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This is an important notice. Please have it translated.

¡Este es un aviso importante. Por favor, hágalo traducir!

هذا الإشعار مهم. الرجاء ترجمته.

Đây là một thông báo quan trọng. Xin cho nó được phiên dịch.

October 23, 2020

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Dear Residents,

I want to take a moment to provide you with the latest update regarding the 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 am not going to sugar-coat the situation we are in. **It is bad.** The number of infections within our community and across the state have been steadily rising and are predicted to get exponentially worse in the coming months. Here at the WHA, we have already experienced **multiple deaths** at the hands of this uncontained virus. It has ripped apart families - mothers, fathers, siblings, and grandparents - leaving devastated friends and family members behind to pick up the pieces.

Together with local hospitals and public health officials, I have been carefully tracking infection rates within our sites. WHA staff have been doing everything in their power to keep our properties safe and sanitized. Nevertheless, the number of infections on our family properties continue to go up, with more and more being diagnosed each day.

As a result, I had asked our Property Management and Public Safety staff to conduct frequent walks and surveillance of our properties to gain an understanding as to what might be leading to this sudden increase in infection rates, often with me accompanying them. **What I have witnessed is disturbing and alarming.**

Most noticeably, at our family sites like Great Brook Valley, Curtis Apartments, Lakeside Apartments, Main South apartments and some of our other smaller sites, we are seeing a large number of residents out and about on the property **without** masks and not observing social distancing requirements. These violations encompass all ages – from children, who are most likely to be carriers of the virus; to grandparents, who are most likely to be victims – I am seeing people congregating, socializing, and hanging out on the properties with no masks and no distancing. **This is not ok. This is irresponsible.**

No matter how often our Maintenance staff clean and sanitize our properties and no matter how many free masks, hand sanitizers, and resources our Family & Resident Services staff hand out, if you do not do your part, it will never work. Personal accountability matters. You must take responsibility for your own safety, the safety of your family, and the safety of your neighbors.

Only you can prevent more infections. Only you can prevent more deaths.

The Worcester Housing Authority provides reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities

You must:

- **Wear your mask** any time and every time you leave your home. Wear it properly, completely covering your mouth and nose.
- **Maintain a safe distance** of at least six feet from anyone who does not live with you. Do not share benches. Do not share food or drink. Do not share cigarettes or hugs.
- **Wash your hands** frequently with soap and warm water and use hand sanitizer when not near a sink or after handling items in a store or outside your home.
- **Keep your hands away from your face.** The virus spreads through droplets introduced through the mouth, nose, or eyes.

We are all tired of this virus, but this virus is not tired of us. As soon as you let your guard down, you jeopardize your life and the lives of those who count on you to be here. If you see something, say something; remind your friends and neighbors to wear their masks, remind them to take precautions, remind them that you love them and want them to be around and to be healthy. Winter is just around the corner and once cold and flu season kick into high gear, we will all be at risk. **Stay vigilant.**

Available Resources

- COVID-19 related updates are frequently posted on our webpage: <http://www.worcesterha.org/covid19.html>. This webpage can be translated into over 100 languages. For 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.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation. On behalf of the entire WHA staff, I wish you good health and good luck. We are all in this together.

Thank you,

Alex Corrales

Alex Corrales
Chief Executive Officer