

Notification of Pickaway Metropolitan Housing Authority Adopted Waivers Under
HUD PIH Notice 2020-05, Revision 1

Pursuant to the authority provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Public Law 116-136), HUD is waiving and establishing alternative requirements for numerous statutory and regulatory requirements for the Public Housing Program and Housing Choice Voucher Program. The use of these waivers is at the discretion of the Public Housing Authority but HUD encourages use of the waivers as appropriate to keep public housing and HCV programs operational to the extent practicable.

Within this document:

PHA will be used in place of Public Housing Authority
PIH will be used in place of Public and Indian Housing and covers Section 8 funded programs (Housing Choice Voucher) and Section 9 funded programs (Public Housing).
PMHA will be used in place of Pickaway Metropolitan Housing Authority
PH will be used in place of Public Housing
HCV will be used in place of Housing Choice Voucher
HUD will be used in place of Department of Housing & Urban Development
HQS will be used in place of Housing Quality Standards

If you require assistance in reading or interpreting this document, please contact your caseworker at PMHA at 740-477-2514. Caseworker program, extension and email are:
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The effective date of all waivers is April 10, 2020. The termination date for the waivers is either July 31, 2020, October 31, 2020 or December 31, 2020 as noted below. HUD has stated that the waivers may be extended. At the discretion of the PHA, we may return to regular program operation at any time.

This is a summary of the waivers that PMHA has adopted:

Waiver PH and HCV-1

Adopted 4-10-2020

Expires 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

The current regulation provides 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 the 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. The PHA is required to notify public housing residents and HCV families of any impacts the significant amendment may have on them by whatever means it considers most effective as soon as practicable. The period of availability for the waiver of the significant amendment process ends on July 31, 2020.

Waiver PH and HCV-3:

Adopted 4-10-2020

Expires 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

Under the current regulation, HUD requires PHAs to use the EIV (Enterprise Income Verification) System for verification of family income at the annual examination. HUD also outlines the required verification hierarchy process PHAs must follow in PIH Notice 2018-18.

HUD is waiving the requirement to use PIH Notice 2018-18 to verify income, including the use of EIV in the completion of annual reexaminations rather than opting to delay the annual recertification (as permitted in Waiver PH and HCV-2 which was NOT adopted by PMHA).

During the period allowed under the waiver, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process annual reexaminations. After this waiver is no longer in effect, PHAs must address any material discrepancies that arise, an example of which would be if EIV later reveals income in the household that was unreported. The PMHA will still pull the EIV report for each household during certifications, but will not use it as the income verification source.

Waiver PH and HCV-4

Adopted 4-10-2020

Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

This waiver is the same as Waiver 3 but applies to interim certifications (any certification that is not the family annual certification). This waiver waives the requirement to use third-party income verification, including the required use of EIV. During the period covered by the waiver, PHAs may consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification to process interim certifications.

Examples of how this certification may occur is via use of telephone (and documented in writing by the PMHA staff), through email by a self-certification form by the family, or through other electronic communications including fax.

As the previous waiver, the PHA is required to amend any discrepancies discovered at a later time, and PMHA will continue to pull EIV reports but will not use them as the income verification source.

Waiver PH and HCV-6
Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates 12-31-2020 unless extended

The HCV program at PMHA includes a Family Self Sufficiency component. Current HUD regulation authorizes a PHA to extend a family's contract of participation in the FSS program for a period not to exceed two years upon a finding of good cause. HUD has made the 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. This is adopted by PMHA as a case by case consideration. The availability period for this waiver ends on 12/31/2020.

HQS INFORMATION

HUD's goal in assessing the COVID-19 pandemic is for PHAs to continue to use available funding to house families, keep families in their homes, and conduct critical operations that can be done remotely and safely. At the same time HUD recognizes the unprecedented challenge this pandemic poses to PHAs in carrying out the most essential of their program administrative responsibilities. One of these areas is the completion of the HQS inspections that protect the health and safety of HCV families. Conducting physical inspections of a rental unit poses its own health risks for families, participating owners, and PHA personal. At the same time, completion of the HQS inspection may run counter to public health orders, directives or recommendations such a shelter-in-place or other social distancing practices designed to contain and reduce exposure to in-place or other social distancing practices designed to contain and reduce exposure to COVID-19.

To address this situation, HUD offered 11 waivers regarding HQS, some of which apply to programs outside the HCV Program. PMHA has adopted the following HQS Waivers:

Waiver HQS-3
Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver extended through December 31, 2020)

Current regulation provides PHAs with the option to choose to approve an assisted tenancy, execute the HAP contract, and begin making housing assistance payments on a unit that fails the initial HQS inspection, provided the unit's failure to meet HQS is the result only of non-life threatening conditions. The statute further requires that the PHA must withhold housing assistance payments from the owner if the non-life threatening conditions (NLT) are not corrected within 30 days. HUD is waiving the requirement that the PHA must withhold the payment if the NLT repairs are not made in 30 days. Instead, the PHA may provide an extension of up to an additional 30 days to the owner to make the NLT repairs and continue to make payments to the owner during the period of that maximum 30 day extension. If the owner has not made the NLT repairs by the end of the PHA extension period, the PHA must withhold payments.

