

**CHAPA**  
**COVID-19 & Affordable Housing Response Meeting**  
**Friday, March 3, 2020**  
**2:30 - 4:30 p.m.**

For the most updated information on affordable housing and the COVID-19 crisis, visit: <https://www.chapa.org/housing-news/covid-19-affordable-housing-updates>

**Notes**

**Welcome**

*Rachel Heller, CEO, CHAPA*

Heller welcomed everyone to the call and reiterated CHAPA's intention to keep the community informed and updated on all housing and non-housing issues and resources.

**Update from DHCD**

*Undersecretary of Housing and Community Development Jennifer Maddox*

The Undersecretary highlighted responses of DHCD in their focus on keeping critical services and support available to vulnerable households including: halting evictions; working in concert with the Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to mitigate spread; and working with regional housing agencies and local housing authorities to offer guidance on loss of income.

**Shelter Update**

*Lyndia Downie, President & Executive Director, Pine Street Inn*

Downie spoke of the difficult challenges homeless shelters face because of COVID-19. Pine Street Inn is trying to put in place certain practices to help prevent the spread of the virus. This includes doing meals in shifts and having residents sleep head-to-toe. However, shelters are designed for communal eating and sleeping so it is extremely difficult to self-isolate, socially distance, or quarantine guests. Downie is working with partners to identify spaces to be able to isolate individuals if they have COVID-19. There are additional challenges for manage all others who may have been exposed. This includes frontline staff who are managing the shelters. There are concerns about staffing shortages as the virus spreads. There is also a continuing need for sanitizing and other cleaning supplies.

**Senior & Supportive Housing Update**

*Amy Schectman, President & CEO, 2Life Communities*

Schectman spoke about the critical issue of have cleaning and disinfecting protocols in place to protect residents. In addition to the cleaning protocols, 2Life is redeploying or

adding staff. With elderly residents, 2Life is enforcing a no outside visitor policy. To address social isolation issues with phone visits and use of other technology to connect with residents. 2Life is also re-designing group activities when possible to ensure residents are not closer than six feet apart. It is also updating its website to share best practices: <https://www.2lifecommunities.org/coronavirus-preparedness-2life>

### **Affordable Housing Manager Update**

*Felicia Jacques, Vice President, & Jennifer Kadilak, Director of Resident Services, Maloney Properties*

Jacques echoed others and highlighted that critical issues include enhanced sanitation issues and best practices around cleaning and disinfecting.

### **Regional Housing Agencies Update**

*Sue Nohl, Deputy Director, Metro Housing|Boston*

Nohl discussed the challenges for agencies that administer programs like rental assistance and RAFT. These challenges include how to offer services remotely, particularly for programs that may require paper applications and materials or in-person meetings.

### **Housing Authority Update**

*Lydia Agro, Chief of Staff, Boston Housing Authority*

Agro spoke of measures that the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) is taking to address the COVID-19 crisis, including limiting non-essential evictions and inspections. Agro highlighted particular challenges facing the housing authority. For example, BHA has 28 different languages spoken by its residents, with notices and information needing to be put on so all residents can understand. Additionally, there are challenges of what happens when a resident becomes infected in a high-rise building and how to contain the building.

### **Federal Responses**

*Ryan Dominguez, Senior Policy Analyst, CHAPA*

Dominguez offered updates on federal policy matters. For the latest federal housing information, visit the “National Updates” section of CHAPA’s COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.chapa.org/housing-news/covid-19-affordable-housing-updates>

### **Questions & Answers**

*Eric Shupin, Director of Public Policy, CHAPA*

Shupin provided an update on the eviction and foreclosure moratorium bill filed by Reps. Kevin Honan and Mike Connolly - HD.4935.

### **Next Steps**

*Rachel Heller & Abhidnya Kurve, Policy Associate CHAPA*