

# Coronavirus Notice & Policy

The Columbus Housing Authority (CHA) continues working diligently to ensure that essential services are provided while following the Department of Public Health's directive to limit any exposure to COVID-19. In order to continue to meet customer needs, the CHA, like other City and Lowndes county departments, has taken immediate action as reflected below:

## **CHA Office**

The office doors remain locked to limit face- to -face contact and prevent possible spreading of contagious diseases. We are accepting in-person visits by appointment only. You may drop off paperwork, make rent payments or provide updated information at the CHA using the drop box outside the office's main entrance at 912 4<sup>th</sup> Street South. Paperwork or documents can be returned by fax to 662-329-3853; or email it to [colhou@chauthority.org](mailto:colhou@chauthority.org).

## **Immediate Needs**

Our staff are prioritizing interim recertification requests for rent reductions; emergency moves, due to your home being uninhabitable and inspections for new move ins. You may request an interim, a transfer, an emergency inspection, or submit notice to vacate using the following methods:

- Email to [colhou@chauthority.org](mailto:colhou@chauthority.org)
- Fax to 662-329-3853
- Mail to 914 4<sup>th</sup> Street South Columbus, MS 39701
- Place in the drop box

In complying with the Mississippi State Department of Public Health's recommendations, it is anticipated that the CHA will operate with minimum staff. We ask that any requests that are not immediate needs wait until the office re-opens.

Due to the state of emergency, we are operating with minimum staff. Please bear with us as we may experience longer than normal hold times due to a high volume of calls. We will continue to answer your call as quickly as possible and monitor our wait times. If you would prefer, you may also email [colhou@chauthority.org](mailto:colhou@chauthority.org) and we will respond to you within 48 hours.

## **CHA update – Operations and COVID 19**

**July 1, 2020**

- Since the pandemic began, CHA has continued providing services because housing is an essential business. In terms of operations, staff are working 2.5 days in staggered schedules.
- Maintenance is only entering homes performing emergency maintenance service calls.
- WE have kept our doors locked to minimize face to face contact and possible contraction and spread of COVID. Doors will remain locked for this purpose (until further notice).
- Signage has been placed in parking lots of the administrative building and resource center advising people to call before leaving their vehicles.
- Stay in your vehicle signs will be posted in front of all parking spaces. They will state- call the office at 328-4236 give your name, phone number and the reason you are here. We will call you when we are ready for you to come to the door for services
- CHA is doing all we can to serve customers over the phone. If we cannot do so, employees will come to the door and serve them face-to-face.
- Services are also being made available and provided by email, fax, drop box, conference call and text.
- A larger drop box has been ordered so tenants can conveniently return or submit paperwork and information that is too large to fit in the payment drop box.
- Mask or a face covering is to be worn when entering the building. If customers do not have one, one can be provided.
- We are planning to return to normal business hours no later than the first of August- by then, all Kiosk should be in place. This is all contingent up on the pandemic status.
- Everyone coming into our office will go thru a body temperature scan device. If your temperature reads over 98.6, you will be notified and tested a second time using a hand held touchless thermometer. If you have a second elevated body temperature, you will be asked to reschedule your appointment and encouraged to seek medical attention.
- Temperature gauges will be installed at front and rear entrances of main building, Shield Sims Resource Center and at the maintenance building. All staff will be checked by digital touchless thermometers. Depending on that reading, they may not be allowed to work and advised to seek medical attention as well.

- If anyone goes into interview rooms for service, staff are required to spray and wipe down common, most frequently touched surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, counter and chair handles before another person enters.
- We have adopted a contagious and infectious disease preparedness and recovery plan which goes into effect August 1, 2020
- This date was chosen to allow ample time for staff training, resident notification and training of the Resident Council.
- In accordance to this plan, all employees are required to wear protective equipment such as mask, face covering, gloves and /or body suits when providing any type of services to clients in the office or units.
- For more details or to view the full plan, please go to our website policies Tab.