



HELLO
December

Preventing Burnout During the Holiday Season

Everyday life can be hectic enough without the added pressure of the holidays, which can also be a source of major stress and burnout for many people. Burnout isn't just about being tired; it's emotional, mental and physical depletion caused by prolonged stress. However, with some planning and self-care, you can protect your mental and physical well-being while still enjoying the festivities.

The American Psychological Association reports that the holiday season brings added stress for 2 out of every 5 people.

Consider these tips to help prevent burnout:

- **Set realistic expectations.** Social media and cultural norms often create pressure. Focus on meaningful experiences rather than flawless decorations, trendy outfits or extravagant gifts. Gratitude journaling can help shift your mindset toward what truly matters.
- **Start early.** No matter your holiday plans, spreading out your tasks and starting early will help with stress levels. This way, you won't be waiting until the last minute to complete tasks and rushing through responsibilities.

- **Take time to recharge.** Self-care during the holidays isn't indulgent; it's essential. Regular breaks from daily stressors can prevent burnout by helping your body and mind relax and recharge. Rest restores your energy, boosts your mood and increases productivity.
- **Maintain boundaries.** Boundaries protect your emotions and your physical space. They can be a healthy strategy as you navigate the holiday season and a full calendar. Only commit to the invitations or requests that truly matter to you and let go of the rest.
- **Make a list of all visible and invisible tasks.** Often, the mental load of holiday planning falls on one person and can go unnoticed. For example, "buying a gift" includes making a budget, understanding interests or sizes, deciding on a gift, purchasing it and wrapping it. When invisible labor becomes visible, it's easier to delegate tasks and ask for help.

While these practical strategies can help address some holiday stressors, you should also seek further support from a doctor or mental health professional.



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December 2025 Newsletter

HUD Fair Market Rents & Flat Rent Policy FY 2026 – The FY 2026 Flat Rent Policy was approved as a draft at PCHA’s 9/18/2025 Board Meeting. The updated FY 2026 Flat Rent Policy and related documents were available for public review for a period of at least 45 days, beginning 9/24/2025 through 11/10/2025 when a public meeting was held to go over the materials. There was no attendance at the public meeting and no comments were received at any time regarding the materials. The FY 2026 Flat Rent Policy was accepted as final at PCHA’s 11/20/2025 Board Meeting.

This is the first step in setting the final flat rents for FY 2026. The Utility Allowances are the other part, they are discussed below. Once the Utility Allowances are finalized they will reduce the 80% Fair Market Rent dollar figure to become the official flat rents for FY 2026. The flat rent information remains available in the Public Notice section of www.pikehousing.com.

Note: Flat Rents only affects households with higher earnings where the income based rent would be significantly higher. In those situations the flat rent acts a rent cap and is a good deal.

Utility Allowance FY 2026 - Pike County Housing Authority (PCHA) has available for public review and comment its FY 2026 Utility Allowance Schedule (UAS) documentation. This documentation indicates the allowances as calculated by Johnson Controls to offset PCHA tenants Ameren Electric utility costs by rent reduction.

The FY 2026 UAS was approved as a draft at PCHA’s 10/16/2025 Board Meeting. The FY 2026 UAS documentation will be available for public review for a period of at least 45 days, beginning 10/22/2025 through 12/8/2025 at which time a public meeting will be held at the PCHA community building located at 842 Mason Street, Barry, Illinois at 1:00p.m. At PCHA’s 12/18/2025 Board Meeting, it is planned to ratify the FY 2026 UAS as final. After that approval, the FY 2026 UAS will be applied to all tenant re-examination transactions after 1/1/2026.

PCHA has the FY 2026 UAS documents posted for review at the PCHA community building mentioned above, and also on its website at www.pikehousing.com in the Public Notice section. Questions and comments regarding the FY 2026 UAS documentation can be directed through the public meeting to the office.

Note: Utility Allowances affect all households and vary by location. There are many factors that go into these such as utility cost/type, property age, unit type/size, consumption patterns, HUD regulation, etc.

Board Meeting Schedule FY 2026 – Board meeting times have been set for FY 2026. These are set for the 3rd Thursday of every month at 4pm at the PCHA office in Barry.

