

Certificate of Preference Program Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is a Certificate of Preference?** *A Certificate of Preference is a document issued by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (“Redevelopment Agency”) to households that were displaced by Agency activity in Redevelopment Project Areas during the 1960’s and 1970’s. This Certificate gives such households preferential consideration for Agency-sponsored housing and business opportunities in Redevelopment Project Areas.*

- 2. Who is the contact person at the Redevelopment Agency for the Certificate of Preference Program?** *Adrienne Anderson, Certificate of Preference Program. You may call her at 415-749-2497. You may also call the hotline anytime at 415-749-2432. In addition, you can log onto the Agency’s website at www.sfraaffordablehousing.org for more information.*

- 3. Where is the Redevelopment Agency located?** *The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency is located at One South Van Ness, Fifth Floor, San Francisco, California 94103. The general phone number for the Agency is 415-749-2400.*

- 4. Who is eligible for a Certificate?** *You are eligible if you were part of a household displaced by Agency activity in Redevelopment Project Areas during the 1960’s and 1970’s.*

- 5. How do I obtain a Certificate?** *If you believe you are eligible, you may call or make a written request for a Certificate. Be prepared to give the name of the head of household and address from which you were displaced, if possible. To verify your eligibility, you may be asked submit documentation, such as a copy of your birth certificate and driver’s license. You may be asked to submit additional documentation if necessary.*

- 6. If I am a family member of someone who got a Certificate of Preference, do I automatically get one, too?** *Certificate issuance is not automatic. If you believe you are eligible for a Certificate, you must request one by calling or writing. You will be required to present documentation to verify your eligibility.*

- 7. What type of documentation would I need?** *A birth certificate, school records, or other documentation that has an address which can document that you were either at the address at the time of displacement or part of a household which the Agency displaced.*

- 8. How does a Certificate of Preference help me get housing?** *A Certificate gives you priority consideration over non-certificate holders to obtain a housing unit in an Agency-funded housing project. The Certificate holder must still meet the program eligibility rules for any particular housing unit including maximum income levels.*

- 9. Does a Certificate of Preference have a subsidy attached to help me pay my rent or buy a house?** *No. The Certificate provides the holder with priority consideration for housing and business opportunities, as discussed in number 5 above.*
- 10. Is a Certificate of Preference the same as a Section 8 Certificate?** *No, the Section 8 Program is administered by the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA). A Section 8 Certificate is a tenant-based subsidy that can be used to subsidize a tenant's rent for any apartment inspected and approved by SFHA. A Certificate of Preference does not have a subsidy attached. For any questions about Section 8, you may call the SFHA at 415-554-1200.*
- 11. How long does a Certificate of Preference last?** *The certificate is valid until two years after completion of the Project Area from which the household was displaced. Currently, Certificates issued for displacees from the Western Addition expire on January 2, 2011. Certificates issued for displacees from Hunters Point expire on January 20, 2011.*
- 12. How many types of Certificates of Preference are there?** *There are three, two of which are residential certificates and one of which was issued for business and property owners. The two residential Certificates are "Residential A" and "Residential C" Certificates.*
- 13. What is the difference between a "Residential A" and "Residential C" Certificate?** *A "Residential A" Certificate is given to the head of household that had been displaced by Agency action. A "Residential C" Certificate is given to eligible family or other household members of "Residential A" Certificate holders.*
- 14. How many times can I use a Certificate of Preference?** *A Certificate may be used once for a rental opportunity and may be used again for purchase of a home.*
- 15. If I am denied a Certificate, what is the appeals process?** *The first step in the Appeals Process is to write the Agency, (Adrienne Anderson, Certificate of Preference Program) that you are appealing and would like to schedule an Informal Settlement meeting. Agency staff will schedule this informal meeting and provide you an opportunity to submit any alternative documentation (Refer to Question 7 for examples). The Agency will prepare a summary of the discussion held at the Informal Settlement meeting no later than one week from the date of the meeting. The summary shall either be delivered personally to you or sent by regular mail to the complainant's address or such other address as the complainant specifies.*

If you want to appeal the decision made and summarized from the Informal Settlement meeting, you would submit a written request for a hearing addressed to Olson Lee, the Agency's Deputy Executive Director, no later than two weeks from the date of the summary from the Informal Settlement meeting. Your written request for a hearing must state the specific facts you believe entitles you to a Certificate of Preference. A Hearing Officer, outside the Agency, will then hear your appeal.

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