



## Tenant Selection Policy

To consider **Cornerstone at Branchburg** your home, this is the Selection Criteria you must meet:

### **IDENTITY AND AGE VERIFICATION**

Application must include one applicant at least 55 years of age. All additional applicants in household must be at least 45 years of age. A document verifying the age of each household member will be required. Acceptable age verification documents: Birth certificate, Baptismal Certificate, Valid Passport, Social Security Administration Benefit Letter that includes birth date, Naturalization Certificate

### **LIVE IN AIDE SPECIFICATIONS**

- The Live in Aide does not need to meet age requirements, however, does need to meet screening requirements
- Proof of medical need by a licensed physician is required, and a signed addendum by the physician, provided by Management.
- Once the resident no longer occupies the unit, this will terminate the live in aide's ability to occupy the unit and/or access the building.

### **HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION / UNIT ELIGIBILITY MUST FALL INTO THESE CATEGORIES**

#### OCCUPANCY GUIDELINES

APARTMENT SIZE	MINIMUM OCCUPANTS	MAXIMUM OCCUPANTS
ONE BEDROOM	ONE	TWO
TWO BEDROOM	TWO	FOUR

**Frequently asked question:** Can one person have a 2 bedroom apartment?

**Answer:** No. The only exception to the above occupancy guidelines is those households that require a live in aide.

**HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS INCLUDE:** All persons who consider the apartment their primary residence. For example: children under joint custody must reside in the apartment at least 50% of the time or children away in foster care who will be returning to the household, members temporarily in the hospital or nursing home, unborn children, children being adopted or a future spouse or roommate.

**YOUR ANNUAL INCOME MUST** fall within the State established -HUD income levels. The annual income is the full amount, (GROSS), before any payroll deductions for all adults **NOT** the take home pay or net income. Adults are persons over the age of 18 years.

**ANNUAL INCOME** is inclusive and not limited to: employment, self-employment, tips, commissions, income from assets, Social Security and other benefits, payments in lieu of earnings, i.e., unemployment, disability compensation, worker's compensation and severance pay., child support/alimony, gifts, military pay, student financial assistance, etc.

If your annual income is lower than the required minimum income level for the specific number of household members for the specific bedroom size; you will not be eligible for an apartment. The only time this doesn't apply is if you can prove that you paid higher rent in the previous 12 months.

If your annual income exceeds the maximum income requirements for the specific number of Household members and bedroom size, you will not be eligible for an apartment.

## STUDENT STATUS

As a LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credit) community, student status in the household is an important matter for tax compliance. Due to this status, generally households made up entirely of **FULL TIME** students **DO NOT QUALIFY**. Student Status exceptions are as follows:

1. All adults are married and ENTITLED TO file a joint tax return.
2. All adult members are single parents with minor children, the adult is not a dependent of any third party, and the children are only claimed by a parent.
3. The household includes a member who receives assistance under Title IV Welfare  
a. (TANF).
4. The household includes a member who formerly received foster care assistance.
5. The household contains a member, who gets assistance under the Job Training  
i. Partnership Act, (JTPA) or under other similar, Federal, State or local laws.
6. This information must be verified to ensure household qualifications.

## PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS

Preliminary applications will be accepted the following way:

- Mailed to or dropped off in person:
- Cornerstone at Branchburg  
1000 Cornerstone Drive  
Branchburg, NJ 08876

## CREDIT SCREENING

Once selected for a unit an application fee of \$50.00 for each applicant over the age of 18 years old must be submitted to begin the application process. This is to be paid to **Cornerstone at Branchburg** in cleared funds, i.e. Money Order, Certified Bank/Cashiers Check will be accepted. **NO CASH OR PERSONAL CHECKS.**

To verify the credit of applicants over the age of 18, **Cornerstone at Branchburg** uses a 3<sup>rd</sup> party credit verifier, The National Tenant Network (NTN). The NTN score must be 70 or higher to be acceptable, anything less will require a cosigner\* with a score of 76 or higher, along with income which is equal to 3 times the monthly rent, to accept the application. If neither of the above requirements are met, the application will be rejected. If the applicant does not get approved and chooses to get a cosigner, they must pay an application fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable) for the cosigner\*.

\*The cosigner's role has a financial responsibility if the lease holder falters in paying their rent. The cosigner will continue to be the cosigner for subsequent years or until the resident vacates.

