



Roles and Responsibilities for Tenant Representatives

Policy Owner:
Community Health Unit

Type: Guidelines

Date Approved: November 2011

Approved By: Executives

Last Reviewed: January 2010

Guidelines Summary

These guidelines provide a framework within which Toronto Community Housing can meet the following objectives:

- Outline the roles and responsibility of Tenant Representatives
- Maintain high ethical standard, good judgement, and accountability, as well as commitments of Tenant Representatives
- Support activities that will enable Tenant Representatives and Tenant Councils to become more involved in governance and decision-making in their communities

Guidelines Statement

Through tenant engagement initiatives, Toronto Community

Housing facilitates the participation of tenants in issues that have an impact on their buildings and their communities. In meeting its mission, Toronto Community Housing applies its resources to support meaningful engagement, reduce barriers and spark social change.

Tenant Representatives represent the interests of all the tenants in their building or complex. Tenant Representatives must treat all tenants equally, with respect and dignity, this includes but not limited to: race ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed or religion, sex, sexual orientation, same-sex partnership status, gender identity, age, marital status, family status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation or disability.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the roles and responsibility of Tenant Representatives.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all elected Tenant Representatives when carrying out their duties as a Tenant Representative.

Values

Maintain high ethical standard, good judgment, accountability and conduct for Tenant Representatives.

Standards

Health Promotion Officer/Youth Engagement Coordinator are responsible for supporting Tenant Representatives to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Guidelines Details

Get To Know What Issues Are Important To the Community

It is the Tenant Representative's role to:

- Encourage tenants to talk about what is important to them by organizing meetings and

community events in partnership with staff and tenant groups

- Keep an open and ongoing dialogue with tenants and staff in their building or complex regarding community issues
- Get to know the local community agencies and partners through your Health Promotion Officer/Youth Engagement Coordinator
- Represent tenants on different issues that affect the community and neighbourhood

Participate Actively on Neighbourhood Council

Tenant Representatives are responsible for:

- Regularly attending Neighbourhood Council meetings
- Participating actively and sharing ideas with other Tenant Representatives
- Addressing the needs and concerns of all the tenants in the community at Neighbourhood Council meetings
- Helping to develop community plans for Neighbourhood Councils
- Being prepared and on time for Council meetings. (e.g. read previously provided material before the meeting, review

agenda, arrive before meetings begins etc.)

- Not missing more than three Neighbourhood Council meetings per calendar year

Keep Tenants Informed

Tenant Representatives are responsible for:

- Collectively working with Health Promotion Officer/Youth Engagement Coordinator to inform their community about the decisions made at Neighbourhood Council meetings
- Providing regular updates to communities on Toronto Community Housing initiatives
- Actively participating at building café/meetings throughout year
- Promoting the availability of Use of Space Funds and Tenant Council Funds for their community

Building Meetings/Cafés

- Tenant Representatives will participate in monthly café/meetings with their local staff on numerous issues regarding their community

Make Connections

It is the role of the Tenant Representative to:

- Network, connect, and liaise with other Tenant Representatives
- Link with other tenant groups
- Develop links with community organizations and other partners or issue based groups

Advocate for Change

Advocacy is an important part of the Tenant Representative role. Tenant Representatives should:

- Advocate for tenant rights on topics of interest to their constituents
- Invite staff and community partners to attend meetings
- Advocate on behalf of tenants regarding systemic issues
- Encourage healthy communities by building on the strengths of tenants and encouraging others to become more active members of their community
- Host community meetings on tenant identified issues like:
 - Pest control
 - Safety concerns
 - Environmental concerns
 - Recycling Initiatives

Resources and Supports

Tenant Representatives need to make sure they know what resources and supports are available to them. Accordingly, Tenant Representatives should:

- Speak with their Health Promotion Officer/Youth Engagement Coordinator to identify training needs and opportunities
- Utilize the skills of the Health Promotion Officer/Youth Engagement Coordinator to learn about partners and agencies in the area
- Become familiar with Toronto Community Housing policies
- Familiarize themselves with the orientation for Tenant Representatives, Toronto Community Housing structure, budget, staff roles, Operating Unit structure and Tenant Engagement Structure (eg. Neighbourhood Council, issue-based groups, and work groups)
- Utilize the Neighbourhood Tenant Council Funds to improve their leadership skills and for community development initiatives

Set Some Limits

Remember you are a volunteer and no one is expecting you to work full time. This is not a paid position and you should enjoy this opportunity.

Compliance

Action will be taken against Tenant Representatives who do not follow these guidelines, up to removal from the Tenant Representative position.

Governing and Applicable Legislation

- Housing Services Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Ontario Tenant Protection Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act

Related Policies and Procedures

- Community Standards
- Tenant Representatives Code of Conduct
- Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy
- Accessibility for Tenants
- Tenant Complaint Process
- Eviction Prevention Policy
- Distribution and Allocation of Use of Space Funds Policy
- Distribution of Tenant Council Funds Policy
- Translation and Interpretation Policy
- Community Management Plan
- Board Deputation Process
- Tenant Transfer Policy
- Pest Control Strategy
- Shareholder's Direction
- Mental Health Framework

- Toronto Community Housing Staff Code of Conduct
- Race Relations & Multicultural Policy
- Anti-Ableism Policy
- Expense Reconciliation Procedures for Toronto Community Housing Tenants Guidelines

Commencement and Review

- Commencement
These guidelines take effect on November 22, 2011
- Next Review Date : November 2013