

2024 FAQ's about the Application Process

Where can I find info about Saranam?

Contact: Jennifer Mullen, Program Director
Email: Jmullen@saranamabq.org

Phone: (505) 507-0036
Website: www.saranamabq.org

Timeline:

Applications available: February 1

Saranam is constructing a brand new campus, and we expect the apartments to be ready for move-in no later than mid-April. Applicants will be notified about exact timelines as soon as possible.

Who is a good referral/candidate?

Saranam is looking for families with people who:

- Are experiencing homelessness, including doubled-up, couch surfing, motel, shelter, etc.
- Are committed to ending their homelessness
- Are sober
- Can take direction from others
- Desire to set and accomplish goals
- Are willing to cooperate with others
- Have custody of at least one minor child
- Desire to be a full-time student
- Are willing to *not* be employed while in school
- Are committed to change for their family

Who is *not* a good referral/candidate?

Saranam is *not* looking for people who:

- Are not experiencing homelessness
- Are sober less than 90 days
- One parent is “in” (committed) and the other is “out”
- Do not expect their children to live with them
- Cannot participate in English based education
- Are not interested in being a full-time student

What if there are safety issues?

Please let us know (either in the Referral Information questions or on the phone). It is important that we understand the nature of the concerns (i.e. stalking, drug connections, gang involvement, restraining orders, etc.) in order to effectively address them and keep everyone as safe as possible.

How do I make a referral?

Get the application (online, email, mail) and complete the Referral Information Questions. Be a good screener of your clients – the adults in the family should want to be in school full time (without working).

How does a family apply?

A family must find someone to refer them. This includes social workers or case workers for TANF/CYFD or other programs, case managers, therapists, doctors, pastors/clergy, teachers, etc. It should be someone outside of the family who has worked directly with the family. The referral source must complete the Referral Information Questions (included in application) and the family must complete and return the application.

This is a two year program. What does Saranam provide for a family?

- A fully furnished apartment
- Cleaning & hygiene supplies
- Supportive children's program
- Saranam pays rent & utilities
- Transportation allowance
- On site education (academic and life skills)
- Adults earn weekly cash
- Supportive community
- Case Management

Does a family have to pay anything to be in the program?

No. A family will never pay rent or anything else to Saranam.

What is expected of the families in Saranam?

A lot! Adults must be willing to work hard in their education and work on making changes in themselves and their families. This includes academic work, life skills classes, and financial management. Children must be in school and/or daycare full-time. Adults must be willing to set personal and family goals that will help end their homelessness, and be willing to work in a group environment. Adults are not allowed to work because their job is to be a full-time student. Adults must be willing to remain sober.

If I can't work, how do I support my family?

Saranam pays the bulk of your living expenses, including rent, utilities, and monthly hygiene and cleaning supplies. You are expected to apply for Medicaid, SNAP (food stamps), subsidized child care (NM ECECD child care assistance), and WIC. *You are **not** allowed to receive TANF benefits while at Saranam.* You will earn a weekly cash allowance and will receive monthly cash transportation assistance from Saranam.

What kind of education are you talking about?

Academic and life skills classes are offered on site during the first part of our program. These include, but are not limited to Reading/Writing and Math classes, and GED preparation (if necessary). Our life skills classes include Parenting, Effective Communication, Community Resources, Employability Skills, and more! Adults gradually transition their academic/vocational education to a local college or university (most often CNM).

I am already in college. Do I have to quit to be in Saranam?

No, but you may have to alter your schedule so that you will be able to attend our Life Skills classes, which are mandatory.

What does the children's program involve?

Our children's program is designed to help our children build connections in their community through weekly life skills activities and a weekly family fun night. Other activities may include homework help/tutoring, reading circles, and Teen Café.

Where are the apartments? Can I see one? What size are they?

Saranam has two campuses. The eastside campus is in the vicinity of Eubank and Lomas NE. The westside campus is in the vicinity of Montano and Taylor Ranch NW. Pictures of the apartments are available on our website: www.saranamabq.org. There are 2, 3, and 4 bedroom apartments available and assigned based on the size of the family. All apartments are fully furnished.

My family is different...is that a problem?

No. Saranam does not discriminate against anyone. The minimum family requirement is one adult who is legally connected (and living with) one minor child. The child must live with the parent at least half time. If the children don't live with the adult, we will want to understand this circumstance and determine the likelihood of the children returning to the parent's custody during their time in our program. Saranam families come from all walks of life and all are welcome here.

What is the community and structure all about?

Saranam families live in the same apartment complex and initially are in classes together four days per week. There are ample opportunities to learn how to live in community. Sometimes this is about celebrating holidays and events together and providing neighborly support. Sometimes it is about learning conflict resolution strategies. Saranam staff can help facilitate both.

Saranam is a very structured program. We have a handbook of rules and follow a schedule based on semesters. There are specific daily participation expectations of all family members in the program. In addition to the basic structure, each family's transition plan provides an individualized program to complement the basic structure.