

April 6, 2020

Dear Leaders of Ohio's Senior Affordable Housing Communities,

In the past several weeks, attention has been focused on our population of older Ohioans and the risks posed by Coronavirus (COVID-19). As an affordable housing provider, you are managing a vital resource for some of our most vulnerable seniors. It is our hope that this virus will not affect those you serve but there does still exist a real threat to the health of your residents.

Given that reality, the Ohio Department of Aging in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Health has put together the [Guidelines for Senior Affordable Independent Housing Communities](#), a list of guidelines we ask you to begin implementing and following immediately. This document aligns with guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention entitled: "[Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Retirement Communities and Independent Living Facilities](#)." In both, you will find information on limiting group activities, restricting visitors, screening employees and providing updated materials. We also encourage you to visit our state COVID-19 webpage at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov); if questions, please call 1-833-4-ASKODH.

We know that many of you have already implemented steps, and if you have not, we believe our guidance can be acted on swiftly with the resources and tools we have included. We have printed free posters for you to display these in prominent locations throughout your community to be read and to serve as reminders to your residents and staff. These posters focus on hand washing, prevention tips, symptoms, and door signage to restrict visitors. Please order your senior housing [free posters](#) today.

We recognize the meaningful contributions that the staff of your community offer to the residents and communities you serve. We encourage you to review the April 2, 2020, [Amended Stay at Home Order](#) issued by the Ohio Department of Health to determine your organization's status as essential. At this time, we believe this provides the supports needed to your organization and to your employees to maintain the levels of service needed for your residents.

Thank you for your agility and leadership in the coming weeks. We will reflect upon this time with pride that we contributed to the good of our communities and to those who rely on us. We stand ready to support you however we can.

Sincerely,



Ursel J. McElroy  
Director

***Fostering sound public policy, research, and initiatives that benefit older Ohioans.***