

Information Packet

Edgewood Apartments

North Reading Affordable Housing

This packet contains specific information on the affordable housing program and application process for the affordable rental units being offered at the Edgewood Apartments in North Reading, MA.

Lincoln North Reading LLC and the Town of North Reading 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.

Please read this entire packet for more details.

A 40R Program

Developed by Lincoln Property Company

Phone Number: (617) 782.6900 (voicemail)

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GENERAL OVERVIEW AND RENTS

Edgewood Apartments is a 406 apartment community located at 100 Lowell St. in North Reading. 102 of these apartments will be rented to households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income. There are no differences in the construction or the appearance between the affordable and the market-rate units. For a description of the units and the development please read page 12.

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. The unit mix of the affordable units is as follows:

# of Units	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Feet	Estimated Monthly Rent* <i>(does not include utilities)</i>
42	2	2	1,079 to 1,242	\$1,264*
60	1	1	789 to 880	\$1,156*

***RENTS DO NOT CHANGE BASED ON INCOME. This is not subsidized housing.** 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 and are subject to change (see below). Tenants are responsible for paying the full amount of rent each month. Tenant is also paying for all utilities (heating and hot water is natural gas, cooking is electric).

The Edgewood Apartments in North Reading do 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.

Section 8 Voucher Holders, please note the rents at Edgewood are higher than Fair Market Rents. Therefore, it is unlikely that your Section 8 voucher can be used. Please contact your local housing authority for further information.

Q: How long will the designated apartments remain affordable?

A: Rents may increase a few percentage points if Boston Area Median Income increases or the costs of utilities decreases. Likewise, if the Boston Area Median Income decreases and the costs of utilities increases, **rents will decrease**. For historical reference, the Boston Area Median Income did not change between 2005 and 2009 and utility costs increased therefore the rents that affordable tenants paid have decreased or stayed the same over the last few years.

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 Edgewood Apartments?

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

- 1.) Households must have income (and assets) that qualify 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.

Q: Can I apply if I currently own a home or am losing a home through foreclosure or divorce?

A: Yes. However, you cannot own your home upon move-in. If you currently own a home, it must be sold prior to move-in (you will have to submit your HUD-1 settlement statement before signing your lease). If you are going through a divorce, your divorce decree or separation papers must state that you will no longer be on the deed or mortgage of the home. If your house is going through foreclosure, you must prove that it will be foreclosed on prior to your move-in date.

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. For questions on priority by need of a disabled accessible unit, please read **Disabled-Accessible Unit Information on pg. 9**.

Q: Do I have to be a resident of the Town of North Reading 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 to lease an affordable unit, 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 Boston PMSA. **All sources of income are counted. Additionally, 2% of the value of total household assets will be added to a household's income** (see *Allowable Assets below*). The maximum incomes allowed for this program are:

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

Minimum Income

The Leasing Office will determine if an applicant has enough monthly income to cover the rent using the same Lease Approval criteria used for their market rate units. Generally, leasing offices will not qualify an applicant if they would be paying over 35% of their monthly income towards rent and utilities.

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, 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 x 2% = \$900.*

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

Q: How is a household's income determined?

A: The Lottery Agent will **project a household's income over the next 12 months** based on their current income and assets. In an effort to provide as accurate an income estimation as possible, the Lottery Agent will also review historical income data to provide a basis for future income estimates.

ALL SOURCES OF INCOME ARE COUNTED. Any monies you anticipate receiving in the next 12 months will be counted as income and monies received over the previous 6 months will be analyzed to help estimate future income. This includes, but is not limited to, Social Security, alimony, child support, overtime pay, bonuses, unemployment, severance pay, part-time employment, matured bonds, monies to be received in court settlements and imputed interest and dividends on bank accounts and other assets.

If a household applies for an affordable unit on July 15th, 2010, the total anticipated amount of money received by all members of the household from July 15th 2010 thru July 15th, 2011 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.

If a household claims that certain income will stop in the near future, all claims must be supported with documentation. It is also 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.

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.

Household Size

Q: How is appropriate household size determined?

A: According to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development guidelines:

Within an applicant pool first (priority) shall be given to households requiring the total number of bedrooms in the unit based on the following **criteria**:

- a. There is at least one occupant and no more than two occupants per bedroom.
- b. A husband and wife, or those in a similar living arrangement, shall be required to share a bedroom. Other household members may share but shall not be required to share a bedroom.
- c. A person described in the first sentence of (b) shall not be required to share a bedroom if a consequence of sharing would be a severe adverse impact on his or her mental or physical health and the lottery agent receives reliable medical documentation as to such impact of sharing.

