanning your documents, make an appointment at the Management Office. They will scan the documents for you and return them to you. Then email the documents to the email address listed on the reminder notice. You can also insert your own email address in the “CC” or “BCC” field to receive a copy of the email in your inbox. Keep the originals for yourself!

25. Can I submit my recertification documents in-person?

Most tenants will need to submit your documents to Nan McKay, by mail or email. If you are recertifying with Nan McKay, you can make an appointment to come to the Management Office in order to scan your documents and email them to Nan McKay.

Some tenants who need special help can receive in-person assistance from Phipps. If you believe you need in-person help in order to recertify, please make an appointment with the Management Office.

26. I used to submit my recertification documents through a lockbox. Can I still do that?

No. Documents should be mailed, emailed or, if you have an in-person appointment with the Management Office for assistance recertifying, delivered in person at that appointment.

27. If I submit my documents, but Nan McKay or Phipps says they did not receive them, how can I show later that I submitted them?

*The best way to send your documents, if you can, is by **email**, because then you have records of exactly what you sent and when. If you email your documents, make sure to not delete the email you sent. This email will show the email address you sent your documents to, the date and time it was sent, and a copy of the documents you sent electronically.*

*If you **mail** your documents, make sure to always keep the original copies of what you mailed. Some kinds of mailing, like certified mail, let you keep a record of when you mailed something, but that won't show which specific things you mailed. You can keep extra copies of what you sent, and take a picture on your phone of all the documents you sent and the envelope you sent them in which will create a record of when you mailed the documents.*

28. I received a letter with a list of documents that I am required to submit. Who can I speak with if I don't understand the list, or if I think the list is asking for documents I already submitted?

You should first contact Nan McKay customer service at the phone number on the notice you received. If you are still having trouble, you can contact the Management Office.

29. How do I know if I'm missing documents for my annual recertification?

If you are missing documents, you will receive an additional documents notice, which is a list of missing documents. It will list any documents needed to complete your recertification.

30. I was not able to recertify last year or in earlier years. How will I know what documents I need to submit?

Phipps will send you a complete list of all the required documents, and for what years you need each document. For example, if you are missing paystubs for your 2022 recertification, and bank statements for your 2024 recertification, the list will identify those missing documents by year.

31. I don't have any income. Do I still need to submit documents for my annual recertification?

Yes. The notices you received will tell you what documents you should submit for your annual recertification, which may include certifications of zero income and unemployment.

32. Do I have to notarize documents for my annual recertification?

You will only have to notarize documents that are required by HUD to be notarized. An example of a document that HUD requires notarization for is the zero income certification. If you think you are being asked to notarize a document that is not required to be notarized, or if you need help finding a notary, please contact the Management Office.

33. I receive a fixed income from a federal government benefit. What documents do I need to submit?

If your only source of income is a federal government benefit, then the only proof of income you will need to provide is a copy of your federal benefit award letter. If you have additional sources of income, you will have to submit documents on those sources as well, as directed in the recertification letter.

Language Access

34. I speak Spanish. Can Phipps communicate with me in Spanish?

Yes. Phipps provides some documents in both English and Spanish. Staff in the Management Office speak Spanish. If you need assistance in Spanish, or need English documents translated into Spanish, contact the Management Office.

35. I speak a language other than English or Spanish. Can Phipps communicate with me in my language?

Yes. Phipps uses a "language line" – a telephone service that can translate into multiple languages. The language line can interpret for conversations with Phipps staff and can help translate documents out loud. To access help through the language line, contact the Management Office at 718-542-0072.

36. What languages are available through the language line?

The Phipps language line offers all languages for translation.

37. I don't understand English, but I continue to receive communications from Phipps in English. What should I do?

Contact the Management Office. If you speak Spanish, Management Office staff can speak to you in Spanish. If you speak a different language, you can use the language line for translation help during this conversation.

If you read Spanish, Phipps can make sure to send you Spanish versions of documents where those exist. Otherwise, you can get help from the Management Office translating specific documents.

