



*Building Communities and Changing Lives.....*  
*175 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 350 • Chicago, IL 60604 • (312) 663-5447*

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**Richard J. Monocchio**  
Executive Director

Dear HACC Residents, Landlords and Community Collaborators,

April 28, 2020

We want to provide you with an update regarding COVID-19 and the actions the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) is taking to safeguard the well-being of our community members. HACC and the Cook County Department of Public Health continue to work closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as we closely monitor and work to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued guidance regarding waivers that allow the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) to implement administrative flexibilities in the operations of its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please see details regarding these waivers and the steps HACC is taking below.

**HACC has temporarily implemented the following waivers within the HCV Program:**

- Suspending biennial Housing Quality Standard (HQS) inspections of occupied units and routine quality control inspections
- Accepting written self-certification and documentation of oral third-party certification when verifying participant income for annual and interim re-examinations.
- Waiving the requirement that a family to move if the addition of a household member would violate HQS space requirements.
- Extending the length of time beyond the HUD-mandated 180 days for a family to remain in the HCV program after becoming zero HAP (paying the full rent to the owner) or for a family who has been unable to return home due to a COVID-19 related emergency.
- Extending the length of time a guest can remain in HCV-assisted units due to a COVID-19 related emergency.
- Suspending the need for families to attend in-person briefings for voucher issuance, moves, and portability. Families will participate in remote interviews, online briefings, or calls
- Increasing the Family Unification Program for Youth (FUP-Y) eligibility age to those who have not reached their 26<sup>th</sup> birthday (up from not yet reached their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday).
- Granting an extension to the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Contract of Participation for good cause related to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Amending the Administrative Plan prior to receiving HACC Board approval.
- Extending processing deadlines for financial reporting, 50058 submission, and HAP contract execution. This will allow staff working remotely additional time to perform these functions.



**What HACC is doing to protect residents, staff and community collaborators:**

- Implementing a no visitor policy at HACC offices and residential buildings. No outside visitors at suburban or downtown offices – only medical professionals, HACC staff and emergency responders will be allowed on the premises until further notice.
- Cancelling all community/communal events until further notice - this includes all moves briefings and special program workshops.
- Posting CDC informational flyers regarding symptoms and steps residents can take to protect themselves and others (washing hands, limiting contact, avoiding crowds, etc.) in all common areas, bathrooms and shared cooking spaces.
- Educating our property managers about these items and providing them with resources to share with residents in case they have questions.
- Ensuring that our hand sanitation stations are fully equipped.
- Cleaning high touch/traffic surfaces in the common areas several times throughout the day i.e. door knobs, elevator buttons, intercom keypads, etc.
- Securing extra sanitation materials in case of escalation.

**For additional up-to-date information, please visit:**

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- **Illinois Department of Public Health:** <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>
- **Cook County Department of Public Health:** <https://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases/novel-coronavirus/>

For more information regarding HACC policies, or to further discuss a personal hardship related to COVID-19, please contact your housing specialist. We appreciate your patience as we navigate these unprecedented times – delays in processing are expected.

Regards,

Richard Monocchio  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Cook County

