

**HOUSING AUTHORITY CITY OF KENNEWICK**  
**COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN**  
**MARCH 2020**

Housing Authority City of Kennewick (KHA) is monitoring the COVID-19 outbreak. This is a constantly evolving, very serious situation. This virus is impacting our delivery of services to our residents and participants. Sources of information concerning the virus can be found at the following websites.

- Washington State Department of Health: [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- The World Health Organization: [www.who.int/health-topics](http://www.who.int/health-topics)
- Benton/Franklin Health District: [www.bfhd.wa.gov](http://www.bfhd.wa.gov)

KHA will be cautious and take active measures to protect KHA staff, KHA residents, vendors, and members of the public we work with each day. This plan is a working/evolving document. KHA's goal is to limit exposure of the COVID-19 virus to our employees, residents and participants and prevent further spread of the virus in our community and to keep KHA employees economically whole.

Effective March 16, 2020 at 7:30 am KHA offices will be closed to the public until further notice. Business will be conducted via telephone, email, mail service and drop box. On a case-by-case basis KHA may meet with clients utilizing the lobby and intercom system.

**Plan Goals:** KHA's goals are to: reduce the spread of COVID-19 among our staff, our clients and members of the general public; protect vulnerable clients who are at higher risk for complications; maintain essential business operations and minimize financial impact on staff that could result from office or school closures. KHA strives to minimize stress of rent payments and evictions for non-payment of rent among our clients and provide crisis management supports for our customers as applicable. KHA will comply with proclamations and directives provided through local, state and federal authorities.

**Chain of Command:** In the event the Executive Director(ED) is unavailable to perform duties, the Finance Director is hereby designated to act in the ED capacity during the absence. If the Finance Director is not available to perform these duties then the KHA Compliance Director/HCV Supervisor and/or the KHA

Maintenance/Development Director will be authorized to act in this capacity. Directors will maintain communication with the Board Chair when they are acting in the capacity of Executive Director. If Directors are not available, the Board Chair will work with the Board of Commissioners and the Accounting Assistant and Administrative Assistant to determine who will serve as Acting Director. The Executive Director of the Housing Authority City of Pasco and Franklin County is available to consult on an advisory capacity.

**Communication:** Clear and effective communication is key with employees, residents, government officials, vendors, and the public. Communication will require utilizing letters, emails, website, flyers and when possible, text messages. Employees are welcome to talk with their supervisor and/or the Executive Director if they have questions or concerns with regard to COVID-19.

**Residents/Applicants/Participants:** KHA serves over 2,000 households. KHA will provide communications utilizing mail service, email and drop box capacity. KHA has provided basic information to tenants about the virus, how to prevent spread and where additional information can be accessed. Information has been posted on the KHA website. Information is available for dissemination outside the KHA Administrative Office located at 1915 West 4<sup>th</sup> Place, Kennewick, WA. Posters have been posted in KHA buildings on the virus, its spread, and steps to take to be safe.

**Inspections and Maintenance Repairs:** KHA will not enter occupied units to inspect or repair a unit unless absolutely necessary. Emergency repairs will be completed on units but staff members will wear Personal Protective Equipment if a household member is ill. If an initial inspection on an occupied unit is necessary, KHA will utilize a two-member team approach with one person utilizing the I-pad to record the inspection, not touching items in the unit and the other staff member in appropriate PPE will physically inspect the unit to determine whether the unit passes inspection. Both members will sanitize after leaving the unit.

If residents are showing symptoms, KHA will encourage residents to contact the health department and self-quarantine to protect their neighbors.

**Employees:** The preferred method of communication will be via telephone call, text or email. Groups of over ten staff members will not be allowed in any one area of a building and all staff will be required to socially distance (6') from one another.

Employees are advised to monitor their health, checking for symptoms and check their temperature each morning before coming to work. Any staff member, who is exhibiting symptoms or has a household member exhibiting symptoms, will be required to stay home until three days after all symptoms subside. Employees or family members who have tested positive for the Covid-19 virus will be asked to stay home until the individual who has tested positive is symptom-free for three days AND has tested negative on two tests that were taken 24 hours apart if they can access testing.

Employees are encouraged to contact their healthcare professionals if they or their household members are exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms. If an employee believes that they have been directly exposed, KHA asks that the employee remain at home for 14 days even if asymptomatic and quarantine.

Employees who decide to disregard the guidance by state and federal officials on social distancing and the maximum number of people gathering prescribed by local, state or federal officials will be asked to take 14 days of sick or annual leave in order to demonstrate that they did not catch the virus while socializing against local, state and/or federal guidance.

KHA will provide paid administrative leave for employees, subject to state and federal regulations. In lieu of paid administrative leave, staff will be able to utilize their sick and annual leave banks and KHA will explore state and federal resources provided for businesses due to the impact of the virus. KHA's goal is that employees remain employed and are not impacted by loss of income during this crisis even when KHA is required to modify work schedules. If an employee is unable to work their scheduled shift in the case of a modified work schedule, the employee will need to utilize annual or sick leave as appropriate for those scheduled days. The employee will receive paid administrative leave for days they were scheduled to be off work due to a modified work schedule.

**Public Officials:** KHA will work closely with local, state and federal officials and monitor the situation. KHA will fully cooperate with any request for information from health officials. If government guidance or mandates are issued, KHA will work to communicate directives to our residents and staff and will follow the guidance. The Executive Director will be the point of contact for public officials.

