



837 MAIN STREET  
RACINE, WISCONSIN 53403

## HOUSING AUTHORITY of RACINE COUNTY COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN MARCH 2020

### **Introduction:**

The Housing Authority of Racine County (HARC) is closely monitoring the CoVid-19 pandemic. This is a constantly changing situation and HARC has developed an Emergency Response Plan should this health crisis impact operations of our housing programs. Our goal will be to limit the exposure of the virus to our employees and residents and to prevent the further spread of the virus.

**Effective March 18, 2020 the office will be closed to the public. Business will continue to be conducted via phone and e-mail, as well as our 24/7 web portal at [www.assistancecheck.com](http://www.assistancecheck.com). Our website at [www.rcha.org](http://www.rcha.org) contains information and forms that you might need.**

### **Section 1**

#### **Communication:**

HARC will publish updates regarding operational changes on our website at [www.rcha.org](http://www.rcha.org)

### **Section 2**

#### **Incident Response:**

HARC may consider closing our office to prevent further spread. In doing so, we would attempt to maintain operations via telework.

In the event of a resident contracting COVID-19, HARC may issue a 14-day in-unit quarantine for its residents. HARC would arrange for Meals on Wheels or

other food delivery, as well as provide prescription medication delivery options, if possible.

### **Section 3**

#### **Operational Protocols:**

Leasing/Voucher Issuance: In the event that operations are curtailed due to community health concerns, HARC will attempt to assist our clients to the extent feasible through electronic means or US mail.

**A. Property Management.** Leases will be sent electronically or by mail followed up with phone conversations to review the lease and other pertinent documents. Showing of units will be done in person if possible. In the event a lock down is ordered by the government, if possible, pictures will be taken and sent electronically to potential renters. Move in/move outs inspections will be waived during any lock down or if staff is unavailable. If a move out inspection cannot occur, security deposits shall be returned minus any unpaid rent. Lease enforcement will continue to the extent complaints can be followed up via emails, texts or phone calls. HARC shall continue to comply with state and federal regulations as it relates to the enforcement of lease provisions.

**B. HCV.** Voucher lease ups shall continue to the extent possible. Paperwork shall continue to be processed, subject to staff availability, via email or regular mail. Phone conversations shall be documented. Lease up inspections will be done on empty units when possible, subject to additional regulatory guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development and availability of staff. Voucher issuance may be suspended if a quarantine or lock down is ordered, if staffing is limited or unavailable and is subject to governmental action.

**C. Occupancy Issues:** Program eligibility; Annual/interim Recertifications: HARC shall continue to process program eligibility and recerts subject to staffing and further regulatory guidance. Whereas income verifications are subject to third party review, processing of eligibility/recertifications may be delayed and or suspended until such time conditions will allow.

**D. Inspections:** In order to comply with virus containment protocols,

inspections may be suspended, and resumed when it is safe to do so. HARC will adopt a Biennial Inspection protocol for all HCV units during this crisis. Conditions which may affect inspections include but are not limited to availability of staff; additional regulatory guidance; and government restrictions. HARC may use outside inspectors if they are available.

**E. Maintenance:** HARC will use extreme caution when required to perform work in common areas and individual units. If residents are infected by the virus, work will be limited to emergency work orders only.

**F. Financial:** Our objective during this crisis shall be to continue to receive and make payments for goods and services provided and or delivered. Residents are expected to continue to make rent payments in a timely fashion. Financial operations will continue to the extent there is staff availability and funding to do so. If HARC's ability to process payments to its landlord and vendors is impeded due to government action or the lack of staff due to this crisis, it is understood that all accrued payments shall be made upon the earliest possible ability to process said payments. HARC is requesting patience and understanding during this difficult time.

**G. Landlords:** Communication will be made with all our landlords to keep them informed of our situation and to ask that they not take any adverse action against participants in the Housing Choice Voucher should payments be delayed. This shall be done through our web site [www.rcha.org](http://www.rcha.org) .

#### **Section 4**

##### **Telework:**

If the situation makes it necessary to close HARC's offices, telework may be an option. Whereas not all tasks required to maintain operations can be done at home, every effort will be made to identify work that can be done electronically from home, to keep as many operations going as possible.

#### **Section 5**

##### **Meetings:**

If it becomes necessary to have virtual meetings, rather than face to face, HARC will use electronic means to conduct meetings and keep operations continuing to the greatest extent possible.