



County of Wellington
Social Services Department – Housing Services

DIRECTIVE

Directive Number: 2021-06

Effective Date: July 1, 2021

This directive has been developed by the County of Wellington in its role as Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) and applies to housing providers funded under the following social housing programmes:

- Provincially Reformed Non-Profit Housing Programmes
 - Provincially Reformed Co-operative Housing Programmes (Co-ops)
 - Local Housing Corporation (LHC)
 - Service Manager Funding Agreement (Post EOA)
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Subject	Pursuit of Income
Legislative Reference	Housing Services Act, 2011 (HSA) O.Reg. 367/11 S.31
Directive Reference	Repeals and replaces Directive 2013-14 Pursuit of Income

Background

HSA O.Reg. 367/11 S.31 permits the CMSM to establish pursuit of income requirements for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) households.

Purpose

To establish a process for housing providers to follow up with RGI residents who are required to pursue income in order to be eligible for RGI.

Direction

1. Income Sources

Housing providers must require that all RGI households pursue income sources available to them. If the housing provider is of the opinion that a household may be eligible for one of the following income sources, then the housing provider must require the household to make a reasonable effort to pursue that income:

- Ontario Works (OW)
- Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits

- Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Ontario Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement (OAS/GIS/GAINS)
- Immigration sponsorship income

2. Exceptions

Housing providers may waive a household's obligation to pursue immigration sponsorship income if:

- the sponsor is in receipt of financial assistance through Ontario Works or ODSP;
- the sponsor is in receipt of OAS, GIS or GAINS;
- the pursuit of support may place a special priority applicant/household at risk of further abuse because the sponsor is the abuser; or,
- the sponsor is deceased.

3. Extenuating Circumstances

Any requests for a waiver to this rule based on extenuating circumstances will be considered by the housing provider. The household is required to submit an extenuating circumstances request, in writing, to the housing provider prior to or as soon as the circumstances are known to the household. All decisions with regards to extenuating circumstances are at the discretion of the housing provider.

4. RGI Adjustments Pending Income

Households with a decrease in income that are subsequently required to pursue income will have their RGI reviewed and rent decreased after a decision has been reached on the pending income application.

For example, a tenant who loses their job and is required to pursue EI or Ontario Works will continue to be charged RGI based on their previous earnings until a decision has been reached on their EI or Ontario Works application.

5. Cessation of Eligibility

HSA O.Reg. 367/11 S.3 (3) gives the housing provider the ability to remove RGI eligibility from households under the following circumstances:

- The household does not respond to the housing provider within the period of time specified in a written notice from the housing provider to the household; or
- The housing provider concludes, after receiving a response from the household, that the member of the household has failed to make reasonable efforts to obtain the income of the type specified in the written notice.

Definitions

“Extenuating Circumstances” means a situation which hinders a household's ability to follow the local rule;

“Reasonable effort” means providing proof of application for the required income source within the required timeframe established in the housing provider's written notice.

Application

1. If the housing provider believes that the household may be eligible for a required pursuit of income source and has not or is not pursuing it, the housing provider will give the household a written notice. The notice will state:
 - That the household may be eligible to receive specified income;
 - That the household is required to make a reasonable effort to apply for that income in order to maintain RGI eligibility;
 - That the household is required to follow steps to complete the application for the specified income; and
 - Specify a reasonable period of time within which the household will inform the housing provider the results of the application for income.
2. If the household fails to respond within the required timeframe, the household is no longer eligible for RGI assistance. The housing provider must then serve the household ninety (90) days written notice of loss of RGI eligibility. The household must be advised of the right to a review of the decision.

If you require additional information, please contact the Housing Programme Advisor.



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