As we confront the many challenges facing us all during the COVID-19 pandemic, the well-being of CHA residents remains our top priority. It is my hope that you are staying safe and healthy during this time.

As part of Chicago's comprehensive response, CHA stands with Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot in continuing to offer life-saving information and support. We have been adapting to the changing environment created by COVID-19 in a variety of ways to help ensure the safety of residents and staff. Some of our efforts include: adopting HUD waivers that allow more flexibility; proactively extending deadlines; waiving the $75 minimum rent for families experiencing income loss; compiling comprehensive FAQs to address pressing issues; moving HCV events online for continued education; and, communicating often with families and partners via email, phone, CHA's website and the HCV Portals.

In this issue of Going Places, I am pleased to introduce CHA's new CEO, Tracey Scott. In addition, you'll find updates on HCV operations during COVID-19, how the Participant Portal can help, guidance from the CDC on face coverings and information on CHA's language assistance services.

As we move forward, please remember ... we are all in this together. Be well.

Regards,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer
Updates to HCV Program Operations during COVID-19

Although CHA’s offices closed to the public in mid-March, CHA has been working tirelessly to operate and provide all essential services to CHA families and seniors during this time. On Friday, April 10th, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued waivers that offer Public Housing Authorities administrative flexibilities in providing assistance to families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below are some of the adopted waivers that may impact HCV participants:

• CHA will begin conducting Re-Examination interviews with participants by email, phone and/or U.S. Mail. Participants who are unable to participate in a remote interview will have their Re-Examination postponed until in-person operations resume.

• CHA will temporarily accept written self-certification as well as oral third-party certification when verifying participant income for Re-Examinations and Interim Re-Examinations.

• CHA will not require a family to move at this time if the addition of a new household member would violate Housing Quality Standards (HQS) regarding space and safety.

• CHA will not pursue Program termination for participants who have paid their full Contract Rent for more than 180 days (also known as zero HAP) or who have been away from the unit for an extended period of time.

• CHA internal processing deadlines have been extended allowing more time for staff to monitor and submit reports as well as execute HAP Contracts (with retroactive effective dates).

For the most up-to-date information regarding HCV Program operations during COVID-19, please visit the Participant Portal at cha.participantportal.org or CHA’s website at www.thecha.org.

CDC Guidance on Face Coverings

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continues to study the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States, and provide guidance based on the findings.

Studies have shown the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity — through speaking, coughing or sneezing — even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. In light of this evidence, the CDC continues to recommend 6-feet social distancing but adds that people should also be wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

Cloth face coverings can be fashioned using personal items, such as bandanas and hair ties, or made at home from common materials, such as old t-shirts or leggings, at minimal cost. Several community-based organizations have also provided opportunities for residents to receive free face masks throughout Chicago since early May.

For more information or to get the latest guidance from the CDC, please visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.
Do You Need Interpretation Services?
CHA offers free interpretation and translation services for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). For Spanish, please call the CHA Customer Call Center at 312-935-2600 and press 2. For all other languages, a non-emergency hotline has been created and can be accessed using the following instructions:

1. Dial 1 (844) 948-1031.
2. Your call will be answered by an operator, who will ask you what language you need interpreted.
3. Inform the operator of the language you speak.
4. The operator will then connect you with an interpreter that speaks your requested language and you will be transferred to voicemail to leave a message.
5. Please provide the following information in your voicemail message:
   a. Name
   b. Tenant ID
   c. Phone Number
   d. Building Name or Address
   e. Program (HCV, PBV, Senior Housing, Family Housing, Homeownership)
   f. Question/Concern
6. Instruct the interpreter to repeat your message to the voicemail in English.

Note: This is a non-emergency phone line. If you have an emergency, please dial 911.

CHA is working diligently to ensure everyone has meaningful access to CHA’s programs and activities. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact chala@thecha.org.

Neighborhood Spotlight: Pilsen

Pilsen is a neighborhood on the Lower West Side of Chicago. It is bound by 16th Street to the North, South Ashland to the West, West Cermak Road to the South and South Halsted to the East.

Pilsen is known for its music, art and award-winning restaurants. Vibrant murals are commonly found along its buildings. Pilsen got its name from Czech immigrants in the late 19th century. They named it “Pilsen” after one of the largest cities in the Czech Republic.

Neighborhood Resources & Community Organizations

25th Ward, Alderman Byron Sigcho Lopez
1645 S. Blue Island Ave., Chicago, IL 60608
773-523-4100
Ward25@cityofchicago.org

12th Police District, Commander Stephen C. Chung
1412 S. Blue Island Ave., Chicago, IL 60608
312-746-8396
CAPS012District@chicagopolice.org

Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
2026 S. Blue Island Ave., Chicago, IL 60608
312-666-2663
www.pilsenneighbors.org

Spanish Coalition for Housing
1915 S. Blue Island Ave., Chicago, IL 60608
312-850-2660
www.sc4housing.org

Pilsen Alliance
1744 W. 18th St., Chicago, IL 60608
312 243-5440
www.thepilsenalliance.org
Upcoming HCV Participant Workshops

**Passing HQS Inspections the First Time, Every Time**

Learn from HQS inspectors what CHA considers as health and safety hazards, and the consequences for both the property owner and participant when inspections fail.

Tuesday, July 7, 2020 | 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Online Webinar
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

**How to Report Income and Family Changes to CHA**

Learn from CHA staff about how to report these changes and how it impacts the amount of subsidy you receive as a participant on the HCV Program.

Tuesday, July 21, 2020 | 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Online Webinar
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

To see the full schedule of HCV participant workshops and to register for these or any other upcoming sessions, visit [CHA-HCEvents.eventbrite.com](http://CHA-HCEvents.eventbrite.com). Online registration is required.

**Disclaimer:** All HCV participant workshops are free and open to all Program participants and property owners, as well as family, friends, neighbors, etc. However, material covered in these workshops is intended specifically for HCV Program participants and may not apply to all audiences. For more information, please contact [hcvmarketing@thecha.org](mailto:hcvmarketing@thecha.org).