



# HCV Newsletter Summer 2020 Edition

## RECENT CHANGES

Due to the recent pandemic, we have had to change our processes in order better serve you while taking the proper safety precautions. The following are some changes we have implemented:

- ✓ Mail out Recertifications—Your annual recertification is still REQUIRED by HUD, however you do not have to come to the office to complete it. You will receive a packet in the mail that contains forms to fill out and return with your verification of income. Assets, paid utility and rent receipts.
- ✓ Interim Changes-You do not have to fill out the interim change form until further notice. You do still have to report the change! Just email your Housing Specialist to report your change, stating start/stop dates and verification of the change such as a letter stating you are no longer employed or paystubs from a new job or increase in hours or hourly wage.
- ✓ Office is open by appointment only—Most processes or questions can be handled by email or a phone call and do not need an appointment. If your Housing Specialist determines an appointment is needed, one will be scheduled. MASKS ARE MANDATORY.
- ✓ HOUSING AUTHORITY DROP BOX—For your convenience, the Housing Authority has installed a drop box. You are welcomed to drop completed recertification packets, interim change documentation, informal requests, requests for inspections (landlord packets) etc.. in the drop box located to the left of the double doors at our office entrance.
- ✓ Mail out Voucher Briefings—For those who are selected off the waitlist, a mail out voucher briefing packet will be sent to you if you qualify after the telephone interview. All documentation that needs returned can be dropped off in our drop box.

## HCV Contact Info

### Inspector

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### HCV Housing Specialists

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### Portability/Intake Specialist

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### HCV Program Supervisor

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## Inspector's Corner

Our Inspector has recently started conducting occupied inspections again. Your annual inspection may have been skipped during the months of March-July. It is not time to catch up and get your HUD required inspection completed. You will be notified when your inspection is scheduled. Please make the process easier for you and the inspector by being prepared. Units must pass an inspection at least biennially to stay on the program. Do not risk your housing assistance by not being home, or not getting repairs completed by the scheduled reinspection date. Landlords and tenants both need to do their part for inspections to pass and to ensure HAP payments are not interrupted.

*Avoid Reinspection fees by completing required repairs before the reinspection date.*

*Inspection requirements can be found on our website [www.hagerstownha.com](http://www.hagerstownha.com)*

### Rent Increases

*Landlords please submit written requests for rent increases 60 days before your tenant's recertification date. For example, if your tenant recertification date is October 1<sup>st</sup> then submit your request to their Housing Specialist by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Rent can only be increased once a year. If you wish to change utility responsibility, this needs approved by the Housing Authority, please contact your tenant's Housing Specialist for more information.*

## City of Hagerstown Codes

### Exterior Inspection Checklist

#### **302.1 Sanitation**

Property is free from litter, trash, discarded items, rubbish, and debris; only furniture designed for exterior use is on the exterior of the property including porches; property is free from accumulations of yard waste; property is free from animal feces

#### **302.3 Private Sidewalk/Driveway**

Sidewalk is good condition; sidewalk is free from tripping hazards; sidewalk is continuous

#### **302.4 Weeds**

Grass is maintained to a height of less than 10 inches; property is free from any noxious weeds; property is free from hazardous or injurious weeds to human health

#### **302.4.1.5 Weeds in the Sidewalk**

Sidewalk is free and clear of any grass or weeds

#### **302.7 Accessory Structures (Garages, Sheds, fences, retaining walls, gazebos, carports)**

Structure is structurally sound; roof shingles are in good repair and free from defects; all windows are free from breaks or holes; garage and man doors are intact and free from breaks or deterioration; fences are intact and free from deteriorating conditions; gates are capable of performing functions as intended



- Pay your rent portion and utilities on time to avoid unnecessary late fees and court costs and to remain in good standing with the program.
- Report maintenance issues to your landlord in a timely manner.
- Report income changes within 14 days of occurrence.
- Do not allow people who are not on your voucher to live in your unit. This is a violation of the program and will get you terminated from the program.
- Abide by your lease requirements.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Do not pay more than your portion of the rent which is determined by your HCV Housing Specialist. Other charges such as maintenance are between you and your landlord.
- Report increases in family size to your HCV Housing Specialist and provide a birth certificate and Social Security Card for new babies and request an add on application to add adults to the household. Remember, adults need to apply and be approved before they came move in.
- Make sure you complete your recertification each year. It is a HUD requirement.
- **LANDLORDS-ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE TO BE AUTHORIZED AND APPROVED BY THE HOUSING AUTHORITY. ADDING ANYONE TO THE LEASE WITHOUT PRIOR HHA APPROVAL TO ADD THEM TO THE VOUCHER CAN BE CONSIDERED FRAUD.**

## Landlord and Tenant Portals

Have you registered for access to the tenant or landlord portal??

If you haven't, you are missing out on landlord payment histories, inspection dates, rent adjustments and more right at your fingertips. Contact your HCV Housing Specialist for your registration code if you do not have it.



## What to do if you want to Move with your Voucher

1. Give a written 30 day moving notice to your landlord AND to your HCV Housing Specialist
2. Make sure you are in good standing by having your rent and utilities paid up to date and your recertification completed if due. You can not move with your voucher if you are not in good standing.
3. Decide if you want to stay in our jurisdiction or go portable to another area.
4. Start looking for units on Facebook Marketplace, Zillow, Apartments.com or MDHousingsearch.org
5. You will be mailed a Mover's packet which you will need to complete and return in order to get your voucher and landlord packet.
6. Drop of the completed landlord packet in our drop box to schedule an inspection.
7. **DO NOT MOVE IN UNTIL YOU ARE NOTIFIED BY YOUR HCV SPECIALIST THAT YOUR UNIT PASSED INSPECTION!!!**

## Family Self Sufficiency Program

Visit our Website to view the HUD Waivers put into place due to COVID-19.

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



Have you considered joining the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program? More individuals who have the Section 8 Voucher are learning how becoming a participant in the FSS program can assist them with their future goals.

Your goals can be anything you set your mind to, and as a participant you receive:

- An individual case manager to assist you in identifying your goals within time frames.

- Goals will vary based on each individual's needs and may include:

- \* Employment

- \* Going back to school

- \* Budgeting

- \* Credit repair

- \* Financial Literacy

- \* Home Ownership

***DON'T FORGET YOUR MASK!***

***MASKS ARE REQUIRED FOR***

***APPOINTMENTS IN ALL***

***HOUSING AUTHORITY***

***BUILDINGS. THANK YOU***

***FOR***

***YOUR COOPERATION!***

- Connections to Community Resources to help you accomplish your goals.

- For eligible participants, as employment is obtained or earned income increases, FSS participants may be eligible to build an escrow savings account that is held by the Housing Authority.

- Any individual who is a recipient of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and Public Housing is eligible to enroll and take advantage of this opportunity!

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the

Family Self-Sufficiency Program, please contact:

Tacy Myers, 301-733-6911, ext. 157. [tmyers@hagerstownha.com](mailto:tmyers@hagerstownha.com)

