



Serving elderly, disabled & low income citizens of
Bristol and Sullivan County, Tennessee
204 Bluff City Hwy. • Bristol, TN 37620-4215

COVID-19 Action and Operations Plan

March 23, 2020

Due to concerns regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Bristol Housing has **closed its administrative offices to the general public**. We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure the health and well-being of our housing program participants, our staff, and the public while continuing to serve the housing needs of the Bristol, TN and Sullivan County, TN communities. We did not make this decision lightly but feel we need to observe the following limited operations until further notice:

COVID-19 Action Plan

Public Housing – Edgemont Tower, Fort Shelby Tower & Family Units

- **Applications** for public housing will be taken via telephone appointments at 423-274-8150 during our normal business hours of Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Inspections** will be suspended until further notice. Inspections necessary due to an emergency will be conducted as needed.
- **Income changes** will continue to be processed with income decreases receiving priority. If an income change occurs, we encourage reporting it via email to jenn@bthra.com. Changes may also be reported via fax at 423-274-8130 or by calling 423-274-8150.
- **Annual recertifications** have been postponed for the next 30 days.
- **Move-In's** - We will continue to **rent apartments** and will contact families directly for move-ins as units become available.

- **Move-Out's** - Those wishing to move out must still give the required 30-day Notice to Vacate. Please leave keys in the unit and let us know via phone, email, or fax when you have moved out.

- **Rent & Payments Due** - Residents are still responsible for making their monthly payments. Late charges will continue to be applied for unpaid rent and other charges.

- **Making your Payments** - Bristol Housing has added a drop box (***effective April 1, 2020***) at the front of the main office located at 204 Bluff City Hwy., Bristol, TN for any paperwork or payments due. We ask only checks or money orders be placed in the drop box and to use an envelope that contains the resident name and address so that the payment is applied to the correct account. All payments will be collected from the drop box on a daily basis. Receipts will be mailed for all payments received. For those that are not on automatic draft, we encourage you to pay your rent at First Horizon via the drive thru. For those not on automatic draft, this is a good time to sign up if you have a checking or savings account.

- **Work Orders** - We will continue to complete emergency work orders. However, if anyone in the unit is sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, please let us know so that we may take extra precautions. We will not be completing non-emergency work orders that involve entering individual units until further notice. However, please continue to notify us of any work order related needs, and we will determine if it rises to the level of an emergency. If not, we will respond as soon as it is safe to do so without compromising health and safety. Work orders may be called into 423-274-8178 at any time. Reports of bed bugs or roaches will still be treated as an emergency.

- **Cleaning and sanitizing** - Bristol Housing is now cleaning and sanitizing all common areas on a stepped-up schedule. We encourage staff and clients to follow CDC guidelines regarding social distancing and sanitation practices so as to avoid transferring viruses to themselves or others. This includes frequently washing hands, using hand sanitizer, and disposing of used tissues.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

- **Applications** for the HCV Program will continue to be accepted on our website at www.bristol-housing.com. Individuals who do not have access to a computer may enter an application by calling 423-274-8150 during our normal business hours of Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Inspections** – As previously notified, annual inspections will not be conducted for the next 12 months. Inspections necessary due to an emergency will be conducted as needed. Inspections for new move-ins will be conducted if the unit is vacant at the time of inspection or if no one in the household is sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Income changes** will continue to be processed with income decreases receiving priority. If an income change occurs, we encourage reporting it via email to andrea@bthra.com. Changes may also be reported via fax at 423-274-8155 or by calling 423-274-8150.
- **Annual recertification** - paperwork for recertifications through July were delivered during your recent inspection. Bristol Housing has added a drop box (**effective April 1, 2020**) to the front of our administrative office located at 204 Bluff City Hwy., Bristol, TN. All completed paperwork can be placed in the drop box. We will retrieve those documents and notify you of any changes in your rent by mail. Please be sure to include all verifications of income, assets, etc. as indicated on the letter in your recertification packet.
- **Lease-up's** – If you have submitted a Request for Tenancy, an inspection has been completed and the unit passed, you will be contacted with an appointment date to sign all final documents.
- **Move-Outs** – Those desiring to move, must give 30-day written notice to their landlord and Bristol Housing. If necessary, an appointment will be made to issue a move voucher.
- **Payments due Bristol Housing** – Program participants are still responsible for making their monthly rental payment to their

landlord. Repayment agreement payments due to Bristol Housing can be placed in the drop box indicated above. Only check or money orders enclosed in an envelope with name and address should be placed in the drop box. Failure to do so may result in the payment being applied incorrectly. Receipts will be mailed for all payments received.

- **Other matters** – will be addressed on an as needed basis.
- **Cleaning and sanitizing** - We encourage staff and clients to follow CDC guidelines regarding social distancing and sanitation practices so as to avoid transferring viruses to themselves or others. This includes frequently washing hands, using hand sanitizer, and disposing of used tissues.

We know the COVID-19 virus is causing great concern and want you to know that we share that concern. Bristol Housing is taking the situation very seriously and is closely monitoring developments. We will adjust our operations further as needed, and will keep you informed of any additional changes we may make to protect our housing participants, our staff, and the public.

J. Steve Scyphers, CEO

www.bristol-housing.com