



Board of Commissioners

Joseph P. Carlson

Chairman

Joseph M. Capone

Vice-Chairman

Jose Ramos

Treasurer

William J. Eddy

Member

Rané Bracey-Westbrook

Member

Alex Corrales

Executive Director

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT NOTICE – PLEASE HAVE IT TRANSLATED.

EL AVISO ADJUNTO CONTIENE LA INFORMACIÓN MUY IMPORTANTE ACERCA DE SU ARRENDAMIENTO~ POR FAVOR HÁGALO TRADUCIR SI ES NECESARIO ~

ПРИЛОЖЕННОЕ УВЕДОМЛЕНИЕ СОДЕРЖИТ ОЧЕНЬ ВАЖНУЮ ИНФОРМАЦИЮ ~ ПОЖАЛУЙСТА ПЕРЕВЕДИТЕ ИТ В СЛУЧАЕ НЕОБХОДИМОСТИ ~

Njoftimi i bashkangjitur është shumë e rëndësishme. Ju lutem për ta përkthyer atë.

Sự Chú ý Gắn liền chứa đựng Thông tin rất Quan trọng liên quan Thời gian thuê (của) Các bạn, và Một Cư dân. Xin Có Nó được dịch Nếu Cần thiết ~

June 1, 2020

RE: WHA Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Dear Resident,

I want to take a moment to address our current situation with Coronavirus (COVID-19) at the Worcester Housing Authority (WHA). This is an important message, so please take the time to read it in its entirety.

I would first like to thank you again, for your continuous cooperation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, I know it is not easy, but for your own health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those around you – especially those most vulnerable –, please continue to limit your interactions with others and stay in your own apartment as much as possible.

Social Distancing

As we can all see and appreciate, the weather has been getting much nicer and warmer. We have also seen some businesses begin to re-open and we all can feel a sense of path towards normalcy. With these changes, I have also noticed an increase in social gatherings on the WHA properties. Although I am sensitive to the temptation of going outside and getting some fresh air and mingling with others, I urge you to remember that we are still dealing with COVID-19 and still need to take all necessary safety practices seriously.

If you are choosing to socialize with someone, I ask that you please be conscious of where you are socializing, preferably outside. It is critical that you continue to practice social distancing of at least 6 feet while doing so. Lastly, I discourage you from having interactions with new people during this time to avoid possible contact with COVID-19.

Mask Wearing Requirement

Additionally, please remember to wear your mask at all times when in public and/or interacting with others outside of your apartment household, as it is still a requirement on all WHA properties. This includes parking lots, common areas, laundry rooms, hallways, elevators, etc. When wearing your mask, please remember to cover your mouth AND nose to ensure full protection. I have seen a number of residents improperly wearing their mask and exposing their nose or mouth.

Please keep in mind that wearing a face mask is a great deterrent to spreading the virus. Our efforts are marginalized if we do not work as a team and remain unified in ridding ourselves of this virus. Please help us and yourself by following these measures. Although the vast majority of residents are complying with this requirement and taking all safety precautions seriously, we still have a number of folks that do not want to comply. This is a serious health and safety matter and we will take lease enforcement action along with fines for those that refuse to cooperate, including visitors. Any visitor that fails to comply is at risk of losing their privilege to be allowed on WHA property.

Keep the WHA Informed

As I have mentioned previously, please continue to keep the WHA informed and immediately notify your Property Management Office or Family & Resident Services at **(508) 635-3306**, if you experience symptoms related to COVID-19 or are diagnosed with the virus. Symptoms vary, but common symptoms typically include fever, headache, cough, and trouble breathing. We have many resources in place that can assist you in making sure you are secure and have everything you need to quarantine safely, without putting others at risk.

Re-Opening of WHA Offices

Currently, all WHA offices remain closed to the public. However, I am working closely with key staff to develop a plan that would allow us to re-open. The re-opening of public offices will be slow and planned in a manner that is methodical and with safety at the core. We want to ensure that both residents and staff is able to work in a safe and secure environment while allowing us to assist. Please continue to contact the WHA by phone, email or through our Facebook page.

Following WHA Rules

I cannot stress enough the need for all residents to continue to comply with WHA rules during this difficult time. I feel terribly that our summer this year will be like no other. I feel badly that our residents cannot mingle and enjoy each other's company and that our WHA children cannot have fun as they are accustomed to. If we all do our part in fighting this awful virus, we can return back to enjoying some of the activities we used to partake in.

However, until then, please be mindful to not commit lease violations that can jeopardize your tenancy including, but not limited to,

- Pools / Bouncy Houses – These are not permitted on WHA property. This is a liability concern, if god forbid, a child was injured or sustained something even worse. Please do not rent or put up pools of any size on WHA property.
- Paying rent on time – Although the Governor approved a moratorium on evictions for non-essential evictions, I want to remind residents that they are still obligated to pay their monthly rent. The moratorium does not waive the rent. If you are having a difficult time paying rent due to mitigating circumstances, please contact our Resident Services Department at 508-635-3306 so they can refer you to CMHA.
- Sitting on benches – As you have seen, we have placed plastic wrapping and caution tape to deter folks from sitting on our benches. These benches are not 6 feet apart and in order for us to promote social distancing, we do not want anyone sitting on these benches. Please do not remove the wrappings or caution tape.
- Smoking – Some residents have begun to smoke inside their apartment. Please remember that all WHA properties are smoke free and you are only allowed to smoke in designated smoking areas.

Best Safety Practices

As the state is beginning to reopen, it is critical that we are each accountable for our own personal safety and the safety of our family and community members. You can help by continuing to follow the guidance set forth by the CDC:

- Please continue to follow social distancing guidelines and stay at least 6 feet apart from others.
- Wear your mask at all times when in public and on WHA property.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, and do not touch your face.
- Wear gloves when handling potentially contaminated materials.
- Sanitize surfaces, doorknobs, remote controls, and commonly touched items frequently.
- Don't litter! Be sure to dispose of your gloves and masks in the proper garbage receptacle when done.
- Limit your visits to stores. We have seen where some stores are becoming a place of exposure, so please try to avoid shopping unless it is necessary.

Available Resources

I would like to remind you that the WHA has a number of resources available to support residents in need. If you need help, please do not hesitate to reach out.

- COVID-19 related updates are frequently posted on our dedicated WHA COVID-19 webpage: <http://www.worcesterha.org/covid19.html>
- This webpage can be translated into over 100 languages for ease of use. To receive text alerts, please text: WHACOVID to phone number 67076.
- Our Family & Resident Services Department has been working hard to line up referrals and necessary supplies to assist you with food, personal care items, educational assistance, medical care, mental health resources, or entertainment activities. If you need assistance, please reach out to 508-635-3306.
- If you have experienced a loss of income due to the COVID-19 crisis, please contact your Property Management Office. Our offices are closed to the public, but we are still here to serve you. We are experiencing a higher-than-normal volume of calls, so please be sure to leave a message with a callback number if you are unable to reach someone right away.

I want to thank you again for your cooperation with our efforts to minimize the risk of Coronavirus within our community. On behalf of the entire WHA family, I wish you good health and good luck. We are all in this together.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Corrales". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alex Corrales
Executive Director