



Post Office Box 806
338 Court Square
Barbourville, Kentucky 40906

Leighann Corey – Executive Director
leighann@cvrhaky.com

Telephone 606-546-9324
TDD 1-800-648-6056
Fax 606-546-3740

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SUBJECT: COVID-19 Administrative Plan Amendment

Pursuant to PIH Notice 2020-05 guidance from US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Cumberland Valley Regional HA chooses to adopt the following waivers for the Section 8 program. (The full notice can be reviewed upon request.) CVRHA has the option to apply all, some, or none of the waivers to their Housing Choice Voucher program. All waivers are effective the date of this notice. These waivers are being adopted to better serve our program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following waivers will be adopted by CVRHA:
(refer to notice for full description)
(Extended periods per PIH 2020-13 (HA), REV-1)

Section 7

HCV-1: PHA 5-Year and Annual Plan Submission Dates: Significant Amendment Requirements: For all PHAs, after submission of their first 5-Year Plan, all subsequent 5-Year Plans must be submitted once every five PHA fiscal years, no later than 75 days before the commencement of the PHA's fiscal year. Non-qualified PHAs must also submit their Annual Plan no later than 75 days before the commencement of their fiscal year. Qualified PHAs are not required to submit an annual plan to HUD but are required to hold an annual hearing to discuss proposed plans for the upcoming fiscal year and are required to submit an annual civil rights certification.

Due to the potential postponement of public hearings due to limitations on large public gatherings, HUD is waiving these requirements, and providing alternative deadlines for some PHAs. Specifically, HUD is establishing an alternative requirement under which PHAs with 6/30/20 or 9/30/20 fiscal year-end (FYE) dates must submit their 5-Year (if due in 2020) and Annual Plans or civil rights certification for qualified PHAs no later than 10/18/20 (75 days before 1/1/21) and PHAs with 12/31/20 FYE dates must submit their 5-Year (if due in 2020) and annual plans no later than 1/16/21 (75 days before 4/1/21).



Unless HUD subsequently revises this waiver authority and alternative requirement, PHAs with FYE dates of 3/31 are not impacted by this waiver and are required to submit the 5-Year (if due in 2020) and Annual Plan no later than 75 days before the commencement of their fiscal years.

In addition, the statute and regulations further provide that a significant amendment or modification to the Annual Plan may not be adopted until the PHA has duly called a meeting of its board of directors (or similar governing body) and the meeting, at which the amendment or modification is adopted, is open to the public, and that notification of the amendment or modification is provided to and approved by HUD.

HUD is waiving these requirements and establishing an alternative requirement that any change to a PHA policy, except for changes related to Section 18, Section 22, or the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), that would normally trigger significant amendment requirements of the PHA Plan, may be effectuated without completing the significant amendment process. PHAs are advised that the accessibility, language access, and other nondiscrimination requirements related to the significant amendment process are not waived.

The PHA is required to notify public housing residents and HCV families of any impacts that the significant amendment may have on them by whatever means it considers most effective as soon as practicable. As noted earlier, HUD recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic presents unique challenges from a staffing and communication perspective and encourages PHAs to adapt their communications in consideration of local conditions and resources. For example, a PHA may need to initially provide this notification by placing information on its website and as a voice-mail message and following up with more formal written notice as circumstances allow. All materials, notices, and communications must be clearly communicated and provided in a manner that is effective for persons with hearing, visual, and other communication-related disabilities consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and HUD's Section 504 regulation, and Titles II or III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and implementing regulations.

All materials, notices, and communications must also be provided in a manner that takes reasonable steps to ensure equal access by those with limited English Proficiency.

Period of Availability: The period of availability for the waiver of the significant amendment process ends on December 31, 2020. The period of availability for the 5-Year/Annual Plan submission varies depending on the end date of the PHA fiscal year.

HCV-3: Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination-Income Verification Requirements

– HUD is waiving the requirements to use the income hierarchy described by PIH Notice 2018-18 and will allow PHAs to forgo third-party income verification requirements for annual reexaminations, including the use of EIV, if the PHA wishes to conduct the annual recertification rather than delaying the family's annual recertification. During the allowable period of availability, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process annual reexaminations. This may occur over the telephone (but must be documented by PHA staff with a contemporaneous written record), through an email or postal mail with a self-certification form by the tenant, or through other electronic communications. PHAs that conduct annual examinations under this waiver/alternative requirement will be responsible for addressing any material discrepancies that may arise later. For example, if a tenant self-certified that the tenant lost their job, but later the EIV Income Validation Tool (IVT) shows the tenant's employment continued, the PHA must take enforcement action in accordance with their policies and procedures. Period of Availability: The period of availability to



conduct annual reexaminations using these modified verification requirements ends on July 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of availability to conduct annual reexaminations using these modified verification requirements ends on December 31, 2020.)

