

## Tenant Handbook

A Resource for....

Answers to common questions

Selected policies

Contacts at the CHA and in your community



*The mission of the Concord Housing Authority is to provide safe, affordable housing for individuals and families of low and moderate income. We strive to promote self-sufficiency and the ultimate goal of social and economic independence.*

*We strive to enhance the quality of our communities and meet the fundamental needs that will allow us to progress toward ensuring effective fair housing opportunities for all.*

# Concord Housing Authority

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## **STAFF CONTACTS**

Marianne Nelson, Executive Director

978.369.8435 ext 12

[mnelson@concordha.org](mailto:mnelson@concordha.org)

Sheila Christie, Program Coordinator

978.369.8435 ext 11

[schristie@concordha.org](mailto:schristie@concordha.org)

Laura LoVuolo, Receptionist/Bookkeeper

978.369-8435 ext 10

[llovuolo@concordha.org](mailto:llovuolo@concordha.org)

Mark Henderson, Maint Supervisor

Jim Nicoll, Maintenance

Scott Sirois, Maintenance

978-369-8435

[mhenderson@concordha.org](mailto:mhenderson@concordha.org)

## Concord Housing Authority

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### **ABOUT THE CONCORD HOUSING AUTHORITY**

The Concord Housing Authority currently manages 80 units of state elderly/disabled housing and 28 units of State Family Housing. Guidelines for these programs are established by state housing regulations through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The CHA also manages 18 scattered site Federal family units whose programs are established by Housing and Urban Development (HUD). All of these properties are owned by the CHA and located throughout the Town of Concord. The CHA also owns 6 local properties (4 elderly and 2 family) and administers 85 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (HUD).

The CHA manages and maintains all public housing units.

Your cooperation, however, is needed in order to accomplish our goal of providing benefits to our residents and continued success amidst financial constraints.

We welcome your suggestions and hope your tenancy with the CHA is a positive and pleasant experience.

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# CONCORD HOUSING AUTHORITY



## Community and Resource Contacts

### Emergency Services

Concord Police.....9-1-1  
Police (non-emergency).....978-318-3400  
Concord Fire.....9-1-1  
Fire (non-Emergency).....978-318-3488  
Concord Ambulance.....9-1-1  
Emergency Rooms:  
Emerson Hospital.....978-287-3690  
VA Bedford.....781-275-7500  
Elliot Community Svc (mental health)..978-369-1113  
Mental Health Intervention.....800-540-5806

### Elder Services

Concord Council on Aging.....978-318-3020  
Minuteman Senior Services.....888-222-6171

### Families

Center for Parents and Teachers....978-318-1510x145  
Child Care Search.....978-897-6400  
Concord-Carlisle Parent-Initiative..978-287-5969  
Concord Public Schools.....978-318-1500  
Concord Recreation Dept.....978-369-6460

### Health

Board of Health.....978-318-3275  
Emerson Hospital.....978-369-1400  
Eliot Mental Health Services.....978-369-1113  
Mass Health.....888-665-9993

### Financial Assistance

Hugh Cargil Trust.....978-318-1300x2030  
Salvation Army.....781-894-0413  
St Vincent dePaul.....978-369-7442

### Hunger/Homelessness/Legal

Fuel Assistance 60+.....978-318-3020  
under 60.....978-369-3034  
Citizens Energy.....877-563-4645  
Food Stamps.....800-645-8333  
or.....978-446-2400  
Open Table.....978-369-2275  
South Middlesex Legal Services...800-696-1501  
WIC.....800-942-1007

### Government Assistance

Dept. of Transitional Assistance...800-445-6640  
Dept. of Housing & Community Development  
(state aided Housing).....617-573-1229  
HUD (federal aided housing).....617-994-8200

### Transportation

COA Van 60+.....978-318-3020  
FISH.....978-369-2244  
The RIDE.....617-222-5123  
(free local transportation to medical apt.)

### Municipal/Community

Community Service Coordinator.....978-369-3034  
Concord Town House.....978-318-3080  
Veterans Agent (Dick Krug).....978-318-3038

### Utilities

Concord Municipal Light Plant.....978-318-3101  
Concord Public Works (trash).....978-318-3200  
COMCAST.....800-266-2278  
National Grid.....800-292-2032

## GENERAL OFFICE INFORMATION

Management Office: 34 Everett Street

Phone number: 978-369-8435

Fax number: 978-369-4269

website: [www.concordha.org](http://www.concordha.org)



Office hours:

Monday-Thursday.....7:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Friday.....7:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

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### Maintenance Department

Maintenance hours: Monday-Friday.....7:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

### Work Order Procedure



During regular business hours, please call the office to report a work order. A member of the staff will generate the work order and record it in our system so we will be able to track it.

