

Release 5.8 - Broadcast Question and Answers

NOTE: The following was reiterated at the conclusion of the broadcast:

All detail screens for any function or option remain basically the same. The exceptions for regular renewals are that “Amend Rent” dates were removed and a, “short term indicator” was added. If the contract term in months is less than 12 months the indicator at the top displays a short-term renewal. As such, a short term reason will be required. The biggest change is that for options 1A and 1B, if processing an Amend Rents Only, the eligibility section was removed, as it is not applicable.

Question:

Additionally since the broadcast, we have had several questions about what to do when the system will not allow you to enter a new renewal.

Answer:

The new renewal functionality won't allow a new renewal if an old one exists without the rents final indicator set to 'Yes'. If the rents final indicator is 'NO', for a record, then the user cannot enter a renewal. If the old record is VALID and UNLOCKED, the user will need to go in and make the necessary adjustments/updates to complete the record. Once completed, they can enter the new record. If the record is VALID and LOCKED, the user will need to submit a request to the Help Desk identifying the record that needs to be updated and the specific changes required. The Help Desk will notify the user directly once the record has been updated. The user can then enter the new record. If the record is INVALID and UNLOCKED, the user should be presented with a DELETE button that would allow them to delete the record at anytime. The user can then enter the new record. If the record is INVALID and LOCKED, the user will need to submit a request to the Help Desk with the record that needs to be deleted. The Help Desk will notify the user directly once the record has been deleted. The user can then enter the new record.

Additionally, one issue implemented in the 5.8 release was to lock budgets and comps if associated to a locked renewal. This is now preventing a user from adjusting that locked comp by OCAF (the button no longer displays because it's locked). The work around is to figure the comp rents adjusted by OCAF manually, and then add the new comp manually through the new renewal.

QUESTIONS ASKED DURING OR AFTER THE BROADCAST

Some questions of similar content were combined in this response page. The system functionality for processing renewals and rent adjustments work basically the same as it did prior to this release. Therefore, most of the answers are the same as they were before the release.

Question:

On the Rent Adjustment screen there is a field for a rent effective date. Is there a way to enter a separate effective date for the utility allowance?

Answer:

No, unfortunately there is not a separate date field for the utility allowance. The same effective date will be used for both the utility allowance and the rent adjustment. There is a request to have this changed in a future release.

Question:

Do we still have to enter the **Rent Adjustment** utility allowance effective date in TRACS?

Answer:

Yes, if the effective date for the utility allowance is different than the rent effective date.

Question:

This is in reference to the earlier question about utility allowances. Will the actual utility allowance changes be picked up by TRACS, just not the effective date?

Answer:

Yes, the utility allowance change is picked up by TRACS, however, the same effective date will be used for the rent adjustment and the utility allowance unless you make that correction in TRACS.

Question:

Will TRACS be updated automatically with renewals and rent adjustments?

Answer:

Yes, TRACS will be updated the same way as it always has been.

Question:

When you mark “rents final” can **you** still make changes to the renewal record?

Answer:

You can make changes until the ARAMS status is moved past “Pending”. After that the renewal record is locked. This is not a change.

Question:

Can only the person who creates a contract processing record make changes to that record before it is executed/locked or can any user who has access to the REMS record still make updates to the record, whether or not they created it?

Answer:

Yes, if you are assigned to the property (contract for PBCA), and have edit rights, you can still make changes.

Question:

Can we identify who creates a renewal record?

Answer:

Headquarters can obtain that information if tracking is required, but not the field. Any user can access the Property Assignment screen by clicking on the “assignment” button on the REMS navigation bar to see all the persons assigned to the property. However, the field cannot track what ID created a specific record in REMS.

Question:

If we enter a PRAC renewal in TRACS and the rents have changed, do we enter the rents in TRACS?

Answer:

The PRAC renewal must be entered in TRACS and not REMS; however, if the PRAC is a multi-term contract and each year it gets a rent adjustment/increase the rent adjustment/increase can be entered into REMS using the Rent Adjustment function in the Contract Function functionality.

Question:

When we do rent adjustments now, do we use rent adjustment screens and not the amend rents screen?

