Happy 2020 to all! A new year offers us a chance for a fresh start but also a time to reflect on some of our prior year accomplishments.

In 2019, we continued to pursue our goals and build on our mission to bring more housing opportunities to communities across the city of Chicago.

In October, we opened Oso Apartments in Albany Park, joined our partners to open the first phase of redevelopment at Lathrop, one of CHA’s oldest and most historic family housing communities, and handed out 7,500 coats to residents at the 12th annual Operation Warm event. In December, we saw CHA families receive Christmas gifts not only from the Chicago Bulls as part of the annual Kids Holiday Party but also as a part of the “Santa for a Day” program. And, we were happy to join 1,000 seniors and help them “Roar into 2020” at the 35th annual Senior Gala.

In this issue of Owner News, you will find updates on 2020 initiatives, including the 11th Annual CHA Owner Symposium and recent upgrade to the HCV Owner Portal, as well as information regarding COVID-19, CHA’s cannabis policy and the Chicago Census 2020. Plus, make sure to check out the upcoming events available for HCV property owners beginning in April, including several online webinars that allow you to attend from the comfort of your own home or business.

As always CHA’s important and comprehensive work would not be possible without your support, and I look forward to another year of meaningful conversation and collaboration.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer

What’s New

HCV Administrative Plan Changes
During the January 2020 meeting, the CHA Board of Commissioners approved the following changes, effective February 1, 2020.

Briefings and Voucher Issuance
Any Live-In Aide who is a family member but moves in to the unit as a Live-In Aide is prohibited from changing their voucher status and gaining rights to the voucher.

Re-Examinations
When CHA notifies HCV participants and property owners, in writing, of changes to the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), the reason for the change must also be included.

CTO Homeownership
Those participating in the Choose to Own (CTO) Homeownership Program must notify CHA of any changes to the mortgage payment amount (increase or decrease) within 14 days of the date of the notice from the mortgage lender. In addition, assets are now disregarded after initial eligibility and not included in calculating the voucher holder’s portion. Finally, the monthly maintenance allowance for CTO participants is now one percent of the purchase price of the unit divided evenly throughout the 12 months of the year or $75, whichever is greater.
Owner Portal Upgrade

You asked, we listened. On February 10th, CHA launched an upgraded version of the HCV Owner Portal that incorporated your feedback, making navigation of the Portal more intuitive and expanding popular features. Here are some of the updates you’ll see the next time you log in:

- Mobile friendly layout — no app required.
- **New!** Sub-account feature, allowing you to define what sections of the Portal a sub-user can access for each vendor number.
- **New!** Affordability Calculator, located under the ‘Moves’ menu, where you can determine if the Asking Rent for a specific unit is affordable for a HCV participant based on income, voucher size and utility responsibilities.
- **New!** Document Center, located under the ‘My Account’ menu, where you can submit inspection compliance documents, request forms and change of ownership/management information to CHA.
- Expanded ‘Resources’ page with categorized sub-sections.
- Expanded notification options, including inspection results and changes to direct deposit.

Additionally, some items have been moved under a different menu, including:

- **Note:** If you are looking to dispute inspection results, please send an email to hcvinspections@thecha.org and include your vendor #, inspection ID, room area, fail item, reason for dispute and any supporting documentation.

We hope you enjoy the expanded features!

CHA’s Cannabis Policy


The Chicago Housing Authority, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the City of Chicago are working together to ensure a safe, responsible, fair and equitable implementation of the law and how the new law relates to federal laws governing the use of marijuana in public housing.

CHA wants to make sure that HCV participants remain in compliance with their lease. CHA’s goal has been and continues to be housing stability.

It is important that as a property owner, you understand that CHA is seeking to maintain a balanced and reasonable interpretation of the new marijuana law and address matters involving the use and possession of marijuana on a case-by-case basis with a thoughtful consideration of circumstances.

CHA will be working with property owners, managers and participants to ensure that everyone understands their rights and responsibilities under the new law. As your partner, we understand the need to apply the requirements of the new law equitably to your assisted and market-rate tenants.

If you have any questions, please reach out to our Owner Services department at 312-935-2600 or ownerinfo@thecha.org.
What You Need to Know about the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In addressing Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Chicago Housing Authority will rely on the guidance and direction of the City of Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

While the risk of contracting COVID-19/Novel Coronavirus remains relatively low, public health agencies are recommending that individuals take the following precautions:

- **Practice good hygiene.**
  - Washing your hands with soap and water for **at least 20 seconds** is best.
  - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if you cannot wash with soap and water.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

- **Observe respiratory etiquette.**
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
  - If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
  - Dispose of your used tissue in a waste basket after each use.

For additional information from the City of Chicago Department of Public Health as well as links to a number of useful resources, visit the CDPH’s website at [www.chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus).
**Chicago Census 2020 ... Be Counted!**

CHA joins Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot in encouraging every Chicagoan to be counted in the 2020 census as information from the census shapes our communities and influences Chicago’s voice in Congress.

Census data is used to determine what resources communities need. Funds are provided to state and local governments that use that money to fund programs and infrastructure like healthcare, housing, education and transportation.

An accurate census ensures equal political representation and fair allocation of government resources. The City of Chicago relies on population counts to make important decisions about local policies and funding.

For this reason, it is essential that everyone currently living with you be counted. Information you share with census takers is not shared with CHA and federal law prohibits census takers from asking about anyone’s citizenship.

Additionally, if you would like to help make sure that every Chicagoan gets counted, get involved and visit www.chicago.gov/census regularly for opportunities to help your community be counted.

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**Property Owner Briefings**

New to the HCV Program or want to hear the latest updates? Then join us and learn more about how CHA partners with property owners/managers to provide safe, decent and affordable housing to Chicago’s families.

- **Thursday, April 23**
  1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
  Online Webinar
  Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

- **Thursday, May 21**
  6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
  CHA Central Office
  60 E. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60605

- **Thursday, June 25**
  2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
  Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center
  4859 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615

**Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections Workshop**

How do the CHA inspectors review a unit for the HCV Program? They follow the HUD inspection form! Join us for a review of a typical HQS inspection, including common fail items, and to discuss HUD policy updates.

**Suspended property owners are required to attend this workshop to regain good standing with the HCV Program.**

- **Tuesday, April 28**
  1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
  Online Webinar
  Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

- **Tuesday, May 26**
  5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
  Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center
  4859 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615

- **Tuesday, June 30**
  2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
  CHA Central Office
  60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605

Register to attend these events and see the full schedule at:
CHA-HCVevents.eventbrite.com