

Information Packet

Residences at Union Place

Franklin Affordable Housing

This packet contains specific information on the affordable housing program and application process for the affordable rental units being offered at the Residences at Union Place in Franklin, MA.

Lincoln Property LLC and the Town of Franklin invite you to read this information and submit an application if you think that you meet all eligibility requirements.

Applicants must apply for a lease through the Leasing Office first. Once found eligible for a Lease, Applicants will then complete the Affordable Housing Application that this Information Packet addresses.

Please hold on to this packet until you have leased a unit as it will be a useful guide throughout the entire process.

Units are now being leased on a first-come, first-served basis.

A 40B Program

Developed by Lincoln Property Company
Phone Number: (617) 782 6900 (voicemail)

Table of Contents

General Overview and Rents.....	pg. 3
Eligibility Requirements	
<i>General Requirements.....</i>	pg. 4
<i>Maximum Income.....</i>	pg. 5
<i>How Income is Calculated.....</i>	pg. 5
<i>Allowable Assets.....</i>	pg. 6
<i>Household Size.....</i>	pg. 7
Application Process	pg. 8
Application Timeline	pg. 10
Yearly Eligibility Review.....	pg. 11
Development Description.....	pg. 12

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND RENTS

A private developer, Lincoln Property Company, and the Town of Franklin are working to provide this affordable housing opportunity in Franklin through MassHousing. In this development, **three hundred apartments** will be built in Franklin and **seventy-five** will be rented to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income.

Union Place in Franklin does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and handicap (disability). Disabled persons are entitled to request a reasonable accommodation of rules, policies, practices, or services, or to request a reasonable modification of the housing, when such accommodations or modifications are necessary to afford the disabled person equal opportunity to use and enjoy the housing.

There will be **twenty-nine 1-bedroom** apartments and **forty-six 2-bedroom** apartments. The rental prices as are follows:

<u># of Bedrooms</u>	<u>Rent</u>
1	\$ 950
2	\$ 1,175

These rents do not include utilities.

The rents are set annually using a calculation that determines the “affordable” rent, which is based on the Area Median Incomes for the Boston MSA.

Q: How long will the designated apartments remain affordable?

A: As a **current resident only**, you are considered income eligible for an affordable unit as long as your household earns an income over the next 12 months that does not exceed 140% of the current Maximum Income Limit for a household of your size.

Please see pg. 5 for the current Maximum Income Limit for your household size.

Please see **YEARLY ELIGIBILITY REVIEW** on pg. 11 for information on Income Limits for tenants who are renewing leases .

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Q: Who is eligible to apply for the affordable units in Residences at Union Place?

A: In order to qualify for an affordable unit, households must meet each of the three following criteria:

- 1.) Households must have income that qualifies within the parameters as highlighted in this section.
- 2.) Households must also be between 1 and 4 persons, but priority is given based on household composition. For questions on household size and composition, please read “**Household Size and Composition**”.
- 3.) Households cannot own a home upon move-in to their affordable unit.

Q: If I cannot qualify for a Lease based on my own income or credit history, can I have a co-signer on my Lease?

A: No. Only people who will live in the unit can sign the lease. If someone outside the household is going to help pay the rent, the amount to be paid must be listed as “Periodic Payments” on the Income Table in the Program Application. These payments will be counted towards the applying household’s income.

Q: Are there disabled-accessible units?

A: Yes, some of the units will be disabled-accessible. All households may apply for the disabled-accessible units but households in need of an accessible unit will get top priority.

Q: Who qualifies for a disabled-accessible apartment?

A: All persons with a physical or mental handicap that meet the standards established by the Department of Housing and Community Development and state laws for handicap housing. Verification of need of an accessible apartment must be provided in the form of a doctor’s note or equivalent if applicant is selected to rent one of the affordable apartments.

Q: Do I have to be a resident of the Town of Franklin to apply?

A: No. All households that meet the income guidelines specified above may apply for an affordable unit.

Maximum Income

To be eligible to apply for renting an affordable apartment, the combined annual income for all income sources of all income-earning members in the household must be at or below eighty percent of median income for the local area. Any monies you have received in the past 12 months will be counted as income. **Again, all sources of Income are counted.** Please see the Program Application for the Income Table which lists all income that will be counted. Income counted in all cases is based on GROSS and not net income. **This includes income received from assets.** Additionally, 2% of all assets that don't generate any income will be imputed as income. See "Allowable Assets" below for more information.

Household Size	Maximum Income Limit
1	\$ 46,300
2	\$ 52,950
3	\$ 59,550
4	\$ 66,150

Q: How is a household's income determined?

A: A household's income eligibility will be based on their income over the past 12 months. Income projections are not performed. In general, the income total will be a combination of all income for this calendar year added to the prorated amount of income from the last calendar year.

If a household applied for an affordable unit on July 15th, 2009, the total amount of money received by all members of the household from July 15th 2008 thru July 15th, 2009 will be counted as income. There are some exceptions that will not be counted, most notably income from employment of children under the age of 18 years.

