



COVID-19

Information for Multi-Family Tenants and Owners/Agents

March 19, 2020

Tenants of Multi-Family Developments:

Social Distancing Measures: Many Agents/Owners have adjusted their policies to address social distancing measures. These include cancelling inspections, eliminating face to face meetings and/or communicating remotely. Tenants should be contacting their Management Agent/Owner to obtain information on the site-specific interim policy as this may vary by site.

Rent Payments: Owners/Agents are encouraged to work with impacted residents and families to adjust rent payments, enter into forbearance agreements, and lessen the impact on affected residents. At this time, no additional subsidy funding has been made available.

Annual Recertifications: The annual recertifications are statutory requirements and at this time neither HUD nor the IRS have issued any statutory waivers. However, if a tenant feels ill or has concerns about coming to the office, the owner may consider extenuating circumstances (including COVID-19 considerations in the community) when the tenant is not available to attend the recertification interview, sign consent forms, or sign the TIC or form HUD-50059. It is recommended the owner begin or accomplish the above actions within 90 days of being advised of the extenuating circumstance. When an extenuating circumstance is present, there is no change to the tenant's recertification anniversary date. For HUD subsidized units, the Total Tenant Payment/Tenant Rent and the assistance payment are effective retroactively to the recertification anniversary date. The owner must document in the file why the signature(s) was not obtained and, if applicable, when the signature(s) will be obtained.

Info for Multi-Family Owners/Agents:

Click [here](#) for *Questions and Answers for Office of Multifamily Housing Stakeholders* from the Federal Housing Administration.

RiskShare/Tax Credit/HOME/Mortgagee/UPCS Inspections and/or Monitoring: To the extent possible, staff will conduct all monitoring activities remotely. Physical inspection of the property will be scheduled and/or postponed 60 days from this notice.

Management and Occupancy Review (MOR): All MORs have been postponed at this time.

Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) Inspections: Per guidance received from HUD, all REAC Inspections have been suspended.

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections: RIHousing will continue the inspections of



initial units. All other inspections (annual/bi-annual/special) will be postponed 60 days from this notice. If a tenant is reporting a 24-hour violation, we will accept videos and/or photos of the condition and will contact the landlord immediately to have the condition addressed.

Tenant Complaint Inspections: The decision to conduct these inspections will be made on a case-by-case basis. Factors to be considered will include, severity of alleged issue (e.g. is it a life and safety issue), occupancy of the building (e.g. is the building age-restricted or otherwise occupied by particularly vulnerable populations), etc.

Replacement Reserve Inspections: For the next 60 days, RIHousing will temporarily suspend all replacement reserve inspections for interior repairs that have been completed. In lieu of a physical inspection, we will request that owners /managers submit photographs of improvements to the property along with copies of paid invoices.

Suspected Case Response: As part of the evolving response to the COVID-19 pandemic, RIHousing is reminding all our partners to communicate any instance or suspected instance of the virus occurring at your property. RIHousing will be adjusting scheduled meetings, site visits and inspections with an eye toward the safety of our staff, residents and property staff, and this information is critical to our ability to do so.

Tenant Evictions: Additionally, based on evolving best practices, it is recommended that any scheduled evictions unrelated to issues of life safety be postponed. Displacement of residents can lead to a greater risk of exposure for those displaced, as well as a greater possibility of transmission of the virus if persons are placed into an unstable or transient housing situation. Further, with the likelihood that residents may face loss of employment due to business closures or cutbacks in hours, more residents may face a struggle to pay bills, including rent. Please work to preserve tenancy as much as possible as we await measures to support those who have lost wages and will experience economic instability due to COVID-19.

Social Distancing Measures: As this situation evolves, many of you will be revising your existing policies relating to tenant meetings and/or work orders. We ask that you provide us with a copy of your interim policy to address the “social distancing measures”.

Financial Support for Multi-Family Owners: RIHousing has established interim policy to provide financial support to RIHousing financed developments. These include relaxing replacement reserves minimum requirements, waiving distribution of surplus cash and/or executing forbearance agreements.