



Section 8 Housing News

July 2020

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Hello from the Housing Choice Voucher Program

The City of Wichita has entered the next Phase of its Reopening Plan. City Hall is only open to the public on a limited basis with many restrictions as well as a mandatory mask rule. The Housing office on the 10th floor is still closed to the public, but we will have a housing representative downstairs from approximately 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. when City Hall is open to assist with paperwork. There are no walk-in hours for housing specialists and limited appointment availability.

The best way to communicate with us is over the telephone or via email. You can send documents to us as a scan or picture attached to an email, in the mail, and if you have no other option, as a fax. Please contact your housing specialist to find out their preferred method of communication.

The current phase of reopening is expected to last through the 1st of July. Updates are always available on the wichita.gov website.

Newsletter

We had originally planned on emailing this newsletter out to people that were interested in receiving it. However, we only had a small number of people with their email addresses on file. To make sure that everyone can read recent developments, this newsletter will be posted on the Housing Department's page on the wichita.gov website quarterly in January, April, July, and October.

Inspections

We are once again completing inspections on a limited basis. During this phase of reopening, we are conducting initial inspections for new program participants and relocations of qualified program participants for units that are currently unoccupied. Annual inspections are still currently on hold.

Tenants

Thank you so much for your patience and flexibility over the past few months. During this period of limited service, HCV employees are working full time to make sure that program participants continue to have rental assistance during this challenging time.

A reminder that the most important thing that you can do is send any required paperwork back to our office in a timely manner. Unless specified, there is a 14 day deadline from the date on the letter to return requested paperwork to us. If you do not send requested paperwork back before the deadline you could be terminated from the program for failing to provide required documentation. We remain flexible with many ways to return paperwork without having to come to our offices.

As always, if you have questions please contact your Housing Specialist. Their information is on the last page.

Landlords

Please remember that the best way to send us documents is almost always by attaching a scanned document to an email. This gives all of us a time and date stamped copy. Most importantly, it allows us to go back and find things much more easily.

Rent Increase Requests

There seems to be a lot of conversation lately about rent increase requests.

A reminder that a request for a rent increase must be received in writing at least 60 days before the date that you wish the increase to become effective. A rent increase request must be received for each unit that you want an increase for, there are no “blanket increases” across a property.

Some properties are charging a fee when a tenant moves from a 12 or 6 month contract to month-to-month. Please be aware that HUD regulations view this fee as part of the total rent. Any time a month-to-month fee is added to a tenant’s rent this is considered a rent increase and must be treated as such.

Rent increases do not automatically trigger the necessity for a new HAP contract and lease to be executed. If you send the requested rent increase as an amendment to the current lease, we can process that change without a new contract having to be drawn up and signed.

The easiest and most efficient time for us to process a rent increase is at the annual recertification, but they can be submitted at any time during the contract year (after the first year, and within the guidelines of the program).

We have a lot of exciting improvements coming up in the next half of the year. Technology upgrades to our systems, electronic inspections, digital signatures, and more. Our goal is to make things easier for you and more efficient for us. We will share more information with you as these improvements are put into action.

Finally, thank you for all of your help and understanding during the past few months. The pandemic came right in the middle of getting the office fully staffed and with many changes in the way we do business. Everyone has been incredibly patient with us throughout this process and we all thank you.

HCVP Teams

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Kim Castaneda – Senior Housing Specialist/FSS Coordinator

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