

# Participant Guide

## What is the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program?

The HCV Program is a rental subsidy program created to assist eligible families in renting decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private rental housing market. The HCV program is tenant-based, meaning the assistance is mobile and goes wherever the tenant goes. Therefore, the tenant has the freedom to choose where they want to live and the type of home they want to live in.



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# Eligibility & Voucher Issuance

## Housing Assistance

The Shopping Allowance sheet calculates your portion of rent based on a set payment standard (based on bedroom size for eligible family members) and your total tenant payment (based on your income).

## Payment Standard

SAHA annually sets the payment standards for each bedroom size based on The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Fair Market Rents (FMRs) for the San Antonio area.

The payment standard is the maximum monthly subsidy payment.

## Total Tenant Payment

The Total Tenant Payment (TTP) is the minimum amount a family must contribute toward housing costs regardless of the unit selected.

The maximum housing assistance subsidy a family can qualify for is the payment standard minus the total tenant payment (TTP).

## Exceptions to Subsidy Standards

SAHA shall grant exceptions from the subsidy standards upon request as an accommodation for persons with disabilities. Such requests must be made in writing and must explain the need or justification for the accommodation (i.e. larger bedroom size, etc.). Documentation from a medical professional or expert verifying the need or justification will be required as appropriate.



## Verification Policies

The HCV Program participant must supply any information that SAHA or The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) determines necessary in the administration of the program. Please note that it is SAHA policy to compare the income reported by tenants to the income retrieved through EIV. Discrepancies will be investigated and could lead to termination of assistance if the discrepancy was due to fraud or purposeful omission.

## Information to Owners

In accordance with HUD requirements, SAHA will furnish prospective owners with the family's current address and the name and address of the landlord at the family's current and prior address for current participants of the HCV program. SAHA will provide information on eviction history and damage to rental units for the last year, if requested. SAHA's policy on providing information to owners will apply uniformly to all families and owners. SAHA will make an exception to this requirement if the family's whereabouts must be protected due to domestic abuse or witness protection.

## Enterprise Income Verification (EIV)

EIV is the verification of income information that is retrieved electronically through an independent source, making use of income information databases during eligibility and recertification, including the following:

- Social Security Administration (including Social Security [SS] and Supplemental Security Income [SSI]);
- State Wage Information Collection Agencies; and
- Private vendors.

# Family Obligations



## Eligibility

- Any information supplied by the family must be true and complete.
- After receiving a voucher, the family must find a SAHA-approved unit prior to expiration date. Any requests for an extension of the voucher term must be submitted to SAHA, in writing, before the voucher expiration date.
- The family must supply any information that SAHA or HUD determines necessary in the administration of the program, including disclosing and verifying social security numbers and submitting consent forms for obtaining information.

## Unit

- The family must notify SAHA and the owner before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease, and comply with lease requirements regarding written notice to the owner. The family must also provide written notice to SAHA at the same time the owner is notified.
- The family is responsible for any Housing Quality Standards (HQS) deficiencies caused by the family such as failure to pay tenant-provided utilities or appliances or damages to the dwelling unit/premises beyond normal wear and tear\* by any member of the household or guest.
- The family must not sublease the unit, assign the lease, or transfer the unit. Subleasing includes receiving payment to cover rent and utility costs by a person living in the unit who is not listed as a family member.
- The family must not own or have any interest in the unit.

## Fraud

- Family members must not commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program.
- An assisted family or member of the family must not receive HCV program assistance while receiving another housing subsidy, for the same unit or a different unit under any other federal, state or local housing assistance program.
- The family must repay all debts owed to SAHA. If the family enters a repayment agreement with SAHA, the family must abide by the terms of the repayment agreement.
- A family must not receive HCV program assistance while residing in a unit owned by a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister or brother of any member of the family, unless SAHA has determined (and has notified the owner and the family of such determination) that approving rental of the unit, notwithstanding such relationship, would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities.



