



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
LANSING

GARY HEIDEL
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Programs COVID-19 Pandemic Notice to Owners March 30, 2020

MSHDA is providing the following guidance and changes to policies for owners participating in MSHDA's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Project-Based Voucher (PBV) programs. This Notice will be updated as new guidance and policy changes are released. Due to Governor Whitmer's [Executive Order 2020-21](#), the lobbies of MSHDA offices in Lansing and Detroit are closed to the public. Staff are working remotely until further notice.

Evictions

As a reminder, under [Executive Order 2020-19](#), Governor Whitmer has temporarily halted evictions, unless the tenant poses a substantial risk to another person or an imminent and severe risk to property.

Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) & Utility Assistance Payments (UAP)

Monthly payments to owners (HAP) and participants (UAP) will continue as scheduled. MSHDA anticipates no disruption in these payments.

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections

In general, MSHDA has suspended all routine HQS inspections, unless required under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), an approved reasonable accommodation, or due to health and safety issues, which includes HCV contract terminations due to abatements that do not qualify for the repair extension identified in the HQS Abatements section below.

For new families that were determined eligible for the HCV/PBV program on or before March 24, 2020, or existing program participants who were in the process of moving to a new unit before this date, but the HQS inspection had not been conducted, MSHDA will allow for the HQS inspection scenarios below, if the family is moving into a MSHDA PBV development. The PBV development must have a good track record of passing the HQS inspection the first time.

Note: For HCV applicants/participants, this only applies if the PBV development has a non-PBV unit for them to move into (i.e. the property is not 100 percent assisted with PBVs).

- The HQS inspection can be conducted by the property manager, but the MSHDA Housing Agent must be present via video conferencing to be able to direct/assist the manager throughout the inspection.
- If video conferencing is not an option, the property manager may conduct the HQS if they are HQS trained.
- In either instance, the MSHDA Housing Agent must notify MSHDA of the HQS inspection prior to it taking place.
- MSHDA will require a full HQS inspection of the unit by the MSHDA Housing Agent, once the COVID-19 situation has passed.

HQS Repairs/Re-inspections

- MSHDA Housing Agents may accept confirmatory photos of completed repairs from participants and owners, for non-life-threatening deficiencies ONLY, as opposed to conducting a re-inspection of the unit.
- Extensions may be granted for repairs (30 or 60 additional days) for non-life-threatening deficiencies when the participant states they do not want maintenance to enter their unit due to health and safety reasons or the owner has indicated they will not enter the unit to conduct repairs due to health and safety reasons.

HQS Abatements (Stop Payments)

- MSHDA will allow for a 60-day extension on repairs for units in abatement (payments stopped to the owner) with February 1st, March 1st and April 1st abatement effective dates.
- In order to be eligible, there must be no life-threatening deficiencies associated with the abatement of the unit. The participant must still be in the unit and wanting to remain in the unit, and the owner must be willing to make the repairs at a later date.
- For February 1st and March 1st abatements that meet the criteria above, the abatement will end, and payments will resume to the owner. For April 1st abatements that meet the criteria above, MSHDA will end the abatement before payments to the owner are stopped.
- If the unit qualifies for the 60-day extension for repairs, the new effective date of the abatement will be June 1st. The MSHDA Housing Agent will send an updated Inspection Deficiency Notice to the participant and owner providing the 60-day extension on repairs and the June 1st abatement date.
- For HCV contract terminations that have been issued to the participant and owner, the MSHDA Housing Agent may rescind the termination and provide the extension deadline referenced above, if the unit qualifies for the extension.
- Please contact your MSHDA Housing Agent if you feel your unit qualifies for this extension.