

King County HHCD
COVID-19 Asset Management Guidelines
Updated 5/12/2021

In light of COVID-19 challenges, King County is providing compliance guidance for affordable housing owners and operators to **keep staff and residents safe and healthy while continuing to meet housing needs**. While every effort has been made to align this guidance with HUD, Washington State Housing Finance Commission, and Washington State Department of Commerce, housing providers should directly check with each public funder they hold contracts with.

Income and Rent Schedule

King County is publishing the 2021 Rent and Income schedules. These rents are subject to the limitations of the Governor's Emergency Order 20-19.6 Evictions and Related Housing Practices. This order places limits on both evictions and increases in rents. The order was last extended on March 18, 2021. Currently the order is extended through June 30, 2021.

Onsite Inspections

King County has postponed all annual onsite property inspections as of 3/18/2020 and will reschedule them later following guidance from Public Health – Seattle and King County and the Governor's Office. Inspections for HOME assisted units will be performed within 120 days of the end of the HUD emergency waiver period. At this time the waiver period ends September 30, 2021.

Applicant Income Certifications

King County will permit self-certification of applicant income for persons and families that have lost employment or income due to Covid-19. Owners must determine that the loss of income was due to COVID-19 and forward self-certifications to King County. If the project is also a tax credit property it must use the IRS's emergency waiver rules. Please contact WSHFC for details.

King County will conduct rent and income verifications of all HOME assisted units within 90 days of the end of the HUD waiver period, currently December 31, 2020.

Annual Recertification Delays

Property owners may experience recertification delays due to COVID-19. Owners need to track this information, maintain notes, and comment in WBARS that the certification delay was due to COVID-19. Documentation should include the reason for the delay and any steps the owner representative took to resolve the delay.

All documents must be dated the effective date they were signed or received. Do not backdate documents.

Vacancies and Unit Turns

Owners and managers will best determine how to handle unit turns to protect the health and safety of tenants and staff. If units are vacant due to COVID-19, owners are expected to keep detailed documentation including reasons for extended vacancies and steps taken to resolve the issues. These notes will be submitted with the 2020 Annual Report.

If owners encounter difficulties maintaining population set-asides, please contact King County's Asset Management Program at KCAPR@kingcounty.gov to talk about any potential solutions.

Use of Operating or Replacement Reserves

King County will allow temporary use of operating or replacement reserves where possible to meet increased staffing/operating costs to implement COVID-19 public health recommendations or bridge rent losses driven by COVID-19. Providers are expected to use other available emergency resources first, before seeking to draw on reserves requiring King County approval.

To request use of reserves please contact King County's Asset Management Program at KCAPR@kingcounty.gov.