It is not up to the household to determine what monies received over the past year should and should not be counted as their calculated income. Therefore, all monies should be listed on the application and the inclusion of these monies in determining a household's eligibility will be based on affordable housing guidelines.

Allowable Assets

There is no strict asset limit for this development but income calculations will include an imputation of 2% of the value of the total household assets. Assets may include cash, cash in savings and checking accounts, CDs, retirement accounts, net cash value of stocks, real property, bonds, and capital investments. The total amount of retained equity after the sale of a current home will be added to the total value of assets.

Example: A household has \$10,000 in savings, \$15,000 in a retirement account (\$10,000 net cash value) and a CD worth \$20,000.

*Their assets total is: $\$10,000 + \$15,000 + \$20,000 = \$45,000$
Their imputed income from assets at 2% is: $\$45,000 \times 2\% = \900 .*

Therefore, \$900 will be included in their income calculation when determining if they are income eligible for an affordable unit.

Q: I cannot withdraw money from my 401k or retirement fund, do I have to include it when I list my assets?

A: Yes. You need to include the net cash value of all your current retirement funds. We realize that most retirement funds assess large penalties for early withdrawal but this does not technically mean that you “cannot” withdraw your funds. The post-penalty amount is what you need to provide along with supporting documentation.

Q: I have a large balance in my pension (or annuity or retirement account) that I receive income from every month. Will you impute 2% income from this asset?

A: No. If a pension (or annuity or retirement account) is paying monthly income to you, **only the monthly income from the asset will be counted.** We will not impute an additional 2% onto the asset if it is actively creating documentable income.

Q: Are there eligibility exceptions for households that are barely over the income limit but considerably under the asset limit (or vice versa)?

A: No. All households must be under BOTH the income limit and the asset limit. Eligibility isn't based on only one or the other. Households can have zero assets but if they are over the income limits, they will be considered ineligible. Likewise, households can have zero income but if they are over the asset limits, they will be considered ineligible.

Household Size

Q: How is appropriate household size determined?

A: According to the Affordable Housing Program Guidelines used for this development, "household size shall be appropriate for the number of bedrooms in the dwelling apartment. It is necessary to set a minimum and maximum household size for the apartments. For example, a minimum household size of 2 persons is necessary for two bedroom apartments, and three and four bedroom homes need larger households." There is no minimum size for one bedroom apartments but applications from households with two or more people will get initial priority over single person households for the two bedroom apartments.

Q: Can a one person household lease a two-bedroom unit?

A: Yes but only when there are no larger households on the waiting list. By this program's definitions, a one person household leasing a two bedroom unit, is not a household of "appropriate" size. Therefore, "inappropriately" sized households must understand that if and when an "appropriately" sized household applies for a 2BR unit and all 2BR units are currently leased, then the applicant will have to move into an affordable one-bedroom when one becomes available.

Q: If I am currently going through a divorce/separation or planning on being divorced / separated soon, can I still apply?

A: You will need to provide proof that the separation or divorce process has begun or has already been finalized. The **Program Application** will guide you through the documentation you will need to provide. If you have only begun considering a divorce or separation, and no legal action has been taken, you cannot apply as a single head-of-household. Your application will be reviewed as if your current spouse will be moving into the affordable unit with you.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Q: What are the steps in leasing an affordable unit?

A:

Step 1: Fill out a Lease Application at the Leasing Office.

The Leasing Office reviews a household's **Lease Application** using different criteria than the Lottery Agent uses in reviewing a household's **Program Application**. At the Leasing Office, criteria such as credit scores, references, and current employment income will be reviewed. If a household is found to be eligible for a lease, they may then fill out the Affordable Housing Program Application.

Step 2: Fill out the Affordable Housing Program Application in entirety and submit the Program Application with ALL required documentation to the Lottery Agent.

The Program Application will then be reviewed by the Lottery Agent for program eligibility. Only when all documentation is received will their application be reviewed and processed.

Step 3: Notification of Affordable Housing Program Approval

If the applicant is found eligible for an affordable apartment according to program guidelines, they will be notified by phone and/or by mail. The applicant will then need to go to the Leasing Office, fill out a Lease Agreement, and put down a holding deposit for the available affordable unit.

Q: How is the Affordable Housing Program Application different from a Lease Application?

A: The Affordable Housing **Program Application** is used to determine if applicants make **more than the maximum income allowed** to be eligible for an affordable apartment according to state and program guidelines.

The **Lease Application** is used to determine if applicants have **enough income to afford the affordable rent** and have enough income remaining for other costs of living. The Lease Application uses criteria including employment history, credit score or reports, former lease history etc.

Q: What happens if I don't submit all necessary documentation or fail to correctly complete my Affordable Housing Program Application?

A: Households that submit incomplete documentation will be will be mailed a notice detailing the additional documentation that is needed to make their application complete. If the household submits all additional documentation their application will be processed in the order the application was completed. If a household fails to submit all required documentation, their application will remain in an "Incomplete Application Pool" and will only begin being processed once all requested materials have been received.

