

Access to Housing & Housing Rights Advisory Committee

May 7, 2025



Agenda

- Housing as Human Right
- Overview of MyAccessstoHousingTO – RGI
 - Q&A
- Overview of Affordable Rental Integration
- New Program Components/Consideration
 - Q&A

Housing as a Human Right



The Toronto Housing Charter guides our work as we modernize the administration of the Centralized Waiting List (CWL) for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI), and as we work to integrate Affordable Rental Housing.

“...Its Policy is to move deliberately to further the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing recognized in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights....”



MyAccessstoHousingTO

Modernization of Toronto's Centralized Wait List for RGI Housing

Client Journey

The Choice-Based Access Model is a six step journey

It starts with providing information to clients about RGI and vacancies
It then allows clients to make informed housing choices



Information Access

Information about social housing and the choice-based system is available through a variety of channels:

- Online
- In-person
- Phone
- Video



Vacancy Display

Vacancies are posted during bidding cycles

Vacancy information

- Building/unit attributes
- Neighbourhood info.
- Move-in dates



Expression of Interest

Clients can:

- Express interest in as many units as they like
- Express interest online through the system



Client Journey (Continued)

The journey continues with ranking and selection of clients for vacancies
Once offers close and vacancies are filled, clients are informed and their feedback is solicited



RGI Eligibility

- Status in Canada
- 16 or older
- Ability to live independently with or without supports
- Income limits
- Asset limits
- No arrears with Ontario Social Housing Provider

RGI Priority Status

Provincial Priority:

- Special Priority Program: Intimate-Partner Violence; Human Trafficking; Sponsorship Abuse

Local Priorities

- Over-housed Households
- Terminally Ill
- HESH – Households Exiting Supportive Housing
- Indigenous households (1 in 10 offers)
- Youth-headed households (1 in 7 offers)
- Homeless Households (1 in 5 offers)

Continuous Improvement Efforts

With our commitment to the progressive realization of housing as a human right, the Housing Secretariat continues to test and implement enhanced supports to ensure all applicants have equitable access.

- Digital Divide concerns
- Policy adjustments to alleviate administrative burdens

Digital Divide

Access to Housing recognizes that there will be applicants, both new and existing, who may struggle with technology.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, additional support approaches were tested and implemented.

- Applicant experience surveys
- Applicant focus groups
- Proxy-bidding in shelters
- Case Management
- In-community workshops with Housing Hubs
- Phone calls, Auto-calls, Text message outreach, mail

Policy Adjustments

To alleviate administrative burden on RGI applicants, Access to Housing made the following adjustments.

- Shift from Annual Reviews to 24-month reviews
- 24-month Re-instatement policies
 - Incomplete renewals; income and asset ineligibility
- Renewals via online, in-person, or phone + mail
- Accommodation Request path (in development)

Q&A



Centralized Affordable Rental Housing

Towards the end of 2025, households will be able to apply for RGI and Affordable housing through one application in MyAccesstoHousingTO.

In 2026, Affordable Housing units will be offered through Choice Base Housing Cycles.

Lessons learned from the RGI rollout will inform our work moving forward.