HCV-4: Family Income and Composition: Interim Examinations - To assist PHAs that may be prioritizing the processing of interim reexaminations due to decreases in family income and mitigate the challenges of transferring documentation during periods of shelter-in-place/stay-at-home efforts in response to the COVID-19 emergency, HUD is waiving the requirements to use the income verification hierarchy as described by PIH Notice 2018-18. HUD will allow PHAs to forgo third-party income verification requirements for interim reexaminations, including the required use of EIV. During the allowable period of eligibility, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process interim reexaminations. This may occur over the telephone (with a contemporaneous written record by the PHA staff person), through an email with a self-certification form by the family, or through other electronic communications.

PHAs that conduct interim reexaminations under this waiver/alternative requirement will be responsible for addressing any material discrepancies that may arise later. For example, if a tenant self-certified that the tenant lost their job, but later the EIV IVT Report shows the tenant's employment continued, the PHA must take enforcement action that is consistent with its policies and procedures. Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on July 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.)

HCV-6: Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Contract of Participation; Contract Extension - HUD has made a determination that the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 qualify as "good cause" to extend family contracts, and FSS programs may consider this expanded definition of "good cause" as they make their determinations on each family's eligibility for an extension. Period of Availability: The period of availability during which the PHA may extend the family's contract of participation using COVID-19 as the "good cause" ends on December 31, 2020.

HCV-7: Waiting List: Opening and Closing; Public Notice - Recognizing the foreseeable difficulties in complying with this requirement in light of the COVID-19 emergency, HUD is waiving this requirement and is providing an alternative requirement that the PHA may provide public notice in a voicemail message on its main or general information telephone number and through its website (if such a PHA website is available). Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on July 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.)

Section 8

HQS-1: Initial Inspection Requirements - Description: Section 8(o)(8)(A)(i) requires that the PHA must inspect the unit before any assistance payment is made to determine whether the unit meets HQS. Section 8(o)(8)(C) requires the PHA to conduct the initial inspection within certain time frames after receiving the RFTA. Section 982.305 provides that the PHA may not approve the assisted tenancy or execute a HAP contract until the unit has been inspected by the PHA and passes HQS. Additionally, Section 982.305 requires that the PHA must inspect the unit to determine that the unit satisfies the HQS



before the beginning of the initial lease term, and that the PHA must perform this inspection within either 15 days or within a reasonable time depending on the size of the PHA. HUD is waiving these requirements and providing an alternative requirement. In order to place the unit under HAP contract and commence making payments, the PHA may rely on the owner's certification that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life threatening conditions exist in the unit or units in question instead of conducting an initial inspection. At minimum, the PHA must require this owner certification. However, the PHA may add other requirements or conditions in addition to the owner's certification but is not required to do so. The PHA is required to conduct an HQS inspection on the unit as soon as reasonably possible but no later than October 31, 2020. This waiver and alternative requirement may also be applied to PHA-owned units if the independent entity is unable to perform the inspection. Period of Availability: The period of availability for PHAs to accept owner's self-certification for an initial inspection ends on July 31, 2020. The period of availability for the PHA to inspect a unit that was placed under HAP contract based on the owner's self-certification ends on October 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of availability for a PHA to accept an owner's self-certification for an initial inspection ends on December 31, 2020. For any unit for which a PHA accepted an owner's self-certification, the PHA must conduct an HQS inspection as soon as reasonably possible but no later than the 1-year anniversary of the date of the owner's certification.)

HQS-5: HQS Inspection Requirement-Biennial Inspections - Description: The statute and the regulations require the PHA to inspect the unit not less often than biennially during the term of the HAP contract. HUD is waiving this requirement and is allowing PHAs to delay biennial inspections for both tenant-based and PBV units. All delayed biennial inspections must be completed as soon as reasonably possible but no later than October 31, 2020. This waiver and alternative requirement may also be applied to PHA-owned units if the independent entity is unable to perform the inspection. Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on October 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The PHA must conduct the delayed biennial inspection as soon as reasonably possible but no later than one year after the date the biennial inspection would have been required absent the waiver.)

