

Community Housing Notification

Policies & Procedures No. 20-05

July 1, 2020

(revokes Social Housing Notification 15-07, 15-09 and 16-05)

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

Ineligibility Due to Refusal of One Valid Unit Offer of Accommodations and Unit Allocation Process

Legislative Reference: O. Regulation 367/11 s. 32.2 and s. 46.1 and O. Regulation 318/19, s. 5

Purpose/Overview

To confirm the policy related to a refusal of a valid unit offer of accommodations for the selection of households from the centralized wait list for accommodation.

The Unit Allocation Process confirms the policy for allocating unit vacancies for a household that is eligible to receive rent geared-to-income (RGI) subsidy.

Background

Prior to 2019, O. Reg. 367/11, s. 39 under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA) gave Service Managers the option to create a local rule related to the maximum number of offers that a household may refuse before being deemed ineligible for rent-geared-to-income subsidy. If a local rule was not established, the HSA stipulates that the maximum number of offers cannot be less than three (3). The City of Greater Sudbury local rule was a maximum of three (3) offers.

O. Reg. 318/19 revoked section 39 of O. Reg. 367/11 and replaced it with section 32.2 of O. Reg. 367/11. Service Managers no longer have the discretion to develop a local rule related to the maximum number of offers that a household can refuse before being deemed ineligible for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidy. The HSA now stipulates that households eligible to receive RGI subsidy will only receive **one valid offer of accommodation**.

The Service Manager continues to have discretion on what constitutes a refusal and may specify the reasons that a valid offer of suitable accommodation would not be counted.

Local Rule

The City of Greater Sudbury has chosen to implement this new regulation on July 1st, 2020. This means that effective July 1st, 2020, an applicant household ceases to be eligible to be on the centralized wait list for RGI subsidy if they have refused **one (1)** valid offer of accommodation from any one of their selected Housing Provider Preferences.

Housing Provider Preferences:

All applicants on the centralized wait list will be responsible for indicating their Housing Provider Preferences upon application. There is no minimum or maximum number of housing selections that the applicant may choose. If an applicant does not specify Housing Provider Preference on their application, then all housing providers in the service area will be considered the applicant's Housing Provider Preferences.

If an applicant does not specify any housing providers but specifies the desired geographic region (e.g., the applicant requests to be added to the wait list in Valley East), then all housing providers in that geographic region will be considered the applicant's Housing Provider Preferences.

The applicants are responsible to notify the Housing Registry if they wish to add or remove Housing Provider Preferences from their application at any time.

Refusal of a valid offer:

In order to be considered a **valid offer**, a housing provider must adhere to all of the guidelines set out in Appendix A: City of Greater Sudbury Housing Services Unit Allocation Process, which is attached to this notification. In addition, the housing provider must complete Appendix B: Arrears Information Sheet and Appendix C: Unit Allocation Checklist, which is also attached to this notification. It is important that housing providers complete the Unit Allocation Checklist for each applicant file that receives an offer. If the applicant is selected, the Unit Allocation Checklist would be placed in the tenant/member's file. For applicants who are not selected, a "Unit Allocation Checklist" file will need to be established for audit/internal review purposes.

What counts as a refusal by the applicant:

An offer is considered a refusal only if one or more of the following criteria are satisfied:

- The size of unit that is offered is a size for which the household has indicated a preference and is eligible for;
- The unit that is offered is a unit for which the household would be eligible for RGI subsidy;
- The unit that is offered is in a housing project and geographical area for which the household has indicated a preference; or
- The applicant does not respond to the offer of accommodation within **three full (3) business days**.

What does not count as a refusal by the applicant:

An offer is not to be counted as a refusal if any of the following circumstances apply:

- An SPP household identifies the location is not safe due to the proximity to their abuser;
- A special needs household identifies that the modifications in the unit do not match their medically documented needs as indicated by a medical professional;
- A applicant household refuses an offer of a portable housing benefit;
- The physical features of a community housing project may put the household at a significant disadvantage (e.g., no parking available where an applicant specifically requests parking access);
- An applicant household is offered a location that was not listed on their current housing project preferences; or
- An applicant can verify with valid documentation that extenuating circumstances prevented them from receiving or responding to an offer of accommodation prior to the deadline (e.g., admitted to the hospital).

Considerations:

- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all contact information on their application is correct;
- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they notify the Housing Registry if they wish to make any changes to their housing selections prior to receiving a valid offer of accommodation;
- The Housing Registry will notify the applicant in writing after the one (1) refusal advising their application is cancelled;
- Applicants will have thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the refusal to make a request to reactivate their application with a new date of application. The Housing Registry may request updated information if the file has not been updated in the last twelve (12) months; and
- Applicants will have the right to request an internal review within ten (10) business days from the date the decision is made to cancel their application for refusing an offer of accommodation.

This regulation applies to all applicants on the centralized wait list. Effective July 1, 2020, existing applicants will be entitled to only one (1) valid offer of accommodation regardless if they have already refused one (1) or two (2) offers of accommodation.

Action Required

This notification is effective on July 1, 2020.

Housing providers must adhere to this policy, the City of Greater Sudbury Housing Services Unit Allocation Process (Appendix A), Arrears Information Sheet (Appendix B) and the Unit

Allocation Checklist (Appendix C) when filling a vacant unit with an applicant household from the centralized wait list who is eligible to receive RGI subsidy.

Housing providers are required to ensure a copy of this Social Housing Notification is provided to all members of the Board of Directors.

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



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(Disponible en français)