First and foremost, I want to thank you for your continued support during this challenging year. The difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have been ever-changing and we appreciate your patience as we work through how to best support our partners, families and communities during this time. As we head into cold and flu season, I encourage everyone to continue following the guidelines set by the City of Chicago and take preventative measures to help limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

I also want to thank all of you who joined us for our 11th annual Owner Symposium, dubbed "Symposium Week ’20." More than 1,000 property owners, managers, brokers, investors and other real estate professionals took part in a week of learning, networking and sharing best practices. We wish we could have seen you in person but are happy that technology allowed us the opportunity to offer a virtual alternative.

In this issue of Owner News, you will find HCV Program updates, guidelines on preparing for a virtual inspection, COVID-19 resources, highlights from Symposium Week ’20, tips on preparing for winter and a message from the Office of Inspector General. Plus, make sure to check out the webinars we have planned for HCV property owners starting in January 2021.

2020 has been a challenging year full of obstacles, but it has made us stronger. On behalf of all of us at CHA, I’d like to extend my best wishes for a safe holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer
COVID-19 Resources

If you are in need of help during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Chicago offers a variety of different resources. Learn more about Chicago’s support services below:

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19, visit www.advocateauroraehealth.org/coronavirus-disease-2019 or call 866-443-2584. If you believe you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately.

Food Assistance: If your family is experiencing food insecurity, contact the Greater Chicago Food Depository by phone at 773-247-FOOD (3663) or online at www.chicagosfoodbank.org.

Crisis Support: The following organizations offer free crisis counseling and mental health resources to all Chicago residents by phone and/or text:

- City of Chicago Domestic Violence Helpline | 877-863-6338 or visit www.CHI.gov/dvhelp
- Crisis Text Line | Text HELLO to 741741
- NAMI Chicago Mental Health Helpline | 833-626-4244
Preparing for Winter

Ensuring your unit is ready for winter not only helps prevent possible hardships, it can also keep your tenants safe and comfortable. Here are some tips:

**Check the Heat** — The Department of Buildings enforces the Chicago Building Code. This includes the Chicago Heat Ordinance, which mandates that, during cold weather months, property owners/managers must supply heat to rental units or to any unit where property owners do not have individual control of heat.

From September 15 – June 1, the temperature inside a rental residence is required to be at least 68 degrees from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., and at least 66 degrees from 10:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m.

A property owner/manager can face fines up to $500 per day, per violation for each day they do not supply adequate heat. The reason for the lack of heat does not matter. Property owners/managers must follow the law and residences must be heated regardless.

**Practice Space Heater Safety** — Inspect your unit(s) to ensure tenants are practicing space heater safety and not overloading outlets. Space heaters are not to be used in damp or wet areas, and should be at least three feet away from household combustibles and have cords that are undamaged.

**Watch for Frozen Pipes** — The subzero temperatures of a Chicago winter increase the likelihood of frozen pipes. Protect the water heater and exposed pipes with a weather resistant, insulated material to prevent frozen pipes and improve energy inefficiency.

**Check for Air Leaks** — Examine interior walls for gaps and drafts. Seal air leaks with caulk or insulation. Air leaks can happen in unexpected places such as recessed lighting, electrical outlets or pipe-wall junction. Check weather stripping around doors and windows. Replace any material that looks worn out. Weather stripping plays a significant role in preventing cool air from entering your home.

A Message from the Office of Inspector General (OIG)

The OIG ensures that violations, as they relate to CHA residents, employees, contractors, subcontractors or any entity receiving funds from CHA, are investigated and prosecuted. As a property owner, if you have any information regarding fraud in your dealings with tenants, CHA employees or CHA contractors, you are encouraged to report this information to the OIG. Immediate reporting, while facts are still fresh in your mind, is helpful. Complaints can be kept confidential.

If you have any information relating to fraud or unethical activity within or affecting the Chicago Housing Authority, contact the OIG by calling our Hotline at 800-544-7139 or send us an email at fraud@thecha.org.
As part of our mission to make valuable resources as accessible as possible to our partners and families, CHA has officially launched HCV webinars! Now you can view workshop material and stay updated on important HCV topics from the comfort of your own home or even on-the-go using a computer, tablet or smartphone.

For the full schedule or to register for any upcoming HCV sessions, visit CHA-HCVevents.eventbrite.com.

**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 the inspections team as they methodically walk through a typical HQS inspection, highlight common fail items, and discuss the HUD regulations that dictate inspection criteria.

**Tuesday, March 16**

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

**Property Owner Briefing: Get Started with the HCV Program**

New to the HCV Program? Want to hear the latest updates? Have colleagues who own rental property in Chicago and would be interested in taking advantage of the many benefits offered to HCV property owners? Make the most of your partnership with the Chicago Housing Authority and learn how CHA can work with you to provide safe, decent and affordable housing to Chicago’s families.

To find out more about what’s covered or to register, visit www.thecha.org/hcvownerbriefing.

**Thursday, January 14**

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

**Thursday, February 11**

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

**Thursday, March 11**

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Your Phone, Tablet or Computer