



# ST. CLAIR COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

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May 1, 2020

Dear Landlord:

Thank you for your participation in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) administered by the St. Clair County Housing Authority (SCCHA). As you know, we are experiencing unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted the local, state and national economies. Millions of Americans have lost their jobs or other sources of income (i.e. the self-employed and those operating small businesses).

Those who live and work in the greater Metro-east area are no exception. Thousands of local families are suddenly and unexpectedly struggling financially. The impact on participants in the HCVP has been especially hard because many have (or had) jobs in the hospitality, retail and/or service industries -- most of these businesses have had to at least temporarily close their doors.

The monthly tenant rent portion for each HCVP participant is based on household income. Upon notification of a decrease in household income, SCCHA can and will adjust the tenant rent portion to reflect the change. This usually results in the tenant rent portion decreasing and the housing assistance payment made by SCCHA increasing. However, SCCHA does not have the capacity to immediately verify and process the volume of changes that have been and continue to be received. Many household income changes were processed for May 1<sup>st</sup>, but many more will take longer to process. Properly reported income decreases will become effective retro-actively to the first of the following month once the change is verified and the interim recertification is completed.

Your cooperation, patience and understanding are requested on behalf of residents who are unable to pay what was their established monthly rent portion and on behalf of SCCHA as staff processes income changes as quickly as possible. In regards to the former, HUD prepared the announcement that appears on the back of this letter and requested every PHA (Public Housing Authority) in the nation share the information with HCVP participants and participating landlords.

It is important for you to understand the 120 day suspension of evictions for non-payment of rent (from March 27, 2020 to July 24, 2020) is federal law ---SCCHA and Illinois courts have no authority to make any exceptions.

We will get through this difficult period best by all parties working together cooperatively.

Respectfully,

Larry McLean  
Executive Director

## **"EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY"**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Larry McLean

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Eugene Verdu, Chairman  
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Vivian Cash  
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# Addressing Tenant Concerns Regarding Rent and the Temporary Suspension of Evictions for Nonpayment of Rent

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developed this flyer to provide Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), Public Housing, and Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation (Mod Rehab) participants with important information and resources about paying rent during the national emergency concerning the coronavirus pandemic.

## **What is the suspension of evictions about?**

**Evictions for nonpayment of rent, and charges/fees for nonpayment of rent, have been temporarily suspended.** This applies to all HUD-assisted participants from March 27, 2020 to July 24, 2020<sup>1</sup>. Although your Public Housing Authority's (PHA) Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policies (ACOP) and/or Administrative Plan may not be updated, please be aware that the suspension of evictions for nonpayment of rent is in place.

## **Having trouble making rent?**

- **Voucher and public housing participants:** If you lost your job or had a significant loss of income, **request an interim reexamination** with the housing authority as soon as possible. Your rent can be adjusted to reflect the change in income or you may be eligible for a financial hardship exemption. Your housing authority may also know about other local resources.
- **Voucher participants only:** **Contact your landlord right away.** Reach out early to discuss potential payment plans or accommodations. Due to loss in income and the resulting interim reexamination, your rent adjustment may be retroactive. Confirm with the PHA and your landlord whether you will receive a credit for the previous month.

## **What else should you know?**

- **Rent is still due** during this time period and will accumulate if unpaid.
- Your landlord and the PHA cannot initiate a new eviction action for nonpayment of rent and you should not receive a notice to vacate for nonpayment of rent from March 27, 2020 – July 24, 2020.
- Your landlord and the PHA cannot charge any late fees, or accrue charges/fees, and your assistance cannot be terminated for past due rent in April, May, June and July 2020.
- If you are behind on rent after the suspension of evictions expire: **Voucher participants** need to negotiate directly with your landlord to determine requirements to repay unpaid rent. Otherwise, your landlord could file an eviction. **Public housing participants** need to work with the PHA to pay unpaid rent in a lump sum or set up a repayment agreement. Otherwise, your assistance could be terminated and/or the PHA could file an eviction.
- Evictions for nonpayment of rent filed with the court before March 27, 2020 can proceed if there is no conflict with state or local laws.
- The PHA or your landlord can still terminate assistance and evict for drug abuse, criminal activity, lease violations, fraud, repeated minor violations, other good cause, etc.
- HUD does not intervene or participate in eviction proceedings. If you feel you are being wrongfully evicted, contact your local legal aid organization or social service agencies. If you are a Voucher participant, you may also contact your local PHA.

