

Technical Advisory



Oregon Housing and Community Services

Interim OHCS Inspection and Monitoring Policies

UPDATED March 25, 2020

In response to concerns related to COVID-19, OHCS is implementing the following interim policies for inspections and monitoring. OHCS's interim policy changes seek to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of tenants, owners / operators, management agents, and OHCS staff. *As we move forward, we will continue to re-evaluate the stated extensions and protocols.*

If you have any questions related to this Affordable Rental Housing Advisory, please send to ARH.HCS@oregon.gov

The utmost priority should be placed on ensuring the health and safety of residents, applicants, and staff.

- Property management and owners should work to implement alternate ways for applicants and residents to fill out and sign and submit paperwork:
 - o Electronic signatures are allowable.
 - o There are specific extensions applicable program areas below. During this time it is our hope that projects can work to implement such protocols.

The safety of our affordable rental housing tenants, partners, service providers and staff are of the utmost importance. With the revised measures in place, OHCS will continue to work with investment and development partners for the production of affordable housing currently in the pipeline, and for those planning to apply for resources. Some OHCS staff are working from our offices and others are set up to telecommute. The current circumstances may cause some delayed responses but we are committed to working with our partners.

- For new construction, we expect that project sponsors and their development team, including general contractors and their subcontractors, will continue construction and development. This includes the coordination of lease with their management agents with social measuring practices in place.
- For compliance as well as acquisition and rehab with tenants on site, the priority is to keep residents safe, stable, and minimize displacement and relocation.
- We have uploaded the [COVID-19 Job Site Practices](#) to help address questions related to projects currently under construction on our website.



HUD Project-Based Contract Administration Compliance

- In-person Management Occupancy Reviews (MOR) and file reviews have been suspended per HUD guidance.
- OHCS will continue to work with properties to close remaining MORs; please work closely with your HCA compliance officer and notify them of any issues meeting the required deadlines.
- Electronic signatures are allowable, as long as original signatures are obtained later; please visit this [Technical Advisory](#) for more information.

OHCS Portfolio Compliance Inspections

- OHCS has currently suspended in person file and physical inspections through April 30, 2020. Electronic file inspections will continue as usual to the extent that established practices allow this to happen.
- We encourage all management entities to work toward the adoption of practices that allow this work to happen electronically with maintained social distance.

OHCS Portfolio Annual Income Recertifications for LIHTC:

- OHCS will allow a 60-day delay on Annual Income Recertification's (through May 17th), in order to allow property management to implement practices for meeting this requirement in a way that limits the need for personal contact. Management entities must submit an explanation of this delay in recertification and bring all units into compliance following this 60-day period.
 - This does not apply to initial income certifications, which are expected to be done as required per program regulations.
 - This does not apply to HUD Section 8, owners and agents are urged to work with tenants to adjust rent payments or enter in forbearance agreements to lessen the impact of COVID-19 prevention measures.
- NOTE: to-date no IRS guidance has been issued on this question OHCS will update this guidance as new information is provided.

Annual Certification of Continuing Program Compliance:

- OHCS is on target to conduct this compliance review for the portfolio; no due date adjustments are being recommended.

OHCS Portfolio Financial Reporting

- OHCS properties with 10 units or more funded with HOME, Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), ARRA (TCAP and 1602 Exchange) and BOND (Risk Share, Elderly/Disabled and Conduit) or have an Operating Agreement in place are ordinarily due 90 days after the project's fiscal year end. This reporting will now occur in our new Procorem system (see [advisory](#) for details)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in alignment with the federal government tax filing extension: **OHCS will extend the due date to July 15, 2020**, for fiscal year end December 31, 2019. If an extension beyond July 15th is necessary, please contact us.



Required Construction Progress Site Inspections: These inspections are conducted at active construction sites with HOME and Housing Trust Fund funding or where OHCS is the primary funder. Please contact Kevin Burgee with any questions or concerns: Kevin.Burgee@oregon.gov

- Until further notice from the Department, interiors of occupied dwelling units are not to be included in the inspections.
- Other areas of the construction that may be of concern may be exempted if the project owner or the OHCS Inspector deem the proposed area to pose an unreasonable risk of COVID-19 exposure to themselves or others.
- We have uploaded the [COVID-19 Job Site Practices](#) to help address questions related to projects currently under construction on our website.

HOME/HTF Inspections for Award Closeout: These inspections are conducted at construction completion to begin close out of the funding award. Please contact Kevin Burgee with any questions or concerns: Kevin.Burgee@oregon.gov

- OHCS hereby suspends conducting any additional inspections until further notice.

HOME/HTF File Monitoring for Award Closeout: These monitorings are conducted to close out the funding award. Please contact Kevin Burgee with any questions or concerns:

Kevin.Burgee@oregon.gov

- Until further notice, all closeout file monitoring will be completed as desktop reviews (files sent to OHCS).

HUD 811 PRA: HUD 811 PRA properties have adopted isolation practices to limit contact. At this point all properties have confirmed that they have not suspended move-ins or recertifications.

As we have additional information on these topics, it will be added to this document. We are investigating requirements regarding construction and other inspections; we will make updates to this document with more information in the coming days.

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In addition to this General Guidance, OHCS has prepared:

- [General Interim Guidance on COVID-19](#)
- [Interim OHCS Fund Solicitation Policies](#)
- [OHCS COVID-19 Webpage](#)

