

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LUMBERTON

Lumberton, North Carolina

BEDBUG POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

Adopted by PHA Board of Commissioners

Resolution No.: _____

Date of Adoption: _____

Effective Date of Implementation: _____

Authorized Use by the Housing Authority of the City of Lumberton

BEDBUG PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACTION PLAN

Housing Authority of the City Lumberton

Bedbug infestations are once again a serious problem in housing throughout the country. Public housing properties are not immune to infestations. Bedbugs live on human and animal blood and typically hide and live in dark and undisturbed locations such as cracks and crevices. They can live for long periods of time without feeding and although visible to the naked eye, they may be difficult to detect.

A. EDUCATION

The Housing Authority of the City of Lumberton (hereinafter referred to as PHA) shall educate staff and new and existing residents in our PHA community about bed bugs. Information provided will include identification of bed bugs, habitats, how to avoid bringing bed bugs home and what residents should do if they find a bed bug in their unit or offices.

- The PHA will incorporate bedbug awareness and identification in the Tenant Orientation process.
- The following may be used by the PHA as part of the ongoing training process.
 - Articles in the PHA newsletter
 - A video and information on prevention and treatment shared during move-in and at annual re-sign
 - Flyers delivered to residents
 - Posters in common areas including laundry rooms
 - Training sessions conducted by staff or third-party professionals.
- Provide property management and maintenance staff with suitable training on the identification and treatment of bedbugs.
- Provide Central Office staff with suitable training on the identification of bedbugs.

B. PHA BEDBUG PREVENTION

- Common areas such as laundry facilities, lobbies and community rooms are visually inspected by trained staff monthly.
- Pest control contracts will require inspection of these common areas and individual units by pest control professionals (PCP) as part of the regular service.
- Staff shall inspect vacant units for bed bugs on items left by the former resident, around the unit and behind fixtures such as baseboards, faceplates of electrical outlets and switches, and plaster cracks.
- Admission staff shall ask new residents about any previous exposure to bed bugs and will provide information on how to limit the chance of bringing bed bugs to the property.

- Implement a property wide initiative to seal baseboards, cracks and crevices in each unit. Additionally, seal openings around plumbing and electrical services shared between apartments with pest-proofing sealants.
- Any large item left outside for trash pick-up is considered infested and promptly removed from the property. PHA staff destroys items on the curb using a utility knife, spray paint, or other means to prevent further use.
- When possible, staff meets with residents in offices and other common areas where plastic or metal furniture is available. If office staff must meet with a resident in a unit, staff will only take essential items into the unit and will not sit or set items on upholstered furniture.
- If maintenance staff must move infested items in a unit, they shall wear booties and a disposable suit. They should remove and dispose of the protective clothing immediately upon completing work in the unit.
- Inspections may incorporate a variety of accepted practices such as visual inspections, monitoring devices and detection dogs.
- **IMPORTANT NOTES**
 - Housing shall not be denied because of previous bed bug exposure.
 - The PHA shall not require tenants to treat furniture or other personal belongings prior to occupying their unit or as a condition of acceptance

C. TENANT BEDBUG PREVENTION

To prevent the spread of bedbugs, tenants will be encouraged to:

- Avoid taking used furniture and mattresses, especially discarded furniture and mattresses, into the unit. Used furniture and refurbished mattresses may have bedbugs and bedbug eggs that are difficult to see.
- Inspect for the signs of bedbugs when traveling away from home. Look for live or dead bedbugs, shed bedbug skins or bedbug eggs and fecal spots on mattresses, clothing or dark cracks and crevices.
- Segregate and isolate in sealed plastic bags any luggage, clothing and personal effects that may have been exposed to bedbugs until inspection and decontamination can be completed.
- Report any bed bugs or evidence of bed bugs to PHA management.
- Look for signs of bedbug activity, active infestations will have fecal spotting, live or dead bedbugs, shed skins and bedbug eggs.
- Use properly fitting fabric mattress encasements on both the mattress and box spring to protect the mattress and keep bed bugs out of the interior of box springs.

