

New Crisis priority transfer category and process

Tenant information sheet

July 2018

Toronto Community Housing is making changes to improve our priority transfer process to be more responsive to tenants' needs.

Guided by the Toronto Ombudsman's recommendations, and after receiving valuable feedback through consultations with tenants, employees, stakeholders and outside agencies, we are putting in place a new Crisis priority category, effective July 1, 2018.

The new Crisis priority transfer process will enable us to act swiftly when there is a direct, immediate, elevated and acute risk to the health or safety of a tenant that can only be addressed by a transfer to another unit. This includes tenants who are suffering intimidation, are victims or witnesses of a traumatic incident, or have a need that is protected under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and which cannot be fully addressed by modifying their current unit.

Under the new process, the Crisis priority category will rank second, after the Special Priority Program category (for survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking).

If you have questions, please contact your local Operating Unit Office or our Client Care Centre at **(416) 981-5500** or help@torontohousing.ca.

Overview of the new priority transfer categories

To be eligible for a Crisis priority transfer, the tenant or authorized household member must be in crisis, meaning they must be:

- a victim suffering intimidation;

- a witness suffering intimidation; or
- a victim or witness of a traumatic incident, including being
 - a victim of a traumatic incident on the residential complex;
 - a victim or witness of a traumatic incident in their unit; or
 - a witness of another household member suffering a traumatic incident on the residential complex.

A traumatic incident is a violent crime resulting in serious bodily injury, a death, a suicide, or an attempted suicide where emergency medical intervention was required.

Tenants may also qualify for a transfer if they have a disability or situation protected under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* where the duty to accommodate can only be met by a transfer.

Note that for accessibility/accommodation requests, TCHC will always attempt to reasonably accommodate the need in the current unit before considering a transfer.

Crisis priority transfer categories

1. Victim suffering intimidation

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member is the victim of persistent intimidation or threats of violence that put their life at risk should they continue to live in their current unit.

The application must demonstrate all of the following:

1. Toronto Police Service or another law enforcement agency confirms the tenant or authorized household member is a victim of violence or intimidation amounting to a breach of the *Criminal Code*;
2. The tenant or authorized household member is under threat of death or serious bodily harm where the threat is deliberate, continued, verifiable and immediate;

3. Toronto Police Service or another law enforcement agency confirms that the threat would persist if the household remains in their unit;
4. Toronto Police Service or another law enforcement agency confirms that transferring the household to another unit would eliminate or significantly reduce the risk; and
5. The intimidation must have occurred no more three months prior to the request for transfer.

2. Witness suffering intimidation

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member is cooperating with Toronto Police Service or another law enforcement agency in active legal proceedings or an active investigation where, as a result of their cooperation, law enforcement anticipates they will suffer threat of physical injury.

The application must demonstrate all of the following:

1. The Crown or another law enforcement agency confirms the tenant or authorized household member is cooperating with active law enforcement proceedings or an active investigation;
2. The tenant or authorized household member is cooperating with the law enforcement agency in the anticipated arrest and/or prosecution of an individual accused of committing a crime;
3. As a result of cooperating with the law enforcement agency, the law enforcement agency anticipates the tenant or authorized household member will suffer threat of physical injury;
4. The accused or their associates know where the tenant or authorized household member lives;
5. The threat would persist should the household remain in the unit;

6. Transferring the household to another unit would eliminate or significantly reduce the risk; and
7. The intimidation must have occurred no more than three months prior to the request for transfer.

3. Victim or a witness of a traumatic incident

A traumatic incident is a violent crime resulting in severe bodily injury, a death, a suicide, or an attempted suicide where emergency medical intervention was required.

A) Victim of a traumatic incident on the residential complex where they live

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member is the victim of a traumatic incident that happened on the residential complex where they live.

The application must demonstrate all of the following:

1. Toronto Police Service confirms that the tenant or authorized household member was the victim of a traumatic incident that happened on the residential complex where they live; and
2. The traumatic incident must have happened no more than six months prior to the request for transfer.

B) Witness of a traumatic incident in their unit

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member witnessed a traumatic incident in their unit.

The application must demonstrate all of the following:

1. Toronto Police Service confirms that the tenant or authorized household member witnessed a traumatic incident in their unit; and
2. The traumatic incident must have happened no more than six months prior to the request for transfer.

C) Witness of another household member suffering a traumatic incident on the residential complex where they live

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member witnessed another household member suffer a traumatic incident at the residential complex where they live.