\*If you are informed that a cosigner is required to continue our application process, you have two (2) business days to return to the Leasing Office a signed/dated credit application completed by your selected cosigner. Along with this completed credit application, proper identification from your cosigner is required i.e. signed driver's license. If within this time period the Leasing Office does not receive the completed cosigner credit application you will be removed from our waiting list and the next applicant on the list will be contacted. If in the future you would like to submit a new preliminary application, please contact the Leasing Office to inquire about unit availability.

Applicants whose history indicates a pattern of inability to pay rent timely may be subject to rejection.

If the credit report is not acceptable due to an eviction, the previous landlord will be contacted to clarify if previous eviction was financially satisfied. If it is not satisfied, the applicant will be rejected.

Once the credit screening is approved, the household will receive a **Notice of Conditional Offer** and all applicants 18 and older will be required to complete a **NJ Supplemental Application**. This supplemental application will be used to start continue or screening process.

## VAWA Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (“VAWA”)

VAWA protects qualified tenants, participants, and applicants, and affiliated individuals, who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking from being denied housing, evicted, or terminated based on acts of such violence against them.

## APPLICATION DECISION

Once all applicants over the age of 18 meet our screening criteria, the application process will continue with the submission of our Application for Housing.

**If An Application is Rejected:** Applicants will be notified in writing of any application denial and given fourteen (14) days to respond in writing to request a meeting to discuss the rejection. Within 5 days after the scheduled meeting, written results regarding the appeal decision will be mailed to the applicant. All application fees are non-refundable.

**If An Application is Cancelled:** If for any reason you withdraw your application or notify us that you have changed your mind about renting an apartment, all application fees are non-refundable.

**Failure to Execute the Lease:** In the event that you fail to sign the Lease Agreement after application approval, all said fees and deposits are non-refundable.

If a unit is available for immediate occupancy and your application has been approved through our 3<sup>rd</sup> party verification company and NJHMFA, possession of the unit is required within 15 days of the approval date. If household cannot take possession of the available unit within this required time period, the application will be cancelled and new preliminary application for our waiting list will be required.

## WAIT LIST

The Waiting List will **open** in Accordance with the Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan and will occur when there aren't any specific unit types vacant, available to rent.

The Waiting List will be **closed** once the number of units on the Waiting List reaches 3 times the number of units on the property.

1. Application. Anyone who wishes to be placed on a waiting list must complete an application.
2. Receiving and recording the application. Upon receipt of an application for tenancy, the application will be recorded initialing the date and time received.
3. Data required on the wait list. The following data must be included in an application, which will be placed on the waiting list: Date/time submitted; Name of head of household; annual income level; identification of the need for an accessible unit, including the need for accessible features; unit size.
4. Selection. When a unit becomes vacant\*, a selection will be based on the unit size available, preferences established for the property, income-targeting policies and requirements, and screening policies. Any current resident at **Cornerstone at Branchburg** Apartments will take precedent over the applicants listed on the waiting list.
  - a. \*If a telephone message has been left for you to start the application process for a vacant unit in our community, you have a period of two (2) business days to respond to our Leasing Office. If within this time period the Leasing Office does not receive a response regarding your interest in the available unit, you will be removed from the waiting list and the next applicant on the list will be contacted. If in the future you would like to submit a new preliminary application, please contact the Leasing Office to inquire about unit availability.
5. Confirmation. You will receive a letter from the office confirming your status on the waiting list.
6. Notification: Updating the leasing office with changes in address, income and or household composition is recommended.
  - i. -If household income changes, it is important to contact the Leasing Office as soon possible. In doing this it will ensure that your household is on the waiting list specific to your household income level.
  - b. -If would like change the size of the unit originally requested on your preliminary application, you must reapply and your application will be treated as new.

7. Update: List will be updated every 6 months, with correspondence. If you do not respond to our letter, you will be removed from the waiting list.

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS SET ASIDE UNITS**

**Cornerstone at Branchburg** has (10) units set aside for applicants with Special Needs. These reserved units will be occupied by applicants referred to us by contracted supportive housing agencies. Specific to the special needs set aside units; exceptions may be considered related to our screening criteria and age restrictions do not apply.