For all after-hours emergency calls, please call **1-978-265-1685**. The maintenance man on call will respond. To be considered an emergency, the problem you are having must present a direct and immediate threat of health and/or safety to the resident. If, in the opinion of the maintenance man, your call indicates that it is not an emergency, your request will be handled during the next business day.

**Your lease** is a written agreement between you and the Housing Authority. It states the amount of rent, conditions you must comply with during your tenancy, any utilities you are responsible for and the reason the lease may be terminated by you or the Housing Authority. The lease complies with State regulations and Housing Authority policy.

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### **Payment of Rent**

Your rent is determined according to your gross income and family size. Payment of rent is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month by check, money order or cash. The office cannot make change. You have the option of automatic payment. If you choose this option, the CHA will deduct your rent from your account automatically each month. Forms for this process are available in the CHA office. You may mail your rent to CHA, 34 Everett St., Concord, MA 01742, drop it at the office during regular business hours or in the secure lock box in the laundry room located to the left of the office front entrance. Any payment received after 4:00 p.m. will be credited on the **NEXT business day**. A \$25.00 late fee will apply to any balance on any State and Federal program that is not received within thirty (30) days.

If an emergency arises to prevent you from paying your rent on time for a particular month, PLEASE contact the office to make arrangements.

If rent is not received by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, it is considered late. In the case of repeated late payments, evictions proceedings may be initiated.

## RENT RE-CERTIFICATIONS

### **ANNUAL-**

Once a year, you will be asked to provide current information to reevaluate the status of both your income and family composition. This information is required to be used to adjust your rent for the next year. A packet will be mailed to you approximately ninety days prior to your re-cert date. All necessary forms and supporting documentation are due back into the CHA office thirty days after you receive it.

### **INTERIM-**

**Increases**—If your monthly income increases the CHA is required to re-determine your rent.

*State programs*—You must report any increase 10% or more to the CHA by the 7<sup>th</sup> (seventh) day of the month following the month in which the increase occurred, along with any supporting documentation.

*Federal programs*—You must report any increase within ten days of occurrence. All increases are effective on the 1<sup>st</sup> (first) day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (second) month following the increase. For example, if your income increased in June, your rent will change effective August 1.

**Decreases**—If your income decreases, it is your responsibility to request a rent redetermination. All decreases are effective on the 1<sup>st</sup> (first) day of the month following receipt of ALL required documentation and paperwork.

**FOR ALL RENT REDETERMINATION, A COMPLETED APPLICATION FOR CONTINUED OCCUPANCY MUST BE HANDED IN TO THE OFFICE. CURRENT INCOME VERIFICATION FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS 18 YEARS AND OLDER IS NECESSARY.**

**ALL INCOME MUST BE REPORTED, INCLUDING SOCIAL SECURITY, CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS AND ALIMONY.**



## COMMON PROBLEMS AND FAQ's

### Air Conditioners—(Everett Gardens only)



It is your responsibility to provide, install, maintain, and remove your air conditioner. All air conditioners must be Energy Star qualified. Air conditioners may be installed from May 1 through October 15. All units must be installed in the back of the building only. Medical exceptions may apply to this policy. Please see section on “*Reasonable Accommodations*”. Any A/C not removed by October 15, will be removed by CHA maintenance and the tenant will be charged labor.

**Alterations**—Alterations to Housing Authority property are strictly prohibited; including, but not limited to, painting, borders, stickers, tiles, door locks, ceiling fans, etc.



**Cable Television**—Most apartments have been wired for cable television. However, if you want cable TV service, you are responsible for all costs of installation and removal. You should call COMCAST at the number listed in the front of this handbook. Satellite dish TV is strictly prohibited. No cable TV equipment is allowed to be installed directly onto any structural surface of CHA property.

**Common Areas**—(For complete policies, please contact the office)

**Everett Gardens porches**—Your porch is shared with your neighbor. Please be considerate. Do not use your porch as a storage area. Remember that your porch is visible to other tenants and visitors.

**Family Units**—No animal cages, play gyms, trampolines, swimming pools (including wading pools) are allowed on CHA property. No tires, batteries, car parts can be stored on CHA property. Toys in common areas must be picked up at the end of each day and stored neatly on individual porches. Please remember to keep porches neat and free from excessive clutter. Cooking grills, when in use, must be at least 10 (ten) feet from the building and are only allowed on the first floor, per Fire Dept.