Household size shall not exceed state sanitary code requirements for occupancy of a unit.

Q: Can a one person household or a married couple (or those in a similar living arrangement) lease a two-bedroom unit?

A: Yes but only when there are no larger households on the waiting list. By Department of Housing and Development definitions, a one person household or married couple (or those in a similar living arrangement) leasing a two bedroom unit, is not a "household of appropriate size".

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

A: For non-homeowners, 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 and your application will be reviewed as if your current spouse will be moving into the affordable unit with you. **For homeowners going through a divorce**, the home must be sold or the divorce must be finalized (as you must be off the deed) before you move-in.

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 must choose a unit and put down a holding deposit of \$500. 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 move into their affordable unit within 45 days.

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.

DISABLED-ACCESSIBLE UNIT INFORMATION

Q: Who qualifies for a disabled-accessible unit?

A: The accessible units at Edgewood Apartments are barrier-free. According to *Mass Access: The Accessible Housing Registry*, "units that are barrier-free are accessible to people with disabilities that are wheelchair users, but could also be used by people of different types of disabilities. For example, a person of very short stature, a person with a brain injury or stroke, severe cardiac or respiratory problems, or a person with limited standing, walking, or reaching ability, may use the design features of a wheelchair accessible unit." 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.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Q: What is the schedule for applications and the selection of renters for the affordable apartments at Edgewood Apartments?

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 Edgewood Apartments Leasing Office. All applicants that are found to be lease eligible (based on the review of credit scores, references, adequate income) must put down a \$500 deposit (or possibly more depending on credit scores and other factors). They 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: Edgewood Apartments
165 Chestnut Hill Ave #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: 0-45 days: Applicants must move into their affordable unit within 45 days. 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 **125% of the Area Median Income (AMI)** for a household of your size. Total Income for all *new* applying households must still always be below 80% of AMI.

Using the 2009 Income Limits as an example:

Household Size	2009 Income Limit (80% of 2009 Area Median Income)	2010 Income Limit for Current Tenants (125% of 2010 Area Median Income)
1	\$ 46,300	\$ 72,343
2	\$ 52,950	\$ 82,734
3	\$59,550	\$ 93,046
4	\$ 66,150	\$ 103,359

According to the table above for the years shown, if a household's income exceeds the 2010 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 2010 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: Rents may increase a few percentage points if Boston Area Median Income increases or the costs of utilities decreases. Likewise, if the Boston Area Median Income decreases and the costs of utilities increases, **rents will decrease**. For historical reference, the Boston Area Median Income did not change between 2005 and 2009 and utility costs generally increased therefore the rents that affordable tenants paid have decreased or stayed the same over the last few years.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

Both grand and intimate, Edgewood is a distinctive apartment home community that has artfully balanced an upscale residential lifestyle with its natural wooded surroundings.

Extraordinary one and two bedroom floor plans include such fine appointments as tiled entries, nine foot ceilings, and fireplaces in select apartments. Gourmet style kitchens, soaking tubs and computer alcoves make your new home one of distinction.

Located just 18 miles from Boston and minutes from the North Wilmington Commuter Rail Station and Interstate 93, Edgewood is very accessible to all the area's featured attractions. An abundant of conveniently located retail shopping is just minutes away. The beautiful Cape Ann Beaches are only a forty-five minute drive from your new home.

Interior Appointments

- spacious floorplans
- ceramic tile entryways
- computer alcoves
- full-size washers & dryers
- spacious closets
- nine foot ceilings & crown molding
- gourmet-style kitchens w/black appliances
- energy star appliances
- contemporary fixtures in kitchens & baths
- garden-style soaking tubs in baths
- private balconies

Community Features

- controlled access buildings
- personal storage rooms
- elegant clubhouse
- full service business center with high-speed internet access and conference area
- state-of-the-art fitness center
- resort-style pool
- 24-hr emergency maintenance
- professionally landscaped grounds
- concierge services

Directions:

From interstate 93 North and South- take the Rt-62 Exit. Exit 40 toward N. Reading/Wilmington. Keep right at the fork onto MA-62. Edgewood is just over a mile on your right. (100 Lowell Rd.)

www.myedgewoodapartments.com