# Family Obligations

## Changes

- The composition of the assisted family residing in the unit must be approved by SAHA. The family must notify SAHA in writing of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child within **10 business days**.
- The family must request SAHA approval to add a family member as an occupant of the unit. No other person except members of the family may live in the unit except for SAHA-approved foster children or live-in aides.
- The family must notify SAHA in writing within **10 business days** if any family member no longer lives in the unit.
- The family must supply any information requested by SAHA to verify that the family is living in the unit or information related to family absence from the unit.
- If any family member will be absent from the unit for a period greater than 45 consecutive days, the family must notify SAHA in writing within **10 days** of the member leaving the unit.

## Recertification

- The family must supply any information requested by SAHA or HUD for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition.
- The family must attend all reexamination appointments scheduled by SAHA. The family may reschedule an appointment for good cause,\* or if it needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Requests to reschedule appointments must be made orally or in writing.

## Informal Hearings

If your housing assistance is scheduled for termination, you may submit a written request\* for an informal hearing within **ten (10) business days** after the date of proposed termination.

Once completed and submitted in a timely manner, SAHA will send you an appointment letter scheduling your informal hearing within **thirty (30) days** after the request has been received. You may bring evidence, witnesses, legal or other representation at your own expense.

After a hearing date is agreed upon, you may request to reschedule only for good cause.

If you do not appear at the scheduled hearing and you have not rescheduled the hearing in advance, termination of assistance will be upheld unless you can provide good cause for failure to appear.



# HQS Inspections

The goal of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing at an affordable cost to low-income families. Housing Quality Standards (HQS), set by The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), helps SAHA accomplish that goal by defining standard housing and establishing the minimum quality criteria necessary for the health and safety of program participants.

## What are Housing Quality Standards (HQS)?

All units must maintain HQS throughout the term of this contract.

SAHA staff will ensure that current and potential HCV housing units meet the minimum acceptable criteria for each of the 13 key housing quality components addressed in HQS inspections:

- Sanitary Facilities,
- Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal,
- Space and Security,
- Thermal Environment,
- Illumination and Electricity,
- Structure and Materials,
- Interior Air Quality,
- Water Supply,
- Lead-Based Paint,
- Access,
- Site and Neighborhood,
- Sanitary Conditions, and
- Smoke Detectors.

## When are HQS Inspections Conducted?

SAHA conducts initial inspections to approve a unit for participation in the HCV program. The unit must pass the HQS inspection before any Housing Assistance Payments can be paid to the owner; therefore, it is best if the family does not move into the unit before approval.

Once a participant moves into the unit, inspections are conducted on an annual basis, or a special inspection may be requested between annual inspections by the owner, the family or a third party as a result of problems identified with a unit.

## What happens if the inspection fails?

SAHA will allow for one failed inspection and one re-inspection; or one no show/not ready, one failed inspection, and one re-inspection.

Units that do not pass inspection within the guidelines stated above or within **thirty (30) days** of the initial inspection will result in a Final Fail.

If the time period for correcting the deficiencies has elapsed, or the unit is given a “Final Fail” rating, SAHA will notify the owner and the family that the unit has been rejected and that the family must search for another unit.

## Family Responsibilities: HQS Inspections

The family is responsible for any HQS deficiency caused by the family, including the following:

- Tenant-paid utilities not in service;
- Failure to provide or maintain family-supplied appliances; or
- Damage to the unit or premises caused by a household member or guest, beyond normal wear and tear.



# Recertifications

SAHA must conduct a reexamination of family income and composition. SAHA will begin the recertification process at least **120 days** in advance of its scheduled effective date.

SAHA will mail a recertification packet to the family, which will ask the family to provide required information including the following :

- A SAHA-designated recertification form;
- An Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice; and
- Supporting documentation related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

## **Family Responsibilities: Recertifications**

The family must supply any information required by SAHA and HUD for use in a regularly scheduled reexamination or interim reexamination of family income and composition in accordance with HUD requirements.

The family must complete and submit by mail the Recertification Packet and all required supporting documentation within **ten (10) business days**.

## **Biennial Recertification**

Unless otherwise stated, SAHA will conduct recertification of household income and family composition every two years.

