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Letter from Our Senior Director of Operations



Welcome to our Spring Newsletter! We are already three months into the year 2020. Days are getting longer and brighter. Soon we will see flocks of geese flying back from the south, birds chirping in our backyards, and bunnies hopping around in the streets. Every season brings several natural beauties and it is important we spare a moment to observe and admire the gifts that nature has given to us.

As you know, we are in the midst of COVID-19. I want to ensure you that we will do our best to support you during this difficult time. We are following all health guidelines and advisories from Alberta Health Services to curb the spread of Coronavirus. Even though our offices are closed to visitors and staff are either working from home or are on modified working hours, we are making sure your needs are met during this time. You have been getting important communiques from the Tenant Relations department. Please continue contacting your TRO should you need to locate resources or require other supports during this time. Our emergency line will stay open at all times. We will get through this time together.

I also want to share with you that we have been busy making required adjustments in our communication planning for the year 2020. Now, more than ever, we want to hear from you. Our goal is to provide excellence in services. In order to achieve our goal, we are introducing a Customer Satisfaction Program by conducting a quick online survey. This will allow us to capture your experience with us during an application process, a service call or a home visit. It will help us enhance quality in delivering our services. If your e-mail ID is registered with us, you will receive a link to complete this quick survey. Your completed survey will be entered in a quarterly draw to win a prize valued at \$100. I encourage you to take this opportunity to share your thoughts, ideas, and experiences with us.

I would also like to encourage you to help us GO PAPERLESS by registering your e-mail ID with us. It is not only safe and fast but it will help us reduce our carbon footprint. To keep yourself up-to-date with what new things are happening at Métis Housing, please check our website on a regular basis and follow us on our Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram accounts by looking up *Métis Housing AB*.

Again, on behalf of all of us at Métis Housing, we offer a sincere welcome to all the new families and extend our thanks to all families for keeping pride in their homes. Stay safe and healthy!

- Bindu Bonneau, Senior Director of Operations

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Emergency Maintenance Calls

You may have heard us mention our **Maintenance Department** is only going to address *emergency maintenance issues* at this time. So what guidelines make an “*emergency Maintenance issue*”?

Basically it is any issue regarding plumbing, electrical, uneven/crumbling or icy sidewalks (due to eaves trough flooding) or faulty handrails – anything that could cause damage to our tenants or our units.

If you have a steadily dripping faucet in your bathroom or kitchen or a running toilet, (and how many of you just thought

“well you better go catch it”?), these drips can be surprisingly expensive because of water usage. If you have issues with your hot water tank or furnace, again, *this is an emergency maintenance call*.

If your windows or outside doors are not closing properly or are broken, *this constitutes an emergency maintenance call* because it is compromising the safety and security of your home.

If you are wondering if something is an emergency call, just call us and we will let you know. 1-877-458-8684

Métis Students—Drayden Insurance Scholarship Announcement!



Drayden Insurance has graciously decided to create a sponsorship to better support Métis students in their academic careers.

“We truly feel that children are our future,” began Cindy, McGinnis, Branch Manager with Drayden, “... and the best way we can be a part of their success is to help provide them with the opportunity of a greater education.”

We are completely moved and honoured to be given this sponsorship to invest in two scholarship recipients, through both Métis Urban Housing and Métis Capital Housing. We are still working out the details of determining how best to award these two scholarships, even before all classes had been suspended. We fully look forward to the initiation and awarding of the Drayden Insurance scholarships.

To Apply for Housing go to www.Métishousing.ca

Tenant Spotlight

Brenda is one of our happy residents at Renaissance Tower, our 90 suite adult building in central Edmonton. Brenda agreed to talk to us and share what her experience has been for the past six years in the community she calls home.

Brenda, tell me how you came to be a tenant at Renaissance Tower

"I saw this building built from the ground up. We were driving around one day and I said "Oh look, Métis Housing is building a [55+] building and I'm going to see about it. So I applied and was accepted and I've been here six years, from the very beginning!"

Personally, for me it has been a great experience, being 55+ and I have a corner two bedroom suite and I love the layout. The six years I've lived here it's overall been good.

This place is not built like an ordinary apartment building. It has the extra wide hallways for the [mobility challenged seniors], and when my son first came to look at it, he was checking it out, he was impressed with it and how nice it was.

And there are 30 units that are barrier free

Yes and that by itself is a great thing. You know what it is too, you are always going to have pros and cons with apartment living but its very very well designed for the seniors. I love the gathering room and call the bingo's for the seniors. We have the gathering room for meetings or birthday parties or lunches. It's very nice, convenient, so you don't have to go into each others suite; we have privacy [because] of that. The tenants washroom right outside and overall it's a good layout.

The suites have the Hunter Douglas blinds, they are not cheap blinds. The floor layout for me is good.

I've heard the occasional comment about the area but I've lived all over, worked for 30 years at the University Hospital and lived on Whyte Ave; what IS a good area? I would walk to work every day so...

