

April 9, 2020

HOPWA In Focus: COVID-19

COVID-19 has presented new and difficult circumstances for all of us. As members of a community actively working to end the HIV epidemic, we understand the effort it takes to fight a virus that upends lives. The safety and well-being of Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) grantees, project sponsors, and the people served by HOPWA are a top concern of the Office of HIV/AIDS Housing (OHH). That concern is driving all of our efforts and causing some things – even big projects and initiatives – to temporarily take a back seat. And that is actually the right thing for all of us to do right now – to look at our programs and services to determine what must be prioritized in the moment. The OHH team is evaluating, and re-evaluating frequently, how we can best operate and serve the people who need us while maintaining safety for all our clients, staff, ourselves, and our families.

Help is on the way in the form of [regulatory waiver flexibility](#) and even [funding](#) through the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#), but it will still take all of us working diligently and creatively to continue providing services for our current clients as well as the new clients who will need our assistance as the COVID-19 pandemic leads to an increasingly devastating impact on the economy – including personal and household incomes. This office will continue to update you with relevant HOPWA COVID-19 information as it becomes available through this listserv. All HOPWA COVID-19 information available can be accessed on the [HOPWA Guidance for COVID-19 page](#) on the HUD Exchange. Please take time to review the information available on the web page and discuss it with your team to determine which flexibilities could benefit your community. As always, we are available to answer questions and provide technical assistance to HOPWA providers who need support in preventing or responding to the spread of COVID-19 through the [Ask A Question \(AAQ\) portal](#).

It's a difficult time, and especially challenging for the people who rely on our programs every day for safe and secure housing. They need us now more than ever, and I am grateful to know the dedicated workforce of HOPWA is out there, all working separately but all working together with us to navigate this strange, new battle. Thank you for your continued work and dedication to the HOPWA program, especially in this time of crisis.

Respectfully,

Rita

Rita Harcrow
Director, Office of HIV/AIDS Housing