



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor ♦ Jennifer D. Maddox, Undersecretary

To: All Owners and Managers of Private Affordable Housing with State Financial Assistance
From: Jennifer Maddox, Undersecretary
Subject: Rent Increases During COVID-19 Emergency
Date: April 3, 2020

DHCD is providing this guidance to owners and managers of private affordable housing with state financial assistance in light of the new income and rent limits announced by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on April 1, 2020.

We recognize that these are challenging times for the affordable housing community. The COVID-19 state of emergency has severely impacted many residents of assisted housing who are facing layoffs, reduced hours, job loss and other economic dislocation. While public and private relief efforts are underway, it may take time for payments to reach needy households. Other residents have fallen ill, are caring for ill relatives, or are unable to work due to closure of child care and schools. In these uncertain times, it is essential that private affordable housing owners refrain from taking actions that would undermine the housing stability of their residents, both to support their residents and to remain in good standing with DHCD.

Accordingly, for 120 days from the date of this notice or the duration of the state of emergency, whichever is longer, DHCD expects all owners of multifamily rental property that receive any form of financial assistance from DHCD and/or its quasi-public affiliates to refrain from implementing any rent increases that might otherwise be permitted based on the revised income and rent figures published by HUD on April 1, 2020. This includes without limitation properties that have received federal or state tax credits, tax-exempt bond proceeds, federal or state capital dollars, and/or federal or state rental assistance.

We want to acknowledge that many of the large affordable housing owners with significant portfolios have already contacted us to say that they will voluntarily refrain from implementing the rent increases allowed under the revised HUD figures. The Baker-Polito Administration commends all of these owners for this action, which is so critical to our efforts to preserve the housing stability of renters in state-supported housing during these challenging times. We also hope that owners of multifamily rental projects that do not receive direct Commonwealth financial support will follow the lead of the affordable housing ownership community in refraining from imposing rent increases at this time.