

General Information

The City of Toronto's Housing Secretariat division manages the Centralized Waiting List for subsidized housing. Special Priority Program (SPP) status is reserved for individuals eligible for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance who are victims of abuse or trafficking as defined below:

- **"Abuse"** means one or more incidents of: physical or sexual violence, controlling behaviour; OR intentional destruction of or intentional injury to property; OR words, actions or gestures that threaten a household member to fear for his or her safety; and that are done by specific individuals. OR trafficking of the member done by any individual.
- **"Trafficking"** means, with respect to a member of a household, one or more incidents of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of the member by improper means, including force, abduction, fraud, coercion, deception, and repeated provision of a controlled substance, for an illegal purpose, including sexual exploitation or forced labour.

The *Housing Services Act, 2011*, Ontario Regulation 367/11, Section 52 - 58 ("Special Priority Household Category"), gives priority ranking to social housing applicants and/or tenants whose personal safety, or whose family's safety is at risk because of abuse by an individual with whom they currently or recently lived with, or who is sponsoring the member as an immigrant. This Special Priority is to enable the household to separate permanently from the abuser. Social housing applicants are also eligible for Special Priority if a member of the household is being or has been trafficked.

If you are eligible for Special Priority status, you will be ahead of non-priority applicants on the Centralized Waiting List, but you will still be behind Special Priority applicants who applied before you. We cannot tell you how long it will take to get housing. The amount of time it takes to house a Special Priority applicant depends on where you hope to live and the type of unit you need.

Special Priority Program (SPP) Application

To qualify for Special Priority status, you must:

- Be eligible for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance.
- Meet the criteria for either domestic violence, sponsorship abuse or human trafficking

Domestic Violence and Sponsorship Abuse Criteria

- You are living with someone who is abusing you or your children or you stopped living with them in the last three months. In limited circumstances, we may consider your application after three (3) months.
- You are a sponsored immigrant, and your sponsor is abusing you or your children.

Human Trafficking Criteria

- A member of the household is being or has been trafficked

Who Can Apply

- You are experiencing abuse or human trafficking
- You are an existing household member on the RGI Centralized Waiting List or a new applicant
- You are living in RGI housing experiencing "abuse" or "human trafficking"

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How do I Apply for SPP Status?

If you are new to the RGI Centralized Waiting List, you must:

- Complete an RGI Application in MyAccessToHousingTO
- Sign and date the electronic Consent and Declaration form
- Upload status and income related documents
- Go to the Special Priority section and select "Yes"
- Complete the Special Priority Application
- Print, sign, date and upload the SPP application form (and any supporting documents)

If you are already RGI eligible you can:

- Log into your MyAccessToHousingTO account.
- Go to the Special Priority section and select "Yes"
- Complete the Special Priority Application
- Print, sign, date and upload the SPP application form (and any supporting documents)

If you are **currently an RGI tenant**, you must complete an online application in the MyAccessToHousingTO system:

- Complete the SPP application and send it by mail to Access to Housing

Notice: If you have a safety concern about applying for SPP on your current RGI application (for example, the named abuser is a member of your current application) you can either:

- Create a new RGI application, using a new email address and password **OR**
- Mail the completed Special Priority Application and supporting documentation to:
Access to Housing, 176 Elm St, Toronto, ON M5T 3M4.
- If you are creating a new application, include your other application code.

If you require additional information about the Special Priority Program, or application forms, visit our website www.toronto.ca/accesstohousing

You must have someone verify your claim of human trafficking or abuse. Normally, this person is a professional working with you because of the human trafficking or abuse.

The following is required to complete the Special Priority application:

- Part A: Applicant Consent and Declaration
- Part B: Declaration of Human Trafficking or Abuse
- Part C: Applicant Contact Information
- Part D: Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser (not required for human trafficking)
- Part E: Verification Record completed by a qualified professional
- **Verification Record requirements:** A mandatory one-page Verification Letter is required for all Human Trafficking applications. Letters must be on **official letterhead, signed and dated.**
- If you are applying through the **Domestic Violence program**, MCCSS funded Violence Against Women Agencies in Toronto or City of Toronto Shelter Program, these agencies are not required to provide a Verification Letter when supporting an applicant applying for **Abuse**. If the applicant is unable to provide the required documentation to satisfy the eligibility requirements (cohabitation or is applying beyond the 3-month time frame) the referring agency must provide the Verification Letter.

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- If you are applying through the **Human Trafficking program** all agencies, are required to provide a mandatory one page Verification Letter.

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A. Applicant Consent and Declaration

Please complete this section if you are the applicant. If you, as the applicant, are unable to sign, the consent may be signed on your behalf by a person who is authorized.

