

Woodcliff Lake Borough

**AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE:
RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

OPERATING MANUAL

March 6, 2026

**WOODCLIFF LAKE BOROUGH MANUAL FOR
AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE: RENTAL ASSISTANCE
VERY LOW-, LOW- AND MODERATE- INCOME**

I. PREFACE

N.J.A.C. 5:97 – 8.8 (a) states that “...at least 30 percent of all development fees collected and interest earned shall be used to provide affordability assistance to low- and moderate-income households in affordable units included in the municipality’s Fair Share Plan. One-third of the affordability assistance portion shall be used to provide affordability assistance to very low-income households. Affordability assistance programs may include down payment assistance, security deposit assistance, low interest loans, rental assistance, assistance with homeowner’s association or condominium fees and special assessments, and assistance with emergency repairs.”

It is also important to note that the spending of trust fund money by Woodcliff Lake Borough (the “Borough”), to comply with the required affordability assistance, on units described in the Fair Share Plan does not create Fair Housing credits for the Borough.

The Borough is entering into an agreement with its Administrative Agent, Piazza & Associates, Inc. (“P&A”) to help implement a Rental Assistance Program and funding that program with funds from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund as set forth in the adopted Affordable Housing Trust Fund Spending Plan.

To this end, the Borough of Woodcliff Lake (“Borough”) will set aside up to \$140,000 to fund a Rental Assistance Program (“RAP”) that will provide financial assistance to income-eligible, very-low, low- and moderate- income tenants in deed restricted affordable rental units in the Borough.

II. INTRODUCTION

This RAP Operating Manual has been prepared to assist in the administration of the Woodcliff Lake Rental Assistance Program. It will serve as a guide to the program staff and applicants.

This manual describes the basic content and operation of the program, examines program purpose and provides the guidelines for implementing the program. It has been prepared with a flexible format allowing for periodic updates of its sections, when required, due to revisions in regulations and/or procedures.

This manual explains the steps in the RAP process. It describes the eligibility requirements for participation in the program, program criteria, funding terms and conditions, contract payments and overall program administration.

The program requirements are subject to change and grant funding is subject to availability.

The following represents the procedures developed to implement the RAP.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Rental Assistance Program (“RAP”) provides a one-time rental assistance grant to income-eligible tenants residing in deed-restricted affordable rental units located in the Borough of Woodcliff Lake.

The Borough will provide a grant equal to one (1) month of the tenant’s contract rent, as specified in the lease for the affordable unit. The payment will be made directly to the Landlord or Property Management Company on behalf of the tenant.

Assistance under this program is limited to one grant per certified tenant household residing in an affordable rental unit. However, if the unit becomes vacant and is subsequently occupied by a new income-eligible tenant, the new tenant household may apply for assistance under the program.

All grants are subject to the availability of funds within the Borough’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

IV. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

This program is limited to tenants in rental apartments that are deed restricted as very low-, low- and moderate-income units as defined in the Fair Housing Act, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 et seq.

Applicants who are certified by Piazza & Associates, Inc., working on behalf of the Borough, as income eligible for the very low-, low- and moderate income units, and who become tenants of very low-, low- and moderate income units will automatically qualify for a subsidy under this program.

The certification process is set forth, in detail, in the Rental Operating Manual of the Township, as prepared by Piazza & Associates, Inc.

The qualification shall remain in full force and effect until such time as the program is no longer funded or the Borough requires a recertification for this benefit.

V. FUNDING AND DISTRIBUTION

The funding projections are detailed in the Spending Plan.

VI. THE PROCESS

- A. The Borough will designate a qualified Administrative Agent to prepare the documentation and implement this program.
- B. P&A will prepare and mail a letter to the Landlords and applicants, announcing this program and its parameters. The letter to the Landlord shall request an acknowledgement of their willingness to participate in the program.
- C. At each new occupancy of an Affordable Rental Unit, the Administrative Agent will mail a letter to the new Tenant with a copy to the Landlord announcing the program and including an application form. Depending on availability of funds, the Borough may at its option choose to discontinue offering grants to new Tenants of affordable units in order to extend funding availability for current Tenants participating in the program.
- D. Income eligibility for the RAP is based on the initial certification form and accompanying documentation, sufficient for the AA to certify the gross annual income of the applicant household pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et seq., and as set forth in the applicable Operating Manual of the Borough.
- E. Verification of residency will be based on the submission by the Tenant of the RAP application form and review by P&A of the following documents:
 - 1. A Municipal Residency Form, which requires each head of household to provide the name and age of every resident of the Unit, and so to certify as to its accuracy.
 - 2. A copy of the current lease for the Affordable Unit.
- F. The AA shall inform the Borough and the Tenant as to the status of each application within 10 business days.

- G. In the event that a Tenant is not approved for the program, an appeal can be made to the Borough through the Municipal Housing Liaison.
- H. Once the Tenant is approved and certified for eligibility:
 - 1. The AA shall notify the Borough.
 - 2. The Borough will issue a payment, made payable to the Landlord or Property Management Company, in an amount equal to one (1) month of the regulated rent for the affordable unit, as specified in the tenant's lease agreement.
 - 3. The Landlord will acknowledge receipt on behalf of the Tenant; and
 - 4. The AA will notify the Tenant that the payment was made.
- I. In the event that funds within the Affordable Housing Trust Fund allocated to this program are exhausted, the Administrative Agent will notify Landlords and Tenants that no additional grants will be issued under the program.
- J. The Landlord will credit the accounts of the income-qualified Tenants receiving the grants in an amount that is equal to the funding provided to the Landlord by the Borough.
- K. The Administrative Agent will audit the program by contacting a random number of Tenants to ensure that the funding has been properly credited.
- L. The Chief Financial Officer of the Borough will monitor expenditures and available funds for this program, and will provide the Administrative Agent with at least 120 days' notice if available and anticipated funds are projected to be insufficient to continue the program.

VII. PROGRAM LIMITATIONS

The Rental Assistance Program will continue only for as long as sufficient funds remain available within the Borough's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The Borough reserves the right to modify, suspend, or terminate the program at any time based on funding availability or changes in applicable regulations.

Assistance provided under this program is limited to a one-time payment equal to one month of rent per certified tenant household.