Here I find it quiet, I find it really quiet and the manager is great. She's not just a manager, she's a mentor, we vent to her. When we want things done

she tries to accommodate everybody and she will fax for us. She does a lot, considering. But yes, when my door is shut I don't hear anything.

I understand there's now a few more flower and vegetable beds outside on the patio.



Upstairs yes, outside of the Gathering room we have this patio and we sit out there in the summer. We do grow herbs and flowers, the tenants do that. We've had carrots and peas and that kind of stuff we can do.

I would recommend this to anyone because it does have some great features like the in-suite washers and dryer. Even the elevators, those elevators are fast, convenient, the hallways are wide, the suites are spacious, overall. The rent is affordable, the manager is great and she listens to us. The newsletter that we get every few months, I read it and find it's really good and [informative].



To Apply for Housing go to www.Metishousing.ca

Activities for You & Your Family

During these weeks of self-isolation, it is important to keep ourselves and our families both physically and mentally healthy. Here are a few indoor activity ideas for the family.

Activities for adults and older adults—Spend time reading: it's a great way to spend time and keep the brain engaged.

Explore a variety of hobbies: with so many tutorials online, the sky is the limit: finger weaving, knitting, indoor gardening, learn a language, learn a musical instrument, baking are just a few things you can do in the comfort of your own home.



Exercise regularly: Whether you are sitting or standing, you still get the health and mood benefits. There are a number of great sitting exercises on line if you have access to the internet. If you don't, bending and stretching, jumping jacks or knee to elbow lifts are great, just remember to start out slowly.

Get creative: Having a creative outlet is one of the best ways to deal with stress or boredom. Drawing, colouring, painting, organizing family photo albums, make a family recipe book.

Spend time outdoors: As long as you are practicing social distancing (staying at least two metres (six feet) from others, going for a walk is an excellent mood enhancer. As long as you dress for any weather, walking any time of the day is an excellent exercise.

Kids Activities—Aside from teaching your kids baking and cooking there are many activities you can do indoors.

Pencil & Paper games: Battleship, Hangman, Dots & Squares, Sprouts. I can't list all the details but here is **"Foldover"**:

Give everyone a piece of paper. On the top section, draw a head. It can be an animal head or a person's head, as weird as you like. Now fold that section back, so that most of it is hidden and just a little bit showing on this new side. Now pass it to the next person. Without looking at the hidden drawing, the next person draws a chest and arms (of a person, animal, alien), folds it back as well and passes it on to the next person. Without looking at the previous pictures, that person draws a body (stomach and hips) and the final person draws the legs and feet. (You can have more or fewer sections depending on the number of people you have playing.) Finally, unfold your papers and laugh at the weird creatures you have created.

Building: This can be done either by making apartments and houses out of cardboard and paper towel roles or you can build indoor forts. The trick to indoor forts is making sure everything you tie the rope and sheets (and possibly LED lights) to is secure.

Card Games: classic games like Go Fish, Crazy Eights and War are fun but you can also look up card tricks on line or play board games instead of games played on their phone. This will entertain kids of all ages.

Paper bag skits: Divide the kids up into groups. Give each group a bag filled with props, such as a spoon, toy jewelry, a sock, ball or ribbon. Then give them 15 minutes to construct a skit around the props. This game is fun so it doesn't have to be competitive. If the kids want, though, they can all vote on a winning skit.



It's also great to think outside of the box. Try setting up games like indoor hopscotch with masking tape on the floor or indoor bowling (a great way to reuse water bottles). You can also use a heavy bowl as a target and put rice in a sealed and taped zip-bags back for a beanbag toss. Just remember to create it together and have fun.

To Apply for Housing go to www.Metishousing.ca

Definitions for This Moment in Time

Because we are experiencing challenges to our day to day routines, due to the threat of the coronavirus, we thought we would clarify some of the terms being used.

Social Distancing—It's likely you've heard the phrase "social distance" and the suggestion we all should practice it. The textbook definition of social distancing is "the perceived or desired degree of remoteness between a member of one social group and the members of another, as evidenced in the level of intimacy or tolerated between them."

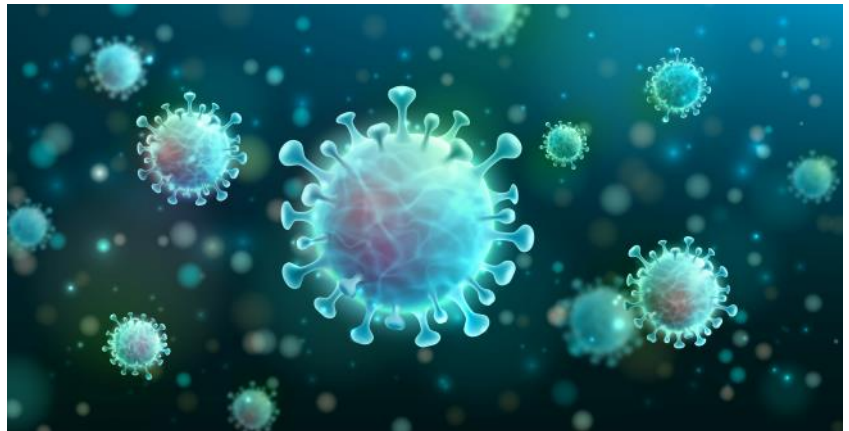
Because COVID-19 can spread easily in dense places, the current definition of practicing social distancing refers to increasing the physical space between people to slow the spread of the virus; the suggested distance being six feet, (two metres).