Q: What information is required when an application is submitted?

A: For an application to be considered complete it must be filled out in entirety, signed and dated. **In addition, all required income documentation and if applicable, disability documentation, must be submitted.** If any documentation is missing the application will not be processed but a notice will be sent stating what documentation is missing. If you following the application closely, it should guide you through everything you need to include.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Q: What is the schedule for applications and the selection of renters for the affordable apartments at Residences at Union Place?

A: This process can be as short as 2 weeks or longer than 2 months. To ensure the fastest approval possible, carefully complete all sections of the Program Application and send in copies of everything required. Below is an approximation of the time needed for each step:

Step 1: The applicant completes a Lease Application at Residences at Union Place Leasing Office. All applicants that are found to be lease eligible (based on the review of credit scores, references, adequate income) can then fill out an Affordable Housing Program Application.

Step 2: +2 weeks: The applicant fills out the Affordable Housing Program Application and gathers all required documentation listed on the checklist and sends it to the Lottery Agent. Applications and *copies* of all income and asset documentation should be mailed to the address below.

SEB

**Re: Residences at Union Place
165 Chestnut Hill Ave Unit 2
Brighton, MA 02135**

+0-2 weeks: Based on information in the application, the Lottery Agent requests that the applicant mail in additional documentation that was missing from their application. *(This step happens with approximately 90% of all applications. If you want to expedite the time it takes to process your application, send in ALL documentation up-front. Do not wait for the Lottery Agent or Monitoring Agent to request a piece of documentation you probably knew was missing).*

+1 week: The Lottery Agent processes the completed application. If an applicant is deemed ineligible, this process is over. If they are deemed eligible, the Lottery Agent contacts the applicant and notifies them that they may now proceed to the Leasing Office to fill out a Lease Agreement.

Step 3: +0-2 weeks: Applicants will have two weeks to put down a holding deposit. The Leasing Office will be expecting the applicant's arrival as they will be notified of an applicant's approval at the same time the applicant is notified. A Lease Agreement can be signed immediately.

YEARLY ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Approximately 90 days before lease renewal, you will need to submit updated income and asset documentation to the Leasing Office so they can ensure that you are still under the maximum income guidelines. You will not be able to renew your Lease until you have submitted all required documentation. You should maintain records of your taxes, pay-stubs, bank statements and asset statements while living in the affordable unit. Maintaining records makes this yearly review very simple.

Q: How long can I lease my affordable unit?

A: As a **current resident only**, you are considered income eligible for an affordable unit as long as your household earns an income that does not exceed **140% of the previous years Income Limit for your household size**. The Income Limits are shown below and on page 5. Total Income for all *new* applying households must still always be below 80% of AMI.

Using the 2008 Income Limits as an example:

Household Size	2008 Income Limit (80% of 2007 Area Media Income)	2009 Income Limit for Current Tenants (140% of 2008 Income Limit)
1	\$ 46,300	\$64,820
2	\$ 52,950	\$74,130
3	\$59,550	\$83,370
4	\$ 66,150	\$92,610

According to the table above for the years shown, if a household's income exceeds the 2009 Income Limit for Current Tenants at the time of their renewal, their unit shall still remain affordable until the next available market rate unit with the same or greater number of bedrooms is rented at an affordable price. Once this market rate apartment becomes newly deemed as affordable, the apartment that was previously deemed affordable can subsequently be rented at market rates. The household with earnings exceeding the 2009 Income Limit for Current Tenants can choose to stay in their apartment, yet would then have to pay the market rate rent.

Q: Will my rent increase each year, and if so, by how much?

A: Basically, your rent will not increase if the Boston MSA Area Median Income does not increase. When the AMI increases, your rent will increase by a few percentage points. The Area Median Income for this MSA did not change between 2005 and 2008 and therefore the base affordable rents did not increase.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The Residences at Union Place development is a residential development of three hundred apartments that will include seventy-five affordable apartments. This development is located on 10 Independence Way off of Upper Union Street in Franklin. Twenty-nine apartments will have one-bedroom and one bath and forty-six apartments will have two bedrooms and two baths. The affordable apartments will be mixed throughout the development in a distribution of one and two-bedroom apartments that matches the distribution for the whole entire project. There is no difference in construction or appearance between the affordable and the market-rate apartments.

Amenities include a Resort-style swimming pool, scenic wooded views, washer/dryer in every apartment home, 24-hour professionally equipped fitness facility, elegant clubhouse, detached private garages (additional charge), walk-out patios, 24-hour controlled building access, spacious walk-in closets, raised hardwood panel kitchen cabinets, terra-cotta floor tile, built-in microwaves and 24-hour emergency maintenance. Pets (excluding dogs) are allowed.

There are a total of the 9 apartment buildings in The Residences at Union Place along with a clubhouse. Phase 1 consists of three buildings and a total of 13 affordable apartments that will be ready for occupancy in September. Construction will continue through the winter for Phases 2 and 3. Initial occupancy begins in September for Phase 1 and will commence in February for Phases 2 and 3.

www.unionplaceapts.com