The PHA maintains a stock of these bedbug covers for purchase in the Main Office. Covers are not marked up for profit, but are offered to the tenant at a price which includes only the PHA's actual cost including shipping.

D. DOCUMENTATION

- The work order shall include information from the treatment report, which includes the following for each unit:
 - Degree of infestation(s)
 - Housekeeping
 - Compliance with preparation instructions
 - Control measures taken
 - Time in and time out
- The PHA shall maintain a register identifying any unit identified as having an infestation. Actions taken and subsequent re-infestation shall be tracked, as well.

E. PHA TREATMENT ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Respond to report of bedbugs within 24 hours of notification.
- Thoroughly inspect the reporting unit and the adjacent areas within 3 calendar days of notification.
- Ask residents from unit reported to have bedbugs about other units and areas in the building where they visit or spend time, to target inspection and monitoring there as well.
- Engage licensed Pest Control Professionals (PCP) for bedbug treatment.
- Schedule a PCP inspection and treatment date as soon as possible.
- The PHA will approve each treatment plan proposed by the PCP prior to implementation. The PHA will consider the burden on the resident, cost of service and risk to people, property and the environment.
- Treatment may include any one or any combination of the following: vacuuming, isolation, freezing, heat or pesticides.
- If infested furniture does not respond to treatments the tenant will be required to dispose of furniture.
- Perform follow-up with tenant within 10 days of treatment to ensure treatment was effective. A bed bug treatment requires at least two visits: the first to inspect, plan treatment and possibly treat; the second is to follow up, treat to kill emerged nymphs or confirm bed bug control. Three or more additional treatments may be required over a period of several months.
- Bedbug Control is defined as seeing no live bed bugs and the resident not reporting any new bites or sightings.
- Bedbug Elimination is considered to be a 45-day period of control.

F. TENANT TREATMENT ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Tenants are required to cooperate with the treatment efforts by allowing for heat treatment of clothing and furniture and refraining from placement of infested furniture or other items in common areas such as hallways. Tenant cooperation is shown to expedite the control of bedbugs and to prevent spreading of infestations.

