



Greater Richmond Interfaith Program Family Housing Program

**A guide to the eligibility requirements and the
referral process for families experiencing homelessness.**

Greater Richmond Interfaith Program

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide details the requirements governing access to the Family Housing Program for families experiencing homelessness. Families must meet eligibility criteria for referral into the program. These requirements can change without notice. This guide seeks to clarify eligibility requirements. This guide provides comprehensive information on these requirements. Updated guides will be available when regulations change.

Affirmative Marketing and Community Outreach Program

The Greater Richmond Interfaith Programs-Emergency Shelter and Family Housing Program promotes equal opportunities for a safe emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for homeless families, regardless of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, age, disability or HIV/AIDS status. Notices will be sent to other shelters in Contra Costa County, as well as other homeless services providers. Announcements of bed availability will be posted in the GRIP West County Resource Center lobby located at 165 22nd Street in Richmond.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY HOUSING

WHAT IS THE GRIP FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM AND WHO IS GRIP?

The Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) and GRIP Family Housing.

Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) is an interfaith, interracial coalition of 41 member congregations - Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and Sikh - working together to address critical issues of human dignity and social justice in West Contra Costa County.

GRIP's three core programs that are a part of the Family Housing Program are the Souper Center, the West County Resource Center and the Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Program; a brief description of each follows:

- **Souper Center** – a soup kitchen that serves lunch 365 days a year to anyone who is hungry and residents of the Family Housing Program.
- **West County Resource Center** – is a multi-service center exclusively for homeless people that provide basic services such as showers, laundry, mail and access to telephones; the case management component primarily helps consumers find a path to increase their income and obtain permanent housing.
- **Family Housing Program** – provides emergency shelter and transitional housing for homeless families. Families may reside in emergency shelter for up to three (3) months and transitional housing for up to one (1) year; limited extensions of stay may be approved by the Program Manager.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR GRIP HOUSING?

Families seeking emergency and transitional housing assistance must apply through the GRIP West County Resource Center. Applications and referrals are accepted through the Intake Coordinator located at 165 22nd Street, Richmond, Monday-Friday between 8:00 am and 2:00 pm. All applicants must complete an initial intake with the Intake Coordinator prior to being placed on the Waiting List. Applicants must bring verification of homelessness, ID Cards, SSI Cards, Birth Certificates (if available), verification of income and marriage licenses.

Categorical Eligibility

The following categories of families are eligible for GRIP Family Housing Program:

- Families with children under age 18. A family may be 1 or 2 parent households with children. If a child is 18 and is still in high school, (child is considered to be a dependent) the family remains eligible for the program. If any 18 year old or older child has a documented disability and is considered to be a dependent, the family remains eligible for the program.
- Pregnant women at *any* stage of pregnancy, with verification from medical personnel. In such cases, the woman may enter the program alone or with her spouse/partner.
- West Contra Costa County Residents have a priority. Verification of residency may include one or more of the following: Documentation of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, WTWII 10 or WCASI 10) or other government benefits, children's school enrollment documents, California Driver's License or Identification, (CDL/ID), most recent utility bills or rent/lease agreements. All other documents must be reviewed and approved by the Family Housing Program Manager.
- Referrals may be accepted from other counties; these referrals will be placed on waiting lists established for each county.
- Must be able and have the desire to obtain employment and want to become self sufficient.
- Must have current PPD (TB) test (dated within 90 days).
- Must be clean and sober. A Urine Analysis (UA) will be completed by the Family Housing Program staff at the time of interview with the Program Manager. It is imperative for the integrity and safety of the program that all adult (parents) applicants be tested prior to entry.

If the UA test produces a positive reading for any illegal substance or alcohol, the family member will be allowed in the program under a contract for Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment as a requirement for continued stay in the program.

Any exceptions to be reviewed and approved by the Family Housing Program Manager.

Financial Eligibility

Income

If the family is categorically eligible for the GRIP Family Housing Program, the Resource Center must determine if they meet the financial criteria for admittance. Families do not need to be receiving cash assistance to qualify for the program.