#### **NJHMFA Energy Benchmarking Partnership**

Energy benchmarking is the process of analyzing energy usage over time and comparing the total use to the total cost. The purpose for benchmarking the energy performance of our buildings is to gain a better understanding of how the buildings use their energy and whether the energy efficiency measures that have been implemented within our buildings have realized their expected energy savings.

To measure this data, all households will be required to sign a tenant utility release form as a part of the lease agreement.

#### **TRANSFER POLICY**

1. Current residents that request, in the form of a letter, a transfer to a different size unit due to a change in household composition, or to make a reasonable accommodation, will be considered a priority and will be placed on the wait list accordingly.
2. Current residents must remain in the income level in what was determined at the time of leasing. For example, if you leased at a 2 Bedroom Moderate level income and now require a 1 Bedroom due to a change in household composition, the level remains the same; Moderate. Regardless of a decrease or increase in household income.
3. If a current resident needs to be placed in a smaller unit due to the death of a family household member, upon an available unit, the current resident must transfer.

#### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

1. A reasonable accommodation is a structural change made to an existing unit occupied by a person with a disability (and disability is typically defined as an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity) in order to afford such a person the full enjoyment of the premises.
2. A reasonable modification is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy or practice used in running a community.

#### **TERMINATION OF LEASE**

According to the signed lease, the current resident listed in the lease agreement will be responsible for the lease terms, which are (12) twelve months. If a 60 days notice is obtained, the lease holder is still responsible for the lease until Management can get the unit occupied.

#### **PET POLICY**

This is a NO pet policy apartment community. Service Animals are accepted with medical documentation only.







<b>FOR OFFICE ONLY:</b>
<b>DATE:</b> _____
<b>TIME:</b> _____
<b>NO.</b> _____

**PRELIMINARY APPLICATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Please read enclosed directions carefully. Incomplete applications will be returned.

**PLEASE PRINT- HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION**

<b>First, Last Name</b>		<b>Email Address:</b>
<b>Address, City, State, Zip Code</b>		<b>County:</b>
<b>Home Phone Number:</b>	<b>Cell Phone Number:</b>	<b>Alternate Phone Number:</b>

**How many bedrooms are you interested in:    1        2**

**Does anyone in the household receive housing assistance?        Yes    No**

**1. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (LIST ALL PERSONS TO LIVE IN HOME) AND INCOME**

Name(s) First & Last	Head of Household	Date of Birth	Gender (M/F)	Current Gross Annual Income*	Student (Y/N)
				\$	

\*Income includes, but is not limited to Gross wages, salaries, tips, commission, child support, pensions, and social security & disability benefits.

**2. ASSETS (SAVINGS, CDS, STOCK, REAL ESTATE, OTHER INVESTMENTS, ETC.)**

Type of Asset	Current Market Value	Yearly Interest of Dividends*

\*Include Interest and Dividends from assets such as Savings, Checking, CD's, Money Market accts, mutual funds, stocks and/or bonds.

I certify that the information provided herein is true and complete and that any misrepresentation of income or household size reported Herein shall be cause for program disqualifications. I also understand that this information is to be used only for determining my preliminary eligibility for referral to an affordable housing unit and does not obligate me in any way.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Head of Household

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Head of Household

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





**PRELIMINARY APPLICATION / FORMS CAN BE MAILED TO or DROPPED OFF IN PERSON:**

**Cornerstone at Branchburg  
1000 Cornerstone Drive  
Branchburg, NJ 08876**

- ✓ Preliminary Application
- ✓ \$50.00 Application fee (non-refundable) for each household member 18 years or older  
i.e., (Money Order, Certified Bank/Cashiers Check) **only when prompted by Leasing Office.**

*I /We understand that the **Preliminary Application must be signed and dated by the head of household (HOH) and all additional forms must be signed and dated by the HOH and ALL household members 18 years of age or older. Incomplete applications will not be processed and will be returned via mail.***

*More importantly, this **DOES NOT** grant me an apartment until all the documents have been submitted to the leasing office in a timely manner and approval has been obtained from RealPage, the Tax Compliance group ( LIHTC) and State approval, (NJHMFA). If you cannot submit documents in a timely fashion, you will be declined for an apartment.*

Applicant Signature	Print Name	Date
Applicant Signature	Print Name	Date
Applicant Signature	Print Name	Date
Applicant Signature	Print Name	Date