Pandemic vs Epidemic—A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease that affects large numbers of people. An epidemic is a regional outbreak of an illness that spreads unexpectedly.

Coronavirus or COVID-19

COVID-19—The technical name for this coronavirus is SARS-CoV-2. The respiratory disease it causes is called the "coronavirus disease 2019" or COVID-19. The crown-like spikes that protrude from their surfaces resemble the sun's corona is what inspired the name for these viruses.

Incubation Period—The incubation period is the time it takes for symptoms to appear after a person is infected. Why incubating is important is this time is critical for prevention and control. This new coronavirus has an incubation period of two to 14 days, with symptoms usually appearing five days after infection.



Know the Difference in Symptoms

CORONAVIRUS

- Fever
- Repeated dry cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Symptoms appear 2-14 days after exposure

FLU

- Fever
- Cough
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue & weakness
- Chills & sweats
- Congestion
- Sore throat

COMMON COLD

- Sneezing
- Sore Throat
- Runny, stuffy nose
- Waterying of the eyes
- Some mild/moderate chest discomfort

ALLERGIES

- Sneezing
- Itchy nose, eyes or roof of the mouth
- Runny, stuffy nose
- Watery, red or swollen eyes

Provincial and Federal Resources—COVID-19

If you are affected by the coronavirus, there are several supports available to Albertans through either the provincial or federal governments. Listed below are the resources available and the links to apply for these resources are found on the listed web sites below:

PROVINCIAL: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-supports-for-albertans.aspx>

1. **Emergency Isolation Support**—Eligible working Albertans can receive a one-time emergency isolation support payment of \$1,146 if they :
 - Experienced total or significant loss of income as a result of having to self-isolate, or are the sole caregiver of a dependent who is self-isolating, and
 - Have no other source of compensation, such as workplace sick leave benefits or federal employment insurance benefits.
 - For more information visit <https://www.alberta.ca/emergency-isolation-support.aspx> or call 310-4455.

FEDERAL: <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

1. **Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits**—Provides up to 15 weeks of income replacement for eligible Albertans who are unable to work due to illness, injury or quarantine (self-isolation). One-week waiting period is waived for people in self-isolation. For more information visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness.html> or call 1-800-206-7218
2. **Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)** (launching April 2020) - Provides \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to workers without paid sick leave (or similar workplace accommodation) who are unable to work, sick, quarantined or forced to stay home to care for children. For more information visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.htm>
3. **Canada Child Benefit**—Eligible parents will receive \$300 more per child with their regular May CCB payment. **Those who already receive the Canada Child Benefit do not need to re-apply.**
4. **GST Rebate Increase**—Provides low- and modest-income Albertans with a one-time special payment in May of up to \$400 for single people and \$600 for couples. **There is no need to apply for this payment. If you are eligible, you will get it automatically.**
5. **Extra Time to file Income Tax Returns**—deferral of filing due date for 2019 tax returns. For individuals, the return filing due date will be deferred until June 1, 2020. Any new income tax balances due, or instalments, to be deferred until August 31, 2020 without incurring interest or penalties.
6. **Eased rules for RRIFs**—The required minimum withdrawal from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) will be reduced by 25% in 2020 in recognition of the impact of volatile market conditions on many seniors' retirement savings.

Our Tenant Relations Officers are here to help, following is a list of their names and contact numbers:

Métis Urban Housing Corporation		Métis Capital Housing Corporation	
CALGARY & RURAL SOUTH		CALGARY & RURAL SOUTH	
Brenda Kelly	587-355-3261 brenda.kelly@metishousing.ca	Brenda Kelly	587-355-3261 brenda.kelly@metishousing.ca
Nadine Bird	587-355-3264 nadine.bird@metishousing.ca	EDMONTON & RURAL NORTH	
EDMONTON & RURAL NORTH		Lisa McKenzie	587-855-6474 lisa.mckenzie@metishousing.ca
Chantelle Alza	587-855-6476 chantelle.alza@metishousing.ca	Leah Pappin	587-520-0655 leah.pappin@metishousing.ca
Krista Lindstrom	587-855-6388 krista.lindstrom@metishousing.ca	Chantelle Alza	587-855-6476 chantelle.alza@metishousing.ca
Charlene Manning	780-452-1049 charlene.manning@metishousing.ca		
Natalie Talley	587-414-5601 natalie.talley@metishousing.ca		