

## Community Housing Notification

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**Policies & Procedures No. 20-13**

**November 16, 2020**

(revokes Community Housing Notification 20-09)

*The Requirements, Recommendations and Guidelines in this communiqué are to be implemented by the housing providers administered under the legislated programs/Operating Agreement identified below:*

- √ Providers under *Housing Services Act, 2011*
- Providers under a Federal Operating Agreement
- √ Requirement
- Guidelines
- Information Only

### **Subject**

***Urgent*** Status on the Centralized Wait List

Legislative Reference: *Housing Services Act, 2011* s. 47, Ontario Regulation 367/11 s. 40.

### **Purpose/Overview**

To confirm the existing policy establishing ***Urgent*** as a local priority access category for the City of Greater Sudbury's centralized wait list system.

### **Background**

The *Housing Services Act, 2011* gives Service Managers the option of establishing their own systems for selecting waiting households. Mandatory priority placement on the centralized wait list for Special Priority (SPP) applicants (victims of domestic violence or human trafficking) still prevails.

The City of Greater Sudbury has confirmed one (1) additional local priority access category: ***Urgent***. Households assigned ***Urgent*** status rank immediately below Special Priority applicants and ahead of all other chronological applications.

## **Local Rule**

All applicants seeking rent-gear-to-income (RGI) subsidy must meet the provincial community housing program eligibility requirements in order to qualify for placement on the centralized wait list.

In order to qualify for *Urgent* status, a household would be required to meet one (1) or more of the following criteria:

- Persons who are living on the street (no shelter - absolute homelessness and accessing emergency homelessness services); or
- Persons accessing temporary transitional housing services due to homelessness (see criteria below); or
- Persons living in substandard housing which has been condemned by the municipality, for example: property standards violations which require that the unit be vacated in order to complete the work, confirmed by a Court Order or an Order of the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal; or
- Persons using the emergency shelter system as their primary residence, and accessing emergency homelessness services; or
- Persons whose homes have been destroyed by fire or natural disaster; or
- Persons awaiting release from hospital who cannot return to their former place of residence and will not be released until suitable housing is found; or
- Households whose children are at risk of apprehension or will not be returned by child protection agencies due to the household not having adequate housing AND the lack of adequate housing is the only protection issue outstanding.

**NOTE: There is no priority status for medical conditions or for overcrowded living conditions.**

### **Operational Considerations:**

- In order for a household to be granted *Urgent* status, all required documentation must be provided at the time of application.
- Households receiving *Urgent* status will be ranked according to the chronological date.
- An applicant with *Urgent* status must be willing to accept any offer of an appropriately sized RGI housing unit within at least one geographic area of their choice (i.e. Chelmsford, Capreol, Lively, Sudbury, etc.).
- An applicant with *Urgent* status will lose their status once they have declined a valid offer of accommodation for a unit from the project selections made on their application. After refusing a unit, the applicant will have thirty (30) days to request reactivation of their application and will receive a new date of application.
- *Urgent* status will be given to applicants/co-applicants where both meet the criteria.
- In the case of joint applicants applying for *Urgent* status due to homelessness, in the event that one of the applicants has adequate shelter, the status will not be awarded.
- If the household ceases to satisfy the criteria or cancels their application, a new request for *Urgent* status will not be reviewed unless there has been a change in the circumstances and all required documentation is provided.

*Urgent* status will not be assigned in situations where the RGI household is homeless as the result of having recently been evicted from an RGI unit for cause, or if the household has recently vacated an RGI unit without just cause.

*Urgent* status will not be assigned in situations where an individual is a guest in another household (i.e. couch surfing).

*Urgent* status is not transferable between emergency shelters unless the Service Manager is satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances.

Applicant households who deliberately provide false or misleading information may lose their *Urgent* status.