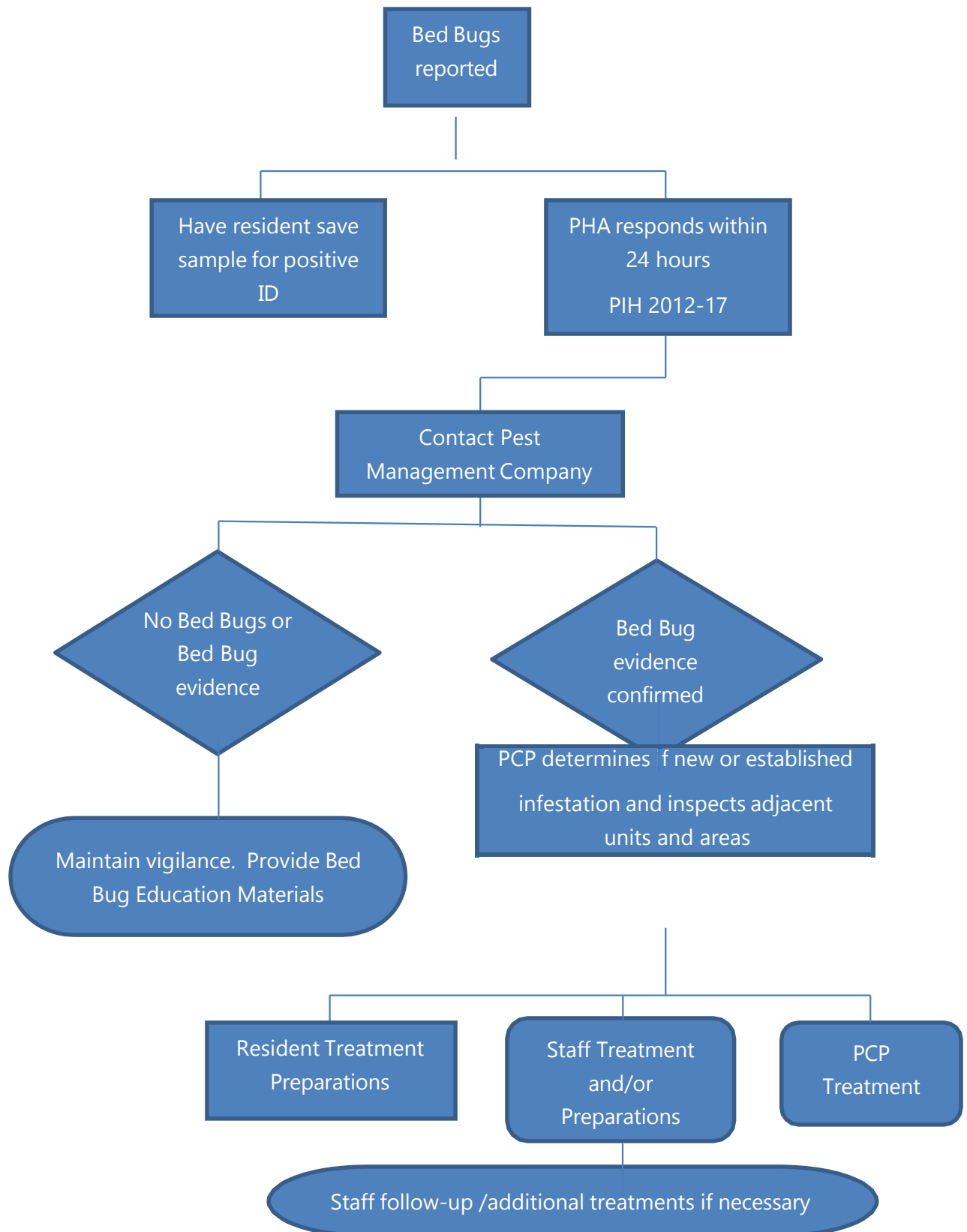
- The tenant will not be expected to contribute to the cost of the treatment.
- The tenant will not be reimbursed the cost of any additional expense to the household, such as purchase of new furniture, clothing or cleaning services.
- For treatment to be effective, tenant must perform the tasks listed below prior to the scheduled treatment date. The PHA encourages tenants to complete items listed as soon as possible in order to minimize severity of bed bug presence and resolve the problem quickly.
 - Remove all sheets, blankets, mattress covers, pillowcases, etc. from beds and wash in hot water (120+ degrees) and dry in clothes dryer on the highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Fold items and place them in clean plastic garbage bags and seal the plastic bags tightly. Do not put them back on the bed until the evening after treatment.
 - Remove everything from bedrooms and hall closets. Closets, dresser drawers, and nightstand drawers must be empty. Remove all clothing, toys, boxes, etc. from bedroom floors.
 - Wash all clothing, towels, and other linens in hot water (120+) and dry in the dryer on the highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Place clean items inside airtight plastic storage bins or plastic garbage bags that are sealed tightly and store until after treatment.
 - Vacuum (using disposable vacuum cleaner bags) all furniture, dresser drawers, nightstand drawers, mattresses, and box springs. Place disposable vacuum cleaner bag inside plastic garbage bag. Seal tightly and discard in outdoor trash receptacle immediately.
 - Move all furniture to the center of the room(s) being treated.
 - Discard all cardboard hangers, boxes, etc.
 - Remove all pictures from walls.
 - Discarded mattresses, box springs, furniture, etc. must be removed from the premises and marked as containing bed bugs. Please do not place bed bug materials in or around dumpsters. Household members, pets and assistance animals must remain out of the residence for four hours (or longer if specified by PCP) after treatment. Items specified by the PCP servicing the unit as non-treatable must be disposed of. Residents must wrap infested items in plastic before moving them out of the unit and destroy the items once they are outside to prevent others from retrieving infested items and taking them home. Plastic wrapping material is available from the PHA office.
- The tenant must dispose of any furniture that does not respond to a third treatment.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Tenants should never use the following products for bed bug treatment: Insecticide bombs, foggers, camphor, kerosene, diesel, gasoline, alcohol or other similar products. These products can cause serious health problems. They are dangerous if misused and cause fires and explosions. These products are not appropriate for bed bug management.

