

# Bridges Housing Assistance Program Navigation Guide



*“Do you need help paying your rent?”*

*“Have you or an adult in your household been diagnosed with a serious mental illness?”*

## **Section 1: Program Information**

**Purpose of the Program:** The Bridges Program helps individuals or families who have at least one adult with a serious mental illness pay for housing. The Bridges program provides assistance until the individual or household becomes eligible for another housing assistance program such as Section 8. Bridges requires the household to apply to or attempt to get on a waitlist for Section 8, and once funding is received from Section 8, funding from Bridges stops. Similarly to Section 8, you will pay 30–40% of your income for housing and Bridges will pay the rest.

**Deadline:** The 2020–2021 funding cycle is currently closed, but you will still want to reach out to a service provider to create an application for when funding becomes available.

**Contact Information:** Bridges has different contacts for different service areas. You must complete an application through a Bridges program staff member. All contact information can be downloaded through this website:

<http://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/Satellite?c=Page&cid=1403290262950&d=Touch&pageName=External%2FPage%2FEXTStandardLayout>

\*\*\*Click the first link under Program Contact Information, titled ‘Bridges Program Contacts’

Below is the contact information for some Twin Cities Bridges contacts. Additional contact information can be found at the link listed above.

## Minneapolis and St. Paul

Metropolitan Council HRA	
Service Area:	Hennepin, Ramsey and Anoka Counties
Contact-Hennepin County:	Martin Marty
Address:	1800 Chicago Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone:	612.348.8124
Email:	<a href="mailto:Martin.marty@hennepin.us">Martin.marty@hennepin.us</a>
Contact-Ramsey County:	Bill Calmbacher
Address:	160 East Kellogg Blvd., Suite 9800, St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone:	651.266.3623
Email:	<a href="mailto:William.calmbacher@co.ramsey.mn.us">William.calmbacher@co.ramsey.mn.us</a>
Contact- Anoka County:	Jennifer Crotteau
Address:	2100 Third Ave. N., Anoka, MN 55303
Phone:	763.324.1846
Email:	<a href="mailto:Jennifer.crotteau@co.anoka.mn.us">Jennifer.crotteau@co.anoka.mn.us</a>

## St. Cloud:

St. Cloud HRA	
Service Area:	Benton, Sherburne, Stearns and Wright Counties
Contact:	Meg Sheehan, Housing Coordinator
Address:	157 Roosevelt Rd. Suite 300, St. Cloud, MN 56301
Phone:	320.240.3326
Email:	<a href="mailto:Meg.sheehan@ccstcloud.org">Meg.sheehan@ccstcloud.org</a>

## Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

**Basic Eligibility:** The exact income limits vary by area, and can be found by visiting the Housing and Urban Development website here: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>. Households with lower than 50% of median income may qualify. In the Twin Cities Metro Area, here are the average limits, although it can vary from city to city. In addition, at least one adult family member must have a serious mental illness and you must have attempted to apply for or be on a waitlist for Section 8.

FY 2020 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income <a href="#">Explanation</a>	FY 2020 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area</b>	\$103,400	Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$) <a href="#">Explanation</a>	36,200	41,400	46,550	<b>51,700</b>	55,850	60,000	64,150	68,250
		Extremely Low Income Limits (\$)* <a href="#">Explanation</a>	21,700	24,800	27,900	<b>31,000</b>	33,500	36,000	39,640	44,120
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$) <a href="#">Explanation</a>	54,950	62,800	70,650	<b>78,500</b>	84,800	91,100	97,350	103,650

**NOTE:** HUD generally uses the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) area definitions in the calculation of income limit program parameters. However, to ensure that program parameters do not vary significantly due to area definition changes, HUD has used custom geographic definitions for the **Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area**.

The **Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI HUD Metro FMR Area** contains the following areas: Anoka County, MN; Carver County, MN; Chisago County, MN; Dakota County, MN; Hennepin County, MN; Isanti County, MN; Ramsey County, MN; Scott County, MN; Sherburne County, MN; Washington County, MN; Wright County, MN; Pierce County, WI; and St. Croix County, WI.

- Bridges gives priority to individuals in the following circumstances:
  - Homeless
  - Living in a psychiatric hospital
  - Living in a community-based residential treatment facility
  - Living in substandard and unaffordable units

### Section 3: Application Process

**You will complete the Bridges application working with the Local Housing Authority and the Bridges Program Contact.**

**The Bridges Program Contact will verify the following information:**

- ☐ Income requirements are met
- ☐ Priority population requirements are met (listed above)

- ☐ A mental health professional will have to verify a serious mental illness diagnosis for you or another adult member of your household
- ☐ That you are on a waitlist or attempted to apply for Section 8

## **Section 4: Expectations (What will happen?)**

### **What is the timeline for receiving services?**

- Currently the 2020–2021 funding cycle is closed, and Bridges is not currently accepting applications
- However, it is best to contact your Bridges Program Contact to begin working on a competitive application for when additional funding becomes available.

### **With whom will participants be communicating?**

You will communicate with the local housing authority as well as your Bridges Program Contact. Contact information for local housing authorities can be found here: [https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/PHA\\_Contact\\_Report\\_MN.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/PHA_Contact_Report_MN.pdf)

### **What additional steps must participants take to receive services?**

- If you qualify for a Bridges Housing voucher, you will still need to find a place to live.
- The place will have to be within size and rent limits, and the landlord must accept Bridges as payment
- You can find places to live through HousingLink (<https://www.housinglink.org/>), looking at bulletin boards in the community, searching newspaper ads, getting recommendations from people you know, by asking your PHA or nonprofits that help with housing, or by working with your Bridges Caseworker
- You must remain on a waitlist for Section 8 while receiving Bridges funding

**Updated:** 8/10/2020

**About Summer Reads:**

This children's literacy tutor resource was created by Summer Reads VISTA members.

Summer Reads is an [AmeriCorps VISTA national service](#) program of Literacy Minnesota. For 8 weeks over the summer, Summer Reads VISTA members volunteer full-time as children's/youth literacy mentors in schools, libraries and out-of-school-time programs across Minnesota. They bring literacy to life for low-income students through a variety of activities – one-on-one tutoring, creative enrichment activities like using arts and drama to explore language or practicing vocabulary and comprehension in science and other subjects. They also connect students and parents/caregivers to community resources through wrap-around basic needs support. At the same time, the VISTA members build their own leadership, explore career paths, pay for college and become lifelong advocates for the communities they serve due to the power of their experience. [www.literacymn.org/summerreads](http://www.literacymn.org/summerreads)