

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

DIRECTIVE

Directive No.: 2019-01
Date Issued: October 1, 2019
Date Updated: July 11, 2022

Authority

This Directive is issued under the authority of the Director of Homelessness Initiatives & Prevention Services

Subject

Shelter clients on the Access to Housing Waitlist (i.e., the centralized waitlist for rent-geared-to-income housing)

Directive or Required Action

Purchase of Service and Directly Operated Shelter Providers are required to ensure all clients are provided an opportunity to be placed on the Centralized Waitlist with local priority status, Disadvantage Code ("DA Code") for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing.

Shelter staff, when discussing housing options with clients, are required to offer to support a client with initiating or maintaining an RGI application with Access to Housing. For clients who do not have the necessary documentation to initiate an application (e.g., Status Identification, source of income, etc.), staff are required to offer support to clients to obtain these documents as part of preparing an application for RGI housing. If a client refuses support, staff must document what support was offered and what efforts were made to engage the client. [Appendix A](#) includes information on how to support a client with their application.

Efforts to support clients in completing housing applications will be part of file reviews during program audits/site visits.

Directive

- All shelter clients who have the necessary documentation in place must be offered support to complete an Access to Housing application
- If an application has been submitted, staff must document the P-Code in the client's Housing Checklist Module in Shelter Management Information System (SMIS)
- If a client does not have the necessary documentation in place to initiate an Access to Housing application, staff must offer to support the client to obtain that documentation

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

DIRECTIVE

Directive No.: 2019-01

Date Issued: October 1, 2019

Date Updated: July 11, 2022

Purpose of Directive

To ensure all eligible shelter clients are added to the City's centralized social housing waiting list system and are designated priority status applicants for faster access to social housing and rent geared-to-income assistance.

Background

As outlined in SSHA's [Homelessness Solutions Service Plan](#), the City's approach to addressing homelessness is grounded in a Housing First approach. Housing First focuses on helping people to find permanent housing as quickly as possible, with the supports they need to live as independently as possible, without any preconditions such as accepting treatment or maintaining abstinence. The underlying philosophy of Housing First is that people are more successful in moving forward with their lives if they first have housing. The Housing First approach includes providing individualized, person-centred supports that are strengths-based, trauma informed, grounded in a harm reduction philosophy and promote self-sufficiency.

The City of Toronto is committed to delivering high-quality services that improve the lives of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The Toronto Shelter Standards provides City of Toronto-funded shelter providers and clients with a clear set of expectations, guidelines and minimum requirements for the provision of shelter services in Toronto. Section 10.1 Case Management and Service Planning of the Toronto Shelter Standards requires that at a minimum, a client's service plan must include a housing plan and housing search assistance be provided to all shelter residents. Section 8.2 Service Planning of the Toronto 24-Hour Respite Site Standards requires that staff offer some degree of service planning to their clients and provide such services to interested clients.

Resources

- [Homelessness Solutions Service Plan](#)
- [Toronto Shelter Standards](#)
 - The 24-Hour Respite Site Standards
- Access to Housing: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/employment-social-support/housing-support/rent-geared-to-income-subsidy/>
- Online trainings for SMIS 3.7 have been released on [ELI](#) (for directly operated providers) and the [City's website](#) (for purchase-of-service providers):
 - Module 7: Housing Checklist
 - Module 9: Client-Level Report for Case Managers

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

DIRECTIVE

Directive No.: 2019-01

Date Issued: October 1, 2019

Date Updated: July 11, 2022

- Access to Housing Video Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AulUoYVKuLs>
- Access to Housing Application Guide: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/8efe-Applicant-GuideFor-WebJuly8-FINAL.pdf>
- Access to Housing Training for Service Providers - registration form: <https://s.cotsurvey.chkmkt.com/?e=269727&d=e&h=2CE139F9D8F085D&l=en%20>

Contact Information

For more information about and support in implementation of this Directive, please contact your Agency Review Officer.

Appendix A

Shelter staff can confirm or check the status of client applications by checking [Rent Café](#). Alternatively, the client may contact the Application Support Centre at 416-338-8888 for additional assistance. Shelter staff may email the helpdesk at myaccesstohousingTO@toronto.ca for further assistance. If the client already has an application on file, provide updated information including indicating that the client is presently experiencing homelessness.

When a client has submitted an Access to Housing application, all client files held by the shelter must include the Access to Housing reference number (P-Code) for any future reference for the client and/or shelter staff. Record the P-Code in the client's SMIS Housing Checklist module or the client's refusal to submit an application in the client's case management notes. If a client has not submitted an Access to Housing application but is working with a Case Manager on document readiness, record that information in SMIS.

In addition, SMIS has a new report called the "Client Level Report for Case Managers." Use this report to help identify which clients are active in your program, have all required eligibility documents, and do not yet have an Access to Housing application.