



## **PHA RESIDENT COVID-19 GOALS AND ACTION PLAN**

*Craig W. Welch, Executive Director*

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First, let me say how impressed and grateful I am for all the care and kindness our residents have shown to each other and our staff as we have navigated through some challenging and unprecedented times. The Covid-19 crisis is a global challenge and here in Portsmouth, I am proud that we have risen to the occasion and followed the guidelines that have allowed us to keep everyone healthy and safe.

On Monday June 15, the Governor's *Stay at Home Order* expires, and instead is going to be replaced with a *Stay at Home Advisory*. While this milestone represents a relaxing of strict rules about social distancing, gatherings, and allows businesses to operate, it is important to know that this crisis is not over. We must remain diligent with our habits and our hygiene to prevent the virus from being contracted or spread by any of our residents, staff, or their caregivers.

Starting on June 15, we will begin to implement a plan that allows us to improve and expand the service we provide; we will be focusing on four key categories to keep our residents and the people who care for our residents healthy and safe.

In consultation with public health experts, risk managers, HUD, and other Housing Authorities in the Region, we have developed the following plan that enables a high level of service and safe operations for residents and staff.



## **Assuring Resident Safety**

- Face masks that cover the mouth and nose are required in all common areas, including stairways, elevators and offices. Masks will be available free of charge for all residents and their caretakers. Residents may request a mask during business hours at any of our property management offices.
- During business hours, only one person will be allowed in administrative office lobbies at a time to speak with the front desk.
- Residents should continue practicing social distancing by staying 6 feet away from others and should avoid touching surfaces that may have been touched by others when possible.
- The PHA will continue with our intensive disinfecting and sanitizing routine of all of our common areas.
- Residents should continue to practice good hygiene by regularly washing your hands for at least 20 seconds throughout the day with warm water and soap, covering coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue and sanitizing hands afterwards, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- In order to protect all our residents, no visitors (other than those providing caretaking, health care, or food delivery services) will be allowed to pass through or use any common areas or entries, or stay overnight in any PHA apartments.
- In order to provide safe delivery of food, medicine, supplies, and assure that our residents get safe access to critical home health and caretaking services, the PHA requires that delivery personnel and caretakers wear masks inside PHA buildings, stay a minimum of 6 feet apart from others, avoid using PHA elevators, and clean and sanitize hands before entering the building.
- The PHA will also find new ways to accommodate active outdoor spaces and activities for PHA residents.

## **Improving Access to Property Management and Administrative Offices**

- The PHA has developed new policies and procedures that will allow us to safely provide on-site property management. Property Managers will be available to meet with residents by appointment. When meeting in person, residents must wear a mask covering their mouth and nose, maintain a minimum of a 6-foot distance between all people in the meeting, and clean and sanitize their hands prior to the meeting. The resident must also answer questions asking whether they are experiencing Covid-19 related symptoms, have been exposed to anyone who is experiencing Covid-19 symptoms, or have been tested positive for Covid-19. If the resident answers yes to any of these questions, the meeting will be held by telephone.



- Residents will also have the opportunity to send text messages to property managers. For residents who have the proper computer equipment and knowledge, PHA staff will also be available by video calls using applications such as Zoom or GoToMeeting, and will continue to be available by phone and email.
- The PHA has also invested in new on-site technologies that will allow residents and visitors to safely speak with PHA staff directly. These technologies include a combination of intercom systems that will allow voice communication through closed windows in property management and administrative offices, access controls to prevent crowding in our offices, and video doorbells that will allow residents to talk to Property Managers during business hours when offices are open, and determine whether an in-person meeting is required.

### **Resuming Normal Operations for Property Maintenance and Capital Improvements**

- We will expand work order dispatch to include priority non-emergency maintenance items.
- Continue to provide quality personal protective equipment and training to front line maintenance staff.
- Create and maintain safety protocols for vendors and contractors entering buildings.
- Continue our intensive cleaning schedule for common areas in all multi-unit properties.
- Residents requesting work orders should be called by property management prior to Maintenance personnel entering the unit to confirm it is safe for the Maintenance personnel to enter.

### **Continued Focus on Resident Services**

- Expand opportunities for communicating with and serving residents.
- Continue our efforts to connect residents with services in the community.
- Staying diligent to prevent fraud against our residents.
- Continue to connect with PHA partner organizations.
- Decide on criteria to resume limited controlled access to PHA common areas. Provide additional resident education regarding transportation options for residents.



## **Thank you!**

Thank you for your kindness and patience as we get through this crisis together, and please join me in thanking PHA's outstanding Maintenance Team, in particular, who have stepped up to this challenge in so many ways, including working hard and with urgency to keep our properties safe and clean, while responding to emergency work orders, and following strict new safety measures. By following the guidelines in this plan, you are not only keeping other residents safe, but you are also doing your part to protect our staff and their families.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Property Manager or our outstanding Resident Services team who have made certain that no one has gone without food, medicine or a friendly call from someone who cares.

Stay healthy, stay strong, and we'll get through this together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gray W. Welch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.