The period of availability for the PHA to approve this extension of up to an additional 30 days ends on July 31, 2020. The extension to make the NLT repairs may extend beyond July 31,

2020, depending on the date the PHA approved the extension. For example, if the PHA approved the extension on July 15th, the maximum extension provided to the owner would be August 15th.

Waiver HQS-5

Adopted 4-10-2020

Terminates 10-31-2020 unless extended

Current regulations require the PHA to inspect the rental 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. All delayed biennial inspections must be completed as soon as reasonably possible, but no later than October 31, 2020.

Waiver HQS-10

Adopted 4-10-2020

Terminates 10-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

Current regulations establish a minimum standard for adequate space for a HCV assisted family. Specifically, it requires that each dwelling unit have at least 1 bedroom or living/sleeping room for each 2 persons. HUD is waiving this requirement for PHAs where the PHA wishes to assist a current participant that needs to add a member or members to the assisted household as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, and the additional family members would result in the unit not meeting the space and security standards. This provision does not apply to an initial or new lease. A participant must not enter into a new lease for a unit that does not comply with the space and security standards. For any family occupying a unit that does not meet the space and security requirements pursuant to this waiver, the waiver will be in effect for the duration of the current lease term or one year from the date of this notice, whichever period of time is longer.

Housing Choice Voucher General Waivers

Waiver HCV-1

Adopted 4-10-2020

Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

Current regulation requires that any revision of the PHA's administrative plan must be formally adopted by the PHA Board of Commissioners or other authorized PHA officials. HUD is waiving the requirement to allow the PHA administrative plan to be revised on a temporary basis without Board approval. As an alternative requirement any informally adopted revisions under this waiver authority must be formally adopted as soon as practicable following June 30, 2020, but no later than July 31, 2020.

Waiver HCV-2**Adopted 4-10-2020****Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)**

Current regulation requires the PHA to conduct an oral briefing for all new participants in the HCV program. HUD is waiving this requirement and as an alternative is permitting the PHA to conduct the briefing by other means such as webcast, video call, or expanded information packet. Section 504 and ADA requirements require the PHA 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.

Waiver HCV-3**Adopted 4-10-2020****Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Extended to December 31, 2020)**

Current regulation provides that at its discretion, the PHA may grant a family one or more extensions of the initial voucher term in accordance with the PHA policy as described in the PHA administrative plan. HUD is waiving this requirement that the extension(s) must be in accordance with the PHA's administrative plan in order to allow the PHA to provide extensions. The period of availability for this extension ends on July 31, 2020.

Waiver HCV-4**Adopted 4-10-2020****Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)**

Current regulation states that the PHA may not make any housing assistance payments to the owner until the HAP contract is executed. The regulation provides that the PHA must use their best efforts to execute the HAP contract before the beginning of the lease term and that the HAP contract must be executed no later than 60 days from the beginning of the lease term. Any HAP contract executed after the 60 day period is void and the PHA may not pay any housing assistance payments to the owner. HUD is waiving the regulatory requirement to allow PHAs to execute the HAP contract after the 60-day deadline has passed and make housing assistance payments back to the beginning of the lease term. However, the PHA and owner must execute the HAP contract no later than 120 days from the beginning of the lease term. The period of availability for the purpose of executing the HAP contract after the normal 60 day period from the beginning of the lease term ends on July 31, 2020.

Waiver HCV-5

Adopted 4-10-2020**Terminates 12-31-2020 unless extended**

The current regulation requires that a family may not be absent from the unit for a period of more than 180 consecutive calendar days for any reason. HUD is waiving this requirement to allow the PHA at its discretion to continue housing assistance payments and not terminate the HAP contract due to extenuating circumstances such as hospitalization, extended stays at nursing homes, and caring for family members. PMHA has added when travel from any outside locations is prohibited or not recommended by air, boat, bus or train. The period of availability for the PHA to choose to continue making HAP payments despite the family's absence of more than 180 days ends on December 31, 2020. The PHA may not make payments beyond December 31, 2020, and the HAP contract will terminate on that date if the family is still absent from the unit. Documentation verifying the circumstance related to this waiver will be required.

Waiver HCV-6**Adopted 4-10-2020****Terminates 12-31-2020 unless extended**

The current regulation states 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.

