



## **COVID-19 FAQ for Organizers Working with NYCHA Residents**

**Question: How can tenants and organizers navigate NYCHA repairs not getting done during COVID-19 since housing court has been suspended for the moment? How do we make sure repairs are being done?**

Answer: Housing court IS [still open for emergencies](#) and doing appearances via video and phone as needed. If any of the repair issues raise to an emergency level, and NYCHA cannot resolve in a reasonable way, residents can still take the landlord to court. You can continue to threaten to take NYCHA to court as part of negotiations - we haven't lost that.

Residents that need to make an emergency filing may call 311 to be connected to an attorney who can assist them. Residents with internet access can also start the process for an emergency HP action at [JustFix's website](#), after which they will be connected with a lawyer to help with the filing. [As of June 10](#), residents may also go to housing court in person to file emergency pro se HP actions on paper. Hearings will be held remotely.

In addition:

- [Red Hook Houses residents](#) can contact Ross Joy at (347) 216-5738 or [joyr@nycourts.gov](mailto:joyr@nycourts.gov) to receive assistance from the Red Hook Community Justice Center
- Any resident that would ordinarily go to the [Harlem Community Justice Center](#) can contact Rafael Moure-Punnett at (212) 360-4988 or [punnetr@courtinnovation.org](mailto:punnetr@courtinnovation.org) to receive assistance from that Community Justice Center

### **Q: How and where can residents file emergency applications for repairs?**

A: As of [March 16](#), Residents can request repairs from NYCHA through the MyNYCHA app or by calling the Customer Care Center (CCC) at (718) 707-7771. Residents will not be able to go to their Property Management Offices to report problems in person, *unless they schedule an appointment ahead of time.*

As of [April 6](#), "Emergency" maintenance and repairs includes:

- No heat or no hot water
- Water leaks
- Gas leaks
- Flooding conditions
- Stoppages

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**Last updated June 11**

*As the situation changes, we will be updating with more questions. If you have questions you would like to add to the list, email [equitableneighborhoods@takerootjustice.org](mailto:equitableneighborhoods@takerootjustice.org).*



- Electrical issues
  - No power in the entire apartment
  - No power to kitchens, bathrooms, or “life-sustaining equipment”
- Other “hazardous conditions”
  - Cabinets falling off walls
  - Indoor rat, bedbug, or mice infestation
  - Stove or refrigerators not working
  - Smoke or carbon monoxide (CO) detectors not working
  - Window guard missing or loose
  - Apartment door not working
  - (there may be other conditions--if a condition in a resident’s apartment is in any way dangerous, it should definitely be reported)
- Mold inspection, remediation, and related repairs, but not related paint work; residents that have requested mold remediation from NYCHA and have not received an adequate response can contact the Ombudsperson Call Center at (888) 341-7152 or <https://ombnyc.com/> (en español: <https://ombnyc.com/español>).

NYCHA staff are supposed to wear face coverings when visiting an apartment, and NYCHA is asking that residents also wear face coverings while NYCHA staff are in their apartment. NYCHA “strongly recommend[s] that residents ask staff members about their health, before allowing entrance into their apartments,” and says that residents may ask that work be rescheduled unless safety requires the work be done immediately.

**Q: What if a resident needs to go to their Property Management Office for some other service?**

A: As of [March 20](#), residents should call their Property Management Office, or the CCC at (718) 707-7111, ahead of time to *schedule an appointment* for any of the services they would ordinarily get in person. NYCHA says that property office staff will continue to assist residents via telephone, email, and through scheduled appointments to speak to staff from behind the reception desk. NYCHA has asked residents not to walk into their property management offices without an appointment “unless it is absolutely necessary.” The Property Management Offices are also [accepting documentation by email](#).

As of [March 25](#), the Brooklyn and Bronx Walk-in Customer Contact Centers are closed.

**Q: Where should tenants who are paying April 1 rent send their checks? Can they pay electronically?**

A: As of [March 20, 2020](#), residents can continue paying their rent through mail, the MyNYCHA app, [NYCHA’s E-Rent system](#), through their bank’s online-payment system, by phone at (877)

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481-9947, or via payroll deductions or HRA direct payments. NYCHA advises that rent should not be paid in person. [Amalgamated bank has closed the two locations that accepted NYCHA rent payments](#), and [Victory State Bank has moved all its branches to drive-thru only](#). [Brooklyn Cooperative Federal Credit Union has resumed collection of NYCHA rent payments](#), but has [reduced hours](#).

**Q: How can residents apply for rent reductions if their income has gone down?**

A: As of [May 15](#), NYCHA has made changes to its process for applying for rent reductions: Residents experiencing a loss of income of more than 5% and who would otherwise be paying more than 30% of their rent can immediately request a Rent Reduction by accessing the [NYCHA Self-Service Portal](#) or calling the CCC at (718) 707-7771 and choosing option 5 to apply by phone.

No supporting documentation will be required; instead, NYCHA says it will accept a self-certification that the household's income has been reduced. NYCHA will still ask for whatever documentation is available, but the rent reduction should not be denied if the household can't provide documentation.

The rent reduction will be effective from the first of the month after the application is submitted. (That is, if a resident applies for reduction on May 20, the reduction will be effective June 1.) That said, they are expected to take three weeks to process. If the reduction isn't reflected in the resident's next rent bill, NYCHA says it "will accept partial rent payments" (presumably, that they will accept rent payments at the level the resident should have received them at) until they are finished processing the application.

NYCHA also has a video and FAQ about the new process [here](#).

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