

Multifamily housing staff from USDA Rural Housing Service's headquarters provided the following information to the Rural Preservation Working Group, which is convened by the Housing Assistance Council, in a meeting on March 18, 2020.

RHS is maximizing telework, so staff are working from home as much as possible. They are committed to providing the same level of service delivery as in normal times.

Multifamily borrowers, property managers and others should rely on the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and local or [state health departments](#) for health-related information. For housing-program-related information, they should contact the appropriate [RD field staff](#). Headquarters will keep field staff up to date on program news. Owners and managers should also look for any state or local government actions (such as moratoriums on eviction) that may impact them.

Multifamily staff in the field have been provided an FAQ document for their internal use in answering questions from multifamily stakeholders. RD expects to send out an external communication this week through their [govdelivery email list](#) and to local offices, which will distribute it further if they have email lists. Suggestions for questions that should be addressed in future FAQs can be sent to [Adam Hauptman](#) at USDA.

**Site inspections.** State Directors have the authority to make case-by-case determinations about performing site inspections. The National Office has no objections to delaying inspections.

**Delay rent collection or waive late fees.** Owners are permitted to waive late fees, although regulations require them to collect the rent eventually. Waiver of late fees should be a consistent policy, applied in the same way to all tenants. Note that different owners/managers can make different decisions about fee waivers.

**Recertifications for Section 521 Rental Assistance.** Late recertifications will not be penalized.

**Emergency funds.** RD field offices have been instructed to be flexible about the use of project reserve funds or additional operating funds to accommodate extra maintenance needs or staff needs.

**3/31/20 audit filing deadline.** Contact the relevant State Office, which has the authority to approve a 30-day extension of this deadline. The National Office is considering providing a longer extension.

**Issuance of NOSAs and policy documents.** Headquarters staff does not anticipate any delays to issuance of funding notices or progress on any policy the agency is developing. Some application deadlines for NOSAs may be extended.