38. Does Nan McKay offer language translation?

Yes. You can contact Nan McKay and ask to be connected to a language line.

Help for Tenants with Disabilities

39. Does Phipps have policies or procedures to help tenants with disabilities?

Yes. Phipps will provide reasonable accommodations to all tenants with disabilities.

40. If I have a disability, what should I do to get help from Phipps?

Tenants who have a disability and require assistance should contact Gabriel Crespo at PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsny.org for assistance.

41. What are examples of disabilities that might qualify me for help?

Phipps understands that tenants might have a range of disabilities that require additional assistance. Some examples include:

- mobility-related disabilities, like trouble walking, traveling, or climbing stairs;*
- visual impairments, like blindness, trouble seeing, or requiring large print;*
- hearing impairments, like deafness or trouble hearing;*
- intellectual/developmental or cognitive disabilities; and*
- mental health disabilities.*

42. I am mostly homebound or have trouble traveling out of my apartment. Can I request someone to help me recertify from my apartment?

Yes, someone from Phipps can help you in your own home. To make that request, contact 718-542-0072 or PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsny.org for assistance.

43. I am visually impaired. Can I request large print documents? Can I request staff to leave me reminders in a voicemail?

Yes, someone from Phipps can help give you information in a way that is accessible to you. To make that request, contact 718-542-0072 or PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsny.org for assistance.

44. I have a disability, like a cognitive or intellectual/developmental disability, or a mental health disability, that makes it hard for me to perform daily tasks without assistance. Can I get help with recertification?

Yes, someone from Phipps can help you manage the recertification process. To make that request, contact 718-542-0072 or PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsny.org for assistance.

45. What if I need special help for another kind of disability?

Phipps is committed to providing all tenants with disabilities the reasonable accommodations they need to complete the recertification process. To make a request for accommodations, contact 718-542-0072 or PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsony.org for assistance.

46. Do I need to give Phipps documentation about my disability?

Phipps is committed to providing all tenants with disabilities reasonable accommodations to help them complete recertification. If you need help because of a disability, contact us, and we will tell you what information we need in order to help.

But, please note that disability can factor into how your rent is calculated by HUD. To have your disability considered in calculating your rent, HUD does require you to submit proof of your disability.

47. Do I need to receive Federal or State disability benefits in order to ask for reasonable accommodation?

No. If you have any disability that makes it harder for you to recertify, you can request accommodation. Contact 718-542-0072 or PHSI-BT-RAGCrespo@phippsony.org for assistance.

48. I have a disability. How can Nan McKay help me?

Yes. Nan McKay will coordinate with Phipps on addressing your request.

Housing Court

49. I received court papers saying there is a Housing Court case filed against me. Is there anywhere I can go for help?

Tenants in New York City can call 311 and ask for assistance through the “Tenant Hotline.”

If the papers you received have a court date on them, you should go to Housing Court on that date (or appear virtually if you are instructed to do so). And no matter what the papers say, you can always go in person to the Housing Court to ask questions.

50. What if I don't have a lawyer? Is there free legal help available in Housing Court?

Under New York City's Right-to-Counsel law, tenants facing eviction in Housing Court have access to free legal representation and advice provided by nonprofit legal services organizations. Tenants who fall within certain income guidelines are eligible to receive legal assistance. If you are eligible for Section 8, you probably meet the income guidelines for free legal representation. You can get more information about Right-to-Counsel by calling 212-962-4795.

If you go in person to the Housing Court (or appear virtually in Housing Court), you should ask to be referred for free legal services or for a list of free legal assistance providers.

51. What should I do if I think the Housing Court case is related to my Section 8 recertification?

If you think the Housing Court case might be related to a problem with your Section 8 recertification, then Phipps would have reached out to you to schedule you for a meeting at the Management Office. If you received Housing Court documents, and you did not see the Phipps's notice or missed the appointment, you can reach out to the Management Office to reschedule. You may be able to work cooperatively with Phipps to restore your subsidy. Even if Phipps has filed an eviction case against you, it is still willing to help you recertify and continue to live in your apartment.