

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL TENANTS: COVID-19 UPDATE 2

April 22, 2020

This is an update to to keep you informed about our continued response to COVID-19. The previous notice (dated March 19, 2020) can be found on our website at <http://nrh.ca/tenants> or the notice board.

YOUR SAFETY COMES FIRST!

Your health and safety is our highest priority. **Here's what NRH is doing to help:**

→ **Limiting contact**

- **The NRH office at Niagara Region Headquarters is CLOSED to the public**, so we are doing business over the phone. Due to increases in phone calls, we will respond to emergency calls only. If it is not an emergency, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.
- **Common Rooms, Community Houses and Playgrounds are now CLOSED.** We want to make sure that you are not exposed to the virus by preventing groups from gathering. Please do your part by staying inside as much as possible and staying 6 feet away from each other at all times.
- In order to reduce contact with others, **we will only respond to urgent/emergency maintenance requests that impact health and safety.** Please only call in for maintenance emergencies that need urgent attention such as fire, flood, loss of heat, bed bugs or emergencies as determined by NRH.

→ **Increased cleaning**

- **We have increased cleaning of touchpoints and common areas.** We are trying to keep sanitizers stocked but there is a shortage, so please do your part

by washing your hands often for at least 20 seconds at a time. If possible, bring hand wipes and sanitizers with you if you must leave your unit.

Rent and Income Changes (*Rent-Geared-to-Income Tenants Only*)

We understand that many of you may have a decrease in income. During this time, please continue to pay your rent as you are able until a new calculation can be completed. You can pay rent by:

- Online banking (add NRH as a payee, enter your tenant account number, send payment)
- Telephone banking
- Secure community dropbox (cheque or money order only, NO CASH) – staff continue to empty these boxes regularly
- Mail

If you currently pay your rent with cash, please begin paying by one of the methods above. If you would like to be set up for Pre-Authorized Payment (PAP) please contact your Property Administrator (PA).

Important:

- Don't forget to mail in documentation that shows any income changes
- There may be delays in rent recalculations but NRH will not proceed with eviction due to outstanding rent balances during this time
- You will be responsible for any outstanding rent balances that occur during this time – please speak to your Tenant Support Representative (TSR) or your Property Administrator (PA)

Financial Assistance

If you have lost your job or need financial assistance, you can call:

- Ontario Works: 905-641-9230 (toll-free 1-866-627-1110) or https://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/apply_online.aspx
- Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB): 1-800-959-2019 / 1-800-959-2041 or <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html>
- Other supports are available at <https://niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/>

Pets

Humane Societies may be able to assist with arrangements for your pet if you are hospitalized during this time. Please contact your Community Programs Coordinator (CPC) if you or another tenant needs help arranging for this pet care.

Support Each Other

We would like to thank you for your cooperation and patience during this confusing and unfamiliar time. Working together, we can continue to keep each other safe. Here's how you can help:

→ Physically distance yourself from others

- Do not get together in groups in lobbies, at entrances, in laundry rooms, in common spaces or in the yard of your buildings/properties
- Keep 6 feet (2 metres) between yourself and other people (i.e. do not touch, shake hands, hug, etc.)
- Do not take your kids for playdates or to playgrounds (this includes play equipment located in your area)

→ Use elevators safely

- Ride the elevator by yourself or only with your immediate family/quarantine group
- Do not get on the elevator if there is already somebody on it – wait for an empty elevator
- Stand back while you wait for an elevator so people exiting the elevator have a minimum of 6 feet of space to walk out

→ Support each other

- Continue to be patient and kind:
 - You may have to wait for people to move out of the way in order to have 6 feet between you
 - Try not to judge. Remember that some visitors may be necessary for caregiving or other tenant needs and some tenants may need to go outside for their physical or mental health.
 - Support each other by calling to check to see if your neighbour is lonely or needs help
 - Do not ask NRH Staff or each other if someone has been diagnosed with COVID. This is personal information that NRH Staff cannot disclose due to privacy legislation.
 - Remember that this is a scary and unfamiliar time for everyone. People will make mistakes and will have times when they are not at their best.

If there is a real risk to your safety because a neighbour is not complying with current local pandemic by-laws, call your municipal by-law enforcement office.

There are many agencies that are available to help you through this time. Check <https://niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/> or call 211 to find out about:

- Help with food

- Grocery delivery
- Mental health/addiction supports
- Parenting support
- Seniors supports and services

We will do everything possible to help you through this difficult time. If you or a neighbour needs emergency help, please call your Community Programs Coordinator (CPC).

Please note that the enclosed Housing Herald was produced before the pandemic so some of the information is not current, but we hope you enjoy it anyway.

Thank you for your patience during this time and for your cooperation in keeping our communities safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Cameron Banach
Housing Operations Manager