## **Triennial Recertification**

For disabled/elderly participants on a fixed income, SAHA will conduct recertification of household income and family composition every three years.



# Changes

## Changes of Income

Effective January 1, 2017, the family no longer needs to report **increases of income** except at the time of recertification. **If you are a participant in the Homeownership Program, Family Self-Sufficiency Program or at Zero-Income,**

you are still required to report increases within **ten (10) business days** of the change.

**01**

If required to report increases in income, the Head of Household must complete and submit a Change of Income Packet within **ten (10) business days**.

**02**

The Head of Household must include any supporting documentation with their change including paycheck stubs, letter from the employer, etc.

## Changes of Family Composition - Remove a Family Member

The family must report to SAHA the removal of a family member from the unit within **ten (10) business days**.

**01**

The Head of Household must complete and submit a Change of Family Composition/Remove Family Member packet to remove a household member.

## Changes of Family Composition - Add a Family Member

The family must report any **change of family composition** in writing. The family must request approval for the addition of a family member as an occupant of the unit prior to move-in of the new family member. The family must report to SAHA, in writing, the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child within **ten (10) business days** (does not need SAHA approval).

**01**

The Head of Household and the individual being added must complete and submit a Change of Family Composition/Add Family Member packet to add a household member. The individual being added must meet SAHA's eligibility criteria and documentation requirements.

**02**

SAHA will make its determination within **30 business days** of receiving all information required to verify the individual's eligibility.

**03**

If SAHA determines the individual meets SAHA's criteria, SAHA will provide written approval to the family.

**04**

If SAHA determines that an individual does not meet SAHA's criteria, SAHA will notify the family of its decision to deny approval of the new family or household member and the reasons for the denial.

**05**

If the owner denies the addition, but the individual is otherwise eligible to be added to the household, SAHA will issue the family a new voucher and the family must try to find an acceptable unit as soon as possible.



# Moving

**There are five conditions under which an assisted family is allowed to move to a new unit with continued assistance:**

1. The family has a right to terminate the lease on notice to the owner for the owner's breach or otherwise.
  - If the family terminates the lease, the family must a notice of termination to the owner and must give SAHA a copy of the notice at the same time.
2. The lease for the family's unit has been terminated by mutual agreement of the owner and the family.
  - If the family and the owner mutually agree to terminate the lease for the family's unit, the family must give SAHA a copy of the termination agreement signed by both parties.
3. The owner has given the family a notice to vacate, has commenced an action to evict the family, or has obtained a court judgment or other process allowing the owner to evict the family. The family must give SAHA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
4. The family or a member of the family is or has been the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and the move is needed to protect the health or safety of the family or family member.
5. SAHA has terminated the assisted lease for the family's unit for the owner's breach.
6. SAHA determines that the family's current unit does not meet the HQS space standards because of a change in family composition.

SAHA will deny a family permission to make more than one elective move during any 12-month period. SAHA will consider an exception to this policy for the following reasons:

- To protect the health or safety of a family member (e.g., lead-based paint hazards, domestic violence, etc.);
- To accommodate a change in family circumstances (e.g., new employment, school attendance, etc.); or
- To address an emergency situation over which a family has no control.

## How to Request a Move

### 01

In order to request a move (Early Release from lease agreement), the household must complete and submit a Request to Move Form.

### 02

Upon receipt of the family's notification to move, SAHA will determine whether the move is approvable and notify the family within **ten (10) business days** of its determination.

### 03

For families approved to move to a new unit, SAHA will perform a recertification and issue a new voucher within **ten (10) business days** of SAHA's written approval to move.

### 04

The family must notify SAHA and the owner before moving out of the unit.