HQS-6: HQS Interim Inspections - The statute requires that upon notification to the PHA by a family or government official that the assisted unit does not comply with the HQS, the PHA must inspect the unit within 24 hours of when the PHA received the notification if the condition is life-threatening. 24 CFR 982.405(g) provides that if the reported condition is not life-threatening, the PHA must inspect the unit within 15 days. The regulation further provides that in the event of extraordinary circumstances HUD may waive the 24-hour or the 15-day inspection requirement until such time as an inspection is feasible. HUD is waiving these requirements and establishing an alternative requirement for both tenant-based and PBV units. If the reported deficiency is life-threatening, the PHA must notify the owner of the reported life-threatening deficiency and that the owner must either correct the life-threatening deficiency within 24 hours of the PHA notification or provide documentation (e.g., text or email a photo to the PHA) that the reported deficiency does not exist. In the case of a reported non-life-threatening deficiency, the PHA must notify the owner of the reported deficiency within 30 days and the owner must either make the repair or document that the deficiency does not exist within 30 days of the PHA notification or any approved PHA extension. The PHA may



add other requirements or conditions in addition to the owner's documentation but is not required to do so. As is the case under the current HCV program requirements, the PHA is not required to conduct an on-site inspection to verify the repairs have been made but may rely on alternative verification methods (e.g., photos submitted by the owner, tenant certification, etc.). This waiver may also be applied to PHA-owned units if the independent entity is unable to perform the inspection. Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on July 31, 2020. After July 31, 2020, the PHA must conduct the HQS inspection in accordance with the applicable time periods upon notification by a family or government official that the assisted unit does not comply with the HQS. (Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020. After December 31, 2020, the PHA must conduct the HQS inspection in accordance with the applicable time periods upon notification by a family or government official that the assisted unit does not comply with the HQS.)

HQS-9: HQS Quality Control Inspections: The regulations require PHAs to conduct supervisory quality control inspections of a sampling of units under contract. HUD is waiving this regulatory requirement. Period of Availability: The period of applicability ends on October 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of applicability ends on December 31, 2020.)

Section 9

HCV-1: Administrative Plan: The regulation requires that any revisions of the PHA's administrative plan must be formally adopted by the PHA Board of Commissioners or other authorized PHA officials. Recognizing the likely foreseeable difficulties in complying with this requirement in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD is waiving the requirement to allow the PHA administrative plan to be revised on a temporary basis without Board approval through September 30, 2020. Any informally adopted revisions under this waiver authority must be formally adopted no later than December 31, 2020. Period of Availability: The period of availability to informally adopt changes to the PHA administrative plan ends on September 30, 2020; the PHA must formally adopt such revisions no later than December 31, 2020.

HCV-2: Information When Family is Selected-PHA Oral Briefing: The regulation requires when the PHA selects a family to participate in either the HCV or PBV program, the PHA must give the family an oral briefing. HUD is waiving this requirement and as an alternative requirement allowing the PHA to conduct the briefing by other means such as a webcast, video call, or expanded information packet. Section 504 and the ADA require PHAs to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants and members of the public in all communications and notices. The PHA must ensure that the method of communication for the briefing effectively communicates with, and allows for equal participation of, each family member, including those with vision, hearing, and other communication-related disabilities, and ensures meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency. Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on July 31, 2020. (Period of Availability: The period of availability ends on December 31, 2020.)

HCV-6: Automatic Termination of HAP Contract: When an HCV family's income increases to the extent that the housing assistance payment is reduced to \$0, PHAs are required by this regulation to automatically terminate HAP contracts 180 days after the



last housing assistance payment to the owner. In recognition that the COVID-19 emergency is creating economic and employment instability for many families, as well as situations where families may on a temporary basis be adding members whose additional income may result in a \$0 HAP subsidy calculation, HUD is waiving this requirement. As an alternative requirement, the PHA, upon written notice to the owner and family, may extend the period of time following the last payment to the owner that triggers the automatic termination of the HAP contract. The extension beyond the normally applicable 180 days is determined by the PHA but may not extend beyond December 31, 2020. Period of Availability: The period of availability for the extension ends December 31, 2020. The PHA may not extend the HAP contract beyond December 31, 2020.