## **Damages—**

When Damages occur to your apartment and/or its fixtures, beyond normal wear and tear, you are expected to pay for the damage. When the damages result from your neglect or are intentional, you will be charged. Some examples:

- \*Broken doors and windows/screen
- \*Defaced walls
- \*Lost Keys
- \*Unclean apartment upon vacating
- \*Damages caused by failure to report a maintenance issue
- \*Damage charges are due within 30 days, per lease

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## **Fire Protection**

**REMOVING OR DISABLING SMOKE DETECTORS IS AGAINST THE LAW.**



Smoking, unattended candles and cooking are the three main causes of fire. Use caution. Should your fire detector malfunction, please call the office IMMEDIATELY. Do NOT take it down.



**Inspections—**Upon move-in, all residents will have the opportunity for a move-in inspection. The CHA will schedule one quarterly inspection the first year of tenancy. If your unit passes, your unit will be inspected annually adhering to the following schedule:

Everett Gardens—October    Peter Bulkeley Terrace—March  
State Family—July    Federal Family—April

In addition, Federal Family units are subject to REAC inspections performed by HUD inspectors every 1-3 years.

All residents will receive a notice at least two weeks prior to the inspection.

## **Insurance**

The housing authority is not responsible for loss or damage to your furnishings as a result of fire, storms, vandalism burglary, flood, etc. The CHA strongly recommends that residents purchase renters insurance to protect themselves.

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## **Keys and Lock Outs**

When you sign your lease, you are given a key to your apartment and your mailbox, if required. If you lose your key, you will be responsible for replacing it.

If you lock yourself out after normal business hours and the on-call maintenance staff is called in to let you into your apartment, you will be charged \$50.00 to reimburse the Housing Authority for this overtime service. The CHA suggests you make a spare key and leave it with a trusted neighbor or relative who lives closer by.

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## **Pets**



A companion animal is allowed in Elderly developments only. You may have one dog (limited to a weight of forty lbs.) or one cat. You must receive permission from the office before bringing a pet onto CHA property. If you are planning on getting a pet, please stop by the office for a complete copy of the PET policy which will include an application and a pet deposit. Effective April 7, 2016, pets will be allowed in Federal Public Housing units. Please contact the CHA for policy and application.

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## **Reasonable Accommodation**

A Reasonable Accommodation is a request for a modification to an apartment or common area or an exception to the CHA's rules and regulations. This must be because of an existing medical condition that prevents normal use of the facilities or compliance with Policy. It must be supported by appropriate third-party documentation accompanying the form.

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## Visitors

Residents are responsible for the conduct of their guests at all times. The terms of your lease regarding overnight guests are as follows:

**Federal**—Overnight guests may not exceed the maximum of fourteen (14) days within a twelve-month period without written permission from the Housing Authority.

**State**—Overnight guests may not exceed the maximum of twenty-one (21) nights within a twelve-month period without permission of the Housing Authority.

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## Vehicles and Parking (complete parking policy available for review in CHA office)

If you have a vehicle, you must provide a copy of the registration to the CHA office. All vehicles on CHA property must be properly licensed, insured and operable. Parking is limited to one (1) licensed driver per household at State Elderly/Disabled developments.

Restrictions:

- You cannot perform any work or repairs to vehicles on CHA property
- You cannot wash your car on CHA property
- Vehicles parked on lawns or walkways are subject to immediate towing and tenants will be held responsible for any damage to property as a result

### **Parking at Everett Gardens, PBT and Everett Gardens Expansion is assigned**

Visitors must park on the street or be towed at their own expense.



Overnight parking bans are in effect from November 1 through April 1.



**NO SMOKING**

## **Smoking**

There is no smoking permitted in any Housing Authority Building. The CHA, with DHCD, instituted a NO SMOKING policy for all of our developments. If you smoke, please be respectful of residents who do not. You must be 30 feet from all CHA buildings.

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## **Stairways and Hallways**



Stairways and Hallways must be kept free of personal clutter. Common areas cannot be used for storage. The Fire Dept. takes notice and you will be charged for removal of stored items.

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## **Transfers**

A resident is allowed to request a transfer to another apartment but only in the case of a change in family size or severe medical problem. You must obtain an application at the office and you may be required to provide additional documentation supporting your transfer request. In order for your request to be considered, all monies to the Housing Authority must be paid and you must be fully compliant with the terms of your lease.

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## **Vacant Unit**

Your apartment is NOT Allowed to be left vacant more than three (3) months out of the entire year. Exceptions to this must be approved in writing by the Executive Director.