## Portability

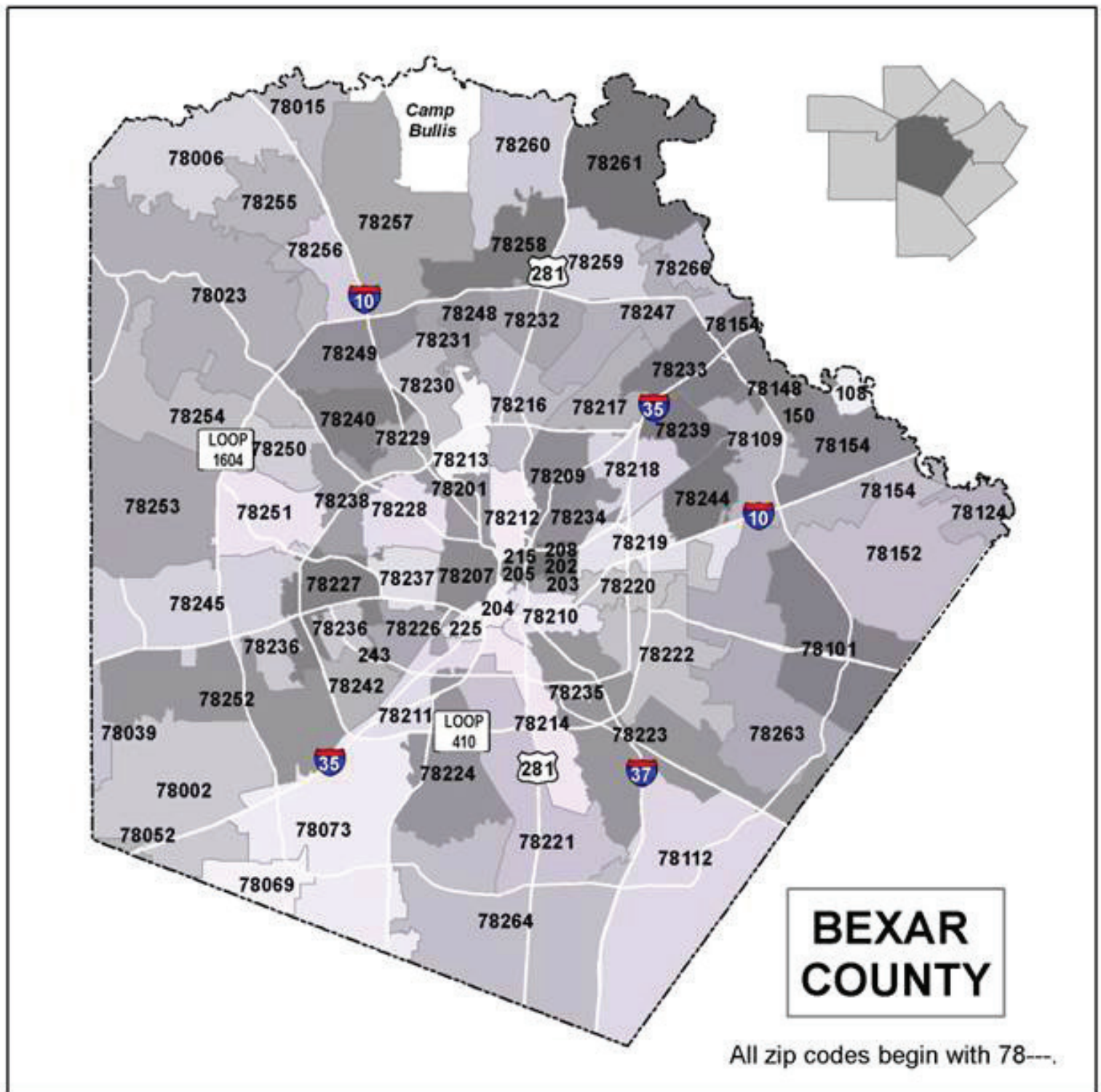
Under the HCV program, the voucher holder may choose to move to another housing authority's jurisdiction. A family wishing to port-out of SAHA's jurisdiction must consult with their Housing Assistance Specialist to verify the necessary procedures for moving.

Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) in the area include:

PHA	Contact	Phone Number
Austin	Jim Hargrove	(512) 477-4488
Bexar County	Laura Morales	(210) 225-0071
Boerne	Kandace Stofa	(830) 249-9357
Floresville	Sharon Boester	(830) 393-6560

# Where Can I Look for Housing?

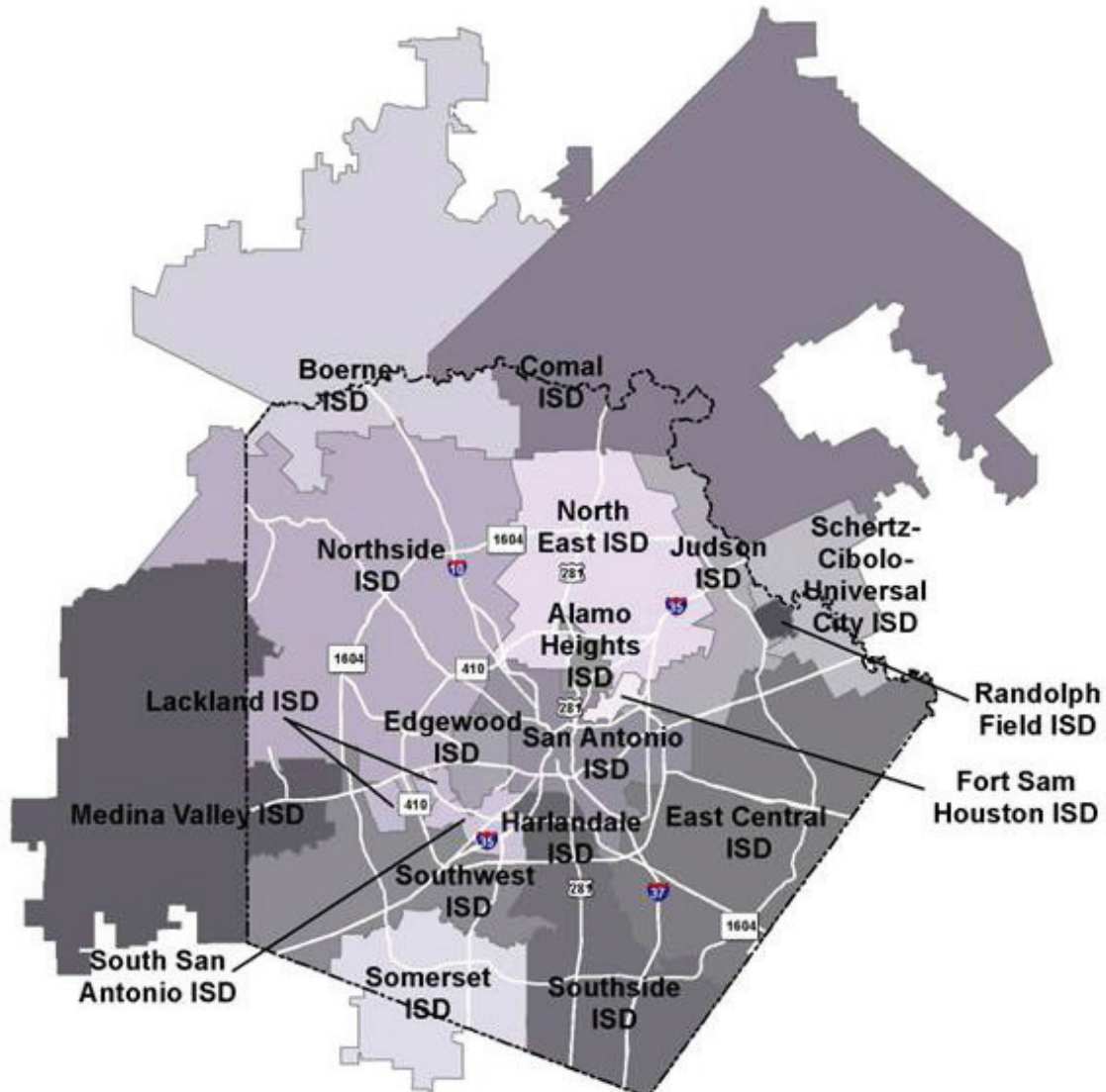
The San Antonio Housing Authority can exercise its jurisdictional authority not only in the City of San Antonio, but throughout the County of Bexar County.



