Updates to HCV Program Operations during COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions

PAYMENTS

I am a property owner and should have received a Housing Assistance Payment on the first of the month. However, I don’t see the payment in my account. When will I receive payment?

Unless the unit is in abatement or the HAP Contract has been terminated, HCV property owners should continue to receive Housing Assistance Payments on the 1st business day of the month. If a new HAP Contract has just been executed or a change has been made to the account, the property owner may receive a payment on the 15th (or subsequent business day) of the month.

Note: Property owners can see the status of their properties as well as HAP statements on the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org.

To learn more about lifting an abatement, please see the INSPECTIONS section of this document.

If the unit is not in abatement, and you believe that you should have received a Housing Assistance Payment, please contact the Owner Services Department via the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org or by email at ownerinfo@thecha.org.

I am a participant and should have received a Utility Reimbursement Payment on the 1st of the month. However, I don’t see the payment in my account. When will I receive payment?

Utility Reimbursement Payments are not typically deposited in a participant’s account until the afternoon of the 1st business day of the month.

If the Utility Reimbursement Payment is still not in your account on the following business day, please contact the CHA Customer Call Center via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org, by email at hcv@thecha.org or by phone at 312-935-2600. For fastest processing, please include “MISSING URP” in the subject line of your email.

I saw that CHA has postponed rent collection for Public Housing residents. As a HCV participant, am I still required to pay my rent portion?

Yes, participants should continue to pay their rent portion to the property owner.

While some property owners may choose to postpone rent collection from their tenants, CHA cannot compel HCV property owners to postpone rent collection. However, CHA has asked property owners to consider extending similar relief to their subsidized tenants.

If you cannot afford to pay your rent portion due to a decrease in income, you should report the change to CHA immediately. Please see the REPORTING & REQUESTING CHANGES section of this document for instructions on how to submit an Interim Re-Examination.

I am a participant, and I cannot afford to pay my rent portion. Can CHA help me?

If you cannot afford to pay your rent portion due to a decrease in income, you should report the change to CHA immediately. Please see the REPORTING & REQUESTING CHANGES section of this document for instructions on how to submit an Interim Re-Examination.
I saw that the CARES Act established a 120-day moratorium on evictions for “covered property”. Is my unit on the HCV Program considered a “covered property”?  
Yes, units rented through the Housing Choice Voucher Program are considered “covered property”.  
Section 4024.b of the CARES Act states: “During the 120-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the lessor of a covered dwelling may not—  

(1) make, or cause to be made, any filing with the court of jurisdiction to initiate a legal action to recover possession of the covered dwelling from the tenant for nonpayment of rent or other fees or charges; or  

(2) charge fees, penalties, or other charges to the tenant related to such nonpayment of rent.”  
If you have questions about how this federal moratorium impacts your specific circumstance, CHA recommends that you seek legal counsel.  

REPORTING AND REQUESTING CHANGES  
I need to report a change in my income. How can I do that?  
To report a change in your income, you must submit an Interim Re-Examination request and provide supporting documents, such as check stubs or a letter from your employer. For convenience, CHA will accept photos of these documents.  
There are four ways you can submit your Interim Re-Examination request:  
1. Visit the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org, log in and click the REPORT CHANGES menu. Select the change that you wish to report or request, and follow the prompts to submit your supporting documents. If you do not have a Participant Portal account, you can sign up for one using your voucher number.  
   Note: Step-by-step instructions for how to create an account and navigate the portal, including submitting an Interim Re-Examination request, are available on the login page of the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org.  
2. Email your Interim Re-Examination request to hcv@thecha.org and include “INTERIM REQUEST” in the subject line. Don’t forget to attach your supporting documents.  
3. Drop off your documents at a “no contact” drop box at the HCV South Office (10 W. 35th Street) or HCV West Office (1852 S. Albany Avenue).  
   Note: The HCV Central Office (60 E. Van Buren Street) does not have a drop box, so participants who normally do business at the Central Office may drop documents at either of the other HCV Regional Offices.  
4. Mail your documents to any of our HCV Regional Offices, listed above.  
   Note: CHA’s receipt of mail may occasionally be delayed, and so this option is least preferred.  
I submitted an Interim Re-Examination request to CHA. How long will my request take to process?  
CHA will approve or deny your Interim request within 30 days of receiving the request and supporting documents. However, any change will be effective on the 1st of the month following the date the request was received.
**Example:** If an Interim request is received on March 25th, but not processed until April 10th, the change effective date will be backdated to April 1st. If an Interim request is received on April 2nd and processed on April 10th, the change will be effective on May 1st.

**I received a stimulus payment from the IRS. Do I need to report that money as income?**

No, you do not need to report your stimulus payment from the IRS as income.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**I was scheduled for a Re-Examination appointment, but it was cancelled. How will I be recertified?**

CHA will schedule all outstanding Re-Examination appointments once the Illinois Shelter in Place Order has been lifted.

**Note:** Rescheduling the Re-Examination will not impact a participant’s status on the HCV Program.

If you have experienced a change that you were planning to report during your Re-Examination appointment, please see the **REPORTING & REQUESTING CHANGES** section of this document for instructions on how to submit an Interim Re-Examination.