### **Documentation Requirements**

- Properly completed Request for *Urgent* status and Confirmation of *Urgent* status forms must be provided to the Housing Registry in order to qualify for *Urgent* status.
- Once the request is complete and submitted to the Housing Registry, written notice of the decision whether or not to grant the applicant's request for *Urgent* status is forwarded by the Housing Registry to the applicant.

### **For Households in an Emergency/Homeless Shelter:**

Once an offer of accommodation is made, the household must have the emergency/homeless shelter complete and re-submit a new Confirmation of *Urgent* status form to the Housing Provider within **three (3) full business days from the date of the offer**. Failure to complete and re-submit this form to the Housing Provider will result in the offer being rescinded and *Urgent* status removed.

### **Graduates of Transitional Housing**

As part of the City of Greater Sudbury Housing and Homelessness Plan, applicant households may be deemed eligible for *Urgent* Status if they are participating in a temporary transitional housing program due to experiencing homelessness. The purpose of this category is to support the transition for applicant households who are experiencing homelessness to secure adequate housing. Applicant households requesting inclusion in this category must adhere to eligibility criteria set out in this policy.

A list of approved designated transitional housing providers is attached in Appendix A of this directive. Transitional housing providers can be included or removed from this list over time, as determined by the Service Manager, when appropriate.

In addition, the applicant household must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the transitional housing agency, that they are capable of independent living with or without support. Support

services include both clinical and non-clinical services that provide assistance to persons to attain adequate housing.

For the purposes of this directive, transitional housing is defined as temporary housing that provides assistance with individualized, flexible and voluntary support services, with the purpose of assisting individuals experiencing complete homelessness in attaining adequate housing. The transitional housing facility must be deemed appropriate by the Service Manager before the *Urgent* status may be assigned to the applicant household.

*Urgent* Status for Graduates of Transitional Housing may be granted if they meet **all** of the following criteria:

- The applicant household has expressed an interest in moving from the transitional housing provider to community (RGI) housing;
- The applicant household has demonstrated readiness to move from the transitional housing provider to non-transitional RGI housing;
- The applicant households meets the provincial and municipal criteria to receive RGI subsidy;
- The applicant household has the financial means and ability to pay rent;
- The applicant household is capable of living independently, with or without supports;
- The applicant household is in good standing with the current transitional housing provider, and has no rental arrears with the transitional housing provider or a previous housing provider listed in the HSA; and
- The applicant household has been referred by one of the designated transitional housing providers approved by the Service Manager to provide referrals for *Urgent* status.

It will be the responsibility of the applicant household and/or support agency to ensure the applicant receives any portable supports, if necessary.

In order to be considered for *Urgent* status, a completed Verification of *Urgent* Status form must be completed and signed by a designated Transitional Housing Provider on behalf of the tenant which verifies that the tenant is able to meet all requirements for this status.

### **No Residency Criteria**

Ontario Regulation 367/11 s. 40 states that a local eligibility rule may not treat a household differently from other households because the household resides, or at any time in the past did reside, outside of the Service Manager's service area.

### **Action Required**

The Housing Registry will assess eligibility for *Urgent* status at the request of the applicant. Before eligibility for *Urgent* status is considered, the applicant's eligibility for RGI subsidy and inclusion on the centralized wait list must be established. The Housing Registry is not responsible to determine the *Urgent* status of applicants that are ineligible for RGI (i.e. market rent households, etc.).

The Housing Registry will notify all applicants of the outcome of their request for ***Urgent*** status. If ***Urgent*** status is denied or removed, the applicant will be notified of their right to request a review of the Housing Registry's decision.

Should you have any questions, please contact your Program Administrator.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C Briscoe".

Cindi Briscoe, B.A.  
Manager, Housing Services  
(Disponible en français)

**Appendix A: List of Designated Transitional Housing Providers for Referral for the *Urgent* Status - Graduates of Transitional Housing in the City of Greater Sudbury**

1. Victoria Street Place (338 Victoria Street) – CMHA Sudbury
2. Harm Reduction Home (Manage Alcohol Program) – CMHA Sudbury