# Where Can I Look for Housing?

## Bexar County School Districts

Alamo Heights ISD	Northeast ISD
Boerne ISD	Northside ISD
Comal ISD	Randolph Field ISD
East Central ISD	San Antonio ISD
Edgewood ISD	Schertz-Cibolo-U City ISD
Ft Sam Houston ISD	Somerset ISD
Harlandale ISD	South San Antonio ISD
Judson ISD	Southwest ISD
Lackland ISD	Southside ISD
Medina Valley ISD	



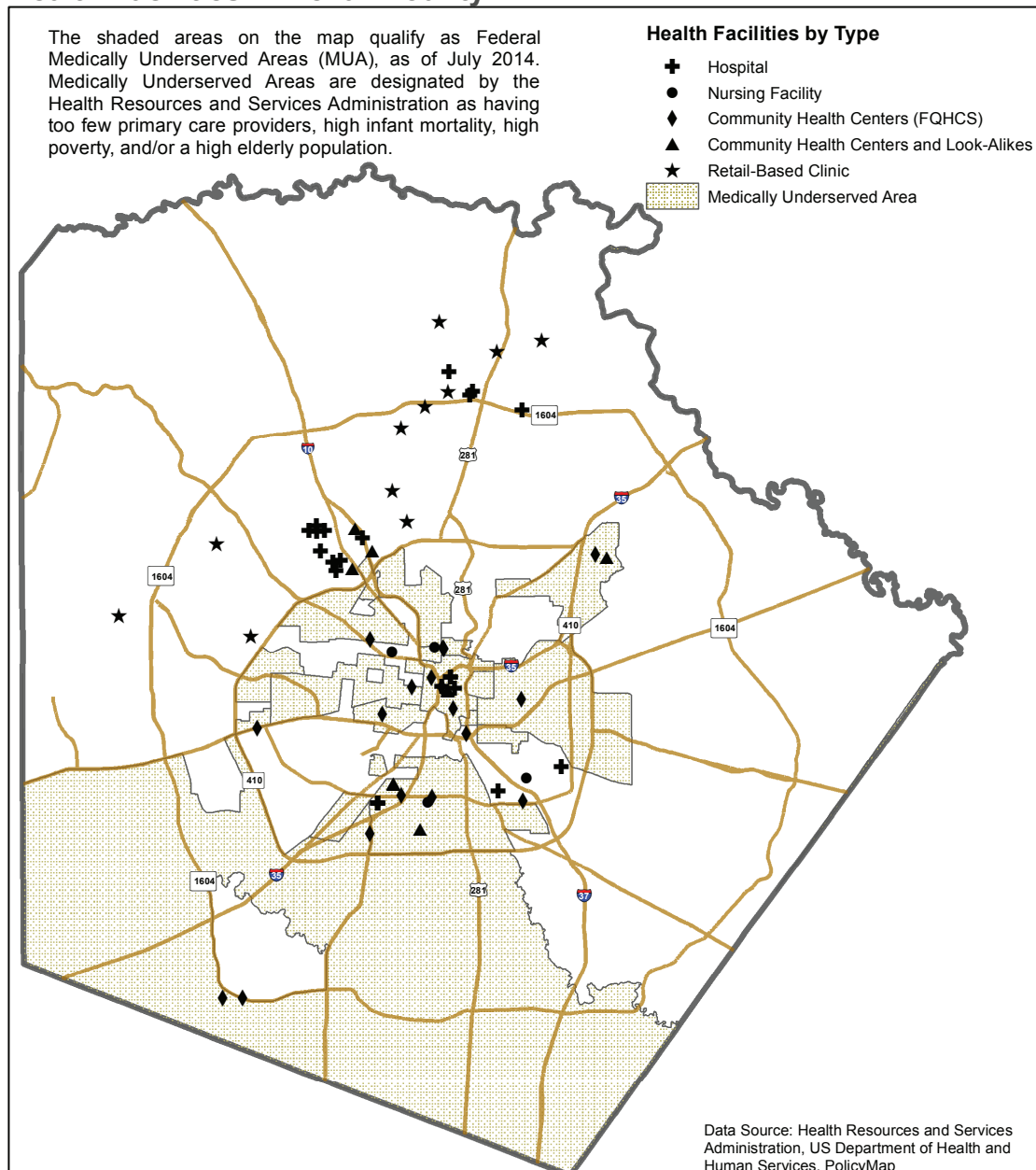
**Source:** Texas Education Agency 2014, BM911 Streets



