



Owner News

A newsletter for property owners & managers participating in the Chicago Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher Program

Q1 2021

Message from the Chief Officer



Greetings and happy spring (almost)! I hope you all continue to be safe and well.

As a property owner, you play an important role in helping our families have a safe place to live. We appreciate your commitment to your business, our partnership and building strong communities across the city. Please continue to work and communicate with your tenants during these challenging times.

Although warmer temperatures are on the horizon, it's still important to make sure that all of your units are prepared to handle any type of weather. As a reminder, the Chicago Heat Ordinance requires that the temperature inside a rental residence is at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and 66 degrees Fahrenheit from 10:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. from September 15 through June 1. If your tenant brings any heating issues to your attention, please make sure any maintenance and repairs are made in a timely matter.

In this issue of *Owner News*, you will find information on rent increase requests, virtual inspections, lead-based paint, CHA's HCV Owner Portal and COVID-19 safety tips. Plus, make sure to check out the webinars we have planned for HCV property owners starting in April 2021.

Let's put our best foot forward as we navigate 2021. I look forward to continuing our partnership and bringing more housing opportunities to communities throughout Chicago, together.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Burns
Chief Housing Choice Voucher Officer

What's New

Operational Updates

Although CHA's offices closed to the public in March 2020, staff remain dedicated to providing information and services to our partners and families. Please continue to utilize the online resources available to you, including CHA's HCV Owner Portal. If you should need to drop off supporting documents, you can do so at any of the "no contact" drop boxes located at each of the HCV Regional Offices:

HCV Central

60 E. Van Buren St., Chicago, 60605

HCV South

3617 S. State St., Chicago, 60609

HCV West

1852 S. Albany Ave., Chicago, 60623

HCV Webinar Libraries

Select HCV webinar recordings are now available **on demand!** If you miss a live session, no worries — you can watch it at a time that works best with your schedule. Make sure to still tune in to our live sessions if you can! Not only will you get to hear the latest HCV Program updates, you'll also have the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by CHA staff during the webinar!

View available webinar recordings at: gotostage.com/channel/chahcvowners

Rent Increase Requests: When and How

Do you know how to submit a rent increase request? Property owners can request a rent increase to go into effect any time after the end of a lease term.

The Chicago Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance requires that property owners submit rent increase requests to CHA based on the amount of time the HCV participant has lived in the unit:

- Less than three years: 60 days prior to the desired effective date
- Over three years: 120 days prior to the desired effective date

Prior to submitting your rent increase request, you should conduct your own market research for the area surrounding the subject unit. CHA will also conduct a market rent analysis when processing any rent increase requests. Together, this will help to ensure the rent increase amount you are requesting is a comparable amount to other units in the same area.

Comparable units that you provide must meet the following criteria:

- Units have been rented in the last 12 months.
- Units are not subsidized units.
- Units are within a one-mile radius of the subject unit.

To submit a comparable, visit www.gosection8.com. Once you have finalized the amount for your rent increase, submit your request directly on the Owner Portal at chahcvportal.org. Select 'Request a Rent Increase' under the 'Finance' tab. CHA will then review the request and approve or deny it within 30 days. If you want to check the status of your request, this can be done on the Owner Portal as well using the 'Rent Increase Tracker' link (again, under the 'Finance' tab).

If the rent increase is approved, CHA will issue an Amendment to the HAP Contract to both you and your tenant. This document will list the new Contract Rent amount, the tenant portion, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) amount and the effective date of the change.

If you have any questions about submitting rent increase requests, please contact ownerinfo@thecha.org.

Virtual Inspections

Do you have a virtual inspection coming up? Make sure you prepare ahead of time for a smooth and timely inspection. Here's how:

- Accept the virtual inspection calendar invite from CHA.
- Download Zoom on your phone, tablet or portable device that has a camera.
- Fully charge the device you will use to virtually walk the inspector through the unit.
- Gather any tools that may be needed to verify compliance — flashlight, outlet tester, measuring tape, level and laser temperature reader.



- Verify that there is a strong internet connection in the unit.

Per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, CHA is still required to conduct inspections even during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, safety is top priority and CHA is taking the necessary precautions to ensure a safe and sanitary inspection, both virtually and in-person. CHA asks that any persons present for the inspection over the age of two (2) wear a face covering and maintain a distance of six (6) feet wherever possible. If you have an in-person inspection, the inspector will wear a mask, shoe covers and gloves during the inspection. Shoe covers and gloves will be changed between each inspection.

Lead-Based Paint 101

October 1, 2000 — the first day of the Lead-Based Paint Certification process for CHA (20+ years now). These inspections are required by HUD and CHA's HQS Inspectors are following HUD mandates.

De Minimis Issues: Under HCV rules, any housing built before 1978 where one or more child(ren) under six years old resides, the HQS Inspector must note paint conditions. This includes all painted, stained or varnished building components. The HQS Inspector is not to make any judgments on their own, they are only to record paint deficiencies regardless of how new or old a component looks.

What is below *de minimis*? Less than 10 percent on smaller painted building components such as door and window moldings, baseboards etc.; less than two square feet of painted surface on interior walls and ceilings; less than 20 square feet on large exterior components such as painted siding. Below *de minimis* cited components can be corrected and do not require the lead-based paint certification.

What is at or above *de minimis*? Equal to or greater than 10 percent on smaller painted building components such as door and window moldings, baseboards, etc.; equal to or greater than two square feet of painted surface on interior walls and ceilings; equal to or greater than 20 square feet on large exterior components such as painted siding. At or above *de minimis* cited components require lead safe work practices and lead-based paint certification.

Having certified workers diminishes the potential for an initial lead inspection failure as well as the potential for children residing in the unit to get lead poisoning due to improper work practices.

COVID-19 Safety Tips

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. Here are some CDC recommended tips for staying safe during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Wear a mask or face covering. 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. Make sure your mask or face covering fits your face properly and keeps your mouth and nose fully covered.

Social distance. Maintain at least six feet (about two arm lengths) of distance between yourself and others who don't live with you.

How to Set Up and Utilize Your HCV Owner Portal Account

The HCV Owner Portal makes it easy for you conduct CHA business online, 24/7, and completely contact-free. The mobile friendly site offers instant access to information, and enables you to perform many tasks, including:

- Listing your vacancies.
- Viewing inspection results / appointments.
- Submitting rent increase requests.
- Viewing HAP statements.
- Uploading RTA packets and tracking moves.
- Downloading HCV Program documents.
- Updating your contact information.
- Plus much more!

Don't have an account yet? HCV property owners can create their own Owner Portal account by visiting chahcvportal.org and selecting the 'Sign Up' button on the homepage. You'll need your vendor number to create an account (provided after HAP Contract execution). Get started today!

Wash your hands. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available).

Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.

Get vaccinated (when it's your turn).

Closely monitor your health. If you experience symptoms such as fever, shortness of breath, or cough, contact your medical provider.

For more information, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus.



HCV Webinars can be viewed from the comfort of your own home or even on-the-go using a computer, tablet or smartphone. Join us to stay up to date on important HCV topics and learn about best practices for being a property owner in the City of Chicago.

For the full schedule or to register for any upcoming HCV sessions, visit [CHA-HCVevents.eventbrite.com](https://www.thecha.org/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, June 15

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, April 8

4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

Thursday, May 13

1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Your Phone, Tablet or Computer

Thursday, June 10

4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Your Phone, Tablet or Computer