G. TENANT FAILURE TO COMPLY

If treatment is scheduled and the exterminator determines that tenant has not performed the above stated responsibilities, the following will occur:

- Treatment will be cancelled by the exterminator
- Tenant lease may be terminated at the PHA's discretion.

BED BUG ACTION PLAN

PUBLIC HOUSING BEDBUG POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set a framework for the prevention and eradication of bedbug infestation at the Housing Authority. Techniques and procedures are detailed in the Bedbug Prevention and Treatment Action Plan.

B. AUTHORITY

This policy complies with the requirements of PIH Notice 2012-17.

C. BACKGROUND

Bedbugs are considered a pest of significant public health importance by the EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The increase in bedbug infestations is due, in part, to lack of knowledge regarding the complex measures needed to prevent and control bedbugs, changes in pesticide availability and technology, and increased resistance of bedbugs to available pesticides.

D. ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM

The PHA will not deny tenancy to a potential resident on the basis of the tenant having experienced a prior bedbug infestation, nor will the Agency give residential preference to any tenant based on a response to a question regarding prior exposure to bedbugs.

E. BEDBUG CONTROL

The PHA will incorporate techniques of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in its effort to control infestation. Successful IPM requires efforts from both PHA staff and tenants. These techniques shall include tenant/staff education, preventive measures and corrective measures.

F. EDUCATION

The PHA will provide information about bedbug eradication and prevention to potential tenants during the pre-occupancy Orientation session. The PHA may periodically conduct additional training sessions or distribute educational materials to tenants. The PHA will provide ongoing training to staff and tenants that includes bedbug prevention and eradication.

G. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

In addition to the responsibilities of the PHA to educate tenants and staff regarding bedbug eradication, the PHA will conduct preventive measures to hinder infestation. The PHA will actively engage residents in these efforts to prevent and eliminate bedbugs.

At lease-up, the PHA will advise the new tenant of preventive measures available at no cost to them before they move furniture into the unit. The PHA will conduct a post move-in orientation with the family within ten calendar days of the tenant move into a unit. In the course of this orientation, the PHA will conduct a brief unit inspection for signs of any infestation, including bedbugs. Appropriate treatment will be arranged as necessary.

H. CORRECTIVE MEASURES

The PHA will respond to tenant reports of bedbugs within 24 hours. The PHA will schedule an inspection, advise the tenant on interim controls and arrange for treatment if necessary. If treatment is required, the PHA may schedule treatment for units adjacent to the unit that first reported the infestation. Procedures related to corrective measures are detailed in the Bedbug Action Plan.

I. COST OF TREATMENT

The tenant shall not be required to contribute to the cost of bedbug treatment; such costs will be covered by the PHA.

J. TENANT REIMBURSEMENT

The PHA will not reimburse the tenant for the cost of any infestation or treatment related expenses such as purchase of new furniture, clothing or cleaning services.

K. ENFORCEMENT

Bedbugs may be introduced into a rental unit by means other than actions by the residents occupying the unit. Bedbugs may travel on the clothing of visitors, contractors and staff and may travel through the walls from adjacent unit. Consequently, the presence of bedbugs, even repeated occurrences, in a rental unit shall not be the sole cause for termination of assistance.

Residents may be subject to eviction and termination of assistance if the tenant does not cooperate with the PHA'S efforts to eliminate any occurrence of bedbugs in their unit or if two confirmed bed bug infestations have occurred within a twelve- month period.