



## **Planning and Housing Committee PH21.6 – Extending the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) Moratorium on Evictions due to Non-Payment of Rent**

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee

We are writing on behalf of the Right to Housing in Toronto (R2HTO), a coalition of organizations and individuals working to support the implementation of the human right to housing by the City of Toronto.

Eviction prevention is a key piece of the City’s commitment to ensure the progressive realization of the right to housing. Eviction from one’s home has serious consequences for an individual’s dignity, health, well-being, and housing stability. As such, eviction is a violation of the human right to housing that should only occur as a last resort and only after a meaningful exploration of all alternatives. Evictions based on rental arrears should not occur without full exploration of means to resolve outstanding debt including the provision of financial assistance and access to eviction prevention measures.

We are writing today to provide our support for an extension of TCHC’s moratorium on evictions for non-payment of rent. The City’s work on eviction prevention continues to move in the right direction and R2HTO fully supports additional efforts to ensure all residents of Toronto are protected from the growing threat of eviction.

R2HTO recently released an Evictions Rights Review<sup>1</sup> and, while completing this Review, we had the opportunity to speak directly with frontline community legal workers, tenant advocacy organizations, and City staff who work directly on eviction prevention strategies. During these conversations we heard, overwhelmingly, about the necessity of protecting vulnerable tenants from eviction. We also heard about the heightened responsibility the City has to work with residents of TCHC, especially vulnerable TCHC tenants, to resolve rental arrears and loss of subsidy matters without resorting to eviction and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://right2housingto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Evictions-Rights-Review-R2HTO.pdf>

ensure eviction matters that proceed to the Landlord and Tenant Board are minimal and in compliance with a rights-based approach to housing. Given this responsibility, we urge the City and TCHC staff to continue address the risk of tenants falling into arrears and facing eviction by notifying tenants of their arrears; referring vulnerable tenants to support services; and negotiating reasonable repayment agreements.

TCHC residents include low-income and vulnerable individuals and families from a range of equity seeking groups, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and youth. Extending the moratorium on the evictions for non-payment of rent will help to ensure TCHC tenants remain sheltered during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to this extension, we also urge the City to limit the number of eviction notices that are issued to tenants, and instead, prioritize alternative intervention methods as a key way to avoid evictions and the long-term risk of the accumulation of arrears.

We note that City Council recently called on the Province to suspend and immediately order a comprehensive moratorium on residential evictions and to stop the processing of applications, notices, hearings and enforcement of evictions to prevent further homelessness. We encourage the City to lead by example and enact these measures to protect TCHC residents from the threat of eviction.

As always, R2HTO is available to the City, as is helpful, to discuss how best to adapt and expand their eviction prevention efforts and we will monitor progress to ensure these measures are implemented using a human rights-based approach.

Thank you,

On Behalf of Right to Housing in Toronto (R2HTO)