The housing authority still seeks a resident to serve on the PHA Board. If you are a person who can maintain confidentiality, provide meaningful discussion, use an Ipad/email, and make the monthly meeting please let us know. Being a resident commissioner does not entitle you to special treatment by PHA staff. The monthly meetings are to conduct the business of the housing authority and not a space to discuss tenant matters or gossip.

Guests & Visitors – A friendly reminder about having guests and visitors to your apartments. Most certainly you are entitled to have people come visit and stay occasionally, but there is a point where having guests & visitors can cross a line and then they become unauthorized guests. PCHA policy and your lease state that if someone is going to be visiting and staying longer than 3 days you must let us know. After that the most they can stay during a 6 month period is 14 consecutive days and ultimately no more than 30 days in any 12 month period.

The standard practice for when we find violators of these rules is to issue a no trespass to the person(s) not authorized on the lease to be in the unit. If they are caught on housing authority property after being served then they could be arrested.

On another note, if you have a regular guest & visitor within the required time frame, they should be respectful of the housing authority rules and your lease. They should not be disruptive to other residents and causing issues at the properties.

Move Out Notice – In the last month or so we've had 2 people move out with no notice. We actually don't know when they left, but we do know they've been charged rent and other fees the whole time. This whole situation could have been avoided by these people by calling in to the office and just saying they were giving their 30 day move out notice. Now, they're paying a whole lot more because they did the wrong thing. If you're moving, please call in and give your 30 day notice and be sure to keep the power on through the 30 days as well.

Have a great month of December, **HAPPY HOLIDAYS**, and thank you.

Regards,



Chris Bruns
Executive Director

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU NEED SOMEONE REMOVED FROM THE LEASE...

REQUEST TO HAVE SOMEONE REMOVED FROM THE LEASE NEEDS TO BE PRESENTED TO PCHA IN WRITING EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR THE REQUEST.

TWO FORMS OF DOCUMENTATION VERIFYING THE NEW ADDRESS OF THE TENANT WHO WILL NO LONGER BE LIVING IN THE UNIT IS REQUIRED.

DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH RESIDENCY. PCHA TYPICALLY ACCEPTS DOCUMENTS FROM GROUP 3 OF THE REAL ID DOCUMENT CHECKLIST. TWO FORMS OF VERIFICATION MUST COME FROM THE DOCUMENTS LISTED IN THIS GROUP. THE REAL ID DOCUMENT CHECKLIST IS LOCATED ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE.

WITHOUT THE PROPER DOCUMENTATION, A LEASE CANNOT BE CHANGED. ONLY CURRENT DOCUMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. THIS IS CLEARLY STATED ON THE REAL ID DOCUMENT CHECKLIST.

ONCE THE VERIFYING DOCUMENTATION IS RECEIVED, AND APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AN APPOINTMENT WILL BE SET UP FOR THE REMAINING RESIDENT TO COME INTO THE OFFICE TO SIGN A LEASE.

RENT WILL NOT BE CHANGED UNTIL THIS IS COMPLETED.

ANY PAST DUE BALANCE ON THE ACCOUNT, RE-PAYMENT AGREEMENT BALANCE, LATE FEES OR ANY OTHER CHARGES, WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL ADULT MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD LISTED ON THE ORIGINAL LEASE.



REAL ID DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Effective May 3, 2023, a REAL ID-compliant driver's license (DL) or identification card (ID) will be required to board domestic flights unless you have a valid U.S. passport. To apply for a REAL ID DL/ID, please bring the appropriate documentation from each category specified below to your local Driver Services facility.



Acceptable Documents of Identification



Documents of identification that are acceptable for the purpose of obtaining a Real ID card are listed by group. **All acceptable documents presented for verification or proof must be valid (current and not expired).** Hard copy documents are required; images from a cellphone are not accepted. An applicant may print the image (e.g., bank statement) and provide the printed copy when presenting documentation. **Photocopies will not be accepted.**

