



## OFFICE OF PUBLIC & INDIAN HOUSING

February 24, 2020

Dear Executive Director,

I am writing to provide advance notice of a special maintenance upgrade of the Inventory Management-Public Housing Information Center (IMS/PIC) system. In order to align with industry best practices for security and data integrity, IMS/PIC requires an upgrade. For the reasons outlined below, I am asking PHAs (and PIH staff) to refrain from using **the IMS/PIC system from March 13, 2020 through March 23, 2020. During that time, the system will not process 50058 submissions.**

This temporary shutdown is necessary to upgrade IMS-PIC to industry standard protocols that ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the information passed between HUD and Public Housing Agencies. Without this upgrade, the security of client-server data communication is not ensured and may potentially be exploited by attackers. HUD continues to work with software vendors and industry partners on the eventual modernization of IMS/PIC (called PIC-NG) and will keep you apprised of our progress later this fiscal year as we begin conversion and deployment activities.

The Department has been testing the upgraded code delivered by its contractor and determined that it will allow IMS/PIC to continue to function, but that there will be issues with some of the functionality that is used less frequently. Various modules in the system such as PIC inventory removal and changes to existing building and unit information will have limited functionality while HUD works to restore operating and maintenance support to the system. The Department is developing a plan for enhanced support during this period to minimize disruptions to essential functions. We appreciate your patience during this period. Please be attentive to further updates in this regard that may be found by clicking the following link:

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/reac/support/tac](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/reac/support/tac).

The Department considered delaying the IMS/PIC upgrade to improve it; however, the most used web browser is scheduled to roll out a patch at the end of March that will make

the current version of IMS/PIC nonfunctional. The Department believes other web browsers will roll out similar patches in the coming months. Because of the situation, the Department has concluded that the costs of delay would outweigh the benefits. In order to mitigate the issues in the pending IMS/PIC upgrade, it is prudent to ask PHAs to refrain from using the IMS/PIC system for 10 days to work with a small number of PHAs to confirm the results of our internal testing and to pilot test the steps to work around the issues in the system. One of the reasons the upgrade is scheduled from March 13 to 23 is to give PHAs operating Housing Choice Voucher programs with fiscal years that end on December 31 the opportunity to complete submission of their SEMAP certifications in the IMS/PIC system prior to the system entering this period of testing.

The Department intends to put the system fully back online on March 24, 2020. At that time, the Department will publish step-by-step instructions for PHAs and Field Offices to address each problem identified in the system. The Department will also prepare the HUD REAC Technical Assistance Center (TAC) to be able to assist PHAs encountering issues. If you have questions, or need assistance, prior to or during this upgrade period, please contact the TAC, Phone: 1-888-245-4860, Fax: 202-485-0280, or Email: [REAC\\_TAC@hud.gov](mailto:REAC_TAC@hud.gov).

I realize that PHAs and the Department as a whole heavily rely on the IMS/PIC system for a wide variety of data needs and that this upgrade is going to be a more difficult one than anyone wishes. The Department is working hard to make this upgrade as straightforward as possible given the challenges. Thank you for your continued partnership and assistance in this important process to provide a higher degree of privacy and data integrity and to maintain compliance with the latest industry standards.



David A. Vargas  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Real Estate Assessment Center