

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

Public Housing Notice 2016-08

To: Local Housing Authorities
From: Sarah Glassman, Associate Director, Division of Public Housing & Rental Assistance
Date: April 19, 2016
Re: Tenant Satisfaction Survey

On [August 6, 2014, Chapter 235, "An Act Relative to Local Housing Authorities,"](#) was signed. This Act represents significant reform to state-aided public housing. Included in the new law is a requirement that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) conduct an annual survey of residents living in state-aided public housing. This public housing notice contains information about the tenant survey.

What is the Tenant Satisfaction Survey?

The survey is a tool to collect information regarding how tenants perceive their living environment. The results of the survey will give housing authority staff and DHCD a fuller, data-driven picture of residents' thoughts on a variety of issues related to housing authority governance, operations and physical conditions. The survey will also, eventually, be used as part of the Performance Management Review (PMR) process and to inform policy decisions about operations, capital needs, and resident services.

Who Wrote the Survey and What Questions Are Asked?

As per state law, the survey (which is 21 questions and multiple choice) asks about maintenance and repair of units, housing authority communication, resident participation in housing authority governance, resident safety and resident services. The questions were developed collaboratively by a working group which included DHCD staff, MassNAHRO, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants, the University of Massachusetts Boston's Center for Survey Research, as well as several executive directors.

Who is Administering the Survey?

The survey will be administered by the University of Massachusetts Boston's Center for Survey Research (CSR). The team at CSR will mail the survey, collect the results and transmit the data to DHCD.

The double-sided survey will be sent out in both English and Spanish. Surveys are also being translated into Brazilian Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Traditional Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Khmer. Residents who would prefer to answer the survey in any of the aforementioned languages can request that a translated survey be sent to them. Directions on how to request a survey that has been translated into another language are included in the survey.

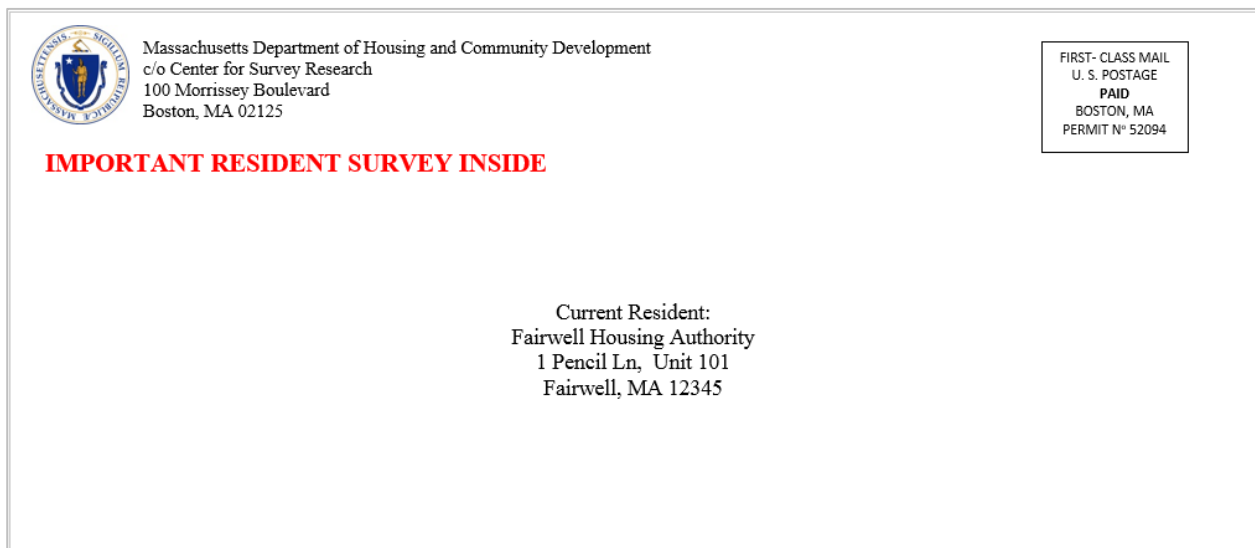
Are You Surveying All of the Residents Every Year?

No. While DHCD will conduct the survey every year, we will not survey residents of all 45,635 units of state-aided public housing every year. Instead, DHCD will split the portfolio into four groups: households residing in chapter 705 and 200 units will be surveyed this spring and those in chapter 667 housing will be surveyed in three groups over 2017, 2018, and 2019. For each chapter of housing, the following sampling criteria will be used. If a chapter has less than 225 units, all households within that chapter will be surveyed. For chapters with more than 225 units, 225 of the households within that chapter will be surveyed.

Each year, DHCD and the University of Massachusetts Boston's CSR will send out approximately 9,000 surveys.

How are the Surveys Delivered?

Residents will receive the surveys directly in their home mailboxes; the surveys will be addressed to the current resident of the unit. The envelope will look like this:



Upon receipt of the survey, one resident from the household should fill out the survey and then return the survey using the postage-paid return envelope. Residents should complete the survey as soon as possible.

What Happens to the Survey When a Resident Mails it Back?

CSR will compile the results of the survey and send aggregate and raw data to DHCD. DHCD will pass on aggregate data to the executive director; in order to protect resident privacy and anonymity, raw data will not be sent to any housing authority staff. Housing authority staff will have the right to respond to the results of the survey within 60 days. The survey results will be used by DHCD and the housing authority to make policy decisions and evaluate the performance of local housing authorities.

Are the Surveys Anonymous?

Yes, the surveys are anonymous. In order to protect resident privacy, the survey will not ask for identifying information. There will be an ID number at the top of the survey- this ID number will only be used by the CSR to send out reminders to residents to complete the survey. Housing authority staff will not have access to these ID numbers or the addresses to which they match.

When Will the First Round of Surveys Be Sent Out?

The surveys have been translated and are currently at the printer. CSR and DHCD hope to have the surveys in the mail by April 23, 2016.

I Still Have Questions About the Survey

Feel free to reach out to Cate Mingoya with any questions or comments about the tenant satisfaction survey. You can reach her at: Cate.Mingoya@state.ma.us or Phone: 617.573.1190