**Press Contact:** The Executive Director will be the point of contact for the press. Interviews or comments will be provided remotely, if possible and all interviews will be conducted utilizing social distancing (6' foot).

**Vendors:** KHA to keep vendors informed via email or telephone call of any changes to our work environment. If buildings are quarantined, KHA will make vendors aware of the situation. Emergency work items requiring immediate attention in an area where we have families who are impacted, the vendor will be notified. On-site vendors will be encouraged to have a social distancing plan in place and access to proper PPE to keep their workers safe. KHA staff will continue to process vendor payments as per our current policy. Vendors such as Abadan or Inline who need to access KHA equipment will be required to socially distance while completing essential functions.

**Incident Response:** If an employee or resident has contracted the virus and KHA is notified, the Safety Committee and the Executive Director shall immediately convene to develop a response. KHA will coordinate a response with public health officials and ensure that KHA's efforts do not duplicate or impede in the Department's ability to respond. The Safety Committee, working with public officials, may need to help determine the source of the virus, take steps to encourage that the spread of the virus is halted or limited and make recommendations on how to proceed with daily operations. The Safety Committee will remain informed on Covid-19, the issues, and recommend additional steps to take as an agency.

KHA will post notices, posters and other informational materials on-site at KHA properties. KHA will post Covid-19 information on the KHA website.

**Prevention Efforts:** KHA will take reasonable efforts to control the spread of the virus. KHA staff will wash their hands often. KHA will place hand-sanitizers in strategic locations at our properties and provide information to tenants. As a

precaution, KHA staff will no longer inspect occupied units for preventative maintenance. As a part of KHA's normal janitorial services, KHA will make additional efforts to sanitize areas frequented by staff and residents. An emphasis will be made on areas which are frequently touched (i.e. elevator buttons, door handles, keypads, etc.) Sanitization at Keewaydin Plaza, due to the common areas and elevators will be sanitized no less than twice per day, seven days per week.

KHA's Administrative offices will be closed until further notice to diminish the spread of the virus. Paperwork will be completed via email, mail service, telephonic communication or drop box.

KHA will encourage residents to report Covid-19 positive results to KHA. KHA will mandate residents to follow the federal or state "shelter in place" or "stay at home" mandates. KHA may seek to limit access to KHA's high rise elderly/disabled building if residents are unwilling to follow "shelter in place" or "state at home" mandates made by local, state or federal authorities. Community Rooms, Community Centers, recreational facilities, and lobbies may be closed in order to stem the spread of the virus.

**Telework:** Working from home is limited to KHA's Executive Team at this juncture. KHA's non-exempt staff members are not eligible due to lack of KHA teleworking equipment and capacity. KHA will be flexible, allowing staff to work a schedule which meets individual needs. All changes in schedule requests will be submitted to the staff's Department Director and then approved by the Executive Director and submitted to the Finance Department.

**Travel & Training:** All travel and training attendance, regular business meetings or trainings have been cancelled until further notice. On-line training can continue.

**Social Distancing:** All Staff meetings will be cancelled or suspended. All Resident Council meetings will be cancelled until further notice. All public hearings and KHA Board meetings will be held and social distancing guidance (6' apart) will be followed or the meeting will occur telephonically. If mandated by the Governor or nationally, KHA will follow the additional, more restrictive requirements. KHA

will limit Board meetings and public hearings to those that are absolutely necessary to complete KHA's essential business tasks.

**Essential Tasks:** Below is a list of essential tasks to be completed by KHA staff members. KHA will strive to have the minimum staff available in the office at any one time on a rotating basis to complete the essential functions of the office. Some weeks may require staff to be in the office for a four-day work week in order to remain current with essential functions of the agency. The weekly schedule will be determined by the Executive Team and may vary from week to week.

- 1) Initial lease-ups of public housing units and HCV units; briefings via on-line link; mail out of information; drop box, email or mail service return; mail service mail log-ins; HUD reporting; telephonic resident hearings or informal reviews.
- 2) Payroll and Accounts Payable; mandatory reporting that has not been delayed; HAP checks; and other essential financial and administrative functions such as, but not limited to: bank reconciliations and human resources activities.
- 3) Annual and Interim Re-Exams; Interim Re-exams due to loss of income due to COVID-19 lay-offs to be prioritized. If KHA cannot get third-party verification quickly telephonically, KHA will accept a self-declaration from the client via email, mail or drop box and KHA will request third-party verification of the self-declaration at a later date.
- 4) Move-in activities and inspections of vacant units prior to lease up; on a case-by-case basis inspections of occupied units;
- 5) Background checks, SAVE checks, PIC uploads, off-line/on-line unit changes
- 6) Unit turns on vacant units;
- 7) Emergency work orders only using proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- 8) Vendor delivery acceptance, utilizing social distancing and/or PPE;
- 9) Annual Agency Plan public hearing and Special Board Meeting;
- 10) Moon Security, KPD, or Sheriff contacts for welfare checks, altercations and other emergent tenant issues;
- 11) Executive level communication/meetings with County, City, State and Federal officials;
- 12) Telephone call backs to clients;

- 13) Sanitizing of common areas in Keewaydin Plaza and administrative offices;
- 14) Other duties may be added to this list as more information develops with regard to the COVID-19 emergency and more restrictions are placed on or removed by local, state or federal officials.

**Miscellaneous Information:** KHA will issue an “essential business” letter to employees so that they are able to come to and leave from work during a “shelter in place” or “stay at home” proclamation.