

Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse

1307 BADGER STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 1053
LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN 54602-1053
PHONE (608) 782-2264
FAX (608) 782-2262
TDD (608) 782-2261



RESOLUTION #2237

03/31/2020

Board of Commissioners

Steve Schauf, Executive Director

COVID-19 Pandemic – LHA Emergency Actions Authorization

Article I. Background

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a “public health emergency of international concern” in response to the potential spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). This warning was intensified, as the WHO declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic on March 12, 2020. On March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump officially declared a national emergency in the United States. Following CDC recommendations, several states began prohibiting gatherings of 50 or more people in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. On March 12, 2020, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers declared a public health emergency to direct all resources needed to respond to and contain COVID-19 in Wisconsin. Governor Evers issued Emergency Order #12 – “Safer at Home” on March 24, 2020, effective 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 and remain in effect until 8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 24, 2020, or until a superseding order is issued. Individuals and businesses performing “essential services” were exempted from this order.

The Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse (LHA) has been deemed an “essential service” under State of Wisconsin Emergency Order #12. Section 11,(d.) of the order specifically states “For the purposes of this Emergency Order, individuals may leave their residence to perform any of the following essential activities: To perform work at Essential Businesses or Operations (which, as defined below, includes Healthcare and Public Health Operations, Human Services Operations, Essential Governmental Functions, and Essential Infrastructure) or to otherwise carry out activities specifically permitted in this Order, including Minimum Basic Operations and obtaining supplies needed to work from home.” Pursuant to Section 9 of the order, Human Service Operations deemed essential include “residential settings and shelters for adults, seniors, children, victims of domestic abuse, people with disabilities, people with substance use disorders, or mental illness; transitional facilities; home-based settings to provide services to individuals with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, seniors, adults, and children; adult day care, adult day services, and supportive home care; field offices that provide and help to determine eligibility for basic needs including food, cash assistance, medical coverage, child care, vocational services, or rehabilitation services; developmental centers; adoption agencies; businesses that provide food, shelter, and social services; or other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged individuals, individuals with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, or otherwise needy individuals.”

The Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse, considering the state of emergency and order issued by the Governor of Wisconsin has taken the following actions:

- All LHA offices and community spaces are closed to the public

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- All business conducted with the Authority is being done electronically, mail, and phone
- LHA staff are currently required to work at the office daily, while observing social distancing, and are being allowed to work remotely if available
- While physically on site, LHA staff is directed to perform only essential functions of the Authority
- Routine inspections and work orders have been suspended or postponed
- Emergency, urgent, and unit-turn work orders are being completed
- Distributed to residents and participants detailing operational changes
- Release on 03/14/2020 regarding agency response
- Updates posted as needed via letter, newsletter, and building postings
- Effective April 2, 2020 the Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights have been incorporated

Information regarding this crisis, the virus, and government direction is updated daily. As the COVID-19 response evolves, the Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse must have the discretion to make immediate decisions regarding emergency measures and contingencies for continuity of operations.

Article II. Recommendation

It is the recommendation of the Executive Director that the Board of Commissioners adopt this resolution authorizing previous and future action taken by Executive Director Steve Schauf, or his designee(s), during the COVID-19 pandemic deemed necessary to ensure the continued operations of the Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse while protecting its employees, clients, vendors, partners and the community as a whole.

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WHEREAS, On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a “public health emergency of international concern” in response to the potential spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), and on March 12, 2020 WHO declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic; and

WHEREAS, On March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump officially declared a national emergency in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The State of Wisconsin, following the Centers for Disease Control recommendations, began restricting gatherings of 50 or more people in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, On March 12, 2020, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers declared a public health emergency to direct all resources needed to respond to and contain COVID-19 in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, Governor Evers issued Emergency Order #12 – “Safer at Home” on March 24, 2020, effective 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 and remain in effect until 8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 24, 2020, or until a superseding order is issued; and

WHEREAS, Individuals and businesses performing “essential services” were exempted from this order; and

WHEREAS, The Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse has been deemed an “essential service” under State of Wisconsin Emergency Order #12, Section 11(d.); and

WHEREAS, The Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse, considering the state of emergency and order issued by the Governor of Wisconsin has taken emergency measures and will need discretion to take future extraordinary and expedient action to protect the Housing Authority's essential operations; and

WHEREAS, The Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse has a responsibility to enact measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its residents, employees, clients, and the general public.

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