

COVID-19 Community Resource Guide

County of Huron
Housing & Property Services

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COVID-19 Community Resource Guide

Housing & Property Services

This Community Resource Guide is a brief consolidation of practices, procedures, and subsequent information related to the Corporation of the County of Huron and its response to COVID-19, which may be subject to future revisions.

The compilation is for convenient administrative purposes. The most current version or any legal interpretation of the documents herein should be verified with the respective departments.

CAO's Message

As we work through the uncertainty that COVID-19 has delivered, please be assured that we are committed to being both responsive and responsible, and navigating through these times with the safety and wellbeing of County of Huron staff and Huron County residents as our top priority.

We, at the County, are committed to maintaining our core service delivery throughout this period. We will continue to provide social supports to our residents and resources to local businesses who are impacted by the pandemic outbreak.

The following Community Resource Guide has been designed to guide you through the adjustments made to some of our regular County operations and services in response to COVID-19.

We recognize, and are grateful for, the important actions and sacrifices that all Huron County residents are making during these unprecedented times.

We are all in this together, we will get through this together.

Sincerely,



Meighan Wark,
CAO

OUR VISION
A Community for Generations

OUR MISSION
We cultivate a healthy environment
for prosperous living

OUR VALUES
Integrity / Teamwork / Excellence



Contact Information

Housing & Homelessness Services

For general inquiries:

contacthousing@huroncounty.ca

519-482-8505

Toll-Free: 1-888-371-5718

Property Services

For general office inquiries

jmbreception@huroncounty.ca

519-482-8505

Toll-Free: 1-888-371-5718

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting many local communities and business operations. The County of Huron is continuing to provide essential supports to our residents and resources to local businesses throughout this event and will continue to do so as we transition into recovery. The safety and continued wellbeing of all County of Huron staff and Huron County residents will remain our first priority

While all County of Huron offices are closed to public access until further notice, core service delivery continues. As a result of the outbreak, the County's services and operations have adjusted according to recommendations from health authorities and other advisors. This Resource Guide will clarify what services this department is providing and how they are being provided, in light of the COVID-19 situation. Please do not hesitate to contact the department for further clarification on their services or for additional information not contained in this document.

Self-Monitoring, Self-Isolation and Physical Distancing

Physical distancing, including self-monitoring and self-isolation, are public health measures that can delay and decrease the number of cases of COVID-19 over time so to not overwhelm our healthcare system. Huron County urges all residents to practice physical distancing and proper hygiene protocols.

For current and additional information on Self-Monitoring, Self-Isolation and Physical Distancing, please visit Huron Perth Public Health at www.hpph.ca.

Huron Perth Public Health

For the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19 in Huron and Perth, visit www.hpph.ca/coronavirus.

Follow Huron Perth Public Health at
Facebook: www.facebook.com/HuronPerthPublicHealth
and Twitter: www.twitter.com/HPPublicHealth

Resources

Ministry of Health

www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus

Public Health Agency of Canada - Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Outbreak Update

www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html

Public Health Agency of Canada - Travel Health Notices

www.travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notices

County of Huron

www.huroncounty.ca

Huron County Housing & Property Services COVID-19 Impacts and Response.

Housing & Homelessness Services

Office Closure

The office will be closed to the public effective end of day March 16, 2020 until further notice. Although the office will be closed to personal visits, all essential services will continue to be delivered. Please call the office at 519-482-8505 with any further questions.

Huron County Community Housing Co-ordinated Access

The County of Huron's Community Housing Program provides a range of administrative, support and funding services to provide affordable housing options in the County of Huron.

Services include:

- Answering questions about community housing in the County of Huron
- Processing new applications for subsidized (rent-geared-to-income) housing within the County
- Determine eligibility for community housing
- Update applications for subsidized housing with required information changes
- Manage and maintain a centralized waiting list for community housing providers within Huron County

All services continue except for personal visits at the office. Applications can be found online at www.huroncounty.ca or you can call our office to request application. Applications can be mailed, dropped at mail slot at main office or emailed to contacthousing@huroncounty.ca. All updates to information can be made by calling 519-482-8505 ext. 4252.

Huron County Housing

The County of Huron owns and manages 415 rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units throughout Huron County. Housing Services provides all of the administrative and property management services for these properties.

Property management responsibilities include:

- Preparing vacant units for occupancy (ongoing)
- Executing tenancy agreements (ongoing with social distancing measures)
- Financial verification and calculating rents (ongoing)
- Monitoring household income limits (ongoing)
- Collecting rents (no cash payments at this time, cheque, money orders, automatic withdrawal)
- Conducting regular unit inspections (suspended temporarily at this time)

Tenant Support responsibilities include:

- Referrals to social support agencies (ongoing)
- Tenant meetings (temporarily on hold)
- Tenant newsletters (ongoing with updated COVID-19 information)
- Investigate concerns and complaints (ongoing)

All essential services will be maintained. If anyone has questions or concerns, they can call 519-482-8505. Complaints can be submitted in writing or by email to contacthousing@huroncounty.ca.

