



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor ♦ Chrystal Kornegay, Undersecretary

Public Housing Notice 2015-12

Memorandum

To: LHA Executive Directors
From: Steve Carvalho, Associate Director,
Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance
Subject: Public Housing Portal Update
Date: April 14, 2015

Together with MassIT, we are happy to announce that software development of the Public Housing Portal (a.k.a. Central Waitlist) is nearly complete. We are planning to pilot the software with three LHAs later this spring. Before we pilot the program, however, we have a very important job that involves all housing authorities. We need to bring all of the data of all of the applications for state-aided housing across the Commonwealth together in one central database, and we need help from you and your staff to do this important task. Please note that the transfer of data needs to be **completed by April 24th, 2015**.

This project of migrating all of the data is an important undertaking, the success of which will be critical to the overall success of the Public Housing Portal. By transferring this data, we will be able to maintain the time stamps for all applicants by program at all LHAs. Once the data has been transferred, it will be sorted to match the same applicants across the LHAs using name, birthdate, social security numbers when available, and addresses. By doing so, applicants will be able to claim all of their existing applications in one account when they first engage with the system online. Your feedback to the Data Migration Survey sent several months ago was very helpful to improving our process....thank you so much!

How will you extract and load your LHA's data for the portal?

Below and attached are the instructions for this process:

1. Extract the data from your current system utilizing your vendor for support as needed
2. Move data into the attached data file layout for data submission
3. Save file with the name of your town/city (ex. Taunton.xls)
4. Load this extracted spreadsheet via the Commonwealth's Interchange system (attached instructions)

- You will receive 2 emails from Interchange (1 with your username and a 2nd with your password)
- *This email may have been sent to more than 1 email address at your local housing authority – please verify that only one submission for your authority is sent.*

This PHN, and attachments, are also being sent to all the staff who you indicated would be responsible for performing this type of task in the Data Migration Survey.

If you have problems logging into Interchange, please contact the Commonwealth of Massachusetts CommonHelp Service Desk at 1-866-888-2808 or CommonHelpServiceDesk@massmail.state.ma.us.

DUE DATE for Data Load to Interchange: April 24, 2015

Please note that the sharing of this information is legal. To alleviate any concerns you may have, in accordance with the Privacy and Confidentiality regulation at 760 CMR 8.04(4), LHAs must provide personal data of applicants to DHCD upon DHCD request. DHCD has a holder agreement with MassIT that allows MassIT to have access to personal data and requires MassIT to maintain the data confidentially. LHAs are not required to notify applicants that their personal data is being shared with DHCD and MassIT.

Post Pilot – What you can expect

- Full share of feedback based on initial pilot feedback
- Updates made to portal as needed based on pilot feedback
- Continued rollout to all Local Housing Authorities
 - Schedule to be created together and shared
- A future request for an additional data extract will be requested when your local housing authority begins use of the Portal

Our plan is to continue sharing with you updates on the progress. Your input is critical to ensuring that together we implement a process that works well for you and meets the needs of our applicants. If you have any questions about this step of data migration or problems with Interchange, please contact Ali Roshandel, Ali.Roshandel@state.ma.us, (617) 619-5630. If you have any questions on the Public Housing Portal moving forward, please feel free to contact Juliana Gamble, juliana.gamble@state.ma.us, (617) 573-1207.

If you are an LHA with **only** paper or written records of applications, with no digital files, please email Juliana with the subject line “Paper Applications” and let her know the number of applications you have by program, the date of the last waitlist update and if any of your waitlists are closed.