Goals of Integration



One-Window Approach

Single point of access for affordable and social housing



Transparency and Consistency

Standardized processes communicated to the public



Simple and Accessible

User-friendly interface with broad information available in accessible formats



Operational Efficiency

Leverage technology to increase efficiencies for all users



Fair and Equitable Allocation of Units

Flexibility in allocation methods to advance equitable outcomes

Affordable—Current vs. Future

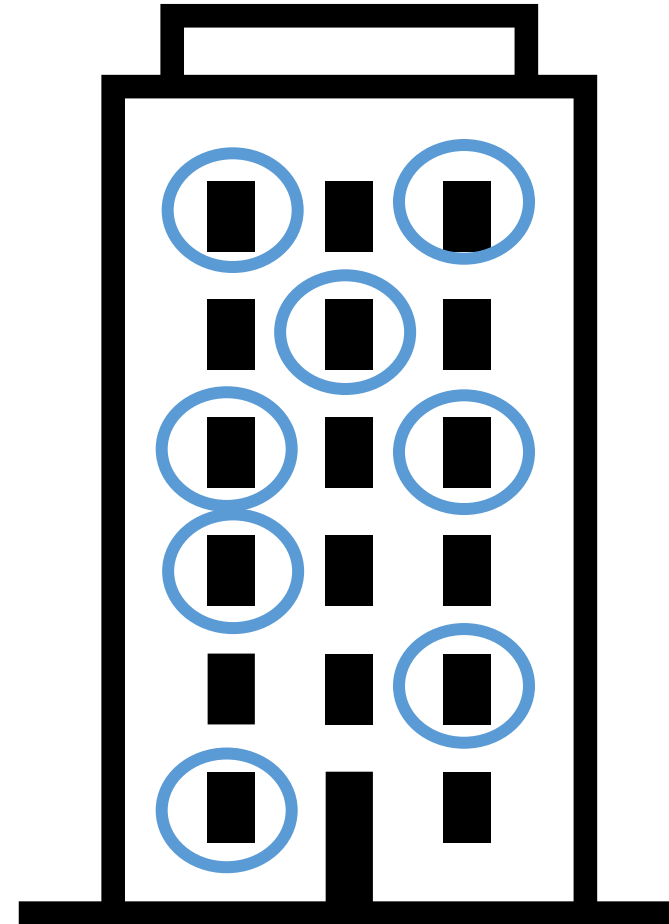
Current State	Future State
A separate application per lottery	One application for every affordable unit (applicant applies once only then maintains file going forward)
Every building is filled by lottery only	Every building will be a mix of lottery and time-based waiting on waitlist
Every housing provider creates and manages a waitlist per building	One central waitlist for every provider/building/unit in the City
The provider is responsible for collecting applications	All applications will flow through the centralized access system
Applicants apply to a whole building, provider matches applicants to units	Applicant applies to specific units on a choice-based model. Provider offers units applicant expresses interest in
The provider is responsible for screening applicants	The City screens applicants for RGI and Affordable program eligibility. The provider conducts <i>RTA</i> screening. Shared.
Reporting on outcomes (offers, refusals) done outside of the system and provided to the City	Reporting on outcomes done in access system

Affordable Rental Housing Centralization

- One application in MyAccessstoHousingTO, screened for both RGI housing and Affordable programs
- Same Eligibility criteria as RGI, with exception to income and asset limits. Align program components with RGI where possible.
- No priority groups for Affordable Housing at this time
- Choice Based housing cycles will showcase both RGI and Affordable housing vacancies, including Affordable random draws
- Applicant supports and policy adjustments developed for RGI will be updated and adapted for the Affordable Housing program components

Random Draw in Choice Based Housing Cycles

- Council Direction to run random draws on new builds that have 10 or more units
 - Year 1: 50 Chronological / 50 draw
 - Year 2: 75 Chronological / 25 draw
 - Year 3: TBD, report back to Council
- Random Draw units will be visible to all applicants
- Single Offer Rule will not apply



New Program Components

There are three new program components we would like to highlight

- Optical Character Recognition Technology
- Minimum Income
- Launch and Scramble Considerations

New: Optical Character Recognition Technology

Access to Housing anticipates the volume of applications to rise significantly.

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Technology will:

- Automatically review Notice of Assessments, granting pre-eligibility status
- Allows Access to Housing to prioritize human resources for value-add work including file administration for priority applications and oversight of Choice Based Housing Cycles

Work-arounds will be in place for applicants not required to submit an NOA upfront, including homeless and applicant fleeing violence/trafficking

New: Choice Based Minimum Income Threshold

- Income must cover the rental cost for household to see the unit in Choice Based
- Households can list additional funds to accurately reflect their budget
- Promote successful tenancies

Applicants on the Centralized waitlist face significant wait times to connect to housing. There is an acknowledgement that household incomes may change over time.

New: Scramble Period for Affordable Applications

Net new applications received during a set number of months (TBD) after the application launch will be scrambled.

- RGI dates will reflect when the application was actually submitted
- Affordable dates will be scrambled

By incorporating a scramble period, we aim to:

- Ensure equitable access, particularly for vulnerable applicants who struggle with technology
- No rushing to be first in line; alleviate applicant anxiety
- Alleviate flooding human resources both within the City and with community partners
- Provide workshops across the City to help people apply

Consideration: Wait times for housing

We acknowledge that there will continue to be long wait times to connect to house.

- RGI wait list is 100K households, with 20k applications in applied status with up to 3000 RGI units offered per year.
- Affordable program is eligible to larger pool of applicants, and we anticipate these applications double our waitlist size.
- Affordable units will continue to come online as developed.
- Demand for housing will continue to exceed supply.

How do we be transparent in our communication with applicants about this reality?

Q&A



Thank You

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