GROUP 1: Proof of Identity, Date of Birth and U.S. Citizenship or Lawful Status

Requires one of the following documents:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copy of a birth certificate filed with a state office of vital statistics or equivalent agency in the individual's county of birth. <input type="checkbox"/> Valid U.S. passport or passport card. <input type="checkbox"/> Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) issued by the U.S. Department of State, Form FS-240, Form DS-1350 or Form FS-545. <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Citizenship issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Form N-560 or Form N-561. <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Naturalization issued by DHS, Form N-550 or Form N-570. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by DHS, Form I-766 or Form I-688B. <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign passport with a valid U.S. visa affixed accompanied by the approved Form I-94 documenting the applicant's most recent admittance to the United States. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551) issued by DHS or the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. <input type="checkbox"/> REAL ID DL/ID card issued in compliance with the standards of Part 37 of Title 6 of the Code of Federal Regulations (pursuant to federal rule, this document alone is not sufficient to prove lawful status). |
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Name change documents, such as a **certified marriage certificate**, etc., will be required if the applicant's current name is different than the name that appears on the birth certificate. If a passport is in the applicant's current name, then name change documents are not needed. **Multiple name change documents will be required if your name has changed multiple times.**

GROUP 2: Full Social Security Number (SSN)

Requires one of the following documents:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security card. <input type="checkbox"/> W-2 with full SSN <input type="checkbox"/> The most recent pay stub or printed electronic deposit receipt bearing the applicant's name and full SSN. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> SSA-1099 Form. <input type="checkbox"/> Non-SSA-1099 Form. |
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GROUP 3: Residency

Requires two of the following documents:

All documents must contain full residence address. A document listed in Group 1 or 2 that contains the full residence address is acceptable as proof of residency. Account numbers must be visible.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bank statement (dated within 90 days prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Canceled check (dated within 90 days prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Certified grade/high school or college/university transcript. <input type="checkbox"/> Credit card statement (dated within 90 days prior to application) Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Discover. <input type="checkbox"/> Credit report issued by Experian, Equifax or TransUnion (dated within 12 months prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Deed/title, mortgage or rental/lease agreement. <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance policy (homeowner's or renter's). <input type="checkbox"/> Letter on official school letterhead (dated within 90 days prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Medical claim or statement of benefits from private insurance company or public (government) agency (dated within 90 days prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Pay stub or printed electronic deposit receipt. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Official mail received from a state, county, city or village, or a federal government agency that includes first and last name of the applicant and complete current address. This may include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homestead Exemption receipt. Jury duty notice (issued within 90 days prior to application). Selective Service card. Social Security annual statement. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) statement. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits statement. <input type="checkbox"/> Pension or retirement statement. <input type="checkbox"/> Report card from grade/high school or college/university. <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition invoice or other official mail from a college/university (dated within 12 months prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Utility bill — electric, water, refuse, phone (land or cell), cable or gas (issued within 90 days prior to application). <input type="checkbox"/> Voter registration card. |
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Culinary & Holiday Traditions

Japan: It is a popular tradition to eat fried chicken on Christmas Eve

United Kingdom: Families often have a large Christmas dinner featuring goose, stuffing, roast potatoes and Christmas pudding

Italy: A sweet bread called panettone is a common Christmas treat

Australia: Due to the summer weather, many people celebrate with barbeques and beach parties

Iceland: 13 mischievous Yule Lads visit homes in the 13 nights leading up to Christmas leaving gifts in the children's shoes

Norway: People hide their brooms on Christmas Eve to prevent witches from stealing them to fly with

Venezuela: People roller skate to early morning church services on Christmas Eve

Philippines: The Great Lantern Festival, or "Parol" is a spectacular event in San Fernando featuring large, illuminated lanterns



Austria: On December 6th, St. Nicholas is accompanied by the Fearsome Krampus, who punishes Naughty children

Mexico: Tamales are a Christmas favorite. Flavorful bundles of masa and filling wrapped in corn husks and steamed to perfection



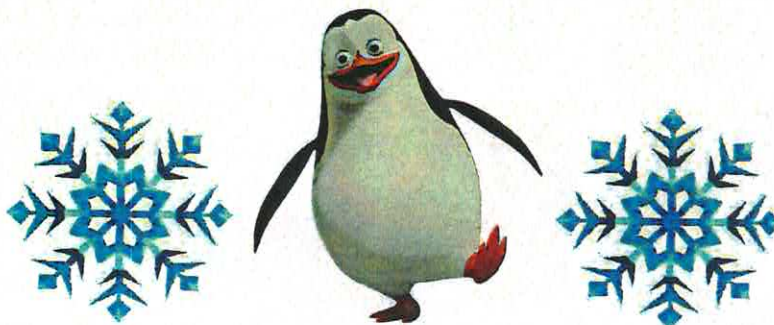
Winter Safety Tips:

Prepare for Power Outages

Winter storms can lead to power outages. Make sure you have easy access to flashlights and a battery-powered radio in case the power goes out. Stockpile warm blankets. Longer power outages can spoil the food in your refrigerator and freezer, so keep a supply of non-perishable foods that can be eaten cold on hand. If the power goes out, wear several layers of clothing, including a hat. Move around a lot to raise your body temperature.