I, _____ (First, Last Name - Print) hereby authorize and consent to the completion, submission and disclosure of information to the City of Toronto and have provided all of the required documents for the purposes of verifying eligibility under the Special Priority category.

- ✓ I confirm that I have obtained consent to disclosure by the abused or the trafficked member or a person authorized to consent on their behalf, if I, as the applicant, am neither of these individuals.
- ✓ I declare the information provided is correct, accurate and complete.
- ✓ I acknowledge that the information I have provided on this form will be used by the City of Toronto to determine my eligibility for Special Priority status. I consent to disclosure of my personal information by the City of Toronto to third parties for the purposes of determining my eligibility for Special Priority status.
- ✓ I understand that if any of the information I provide is determined to be inaccurate, the City of Toronto, or the housing provider may cancel my application.

Signature	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

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Part B: Declaration of Human Trafficking or Abuse

This Declaration is completed by the applicant for Special Priority status. If you are applying because of human trafficking, complete Section 1. If you are applying because you have been abused, complete Section 2.

First Name

Last Name

Application Code

Other Applicant Code

Section 1: Declaration of Human Trafficking

☐ I am being or have been trafficked by: (if available)

Name (First, Last)

☐ I am currently being trafficked

☐ I stopped being trafficked on (approximate date):

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

Signature

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

Section 2: Declaration of Abuse

I have been abused by:

Name (First, Last)

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What is the relationship with the abuser?

- ☐ Intimate Partner/Spouse
☐ Child/Parent
☐ Other (please describe relationship):

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☐ I am currently living with this person

☐ I have not lived with this person since (date):

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

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☐ I have never lived with this person

☐ Canadian immigration sponsor (please attach copy of a letter from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) confirming breakdown in sponsorship).

Note: If you are a sponsored immigrant and you did not live with the abuser (your sponsor), you may be eligible for Special Priority status and **may not** be required to submit proof of living together. Please make sure that the **Verification Record details your living arrangements.**

Signature

Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

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Part C: Applicant Contact Information

I. How would you like us to contact you? Choose one or more options to safely reach you.

☐ **Mail**

Street Number	Street Name	Suite/Unit Number
Postal Code	City/Town, Province	

☐ **Telephone Number**

Telephone Number

☐ **Email**

Email

III. You have the option of providing a safe alternate contact in case we cannot reach you. We will only contact your alternate contact if we cannot reach you. When contacting this person, we will only ask that your contact tell you to contact Access to Housing. We will not disclose any information in your application to this person.

☐ By checking this box, I hereby certify that the individual who's information I am providing below has provided consent to have his/her personal information collected and stored by the City of Toronto and, the Notice of Collection statement placed on this form was presented to this individual.

Alternate Contact Name (First, Last)		
Relationship to Applicant		
Street Number	Street Name	Suite/Unit Number
Postal Code	City/Town, Province	
Telephone Number		Best time to call between 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (Monday to Friday)

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Part D: Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser (Not Required for Human Trafficking)

Special Priority status supports an individual, who **lives or lived** with an abuser and is experiencing or did experience domestic abuse and violence, to leave the abusive situation permanently.

To determine your eligibility, you must provide proof that you **live or lived** with the abuser in the **last three months**.

What is the address of the residence that you share/shared with the abuser?

Date moved-in together (yyyy-mm-dd)		
Street Number	Street Name	Suite/Unit Number
Postal Code	City/Town, Province	

Are you currently living in a Rent-Geared-to-Income unit? Yes ☐ or No ☐.

If **yes**, please provide the following:

Street Number	Street Name	Suite/Unit Number
Postal Code	City/Town, Province	

☐ I have attached proof that I am/was living with the person who abused me.

☐ I have attached proof of sponsorship if applicable.

If you are receiving social assistance:

☐ I have attached **Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser** from my Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) caseworker.

If you are receiving a Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing Subsidy:

☐ I have attached **Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser** from my social housing provider.

If you are NOT receiving social assistance or living in RGI:

☐ I have attached **Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser** showing that the person who abused me and I lived together within the **last three months**.

If you are applying more than three months after separation:

☐ I have attached **Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser** showing that the person who abused me and I lived together more than three months ago. You must also attach

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a **one**-page letter that identifies the reason why and application for Special Priority status within the three-month period.

- ☐ I unable to provide documents to prove joint residency. I have attached a one-page letter to support my application.

Accepted Documentation

Provide **Proof of Joint Residency with the Abuser** showing that you and the person who abused you lived together. Documents must be dated within the **last three months**.

