

# **Dunn Housing Authority COVID-19 PLAN**

**March 20, 2020**

## **A Message from Executive Director**

In accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the North Carolina Department of Health, the PHA is adjusting its services and operations to protect staff and the individuals and families it serves from further spread of COVID-19. The PHA will continue to update its action plan. Any additions or changes to the PHA's March 16, 2020, COVID-19 Action Plan are highlighted below.

In an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, effective immediately all public facing PHA offices and facilities are temporarily closed to all residents and visitors. This closure includes the Administrative Office at 817 Stewart Street. The PHA will be suspending all internal and external meetings with very few exceptions. As much business as possible will be conducted by telephone and other electronic means. The PHA will continue to respond as needed to emergency situations.

Closing our offices does not mean the PHA is closed. We remain committed to our mission and the individuals and families we serve.

Dunn Housing Authority has signs posted with contact information so residents can easily reach staff by telephone in lieu of a walk-in meeting. Residents have also been delivered letters on several occasions with all PHA Staff Contact numbers. PHA staff are still available to provide the emergency services and essential duties that arise in managing PHA owned properties.

## **COVID-19 Action Plan**

### **1. PHA-Owned and Managed Affordable Housing (Public Housing, Scattered Sites, PBRA); Resident Services**

#### **Applicant Interviews:**

- All in-person intake appointments are canceled and all applicants with interviews already scheduled have been rescheduled.

#### **Approving/Denying Files**

- Applications recommended for approval or denial will continue to be reviewed by the Executive Director.

#### **Resident Hearings:**

- All in-person denial hearings are canceled.
- Applicants may appeal their denial by submitting via fax, email or U.S. Mail, a written explanation of why their denial should be overturned, along with supporting documentation, and two community references.

**Lease Signings for New Tenants:**

- Lease signings and initial unit assignments will continue as usual.

**Inspections and Accessing of Units:**

- All routine annual inspections will be postponed until further notice.
- Life and Safety inspections will be conducted by staff as needed.
- Maintenance will have gloves, masks and shoe covers available.

**Transfers:**

- Reasonable Accommodations/Emergency Transfers will continue as usual.

**Rent Calculations/Certifications:**

- Recertifications and rent changes will continue as usual.
- Income changes reported by the resident must now be done via U.S. Mail, email, fax or phone.
- With supporting documentation, a resident may request a financial hardship exemption (Minimum Rent Emergency Waivers).

**Resident Work Orders:**

- Office staff will continue to keep records of needed work orders.
- Maintenance requests may be made only via phone, fax, email.

**Energy Audits:**

HUD is waiving and suspending the requirement to complete energy audits for PHA projects if the audit is due to HUD before December 31, 2020.

- DHA has adopted this waiver

**Over Income Families**

- HUD is waiving the requirement that PHAs terminate rental assistance or charge an alternative rent to families whose income exceeds the program maximum over two consecutive reexamination cycles through December 31, 2020. Through this waiver, PHAs would be allowed to permit over-income families to remain in their units and pay the same rental amount until that PHA conducts the family's next annual income recertification.
- DHA Has adopted this waiver

**2. PHA-Owned and Managed Affordable Housing (Public Housing, Scattered Sites, PBRA); Maintenance**

**Work orders:**

- All non-emergency work orders are suspended until further notice.

- **Community rooms and community recreation centers are closed in order to support social distancing as recommended by the CDC and the North Carolina Department of Health.**
- PHA Maintenance staff will continue regular operations, either in the office or by teleworking:
- Office staff will contribute to the effort by monitoring their own office environments.
- All Preventative Maintenance inspections are postponed until further notice.

**Cleaning and Sanitation supplies:**

- As supplies become more difficult to obtain, emergency purchasing procedures will be utilized to obtain cleaning supplies and personal protection equipment.

**Construction:**

- Construction work will continue based upon the scope of the work.

**3. PHA assisted affordable housing Actions affecting people new to PHA program :**

**Intake appointments will now be conducted in the office and/or by mail**

- Briefings will now be held via telephone.

**Actions affecting ongoing case management of current participants:**

- All in-person appointments are suspended until further notice.
- Mailings will include a return checklist as a reminder of all the documents needed and will also encourage participants to return via email, mail, or fax to limit contact.
- Participants may request an in-person appointment if needed.
- Staff will contact existing appointments to cancel an in-person appointment and to request the return of documents by mail, fax, or email.
- **Residents requiring rent adjustments due to income changes will be able to self-certify through July 31, 2020.**

**Inspections of assisted units:**

- Inspections for participants moving to a new unit and/or entering our program for the first time will continue. These are needed in order to begin housing assistance.
- Inspectors will have gloves; shoe covers and masks available for each inspection.
- Annual inspections already scheduled (March through May), which cannot be delayed, will only receive initial inspection and landlords can self-certify repairs completed on any nonlife-threatening deficiencies items.
- Participants can request annual inspections if needed. Any annual inspection already scheduled during this time that can be delayed will be delayed for 30 days.
- All re-inspections will be completed via self-certifications.

**4. PHA employees:**

**Operational Updates:**

- **The PHA has no plans to lay-off or furlough staff. There remains an abundance**

of PHA work that must be done.

- Staff is encouraged to work with their supervisor to make arrangements that promote social distancing, including working from home, flexible hours, staggered staffing schedules, and weekend and night hours. All PHA staff who can fulfill their duties from home should do so.
- Those employees whose positions do not allow for them to fulfill their duties from home should work with their supervisor to implement plans that reduce the amount of in-person contact with others, while still allowing for the execution of essential services.

**If you have been advised to quarantine due to potential exposure to COVID-19:**

- Inform your supervisor by phone or email and stay at home for 14 days.
- Work remotely, if approved to do so.
- If not approved to work remotely, you may use your accrued leave time (any leave).

**If you have COVID-19 and need to isolate:**

- Inform your supervisor by phone or email and stay at home until symptoms have cleared.
- Work remotely, if approved to do so.
- If not approved to work remotely, you may use your accrued leave time (any leave).

**If you need to stay at home to care for a dependent or a family member who is sick with COVID-19:**

- Inform your supervisor and HR by phone or email and stay home.
- Work remotely, if approved to do so.
- If not approved to work remotely, you may use your accrued leave time (any leave).

**If you have a medical condition and your treating physician is recommending that you maintain social distancing:**

- Inform your supervisor by phone or email and email your doctor's note if possible.
- Work remotely, if approved to do so.
- If not approved to work remotely, you may use your accrued leave time (any leave).

**If you do not want to come to work because you are afraid that you may come in contact with COVID-19 through the workplace:**

- Inform your supervisor by phone or email and request leave.
- You may use your accrued leave time (any leave).

## **5. Resident Informational Links and Community Resources:**

NC Governor's Office: <https://governor.nc.gov/>

HUD Page on COVID-19: <https://www.hud.gov/coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

**NC Department of Health:** <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/>

March 20, 2020

This PHA

COVID-19 Action Plan will be updated regularly. Please visit the PHA's website at

[www.dunnhousing.com](http://www.dunnhousing.com)

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