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Southeast Kansas Community Action Program, Inc.

Recipient of the "Award for Excellence" in Community Action

COVID-19: HUD Waivers & Impact for Housing Services

SEK-CAP's Housing Department is still operational despite the public health challenges we are currently facing due to COVID-19. We are still providing affordable rental properties and rental assistance to low-income families in our southeast Kansas community. The current pandemic has prompted us to make some changes to the way we provide services so that our staff and customers are safe. This document is intended to make our customers and the general public aware of those changes.

STAFFING

Many of our staff are working from home. When you call the office, you will probably need to leave a voicemail and wait for one of our staff to return your call. We are checking messages daily and will get back to you within two business days. Housing staff continue to work diligently to keep families in their homes and to house families that aren't already receiving assistance from us. An alternative way to contact us is via email:

Reason for Contact	Staff Person	Email
Annual Recertifications, Move-Ins, or Household Changes	Janet Swor	janets@sek-cap.com
Applications, Changes in Contact Info, or Questions	April Brown	aprilbrown@sek-cap.com
Inspections, Concerns, or Questions	Timi Myers	timim@sek-cap.com

INCOME CHANGES

We recognize that many families have lost income due to COVID-19. If your household income has been affected by COVID-19, please contact our office immediately to report a change of income so that we can process a change to your rental assistance. Staff are processing household changes that will cause an increase in the amount of assistance needed as quickly as possible to help prevent families from losing their homes.

WAIVER IMPLEMENTATION

The Department of Housing and Urban Development issued PIH Notice 2020-05 on April 10, 2020. This notice allows for Public Housing Authorities to implement blanket waivers for some program operations that may be difficult to perform safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may notice some changes to our day to day operations, due to implementation of these waivers that provide safety and administrative relief:

- PH & HCV-1: PHA 5-Year and Annual Plan
 - Extends the deadline for SEK-CAP to submit the 5-Year PHA Plan to 10/18/2020.
 - Provides additional time for SEK-CAP to hold the required public hearing for the 5-Year PHA Plan so that the public may be allowed to attend in person. The public hearing scheduled for April 28, 2020 has been postponed until further notice. We will notify the public when a new date has been selected.
- PH and HCV-3: Family Income and Composition: Annual Examination - Income Verification requirements

- Waives the requirements to use the income hierarchy, including the use of EIV, and will allow PHAs to consider self-certification as the highest form of income verification.
 - PHAs that implement this waiver will be responsible for addressing material income discrepancies that may arise later.
- PH and HCV-4: Interim reexaminations
 - Waives the requirement to use the income verification requirements, including the use of EIV, for interim reexaminations.
- HQS-5: Biennial Inspections
 - Allows for delay in biennial Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections.
 - SEK-CAP has postponed all biennial and annual inspections until further notice. All delayed biennial and annual inspections must be completed no later than October 31, 2020.
- HQS-6: Interim Inspections
 - If a family member or government agency reports a life-threatening deficiency, SEK-CAP must notify the owner of the reported life-threatening deficiency and the owner must either correct the life-threatening deficiency within 24 hours of the PHA notification or provide documentation that the reported deficiency does not exist.
 - In the case of a reported non-life-threatening deficiency, SEK-CAP must notify the owner of the reported deficiency within 30 days and the owner must either make the repair or document that the deficiency does not exist within 30 days of the notification or any approved PHA extension.
 - SEK-CAP may rely on alternative methods to verify the repairs have been made (e.g., photos submitted by the owner, tenant certification, etc.).
 - This waiver is applicable until July 31, 2020.
- HQS-9: HQS QC Inspections
 - Provides for a suspension of the requirement for Quality Control (QC) sampling inspections until 10/31/2020.
- HQS-10: HQS Space and Security
 - Waives the requirement that each dwelling unit have at least 1 bedroom or living/sleeping room for each 2 persons.
 - Prevents families from having to move due to overcrowding during COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Remains in effect one year from lease term or date of notice, whichever is longer.
- HCV-1: Administrative Plan
 - Waives the requirement to adopt revisions to the admin plan until 7/31/2020.
 - SEK-CAP will not allow families to move with assistance, unless it is determined to be necessary for the health and safety of the family, during any “stay-at-home” order, whether it be national, state-wide or locally implemented.
- HCV-2: PHA Oral Briefing
 - Waives the requirement for an oral briefing when a family receives a voucher.
 - Provides for alternative methods to conduct required voucher briefing (email, phone, zoom, etc.)
- HCV-3: Term of Voucher-Extensions of Term
 - Allows SEK-CAP to extend voucher terms, regardless of current policy, to allow families more time to locate rental housing.
 - Waiver expires 7/31/2020
- HCV-4: PHA Approval of Assisted Tenancy
 - Provides additional time to execute Housing Assistance Payment Contracts beyond 60 days of lease start date.
 - Effective until 7/31/2020

- HCV-6: Automatic Termination of the HAP Contract
 - When a family's income increases to the extent that the housing assistance payment is reduced to \$0, SEK-CAP is required to automatically terminate the Housing Assistance Payment contract 180 days after the last housing assistance payment to the owner. This waiver allows SEK-CAP to extend the contract beyond the normally applicable 180 days, but not to extend beyond December 31, 2020.
 - Waiver expires 12/31/2020