County View Seniors Apartments

The County of Huron has a 31 unit affordable housing unit building for seniors located just south of Clinton. This three storey apartment building has 19 one bedroom units and 12 two bedroom units. Rents at this building are offered at 80% of Average Market Rents for Huron County.

If interested in applying for County View Seniors Apartments, you can find the application online at www.huroncounty.ca or you can call our office to request an application. The contact number is 519-482-8505 ext. 4252.

Homeownership Assistance

The Federal and Provincial governments are providing funding to make homeownership affordable for low and moderate-income renter households by providing down payment assistance in the form of a forgivable loan. Eligible homes may be either a new build or resale. Funding will be provided to eligible households upon receipt of a fully executed Agreement of Purchase and Sale until all funding is depleted by the County. Funding is very limited for this program.

If interested in this program, you can find further details and application on www.huroncounty.ca or you can contact the Housing Programs Co-ordinator at 519-482-8505 ext. 4255.

Ontario Renovates Program

The Ontario Renovates Program is designed to improve the living conditions of low to moderate income households in need. It offers financial assistance to complete home repair deficiencies, energy efficiency upgrades and accessibility upgrades for persons with disabilities. This program is administered through the Housing Services Division and any necessary home inspections will be completed by a Certified Home Inspection Provider.

The program provides assistance in the form of a grant for accessibility upgrades (under \$5,000) or a forgivable loan for home repairs (to a maximum of \$10,000).

This program is temporarily suspended as new construction projects are regulated as a non-essential service at this time. No contracts will be signed. If interested in details on the program, you can find further information at www.huroncounty.ca or call 519-482-8505 ext. 4255.

Homelessness Services

The County of Huron continues to work diligently to address the challenges associated with homelessness, poverty and housing instability in Huron County. The County's Long-Term Affordable Housing and Homelessness Plan confirms our commitment to improving the housing situation for the people of Huron. We must continue our work towards a housing and homelessness service system that offers coordinated access to all by a group of committed partners working in collaboration for a system of care.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Housing Services remains committed to supporting the homeless in our communities. If you are a landlord who has a rental unit available, our office can provide social and financial supports to individuals to help them retain successful tenancy. You can reach our Homelessness Programs Supervisor at 519-482-8505 ext. 4217.

Property Services

Facilities Availability

In response to the COVID-19 situation, a number of County buildings are closed to the public, however, many services are still being offered in a different format. Please check the County website for the availability of each Department. In addition, there is limited public access to the Huron County Courthouse although access for Court services is still available.

Additional Cleaning

Property Services has increased the amount of times each day that all high touch points are cleaned with a disinfectant designed to protect against the spread of viruses and bacteria.

Maintaining Services to our tenants

Property Services continues to provide cleaning and maintenance repair to all facilities. Each maintenance request is being reviewed and prioritized, with the intent of ensuring our tenants' health and safety, as well as the health and safety of our staff, and the urgency of the request.

Capital Improvements

At this time all capital work at all facilities is on hold pending approval from the Province to resume and consideration of the health and safety of our tenants, staff and contractors. Capital work is still being designed and prepared to be ready once we can resume business.

Housing & Property Services FAQ

Do I have to pay my rent? How do I pay my rent when the office is closed?

Yes, rent is still due and payable by the 1st of each month. Tenants can pay their rent by cheque, bank draft or money order. These payments can be mailed or dropped through the mail slot at our main office at 77722D London Road in Clinton. You can also have your rent automatically withdrawn from your bank account on the 1st banking day of each month. If you are interested in registering for automatic withdrawal of rent, please contact the office at 519-482-8505 ext. 4252.

I live in a community housing building, are visitors allowed in the building?

We are asking all tenants to please limit or refrain from having visitors. Self-isolation and social distancing is in the best interest of all building residents.

I have received my Annual Income Review. Do I have to complete it and send it back? What if I don't have all of the information?

We will continue to mail your Annual Income Review paperwork. You can submit this paperwork back to our office by mail, by dropping through the mail slot at the front door, or by emailing to contacthousing@huroncounty.ca. If you do not have, and cannot get all information required to submit your review, please submit what information you do have, and make note of the information you will forward when available.

How do tenants contact Property Services?

Tenants may continue to contact the service line at 519-482-8505, ext. 4310 to request maintenance work. The after-hours answering service for urgent maintenance issues may still be contacted at 1-800-553-8515.

What can you do to help?

We want you to participate! Here are a few tips and suggestions on things Huron County residents can do to help get through this together.

Self-isolate and stay at home

The number one, most important thing you can do to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our most vulnerable citizens and front line workers is practice physical distancing and stay at home. If living in an apartment building, please limit your time in public spaces (hallways, front entries) to coming and going from the building.

Wash your hands

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 30 seconds.

Respect physical distancing

Property Services, contractors and other staff continue to be inside the apartment buildings completing cleaning and doing urgent maintenance work. Please respect physical distancing. This will keep staff safe, and will protect your safety as well.

Check in on others

As we become more physically isolated, it will become more important than ever that we reach out to one another to stay connected. Call, text or email with those who may be alone.