# Where Can I Look for Housing?

## Medically Underserved Areas & Health Facilities in Bexar County

### Medically Underserved Areas & Health Facilities in Bexar County



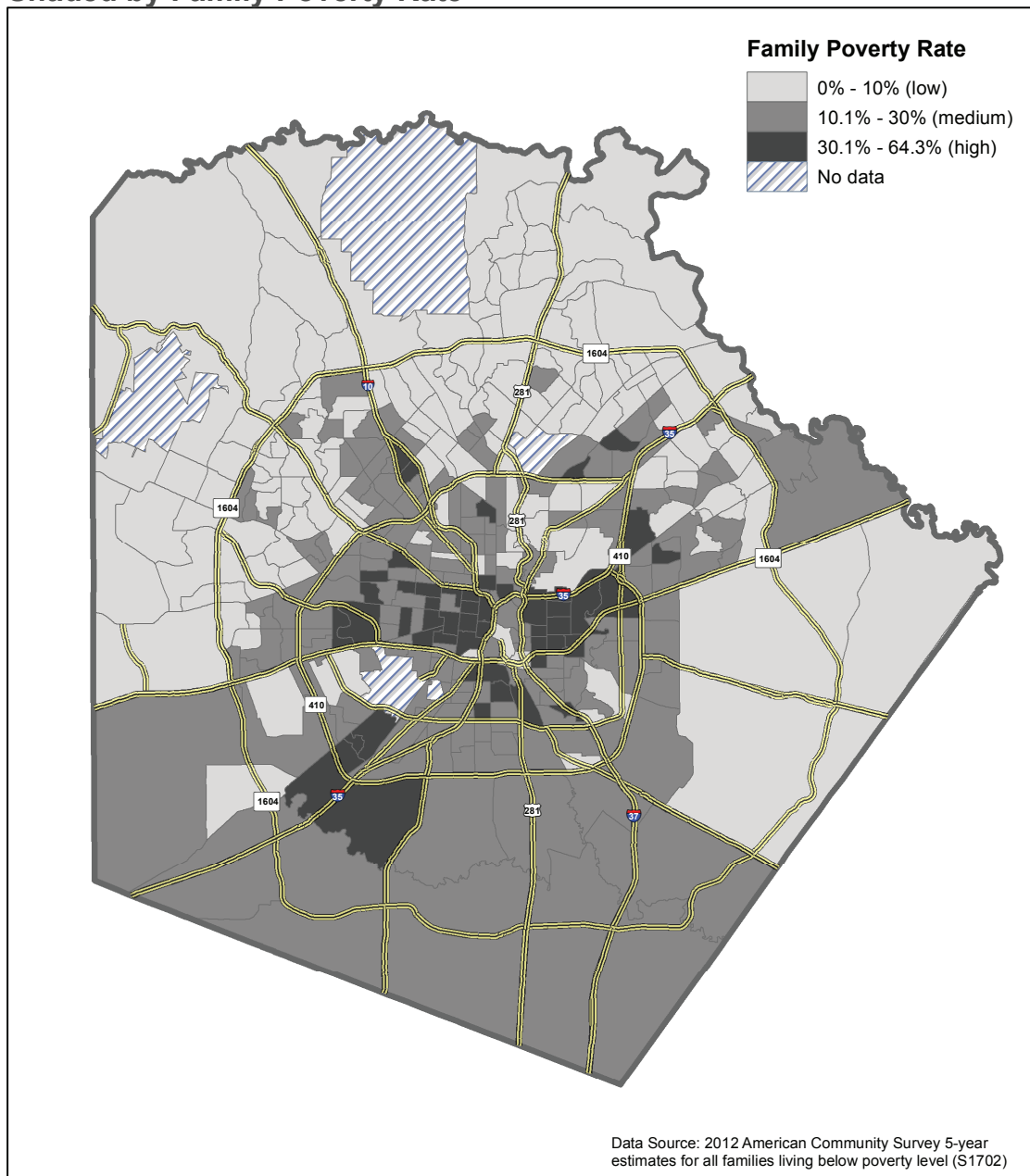
To view an interactive version of this map, please visit  
<http://www.saha.org/index.php/current-residents/2012-03-20-42-49/housing-choice-maps>

