To: All Tenants and Rental Assistance Program Participants
From: Lynn Bartlett, Executive Director
CC:
Date: 3/13/2020
Re: HABC Business Operations and Customer Service regarding COVID19

To All HABC Clients and Tenants

As COVID19 continues to impact people and organizations locally and globally, I want to update you on steps that HABC is taking to ensure business continuity for our program participants, landlords and tenants.

In the current environment, ensuring continued business operations with a heightened focus on the health and safety of our employees, clients, tenants and communities is our main priority.

In this vein, the HABC has or is taking the following measures to make sure client annual recertifications, interim certifications and HQS inspections are completed in a timely manner that protects both client and staff.

In an effort to reduce contact, all in-person certification meetings have been suspended. Certifications can be completed electronically. Scanned and smart phone pictures of documents can be emailed to your Assisted Housing Specialist. Copies of documents can be dropped in provided drop boxes at the appropriate office or mailed.

Further efforts are being undertaken by HABC to maximize social distancing with the implementation of alternate workday and remote working operations. Consequently, for most timely response participants are encouraged to communicate all questions, needs and issues via email since telephone voicemail may not be readily accessible from remote locations.

HQS Inspections of units continue to be scheduled and completed by CGI our contracted provider. CGI Inspectors are avoiding non-essential business travel with
the exception of traveling to and from housing unit inspections. However, if CGI is made aware of a unit housing someone experiencing illness, they will not perform the inspection and will immediately inform the HABC of the unit address. In turn, we are asking that if you or a family member is sick immediately notify CGI by emailing inspections@habcnj.org to make us aware of a unit housing someone who is ill, to cancel the inspection for re-scheduling at a later date. In some housing unit inspection cases, we will have to rely on the CGI’s inspector judgement. If an inspector is concerned about the health of an occupant at the time of inspection, he or she is authorized to determine whether to complete or reschedule the inspection. If the inspection is rescheduled CGI will notify the housing authority immediately. Inspections canceled for illness will not be penalized as a fail or no-show and will not result in abatement.

Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020 HABC will:

- Suspend new admissions, relocations and portability moves except for emergency situations to prevent assisted households from becoming homeless.
- Suspend all non-emergency work orders
- Suspend all non-emergency scheduled contractor work. Tenants are encouraged to utilize the emergency call system (day or night) to report emergencies for staff to address.
- Suspend activities and events with Joy Lannaman, the HABC Tenant Service Coordinator

These measures will remain in place until further notice. I look forward to a return to our normal procedures and thank you for your understanding and cooperation.