



## **Housing Authority of the City of Perth Amboy**

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Memorandum To: Board of Commissioners

From: Douglas G. Dzema, PHM  
Executive Director

Date: August 5, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Administrative Plan Temporary Revisions

This is to recommend ratification of the following Administrative Plan Temporary Revisions. Pursuant to HUD Notice PIH 2020-5, the Housing Authority of the City of Perth Amboy temporarily revised its administrative plan to implement alternative requirements made possible by the CARES Act to provide administrative flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. HUD Notice PIH 2020-13 extends these alternative requirements and adds additional requirements. These revisions apply only to the Public Housing (PH), Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Project Based Voucher (PBV) programs. They do not apply to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC).

The original alternative requirements were effective April 10, 2020. The following alternative requirement extensions and additions have been adopted effective July 2, 2020:

### **PH and HCV-3/ PH and HCV-4: Family Income and Composition: Annual and Interim Recertification Income Verification Requirements**

If third-party verification cannot be obtained, caseworkers are permitted to use a verbal phone record or participant self-certification. These forms are available in the PHA-Web computer database. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

### **PH and HCV-6: Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Contract of Participation; Contract Extension**

The Authority may consider the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic to be “good cause” in extending family contracts, if in its determination it is the reason a family could not

complete its contract goals by the deadline. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

#### **PH and HCV-7: Waiting List: Opening and Closing; Public Notice**

Public Notice of the opening and closing of a waiting list will be made by posting on the Authority's website and providing a message on the voicemail system and will not be required to be publicized in a local newspaper of general circulation. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020. PLEASE NOTE- THIS IS NOT NOTICE OF THE OPENING OF THE WAITING LIST. IF THE AUTHORITY OPENS THE WAITING LIST IT WILL BE ANNOUNCED UNDER SEPARATE COVER ON THE WEBSITE AND BY PROVIDING A MESSAGE ON THE VOICEMAIL SYSTEM.

#### **HQS-1: Initial Inspection Requirements for HCV, PBV and PBV RAD** **HQS-7: PBV Turnover Unit Inspection**

In the event an initial or turnover HQS inspection is unable to be done, the Authority will request an owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life-threatening conditions exist in the unit in question. The certification may also request basic information to reasonably determine the unit meets HQS. This owner certification will also be used for PHA owned units, as necessary. The Authority may accept the owner certification through December 31, 2020. Additionally, the Authority must complete an inspection for all units placed under HAP contract based on the owner's certification no later than the one-year anniversary date of the owner certification.

#### **HQS-5: HQS Inspection Requirement- Biennial Inspections for HCV, PBV and PBV RAD**

The Authority will delay biennial HQS inspections. All inspections will be complete no later than one year after the date the biennial inspection would have been required absent the waiver.

#### **HQS-6: HQS Interim Inspections HCV and PBV**

Tenant requests for an interim inspection will be handled by contacting the owner and requiring repair of an emergency within 24 hours of PHA notification, or of a non-emergency within 30 days of PHA notification. The owner will submit documentation by text or email of a photo/receipts verifying the condition has been fixed or that the condition does not exist within the required timeframe. Tenant certification that the repair has been made may also be accepted. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

#### **HQS-9: HQS Quality Control Inspections**

The Authority has suspended all quality control inspections through December 31, 2020.

#### **HQS-11: Homeownership Option- Initial HQS Inspection**

The Authority will forego an initial HQS inspection, and instead approve or disapprove the unit based on review of the independent professional inspection. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-1 Administrative Plan**

The Authority will temporarily revise its administrative plan without board approval. Board approval must be obtained no later than July 31, 2020.

### **HCV-2: Information When Family is Selected- PHA Oral Briefing**

The Authority will conduct the tenant briefing via telephone or expanded information packet. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-3: Term of Voucher-Extension of Term**

The Authority at its discretion may extend a voucher for longer than 120 days if the applicant/participant is having difficulty locating a suitable unit due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-6: Automatic Termination of HAP Contract for Zero HAP Participants**

The period following the last payment to the owner that triggers automatic termination of the HAP contract is extended to December 31, 2020 for families in which the last payment to the owner was made between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-8: Utility Allowance Schedule: Required Review and Revision**

Review and updates of Utility Allowances due during CY 2020 are extended to December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-9: Homeownership Option-Homeownership Counseling**

The Authority may waive the homeownership counseling requirement if there is no available remote learning opportunity. This requirement will remain in effect through December 31, 2020. The Authority plans to hold a remote first-time homeowner training via Zoom in September 2020.

### **HCV-13 Homeownership: Maximum Term of Assistance**

For any homeowner in the last year of their term of homeownership assistance and is experiencing a financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority will extend homeownership assistance for an additional year. The Authority may exercise this alternative requirement through December 31, 2020.

### **HCV-14: Mandatory Removal of Unit from PBV HAP Contract**

Under the PBV program, a PHA is required to remove a unit from a PBV HAP contract after 180 days of zero Hap payments to the owner on behalf of the family residing in the unit. As an alternative requirement HUD is permitting PHAs at its discretion to keep such units under contract for a period of time that exceeds 180 days but does not extend beyond December 31, 2020.

### **Moratorium on Program Termination**

The Authority will not terminate assistance for any participant due to non-payment of rent for a 120-day period beginning March 27, 2020. Program terminations prior to March 27, 2020 are not subject to the moratorium. Program terminations for reasons other than non-payment are not covered by the moratorium.

The Federal moratorium on evictions expired on July 25, 2020. HUD issued additional guidance urging PHAs to offer repayment agreements to tenants who are delinquent in rent payments. The Authority has extended offers of repayment agreements accordingly. If evictions are necessary the Authority will provide 30 days notice as required by HUD and abide by NJ Executive Order 106 which has stayed enforcement of all judgments and warrants for removal for the duration of the public health emergency. This means delinquent tenants not complying with their repayment agreements will be processed for eviction, but their warrant of removal will be stayed until two months after the public health emergency or state of emergency, or as otherwise directed by the Governor of NJ.