DO THE PENGUIN WALK

1. Keep your knees relaxed
2. Point your toes out
3. Take short steps
4. Walk Slowly





Pike County Housing Authority

Tenant Transfers

According to the lease; Page 5 Section G. Resident transfers to another unit are permitted, *only if there is no applicant on the waiting list that needs a unit of that size and type*. PCHA has established a policy which gives preference for available units to applicants who do not currently have assistance.

Apartment availability will be in the order of:

1. VAWA/ Emergency transfer
2. New Applicants
3. PCHA initiated transfer
4. Tenant requested transfer

If a Resident is permitted to move to another unit per tenant request, there will be a \$200.00 non-refundable moving fee *plus* responsibility for damages and other charges for the previous unit.

If the transfer is an administrative transfer generated by the PCHA office for over-housed situations, under-housed situations, reasonable accommodation, etc. There will be no charge. Proper documentation must be provided in a reasonable accommodation request. Tenant will be responsible for damages and other charges for the previous unit.

All transfer requests are at the discretion of the Executive Director.



WE ARE IN THE PEAK OF FLU SEASON...

Influenza (flu) season lasts from October through May in the United States, with peak flu activity between December and March. In the last few years, the timing and duration of flu activity have been unpredictable. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported early increases in seasonal flu last year. The Southern Hemisphere also experienced an early surge of flu activity this year, which may indicate what's to come in the United States.

Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs, especially after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.



The flu can cause serious complications for people of any age, but children and older adults are especially vulnerable. To help keep your household healthy this flu season, consider the following suggestions:

- Avoid contact with people who are sick, and stay away from others when you feel unwell.
- Wash your hands often using soap and warm water to protect against germs. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes to prevent the spread of germs.
- Get plenty of sleep, stay active and drink plenty of water to help keep your immune system strong.
- Eat a nutritious diet of healthy grains, fruits and vegetables.



#StaySafe

COMPLAINTS ON PCHA PROPERTIES

Complaints on PCHA properties are recorded by our office, and go in your tenant file. To ensure the health, safety and right to peaceful enjoyment of PCHA premises by resident's or PCHA employees, we expect the rules and regulations set forth in the PCHA lease to be upheld.

If you feel unsafe call 911

This also includes any violations threatening the health, safety and right to peaceful enjoyment. Any noise violation, speeding or reckless driving, possible stalking, provoking an individual either verbally or physically needs to be reported to law enforcement. By reporting to law enforcement, a record of violations against an individual will be made.

If you suspect unlawful activity being done on PCHA property, you need to call law enforcement. If you see a person that is not allowed to be on PCHA property, call law enforcement.

As landlords, we are not able to enforce the law. We are able to take the complaint and make records, law enforcement needs to be called to take care of the situation.



Happy Holidays!

Happy New Year!

Weather and Adverse Conditions Responsibilities of PCHA and Resident

Resident agrees to take reasonable precautions and to exercise ordinary care to avoid injury to person and property, and to take extra precautions and exercise a high degree of care in the event of dangerous conditions on the premise, grounds and common areas of the PCHA premises caused by an accumulation of snow, ice or other hazardous conditions of which PCHA has no notice or opportunity to alleviate. PCHA agrees to use existing means available to it for removal or notice of such condition and a reasonable time to act; however, PCHA shall not be liable to Resident, or the guests or invites of Resident, for damages or loss from dangerous conditions resulting from snow, ice or other temporary or natural conditions on the premises, grounds, or common areas of public housing premises.

LIHEAP ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP assistance appointments are being taken.

2025 Income guidelines are:

1-\$3,332.00 per month

2-\$4,357.00 per month

3-\$5,382.00 per month

4-\$6,407.00 per month

Call Connie at 217-285-6150 for an appointment.

