
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM45.21	ACTION			Ward: All
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Request to the Province to Amend the Housing Services Act to Support Rent-Geared-to-Income Tenants in Apprenticeship Programs - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Government of Ontario to amend Ontario Regulation 367/11 under the Housing Services Act to reduce barriers for rent-geared-to-income tenants by exempting the income of tenants who participate in apprenticeship programs supported by unions in the same manner as the income is currently excluded for tenants who are enrolled in apprenticeship programs offered through recognized educational institutions, for the calculation of rent-geared-to-income.

Summary

The City of Toronto has been advocating for change to the rent-geared-to-income regulations for many years. Rent-geared-to-income regulations allow individuals or households to access affordable housing. Over the past few years, there have been important changes made to the Housing Services Act, governing rent-geared-to-income administration. These have been the result of such advocacy and include the simplification how rent-geared-to-income is calculated.

In 2016, the Mayor's Task Force on Toronto Community Housing Corporation reported that "tenants are looking for access to jobs and opportunities, particularly those that provide a bridge towards meaningful, sustainable work." Toronto Community Housing Corporation has worked with its development partners and the City on creating opportunities for youth to access training and employment in the trades, however many tenants are reluctant to take these opportunities because they fear losing their housing or subsidy. This presents a barrier to employment opportunities for some rent-geared-to-income households.

A key Provincial regulation change in 2021 was the exclusion of the income of full-time students in the calculation of the household rent-geared-to-income rent. This exclusion also applies to students in qualifying apprenticeship programs. However, in order to qualify, the regulations require that the educational program is with a "recognized educational institution", as defined by the Housing Services Act. For this reason, some participants in unrecognized apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, such as CRAFT, which offers a 14-week intensive training in trade disciplines, may not qualify for this exemption, as it is sponsored by

the union and not an educational institution. Broadening the definition of apprenticeship programs to include those affiliated with trade unions and/or connected to service manager approved programs would extend meaningful employment opportunities to a larger number of rent-geared-to-income tenants in Toronto.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM45.21