



## SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

30 Memorial Road, Somerville, Massachusetts 02145  
Telephone (617) 625-1152 Fax (617) 628-7057 TDD (617) 628-8889

March 25, 2020

Dear Applicants:

The Somerville Housing Authority would like to update you on measures we are taking in response to the recent news regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19). ***This is an important message, so please take the time to read it in its entirety.***

The SHA's goal is to provide you with information, resources, and tips to ensure that you are taking proper safety precautions to protect yourself and those around you from exposure to this virus. We would like to inform you of specific changes that the SHA is making to assist in those precautions.

Administrative staff will be taking additional precautions while providing services to applicants.

However, we need your help to keep everyone as healthy and well as possible.

### WHAT SHA STAFF ARE DOING

- To try and reduce risk and opportunities of exposure, effective immediately, we will modify our onsite workforce and permit staff to work remotely as able. We are taking steps to severely limit person to person contact. We strongly encourage any residents or applicants to make appointments to limit crowding and lines at offices. We will remain available to tenants and applicants by **phone** and **email** within our adjusted business hours of Monday-Thursday 8:00am-2:00pm and Friday 8:00am-12:00pm.
- Wiping down or spraying frequently touched surfaces at the community building (s) (handles, knobs, doors, laundry machines, phones, etc.) with antibacterial wipes or Lysol disinfectant spray.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick and maintaining a minimum 6-foot distance from everyone.
- Practicing basic hygiene – washing hands frequently, coughing into elbow. Cover your nose & mouth with a tissue; throw out tissue immediately after use.
- Staying updated with information coming from state and national agencies.

### WHAT APPLICANTS NEED TO DO

- Stay home if you're not feeling well (sore throat, cough, fever, aches, chills, or respiratory symptoms).
- Wipe down or spray frequently touched surfaces in your unit (handles, knobs, doors, phones, etc.) with antibacterial wipes or Lysol disinfectant spray.

Translation and interpretation services are available upon request by appointment only  
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- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or socializing in groups.
- Minimize any non-essential trips outside your home.
- Practice basic hygiene – wash your hands frequently, cough into your elbow.
- Cover your nose & mouth with a tissue; throw out tissue immediately after use.
- Strongly consider a flu shot, it's not too late (it may not prevent you from getting the flu but might minimize the symptoms).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay updated with information coming from state and national agencies.

## APPLICATIONS

- All applications are all available via our website at [www.sha-web.org](http://www.sha-web.org) or by mail.
- Applications will still be accepted for all programs administered by the Somerville Housing Authority.
- Applications can be sent via email, fax, US mail or returned in the drop box located at 30 Memorial Road, Somerville 02145.

## INTERVIEWS/APPOINTMENTS

- We will attempt to conduct all eligibility and update interviews via phone or video conference.
- All paperwork requested by SHA can be submitted by fax, email or by returning to the drop box.
- Until further notice, no applicants will lose their priority status on the waiting list if they are unable to obtain necessary documentation to verify priority.

## DENIALS/APPEALS

- Until further notice, all private conferences and informal reviews will be postponed.
- The standard procedure of how you request an appeal will remain unchanged.
- All denied applicants will be granted additional time to request a private conference or informal hearing. The timeframe for appeals will not begin until further notice. A follow up letter will go out to all denied applicants advising them when such timeframe begins.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

- In order to practice the strongly recommended *social distancing*, the Somerville Housing Authority will be closed to the public. A drop box has been installed at the Main Office located at 30 Memorial Road, Somerville 02145.

Thank you for your cooperation in these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph R. Macaluso  
Executive Director

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