**I was scheduled for a briefing, but it was cancelled. How will I receive moving papers?**

At this time, CHA is only issuing moving papers to families who have been identified as required moves, including participants with terminated HAP Contracts, participants living in units under abatement and participants seeking protections under the Violence Against Women Act.

If you believe you are a required move, please contact the CHA Customer Call Center via the Participant Portal at [cha.participantportal.org](http://cha.participantportal.org), by email at [hcv@thecha.org](mailto:hcv@thecha.org) or by phone at 312-935-2600. For fastest processing, please include “REQUIRED MOVE” in the subject line of your email.

**INSPECTIONS**

**There is an issue with the unit. How can I request a Complaint Inspection?**

CHA is not currently scheduling Complaint Inspections for items that are not considered life-threatening, emergency hazards.

You can view a list of hazards that CHA considers emergencies in the HQS Inspections Guidebook, which is downloadable on the CHA website at [www.thecha.org/forms](http://www.thecha.org/forms) as well as the Owner Portal at [chahcvportal.org](http://chahcvportal.org) and the Participant Portal at [cha.participantportal.org](http://cha.participantportal.org) under RESOURCES.

To request an emergency Complaint Inspection, please contact the Inspections Department via the Owner Portal at [chahcvportal.org](http://chahcvportal.org), via the Participant Portal at [cha.participantportal.org](http://cha.participantportal.org), by email at [hcvpinspections@thecha.org](mailto:hcvpinspections@thecha.org) or by phone at 312-935-2600. For fastest processing, please include “EMERGENCY INSPECTION” in the subject line of your email.

For all non-emergency complaints, CHA encourages property owners and participants to communicate with each other to resolve unit health and safety concerns and document all requests.
I submitted a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA) packet for a move. When will the inspection be scheduled?

CHA is continuing to schedule Initial Inspections and Initial Re-Inspections for unoccupied units. The Inspections Department will contact the property owner via email to schedule the inspection.

If the unit is currently occupied, the Inspections Department will schedule the Initial Inspection on a case-by-case basis with the goal of limiting contact with the tenants of the occupied unit.

Note: Inspectors will conduct inspections wearing gloves. CHA asks that property owners respect social distancing protocols during the inspection.

The unit was scheduled for a Regular (annual or biennial) Inspection, but it was cancelled. When will it be rescheduled?

CHA will reschedule all outstanding Regular Inspections (annual or biennial) once the Illinois Shelter In Place Order has been lifted. At that time, both the property owner and participant will receive 30 days’ advance notice of their new inspection date.

The unit recently failed an inspection. When will my Re-Inspection be scheduled?

Unless the inspection failed items are deemed life-threatening, emergency hazards, CHA will schedule all outstanding Re-Inspections once the Illinois Shelter In Place Order has been lifted. At that time, both the property owner and participant will receive at least 14 days’ advance notice of the new Re-Inspection date.

The unit had a Weather-Related Extension for a previous failed inspection. When will my Re-Inspection be scheduled?

CHA will schedule all outstanding Re-Inspections once the Illinois Shelter in Place Order has been lifted. At that time, both the property owner and participant will receive at least 14 days’ advance notice of the new Re-Inspection date.

Property owners with existing Weather-Related Extensions on Re-Inspections will have their abatement dates automatically pushed back to June 1, 2020.

Note: Property owners do not need to contact CHA to receive this extension.

The unit failed two or more inspections. Will the unit go into abatement? Will the participant be issued an Intent to Terminate notice?

Property owners who have failed two or more inspections are still required to pay the $75 fee at chareinspection.nanmckay.com to request a Re-Inspection for failed items.

Once payment is made, the Inspections Department will contact the property owner by email to remotely self-certify completed repairs.

If the failed items cannot be certified remotely, and the unit is not currently under abatement, the property owner may be eligible for a Non-Weather Related Extension to prevent abatement.

You can download and submit a Non-Weather Related Extension request on the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org.

Participants who have failed two or more inspections are encouraged to resolve the fail items, as CHA will schedule a Re-Inspection once the Illinois Shelter in Place Order has been lifted.

Note: CHA is not currently issuing Intent to Terminate notices to participants for failed inspections.
The unit is in abatement, but I have made the repairs. How can I request for the abatement to be lifted?

Property owners who have failed two or more inspections are still required to pay the $75 fee at chareinspection.nanmckay.com to request a Re-Inspection for failed items.

Once payment is made, the Inspections Department will contact you to remotely self-certify completed repairs. If the failed items cannot be certified remotely, CHA will schedule a Re-Inspection once the Illinois Shelter in Place Order has been lifted, as the abatement cannot be lifted unless the unit passes inspection.

Note: When the unit ultimately passes, the Housing Assistance Payment will be paid out from the date the $75 fee was paid.

The unit is in abatement, but repairs cannot be completed due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Can I request an extension?

CHA may be able to grant a Non-Weather Related Extension on a case-by-case basis. To determine if your inspection is eligible, please contact the Inspections Department via the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org or by email at hcvinspections@thecha.org.

