



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Charles D. Baker, Governor ◆ Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor ◆ Chrystal Komegay, Undersecretary

Public Housing Notice 2016-26

To: All Local Housing Authorities
From: Laura A. Taylor, Director, Bureau of Housing Management
Subject: Guidance to Local Housing Authorities on Protocol for Contacting Tenant Service Providers
Date: September 2, 2016

As you are aware, housing authorities provide safe and affordable housing for many low income seniors and individuals with disabilities in the Commonwealth. Some of these tenants may from time to time face challenges and health issues that may affect their capacity to fully honor the terms of their leases. In many cases, these lease violations could be cured, and the tenancy preserved, with the timely intervention of service providers.

To that end, we are strongly encouraging your use of the attached form and your active cooperation and participation in an initiative to preserve tenancies for tenants in public housing who may be affected by such challenges and health issues. Attached is the Authorization to Release Information form which should be offered to tenants in state-aided elderly/handicapped housing during the lease up process or during the rent re-determination process. Execution of this form by new tenants, or by current tenants at rent re-determination, will allow housing authorities to contact a designated agency, case worker or family member who can offer an intervention for the resident whose tenancy may be at risk. This Authorization to Release Information form does not permit the designated agency or case worker to provide information to the local housing authority about the tenant's situation, services or care; this form does not take the place of any standard forms used as part of the housing authority's reasonable accommodation process.

The execution of this form is voluntary and the housing authority is authorized to contact only the agency or person designated on the form. This form does not bind the resident to accept specific services but will provide the opportunity for an early intervention so that the housing authority may avoid initiating eviction proceedings.

Please make sure that all local housing authority staff who are in direct contact with residents or who are in a position to initiate eviction proceedings have knowledge of and access to this Authorization form.

Please contact me at Laura.Taylor@State.Ma.Us or (617) 573-1289, if you have any questions.

Attached is the Massachusetts Aging and Disabilities Resource Consortia (ADRC) Member Agencies, which includes Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) and Independent Living Centers (ILCs).