The San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) has attempted to assure the accuracy of GIS data, information, and maps for its internal uses and for no other purposes. We advise they are to be used as an informational tool only and are not meant to be used for projects requiring survey accuracy. Because SAHA collects most GIS data from multiple public and private sources and the data, information, and maps are dynamic and in a constant state of maintenance, correction and update, data accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Please contact the Planning, Policy, and Public Affairs Department at (210) 477-6122 to report any data inaccuracies. The GIS data, information, and maps are not to be sold or redistributed without the permission of SAHA.

# Where Can I Look for Housing?

## Bexar County Census Tracts Shaded by Family Poverty Rate

Bexar County Census Tracts  
Shaded by Family Poverty Rate



To view an interactive version of this map, please visit

<http://www.saha.org/index.php/current-residents/2012-03-20-42-49/housing-choice-maps>

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# Prohibited Areas

Currently, the San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) is not providing housing assistance for units located on the streets listed below, in the neighborhoods under which they are listed.

## The Glen

Glen Arbor	Glen Manor
Glen Bay	Glen Meadow
Glen Briar	Glen Mist
Glen Brook	Glen Nook
Glen Chase	Glen Pakr
Glen Croft	Glen Pass
Glen Cross	Glen Point
Glen Falls	Glen Shire
Glen Glove	Glen Side
Glen Haven	Glen Stone
Glen Hill	Glen Trails
Glen Hurst	Glen Vista
Glen Lake	7400-8099 Glen Mont

## The Camelot II

Ashbrook	Mallow
Belforest	Neston
Brecon	Oldham
Broadwick	Quail Hill
Bridleway	Sarepto
Chipping	Stockport
Cork	Swinford
Langport	Winsford

## Windsor Heights

Brothers Lane  
Windsor Hollow  
Oak Chase  
Windsor Oaks

## Jasper Park

6725 Walzem Road



Please do not search for units in these areas, as your search time is limited and SAHA will deny any Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) for a unit in a prohibited area.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at (210) 477-6262.

**The Glen**



# Transportation

VIA Metropolitan Transit is the main public transportation in San Antonio.

## Customer Information Center

Bus Routing & Scheduling Information | (210) 362-2020  
Customer Comments | (210) 362-2019

## Customer Service Centers

### VIA MetroCenter

1021 San Pedro  
(210) 362-2020  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Crossroads Park and Ride

151 Crossroads Blvd.  
(210) 731-6616  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Downtown Information Center

260 E. Houston St.  
(210) 475-9008  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Sat. 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### Ingram Transit Center

3215 Northwestern Dr.  
(210) 521-6773  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Kel-Lac Transit Center

7183 Highway 90 West  
(210) 679-0083  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Medican Center Transit Center

7535 Merton Minter  
(210) 614-4615  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Randolph Park and Ride

9400 IH 35 North  
(210) 564-8175  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Ellis Alley Information Center

212 Chestnut  
(210) 299-1213  
Mon. - Fri. 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

## VIATrans

Complimentary para-transit is provided to individuals who have disabilities that prevent them from using fixed route bus service. VIATrans, ADA complementary para-transit is provided during the same hours of the day, same days per week and within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed bus route.

Applications for VIATrans can be acquired from the VIA website, <http://www.viainfo.net/Applications/viatransApp.pdf>, or by calling the Accessible Services Department at (210) 362-2140 or TTY (210) 362-2019.

## Office and VIATrans Eligibility

(210) 362-2140  
TTY (210) 362-2019

## VIATrans Reservations and Cancellations

(210) 362-5050  
TTY (210) 362-5060