Families must have applied for entitlement benefits (if not working) prior to intake and have documentation available at time of intake.

Proof of income from all sources is required. (i.e. paycheck stub, unemployment award letter, worker’s comp approval letter/check stub, SSI/SSDI/SSA award letters)

Items that do not count as income when establishing eligibility include:

- Food stamps
- Training stipends up to \$130 per month
- Higher education (college level) grants, loans and work study
- Earnings of children under age 14, as well as up to six months of earnings of full-time students over age 14.

The Family Housing Program requires that all residents participate in an individually designed money management program to be determined and included with the family’s service plan.

Proving Homelessness

Once a family has met categorical and financial eligibility criteria, homelessness must be proven.

A family is considered homeless if:

- They have no housing currently available to them (including temporary accommodations with family or friends)

OR

- The housing that is currently available to them is not feasible because of one of the following (and the family has nowhere else to go) –
 - Natural disaster
 - Imminent eviction or foreclosure
 - Threat to the health and/or safety of the household
 - Mistreatment of a household member/domestic violence

What Documents are Proof a Family is Homeless?

Situation	Verifications Needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural disaster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Verification of inhabitability by Red Cross, fire department or police department.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eviction, foreclosure or vacate notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Copy of Judgment for possession/foreclosure ➤ Letter from Treatment Program w/exit date ➤ 30 Day Notice or 3 Day Notice from Landlord or Property Management Company

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat to health and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proof of severe and uncorrected violations of state sanitary code verified by Board of Health or code enforcement agency. ➤ Proof of overcrowding under state sanitary code as verified by Board of Health. ➤ Proof of immediate threat to health and safety as assessed and verified by GRIP STAFF or Housing Assistance Provider.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Police report or police escort verifying the nature of the abuse or mistreatment. ➤ Copy of active restraining order.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referring Agency Letter/Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Any member of the Continuum of Care Board ➤ Other Non-Profits in Contra Costa County ➤ Referral Form completed from other agency

Disqualification Criteria

A family can be disqualified for referral or intake if:

- The family has used the Family Housing Program within the past 90 days. Families who refused, left, or were terminated from GRIP Family Housing Program are ineligible for referral/intake for 90 days from their last day in the program.
- The family “became homeless” for the purpose of making itself eligible for referral/intake to the Family Housing Program.
- Homeless families are ineligible for the Family Housing Program if they fail to cooperate with case managers and service plans at the GRIP Resource Center prior to referral.
- An adult in the family has quit a job or reduced income, without “good cause”, within 90 days of referral/intake to the GRIP Family Housing Program.
- The family was evicted from housing, “in whole or in part”, for destruction of property or because a family member engaged in criminal activities. This does not apply if the person who committed the crime is no longer a part of the household. Referrals based on this information will be reviewed for special circumstances by the Program Manager.
- Must be clean and sober.

ACCESSING FAMILY HOUSING

Once a family meets all the eligibility requirements, the Resource Center will complete the intake and make a referral to the Family Housing Program Manager. Each family must interview with the Program

Manager who will make the final determination whether the family will obtain placement in the GRIP Family Housing program (Emergency or Transitional Housing).

Other Agency Referrals and Process

Referrals are allowed from any other agency in the Contra Costa County area. The family must have a completed a referral from the referring agency. (See copy of form attached) This form must be presented to the GRIP Resource Center when the family is referred to the center. Blank forms are available to the family, however they must have it completed and returned to the center for intake. The Resource Center is not responsible for completing the referral form for the family. Any agency may make a referral to the Resource Center.

Inter-county referrals will be accepted, however all West Contra Costa County residents have priority placement status. A waiting list will be maintained by the Family Housing Program Manager and will be divided up by county. The waiting lists are subject to closure at anytime. A formal announcement will be made when the waiting lists are closed and reopened throughout the year.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The GRIP Family Housing Program is an equal opportunity program. Rules for acceptance and participation are without regard to race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, national origin, age, physical handicap, or status as a veteran.

GRIP Family Housing Program reserves the right to make changes to the eligibility criteria without notification.