

# Vail updates housing lottery selection qualifications

## Revisions to process intended to make future housing lotteries more clear, equitable and efficient

News [FOLLOW NEWS](#) | Yesterday



**Ali Longwell** [FOLLOW](#)  
alongwell@vaildaily.com

Earlier this year, the town of Vail offered two deed-restricted homes to qualified residents via the town's lottery sales process. While the two lotteries proved successful — amassing a total of 56 qualified applicants — the process unveiled a need to update the lottery selection to make it more clear and equitable for applicants as well as easier to administer for the town.

“We’re looking to make improvements to make sure it’s really fair and it’s efficient for the applicants throughout their application process,” said Missy Johnson, a housing coordinator for the town of Vail, at the Tuesday, Oct. 4, Town Council meeting. “We want to make sure it’s verifiable, clear and concise, and convenient for the applicants.”

The town's existing lottery awarded up to five possible tickets to applicants. These five tickets included one ticket each if: the applicant completes an application, the applicant currently lives in Vail, the applicant has lived in Vail for five or more years, the applicant is currently employed in Vail, and the applicant has worked in Vail for five or more years.

However, according to the town's housing coordinators, verifying some of this information — specifically verification of housing and employment — was hard to do and created ambiguity in the process.

“We received a very different number of documents that could be misinterpreted in order to issue this number of tickets, so we had a number of disagreements with several applications,” said Martha Anderson, a housing coordinator, at the Tuesday, Sept. 20 Town Council meeting. “One of our objectives is to be fair with everybody and not have a process that is ambiguous and not specific in a way that there could be some disagreements with applicants.”

For these reasons, the Vail Town Council passed a new resolution on Tuesday, Oct. 4, amending the lottery ticket process to better align with Vail's goals around housing, which includes increasing its inventory of deed-restricted properties to 1,028 by 2027 — meaning many more lotteries in the future.

As unanimously approved by council on Tuesday, the lottery selection process will now award up to three tickets:

- One ticket for completing the lottery application;
- One ticket for not owning free-market real estate within the town of Vail at the time of the lottery as verified by a signed and sworn affidavit and based on the Eagle County Assessor's property records; and
- One ticket for having unsuccessfully participated (and not being selected) in a town of Vail housing lottery process.

Originally, the proposal for the second lottery ticket was for an additional ticket for not owning any residential real estate. However, the council amended this on Tuesday to be not owning “free-market” real estate, to allow for owners of deed-restricted properties to still benefit from the lottery process.

“There's a lot of discussion about people who are currently in deed-restricted housing, looking for opportunities to move up or down based on their family changes,” said Council member Barry Davis. “The point is that we want people to feel encouraged to participate in the lottery. If people are trading deed-restricted for deed-restricted, I don't think we're punishing them. I think we could encourage people to continue to participate in our program that way.”

In addition to the changes in how lottery tickets are administered, the town also created a new online application submittal process, a list of approved documentation to verify the ticket eligibility, a computerized random drawing process, the requirement of a first-time homebuyers class prior to participation as well as a new application form.

With these changes and revisions made, the town is ready for its next lottery selection, which according to a memo in the Town Council agenda is expected to take place in mid-October.

“We're preparing for a lottery announcement here in the next few weeks,” Johnson said on Tuesday.