Public Housing General Waivers**Waiver PH-4****Adopted 4-10-2020****Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)**

The regulation requires that the PHA policies in the ACOP must be duly adopted and implemented. HUD is waiving this requirement to permit PHAs to adopt and implement changes to the ACOP on an expedited basis, without formal board approval. As an alternative requirement, any informally adopted revisions under this waiver authority must be formally adopted as soon as practicable following June 30, 2020, but no later than July 31, 2020.

Waiver PH-5

Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates 3-31-2021 unless extended

The current regulation requires that each adult resident of public housing, except for any member who is determined exempt, must contribute 8 hours per month of community service or participate in an economic self-sufficiency program or a combination of both. HUD is waiving this requirement and is alternately suspending the community service and self-sufficiency requirement. If a PHA adopts this waiver, tenants will not be subject to this requirement until the family's next annual reexamination. Upon the family's next annual reexamination, the PHA should report on the HUD-50058 each individual's CSSR status as either exempt for those that are exempt, or pending for those that are otherwise eligible but for which the suspension prevents a housing authority from determining compliance. After a PHA completes an annual reexamination for any family, the CSSR becomes effective again for family members for the subsequent annual reexamination cycle.

Waiver PH-6
Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates one year beyond audit deadline unless extended

The current regulation requires PHAs to complete an energy audit for each PHA-owned project not less than once every five years. Due to shelter-in-place orders, and closures of many non-essential businesses, access to qualified energy auditors is likely to be limited during the period of time that the coronavirus is impacting the program. Therefore, HUD is waiving this requirement and is alternatively suspending the performance of the audits for one year for those that were due before December 31, 2020.

Waiver PH-8
Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

The current regulations require that resident councils must adhere to certain minimum standards regarding election procedures, including that all procedures must assure fair and frequent elections of resident council members which is at least once every three years for each council member. HUD is waiving the regulation to allow PHAs to delay resident council elections beyond the three-year limit if necessary. However, the delayed resident council election must be rescheduled and held as soon as reasonably possible once circumstances permit, after July 31, 2020.

Waiver PH-10
Adopted 4-10-2020
Terminates 7-31-2020 unless extended (Waiver Not Extended Under PIH 2020-05, Revision 1)

The current regulation requires PHAs to provide 30-day notice to impacted families for changes to policies, rules and special charges to families. HUD is waving the requirement to provide such advance notice, except advance notice must be provided for any change related to tenant charges. Although HUD is waiving the advanced notice, PHAs must still provide adequate

notification to impacted families within 30 days of making such changes. The period of availability for this waiver ends on July 31, 2020.

Waiver PH-12
Adopted 8-13-2020
Terminates 12-31-2020

The current regulation requires Housing Authorities to complete an annual inspection of their Public Housing properties. HUD is waiving this requirement until 2021. PMHA has decided to adopt this waiver due to the combination of COVID-19 and the renovation currently under way in Public Housing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING OPERATIONS AT PMHA

In reference to the adoption of the waivers, PMHA continues to meet as many operating obligations as normally as possible. In this way, we are processing all annual and interim certifications on schedule.

We began scheduling all HQS inspections beginning June 1, 2020. We have been completing new lease inspections and any emergency inspections called into the office.

In June, 2020, we resumed calling in applicants for HCV and Public Housing appointments. These intake appointments will be held in the PMHA Office Appointment room. Masks will be required for all participants.

Other policies amended by PMHA during the recent months are the elimination of the minimum rent for both PH and HCV, and the elimination of water and sewer overcharges for PH residents. With the lifting of the Stay at Home order on May 20, 2020, the minimum rent will be reinstated with the next annual recertification of each household. Water and Sewer overcharges will be reinstated August 1, 2020.

PMHA will continue to leave the office closed to the public through September and will reopen on Monday, October 5, 2020 unless an increase in local COVID cases occurs. Other appointments will be scheduled in the office if necessary or when requested.

For persons who cannot complete income changes, annual certifications or other work activity via email, telephone or fax, we will schedule appointments in the office. It is our intention to continue processing all interim and annual certifications via electronic methods and by telephone. By doing so, we reduce foot traffic into the office and minimize the exposure of everyone.

Prior to October 5th, Landlords who want to come into the office to sign paperwork, should call as they arrive so we can grant them entrance to the office, or bring the paperwork to them to sign. Landlords who wish to sign paperwork via mail, should contact the office and we will oblige by mailing or emailing the paperwork to you. Please let us know how we can make this process easier for you.

EACH VISITOR TO THE PMHA OFFICE, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON FOR THE VISIT, WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A MASK UNLESS HEALTH REASONS PROHIBIT THEM FROM DOING SO. WE HAVE MASKS IN THE OFFICE FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ONE. PMHA staff are required to wear masks whenever they leave their individual office. This is for your protection as well as ours.