You must provide at least:

- one up-to-date document with both of your names and joint address, or
- one document with your name and joint address, and one document with the abuser's name and joint address

Visit www.toronto.ca/accesstohousing for a full list of acceptable documents

Acceptable documents for proof of joint residency include:

- up-to-date lease, rental agreement, Notices, or mortgage documents
- mailed/online property tax or utility bills, or statement from a financial institution (must include all pages)
- most recent communication from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)
- benefits statement from Ontario Works (OW)/Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- educational institution registration record
- insurance policy
- police report if joint residency has been confirmed
- letter from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) confirming breakdown in sponsorship

Documents that do not prove joint residency include:

- documents/forms with self-declared unverified information (e.g., day care registration)
- health card or drug prescription receipts
- declaration from a friend or family member
- phone and internet bills

If both your name and your abuser's name do not appear on a document together, you may provide more than one document to show you were living at the same address at the same time.

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Part E. Verification Record

This Verification Record must be completed by someone who can confirm Part B: Declaration of Human Trafficking or Abuse.

Note to person completing Verification Record:

You are being asked to complete this **Verification Record** to confirm that the applicant has been a victim of 1) human trafficking; or 2) abuse by an intimate partner, immigration sponsor, relative or a person who is in an emotionally, physically, or financially dependent relationship with the applicant.

You are being asked only to verify the instances of abuse and are not making a recommendation for the applicant's housing placement.

A mandatory one-page Verification Letter is required to complete the application. The letter must be on an official letterhead, signed and dated. **The letter must include the names of the applicant, the abuser, and the shared address. The letter must describe the professional relationship of the referral source and the applicant. In addition, the letter must describe the most recent incident of abuse that has occurred.**

The letter must be notarized if you do not work with the applicant in a professional role but have direct knowledge that the applicant has been subjected to human trafficking or abuse.

Verification Record requirements

Name (First, Last) of person verifying trafficking or abuse		
Position/Title		
Agency/Organization		
Street Number	Street Name	Suite/Unit Number
Postal Code	City/Town, Province	
Business Telephone Number		

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I declare that I have reviewed the information in Part B of this application, and (please check all that apply):

- ☐ My professional assessment is the applicant is a victim of human trafficking.
- ☐ My professional assessment is that the applicant has experienced one or more incidents of physical or sexual violence by the person named in Part B.
- ☐ My professional assessment is that the applicant has experienced one or more incidents of abusive, controlling behavior by the person named in Part B.
- ☐ My professional assessment is that the person in Part B has intentionally destroyed or injured the applicant's property.
- ☐ My professional assessment is that the words, actions, or gestures of the person in Part B have threatened the applicant or made them fear for their safety.
- ☐ My professional assessment is the applicant has experienced one or more incidents of financial abuse.

Relationship to Applicant in Part B:

I am working with the applicant around the issue of human trafficking or abuse in my professional capacity as a:

☐ Registered Social Worker	☐ Housing Provider
☐ Registered Social Service Worker	☐ Lawyer
☐ Police Officer	☐ Doctor
☐ Registered Mental Health Therapist or Psychotherapist	☐ Minister of Religion
☐ Registered Nurse or Registered Practical Nurse	☐ Teacher/Guidance Counsellor
☐ Registered Early Childhood Educator	☐ Midwife
☐ Indigenous Elder/Leader	☐ Indigenous Traditional Person
☐ Indigenous Knowledge Keeper	

License number/professional registration number (if applicable)

- ☐ I am not a member of one of the above professions, but I am working with the applicant in my professional role around the issue of human trafficking or abuse. **I understand that I must have this Verification Record signed by a person who has the authority to bind my agency or organization** (e.g., executive director, program manager)
- ☐ I do not work with the applicant in a professional role, but I have direct knowledge that the applicant has been subjected to human trafficking or abuse. **I understand that I must have this Verification Record and my Letter of Support notarized as to the truth of the records by a commissioner for taking affidavits.**

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Name (First, Last) of person completing Verification Record	
Signature	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

Agency/Organization Binding Authorization

Name (First, Last) of person who can bind agency (this can be the same person completing the Verification Record as per the Agency's discretion)	
Position Title	
Signature	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
Agency Name	
Street Number	Street Name
Suite/Unit Number	Postal Code
City/Town	Province
Business Telephone Number	

Housing Secretariat collects personal information on this form under the legal authority of the Housing Services Act, 2011, Ontario Regulation 367/11, sections 52 to 58.1, and Toronto City Council Item 2022.PH35.20, as confirmed by the City of Toronto By-law 792-2022. The information is used to assess and determine applicant eligibility for special priority on the Centralized Waiting List and for Rent Geared-To-Income assistance. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Manager, Housing Stability Services, Housing Secretariat, Metro Hall, 55 John Street, 6th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C6 or by telephone at 416-392-4126.