

May 11, 2020

Good Afternoon,

PHA continues to monitor the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic in order to handle the impact to our organization, to ensure the safety of our residents, employees and the public. As we continue to prioritize the health and safety of our staff, clients, and community, PHA has implemented the following operational decisions in keeping with the changes announced by the City of Philadelphia, and guidance provided by the federal, state and local entities, including the CDC, and local health departments:

INFORMATION FOR PHA EMPLOYEES

- **Effective Monday, March 16, 2020 at 5PM, ALL PHA offices are closed to the public until further notice.**
- While our offices remain closed to the public, we are phasing employees back to work. We are adjusting our normal operations, in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal requirements. Accordingly, we are implementing remote work to every extent possible. There may be occasion when employees will be required to come to the office. When in the office, employees are required to wear a mask and follow all social distancing guidelines. At this time, employees are not to report to the office unless it has already been arranged with your supervisor.
- Employees who are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (running nose, cough, fever, headaches, diarrhea etc.) should **NOT** report to work.
- Those employees who have already been deemed essential and/or emergency employees should continue to report to work as normal. All other employees will be notified by the department heads regarding their return to work arrangements.

INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

- **Evictions**
Effective April 1, 2020, PHA has suspended all eviction filings for 120 days. PHA will postpone all court appointments where residents have failed to pay rent. **Residents are still required to pay rent.**
- **Hardship Rent Abatement**
Residents who have experienced a financial hardship, such as the loss of a job or decrease in hours or pay, are encouraged to apply for a Hardship Waiver of their rent that will be made retroactive from the date of the hardship event. Public Housing residents can visit the PHA website and request a Hardship or complete an Electronic Interim Request Form: www.pha.phila.gov/pha-news/pha-news/2020/hardship-waiver-forms.aspx

➤ **Rental Payments**

All rent payments are to be dropped off at secure site office mailbox. Rent receipts will be mailed to you once payment is received and processed and such payment will also be reflected in your rent statement.

➤ **Late Rent Payment Fee Waiver**

Effective April 1, 2020, PHA will waive all late rent payment fees till **June 2020**.

➤ **Recertifications**

Effective immediately, all recertification and interim recertification appointments will no longer be conducted in-person. Recertification appointment letters will include the recertification packet that residents will be required to complete, sign and return with the required income and verification documents for their household.

○ Residents can mail or drop of their completed recertification packets at the secure mailbox at their respective management offices. PHA Property Managers will follow-up with residents via telephone if any additional items are needed.

○ An e-mail address (PublicHousing.Answers@pha.phila.gov) was established for residents who have questions while offices are closed. Supervisory staff has access to this e-mail to provide responses.

➤ **Enhanced Cleaning**

○ **Effective Wednesday, March 11, 2020**, PHA began the installation of new hand sanitizer dispensers containing hand sanitizers at all senior locations. Installation was completed on **March 13, 2020**.

○ **Effective Wednesday, March 11, 2020**, PHA implemented an enhanced weekly deep cleaning procedure at all senior facilities and high-rises, which is expected to continue indefinitely. Notwithstanding this, however, **all** residents are encouraged to follow CDC guidelines regarding frequently washing their hands with soap and water.

➤ **Service Orders**

○ **Effective Wednesday March 18, 2020**, PHA will **only** conduct emergency service repairs **until further notice**. However, residents with routine maintenance related issues should continue to call **PHA's Call Center at (215) 684-8920**.

➤ **Meals**

○ **Beginning Monday, March 23, 2020**, PHA will provide free “**grab-n-go**” breakfasts and lunches at the following six (6) PHA locations, **Monday through Friday from 9:00AM to 12:00 PM:**

1. **Abbottsford Homes Community Center**
3226 McMichael Street, 19129
2. **Bartram Village Community Center**
5404 Gibson Drive, 19143
3. **Raymond Rosen Homes Community Center**
2301 W. Edgley Street, 19121

4. **John F. Street Community Center**
1100 Poplar Street, 19123
5. **Wilson Park Community Center**
2500 Jackson Street, 19145
6. **West Park Apartments Community Center**
300 N. Busti Street, 19104

INFORMATION FOR HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) CLIENTS AND LANDLORDS

➤ Hardship Rent Abatement

HCV clients who have experienced a financial hardship, such as the loss of a job or decrease in hours or pay, are encouraged to apply for a Hardship Rent Abatement that will be made retroactive from the date of the hardship event. HCV clients can visit the PHA website and request a Hardship or complete an Electronic Interim Request Form: www.pha.phila.gov/pha-news/pha-news/2020/hardship-waiver-forms.aspx

➤ Recertifications

○ **Effective Wednesday, March 11, 2020**, All HCV recertification and interim appointments will be conducted by mail or online **only, until further notice**. PHA will mail recertification notices to participants and have **two** options to complete their required recertification:

1. HCV Clients can complete and mail their recertification packet in the self-addressed envelope included in their packets to: **PHA, 2013 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19121** or by email clientservices@pha.phila.gov.
2. HCV client can also complete HCV program recertifications online using a computer, tablet, or smartphone using PHA's Recertification Portal at pha.myhousing.com

➤ HQS Inspections

Effective Wednesday March 18, 2020, PHA's Leased Housing Department has postponed all HCV HQS inspections **until further notice**. **ONLY** Initial Inspections and Emergency HQS inspections will be conducted. Clients and landlords can reach the HCV Inspections Department via email at HCVinspections@pha.phila.gov or by phone at **(215) 684-3860** to schedule, reschedule or request an inspection.

➤ Leasing

HCV continues to process RFTA's for new properties and may be emailed to hcv.leasingdepartment@pha.phila.gov PBV referrals may be submitted to hcvprojectbased@pha.phila.gov

Once approved for occupancy including an HQS inspection and rent determination, the Lease and HAP Contract is sent to owners and property managers via e-mail or U.S. mail for execution and signature with the prospective voucher tenant.

➤ HCV Owner Services

HAP Payments to landlords are expected to be issued as normal.

HCV Landlords can continue to contact the Owner Services Department with payment questions, Owner Form submissions and tenant questions via email at HCVlandlords@pha.phila.gov or by phone at **(215) 684-5596 or (215) 684-4329**. Owners can view all the information they need to manage their HCV properties through the [Landlord Data Center](#) 24 hours a day 7 days a week including detailed HAP payment records by tenant, status and schedule of inspections and re-inspections and schedule of upcoming tenant re-certifications. To access the Landlord Data Center

visit the PHA website www.pha.phila.gov

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

While exposure and risk levels are changing daily, it is important to exercise precautionary measures to limit the spread of this virus. We understand that this is a challenging and dynamic time. We will continue to monitor the situation closely, using resources from the [CDC](#), the [World Health Organization](#) and the [City of Philadelphia](#).

We remain vigilantly open to modifying our plans as things develop or change and appreciate your continued partnership, support, and understanding as we all work to adapt to this unprecedented situation.

To ensure awareness of the resources available to youth and young adults in Philadelphia, please access updated information including:

- [Free meals and safe spaces for students while schools are closed](#)
- [Map: Where to find free meals and activities for students](#)
- Free Library of Philadelphia's [digital resources](#) that you can access anywhere, including ebooks, audiobooks, movies, TV, and music, over 100 [databases](#), and the [New York Times online](#).

Last, my thoughts are with all who are adversely impacted by the global pandemic. I hope that we continue to show each other love and kindness in these difficult and uncertain times, and that you and your loved ones remain safe and healthy.

More so than ever, I believe in the strength and resilience of PHA, its employees and the people we are privileged to serve.

Sincerely,

Kelvin A. Jeremiah
President & CEO