The unit is in abatement due to a building code violation. What are my options for resolution?

Please contact the Inspections Department via the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org or by email at hcvinspections@thecha.org to provide documentation of your future court date or attempts to resolve or cure your building code violations. Abatements related to City Code violations may be pushed back on a case-by-case basis.

For more information about City of Chicago Building Code Violations, please visit the Chicago Department of Buildings website at webapps1.chicago.gov/buildingrecords.

MOVING

I want to move. How can I request moving papers?

At this time, CHA is only issuing moving papers to participants who have been identified as required moves, including participants living in units without a HAP Contract, participants living in units under abatement and participants seeking protections under the Violence Against Women Act.

If you believe you are a required move, please contact the CHA Customer Call Center via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org, by email at hcv@thecha.org or by phone at 312-935-2600. For fastest processing, please include “REQUIRED MOVE” in the subject line of your email.

I am required to move. How will I receive moving papers?

If you are a required move, you should start your search for a unit. If you are unsure of the price range for your search, please contact the Moves Team via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “RENT BURDEN WORKSHEET” in the subject line of your email.

Once you have found a unit that you wish to rent, CHA can email a duplicate set of your moving papers directly to the property owner.
To request a duplicate set of moving papers, please contact the Moves Team via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “DUPLICATE PAPERS” in the subject line of your email.

**I have my moving papers, but my voucher expires soon. How can I request an extension?**

All participants who have moving papers that expire between February 29, 2020 and June 30, 2020 will be automatically granted an extension of at least 60 days to continue their search for a unit.

*Note:* Participants do not need to contact CHA to receive this extension.

If you have found a unit that you wish to rent, and the property owner needs a copy of the voucher extension, please contact the Moves Team via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “DUPLICATE PAPERS” in the subject line of your email.

**I was already issued moving papers, but I need a duplicate set. How can I request those?**

If you have already been issued your moving papers and have found a unit that you wish to rent, CHA can email a duplicate set of your moving papers directly to the property owner.

If you are still looking for a unit, CHA can also email or mail a set of your moving papers to you directly.

To request a duplicate set of moving papers, please contact the Moves Team via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “DUPLICATE PAPERS” in the subject line of your email.

**I would like to move outside of the city of Chicago. How can I move with my voucher?**

If you have already been issued your moving papers, you can request to “Port Out” by contacting the Moves Team via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “PORT OUT” in the subject line of your email.

The Moves Team will ask you to complete a Port Out Request form, which you can return by email or at a “no contact” drop box at the HCV South Office or HCV West Office.

*Note:* Many Housing Authorities are currently unable to issue vouchers. CHA highly recommends that participants first contact the new Housing Authority to verify that they are issuing vouchers before submitting a Port Out request.

If you have not already been issued moving papers and wish to “Port Out”, CHA may not be able to process your request at this time. Currently, CHA is only issuing moving papers to families who have been identified as required moves.

If you believe you are a required move, please contact the CHA Customer Call Center via the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or by email at hcv@thecha.org or by phone at 312-935-2600.

**WAITING LIST**

**I was selected from the waiting list. How do I check my eligibility status?**

Applicants seeking more information can contact the Intake Team by email at hcv@thecha.org. For fastest processing, please include “APPLICANT” in the subject line of your email.
**LEARN MORE**

**How can I learn more about the Owner Portal or Participant Portal?**

CHA has recently updated Frequently Asked Questions documents for both the Owner and Participant Portal. You can download these how-to guides by visiting the Owner Portal at [chahcvportal.org](http://chahcvportal.org) or the Participant Portal at [cha.participantportal.org](http://cha.participantportal.org) and clicking on the “How to Navigate” link on the login page.

**How can I learn more about HCV Program policies and initiatives?**

CHA offers dozens of forms, flyers, newsletters and guidebooks that you can download as well as helpful links to partner sites.

Visit the CHA website at [www.thecha.org](http://www.thecha.org), the Owner Portal at [chahcvportal.org](http://chahcvportal.org) and the Participant Portal at [cha.participantportal.org](http://cha.participantportal.org).

To view resources on either of the Portals, log in and click on RESOURCES in the menu bar.

Resources are categorized by subject and clicking on an item will start the download or direct you off the Portal to a partner site.

**How can I learn more about the CARES Act?**


**Who can I contact for crisis support?**

The city of Chicago has assembled a comprehensive list of resources to support all Chicago residents and provide information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. These resources include assistance related to health, mental health, food, housing, utilities, schools, employment, immigration and more. You can access all of these resources online at [www.chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus).

If you need to speak to a crisis counselor, the following organizations offer free mental health resources to all Chicago residents by phone and/or text:

- Bright Star Community Outreach Trauma Counseling Helpline | Call 833-TURN-123
- Chicago Department of Public Health Teletherapy | Call 312-747-1020
- Crisis Text Line | Text HELLO to 741741
- NAMI Chicago Mental Health Helpline | Call 833-626-4244
- Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline | Call or Text 877-863-6338
- U.S. Disaster Distress Helpline | Call 1-800-985-5990 or Text TalkWithUs to 66746