Answer:

Rent Adjustments (*AAF Adjusted or Budget Based* - for contracts not yet renewed or not yet eligible for MAHRA) should be processed using the “Rent Adjustments and Rent Corrections” contract processing function. This function is also used to make “manual corrections” for both MAHRA and non-MAHRA contracts. Amend Rents (for multi-term MAHRA contract rent increases) should be processed using the “Amend Rents Only” contract processing function. For example: If you are processing a rent increase for a 5 year MAHRA contract and you are in years 2 through 5, you will use the Amend Rents Only processing function.

Question:

Do we process AAF and Budget Based pretty much the same still using Rent adjustment?

Answer:

Yes. AAF Adjusted or Budget Based Rent Adjustments (for contracts not yet renewed or not yet eligible for MAHRA) should be processed using the “Rent Adjustments and Rent Corrections” contract processing function.

Question

We have some past MAHRA contracts that do have AAF or budget on them (such as the preservation use agreement). Will that still be an available drop down when you are doing a renewal?

Answer:

Yes. A MAHRA contract that requests a "Budget Based" or "AAF" rent increase is still processed using the appropriate option as a renewal. The user would select "Budget Based" or "AAF" from the HUD Approved Rent drop down to apply these rents to the renewed rent column.

Question:

If a rent correction cannot be retroactive, is the only way to fix a past error (i.e., a rent increase that was never put into TRACS) is to make a manual TRACS adjustment?

Answer:

During the broadcast power point presentation we said that retroactive rents could not be entered in REMS. **(THIS IS A CORRECTION TO THE BROADCAST ANSWER.)** Retroactive rent adjustments can be entered in the REMS Rent Adjustment function.

Question:

Can we enter retro rent adjustments into "Rent Adjustments and Corrections" and will TRACS be updated?

Answer:

(THIS IS A CORRECTION TO THE BROADCAST ANSWER.) Yes. You can enter retroactive rents (past rent effective date) in REMS and TRACS will be updated. This means when the "effective date" of the rent is in the past, that date becomes the rent effective date in TRACS. Because it is in the past, it updates TRACS right away. If the effective date is in the future, the system waits for the date to arrive, then updates TRACS." Rent Adjustments **cannot** update TRACS if the contract is STAGED.

Question:

We had trouble with our satellite at the beginning and I wondered if there was a discussion about the change to the "Is Under Management" for properties with an active use restriction? If so, would you please reiterate the new policy for our staff to hear?

Answer:

No, we did not talk about that subject during this broadcast. Please send or resend your specific question to the multifamily help desk and they will send this question to Housing for follow up.

Question:

When do all of these changes become effective and when will the notes related to this broadcast be available?

Answer:

These changes became effective on Monday (*Feb 27th*). Broadcasts will be available via Webcast. Answers to the questions will be posted on the new Training page. The PowerPoint slides are also available on the Web.

Question:

Right now with the PBCA contracts, all we do is enter subsidy status? So is this a function the PBCA is going to do?

Answer:

If the PBCA was entering renewals before this release, they will continue to enter renewals. The process in your office should not change.

Question:

If I associated a comparability study to a renewal record and that record has been locked, but I realized that the comparability study was entered incorrectly, how do I make the correction?

Answer:

If the comparability study is still valid and can be used for other renewals you can correctly re-enter the comp study data and associate the new record to any new renewals. For the locked record, using incorrect comp study data may negatively affect the rents and/or contract. Notify the MF help desk that you have found an error in the entered comp study data and identify the required changes in REMS, ARAMS and TRACS. Since correcting this involves several systems, housing must make the correction.

Question:

How will previously enter renewals be effected by the new release?

Answer:

Other than the conversion, the renewal data was not affected. The only other changes you will notice are the changes to the screen.

Question:

Will PRAC renewals that have preciously been entered as Option 4 be deleted or cleared from the system?

Answer:

No. You may be asked to go in and do some clean up.

Question:

Are the PBCA's aware of these new procedures?

Answer:

Yes. PBCA's were invited to the broadcast and their website has been updated.

Question:

If you receive a renewal submission package after the contract has expired can I enter my renewal in REMS with an effective date that is the day after the contract expired? How do you handle this?

Answer:

This is more of a policy question. If it is a MAHRA renewal you can still enter it into REMS. How this affects the funds in ARAMS or if you should make allowances for late packages is a question for Housing.