**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to bring the Housing Authority’s properties into compliance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulation 527, Board of Fire Prevention Regulation Section 10 in conjunction with the Norton Fire Department. The Authority has determined that items kept by residents in common areas constitutes a violation of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulation 527, Board of Fire Prevention Regulation Section 10 which states, in part, that there shall be an accessible route, at least 36” wide connecting entrances, public and common use space and dwelling units.

NHA requires residents pay particular attention to any storage that would constitute a hazard or block access to or egress from a residents’ unit in case of an emergency. In order to ensure an efficient building evacuation, as well as rapid and easy access to residents by medical and/or fire department personnel in case of emergency, obstructions must be eliminated and a 36” clearance must be maintained along common areas, staircases and entrance ways.

The Norton Housing Authority has a commitment to provide decent, safe and sanitary living conditions in its housing developments. To accomplish this, it is essential that the Norton Housing Authority develop and adopt a policy to address this legal requirement. Therefore, all items kept in common areas outside of resident units are subject to the discretion of Norton Housing Authority staff. All items must be stored directly adjacent to your unit, and within the boundaries of the space you have. The following is a basic list of some of the items allowed in accordance with this amended policy:

**ALLOWED:**

1. 2 outdoor chair(s), 1 small table, 1 plastic storage unit no larger than 36" x 20" x 72" h
2. 4 wall hooks to hold a small shopping cart on wheels and 1 broom or shovel
3. 4 outdoor plant(s) or other small decorative items

Indoor furniture is not allowed outside. We request that a clear path of at least 36” remain on the outside walkways for residents to safely exit their units at both the back entrance and the front entrance to each unit. The storage of any materials on or near stairways is strictly prohibited. Items found in these locations will be removed by maintenance immediately.

This policy was approved as amended by the Board of Commissioners for the Norton Housing Authority on September 20, 2016.

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Commissioner