

Housing Rights Advisory Committee Working Group Guidelines

1) Mandate

The Housing Rights Advisory Committee (HRAC) Working Groups (“Working Groups”) are established to advance the HRAC’s mandate of providing advice to City Council on policies, programs and actions that the City can implement to advance its commitment to furthering the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing in Toronto based on housing and human rights expertise, lived experiences of housing precarity, discrimination and homelessness, and academic research and learnings from other jurisdictions.

Per HRAC’s [Terms of Reference](#), the Working Groups:

- a) Shall have Guidelines which include matters it will address, member composition and anticipated frequency of meetings;
- b) May engage with City Officials, other City employees and external parties to provide or receive advice on matters related to the Advisory Committee mandate, and engagement shall be facilitated through the Housing Secretariat Division;
- c) Must forward any advice that requires action by City Officials or City Council to the Advisory Committee for consideration and, if recommended by the Advisory Committee, to City Council for approval.

Per the [adoption](#) of the [Housing Rights Advisory Committee Priorities Framework](#) (“Priorities Framework”), each working group will focus one of three main housing rights components outlined in the Priorities Framework, and all three Working Groups will embed the fourth component of the framework, increasing the right supply of housing, into its focus.

- a) HRAC Supporting Unhoused Rightsholders Working Group
 - Considers rightsholders who are unhoused and may face barriers accessing basic needs, including shelter, clean water, sanitation, food, heating and cooling, accessibility supports, healthcare, and harm reduction.
 - May include engagement with rightsholders with living and lived experience of housing precarity or of homelessness.
 - May include engagement with service providers
- b) HRAC Improving Access to Housing Working Group
 - Considers barriers rightsholders face in accessing housing that is affordable, safe, and allows them to meet their basic needs.
 - May include engagement with service providers and rights holders, especially those disproportionately impacted by housing discrimination
- c) HRAC Maintaining Housing Working Group
 - Considers tenants who experience challenges maintaining their housing.

- May include engagement with service providers, housing providers, housing stability and support services providers, and rights holders experiencing housing precarity, instability and displacement.

2) Guiding Principles

- Working group meetings should be guided by the five essential principles of a human rights-based approach, as outlined in the Priorities Framework, where applicable: participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment, and legality
 - Participation: members, including those with living/lived experiences of housing precarity, discrimination and homelessness, are engaged in decisions and discussions that affect the realization of the right to adequate housing with respect to City programs and service delivery.
 - Accountability: members identify areas to improve the City's capacity to monitor and track its progress towards the progressive realization to adequate housing in alignment with the City's implementation of the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan, within HRAC's capacity to do so.
 - Non-discrimination and equality: members apply an intersectional equity approach, to help identify systemic barriers that prevent those with living/lived experiences from accessing and maintaining adequate housing, and to recommend actions to remove such barriers.
 - Empowerment: members work together with a spirit of consensus and collaboration and recommend solutions that best meet the "wants" of all without compromising the "needs" of any.
 - Legality: members provide recommendations which may be considered by City Council to ground policies, practices and procedures at the City in alignment with a human rights-based approach to adequate housing.

3) Key Tasks and Deliverables

The key tasks and deliverables of the Working Groups are to:

- Identify and raise key issues and items for HRAC to prioritize, in alignment with its focus area (as outlined in the Priorities Framework);
- Provide in-depth review and analysis of priority items determined by HRAC and/or presented to HRAC, in support of the fulfillment of HRAC's mandate;
- Support the development of recommendations on priority items and items presented for consideration during HRAC meetings.
- Invite City Staff, community advocates, and rights holders to provide expertise on a Working Group priority item, at the discretion of the Working Group Chair.

4) Composition

The Working Group will be comprised of self-appointed members of the Advisory Committee. Each Working Group will be composed of no more than 5 HRAC members.

Members may choose to participate in working group meetings of their choosing. Members may choose to participate in working groups on an ad-hoc basis to support items that align with their area of interest and expertise, so long as the meeting comprises of no more than 5 HRAC members.

Pursuant to City Council decision [MM18.3](#), public members of Working Groups will be eligible to receive an honorarium of \$125.00 per meeting attended in recognition of the contributions they are providing to Toronto. HRAC honoraria payments are subject to the following:

- a) Honoraria are not intended for public members who serve on HRAC as representatives of organizations or businesses where they are employed; and
- b) public members who serve as the Chair or Vice-Chair of HRAC are not eligible for any additional honoraria.
- c) Honoraria are not paid for attendance at sub-committee meetings or events.

5) Meeting Management

Working Groups will aim to meet once between HRAC meetings pursuant to alignment between HRAC items and its relevance to the mandate of a respective working group.

A Chair will be decided upon by the respective members of each working group during the first meeting and will provide an update on the minutes at the next HRAC meeting

The Housing Secretariat Division will ensure the preparation and submission of meeting minutes to the City Clerk's Office, for inclusion on the HRAC meeting agenda. The Housing Secretariat Division will additionally provide staff support and strategic advice to the Working Groups, as outlined in the HRAC Terms of Reference.

All HRAC members agree to the following guidelines for working group meetings:

- Work constructively and respectfully with other members at all times.
- Listen actively to others and avoid interrupting.
- Manage personal participation by sharing speaking time.
- Debate ideas, not individuals.
- Provide focused input, comments and questions on the agenda item being discussed.

Date: June 3, 2025