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**COVID-19 UPDATE:**

**TEMPORARY CHANGES to Housing Choice Voucher Program Inspection Policies**

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) wants to ensure that all of our families can safely access our housing programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, RRHA is making some temporary changes to our policies for “Uniform Physical Condition Standards for Vouchers” or “UPCS-V” inspections for housing units in the Housing Choice Voucher program (“HCVP”). These changes will make it easier for families to get housing assistance during this challenging time. Below is a list of changes RRHA will make to our HCVP policies.

**PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.**

**If you use a Housing Choice Voucher, this might affect your rights.**

**1. Initial Inspections**

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, it might not be safe for your family, your landlord, or RRHA staff to do an *in-person* UPCS-V inspection before you move to a new unit. During this crisis, RRHA may choose not to inspect a unit in person before you move in. Instead of an inspection, RRHA may accept a form signed by you and your landlord saying there are no problems with the unit. RRHA will accept this form on a case-by-case basis only. If RRHA accepts the form instead of an inspection, RRHA will do a “make-up” inspection at your unit some time before October 31, 2020. If you believe there is a problem with your unit, please contact your HCVP case worker right away.

**2. Failed initial inspection**

Normally, If RRHA did a UPCS-V inspection and found a problem before you moved into the unit, RRHA may let you to move in and give your landlord 30 days to fix the problem. Because of COVID-19, it might be difficult for your landlord to get someone to fix the problem quickly. Because of this, RRHA might give your landlord an extra 30 days, for a total of 60 days, to fix the problem. **This policy does NOT apply to life-threatening issues.** If you think there is a life-threatening problem at your unit, contact your HCVP case worker right away.

**3. Biennial Inspections**

After a tenant moves to a new unit with a voucher, RRHA does a UPCS-V inspection on that unit once every two years. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, it is not safe to do these inspections. RRHA will delay these “biennial” inspections during the crisis. If the inspection on your unit is delayed, RRHA will do a “make-up” inspection sometime before October 31, 2020. If you believe there is a problem with your unit, please contact your HCVP case worker right away.

**4. Interim Inspections.**

If you think there is a problem at your unit, you can always call your RRHA case worker. We will make sure that your landlord makes repairs. However, because of the COVID-19 crisis, it might not be safe for you or RRHA staff to do a follow-up inspection to make sure those problems were fixed. During the crisis, RRHA might accept other proof that your landlord fixed the problem, like a picture or video of the repairs. RRHA will accept this on a case-by-case basis and only if we believe it would not be safe to visit your unit in person. If the problem is life-threatening, RRHA will make sure your landlord fixes it within 24 hours. If the problem is not life-threatening, RRHA will make sure it is fixed within 30 days.

**5. Two people per bedroom**

Normally, RRHA can only let you move into a unit if the unit has at least one bedroom for every two people in your family. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, we know that you might need to add family members to your voucher. During the crisis, RRHA will let you add a family member to your voucher *even if* it means that three or more people would have to share a bedroom.