The application must demonstrate the following:

1. Toronto Police Service confirms that the tenant or authorized household member witnessed a household member suffer a traumatic incident at the residential complex where they live; and
2. The traumatic incident must have happened no more than six months prior to the request for transfer.

Accessibility/Accommodation

This applies if the tenant or authorized household member is requesting accommodation based on an *Ontario Human Rights Code* identified ground.

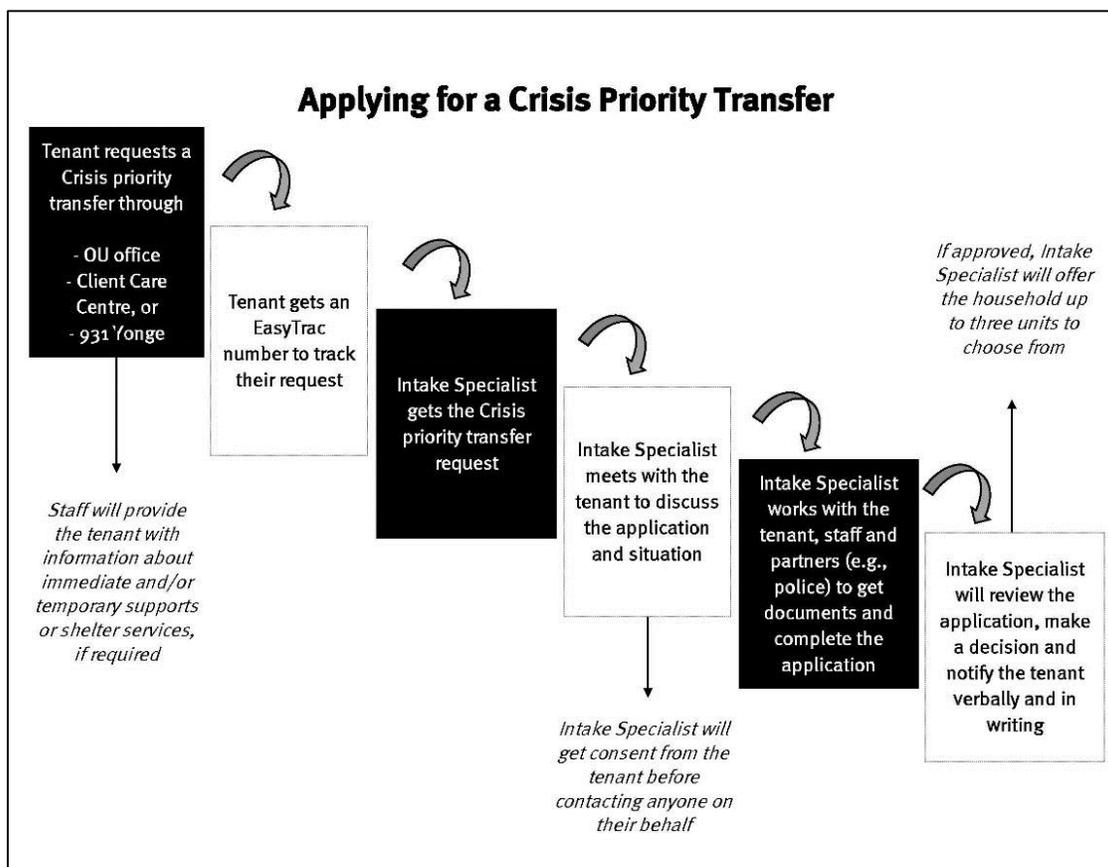
The application must demonstrate the following:

- The request must be made on the basis of an *Ontario Human Rights Code* identified ground.
- For a disability-related request, the application must be supported by medical documentation showing that the duty to accommodate can only be met by a transfer to another unit.
- For any *Ontario Human Rights Code* identified ground that does not relate to disability, the application must be supported by relevant documentation showing that the duty to accommodate can only be met by a transfer to another unit.

Transfers will only be approved if the current unit cannot reasonably be modified to address the *Ontario Human Rights Code* identified ground.

Overview of the Crisis Priority Transfer Process

Here is a step-by-step overview of how to apply for a Crisis priority transfer and how Toronto Community Housing will manage your application.



How do I apply for a transfer?

You can apply for a Crisis transfer at any time. You can go to your local Operating Unit Office, call or email the Client Care Centre or mail your application to 931 Yonge Street to the attention of an Intake Specialist.

How will my transfer request be handled?

- Every household that submits a Crisis priority transfer request will receive an EasyTrac number as their receipt.
- Your transfer request will immediately be assigned to an Intake Specialist who will follow-up with you within two business days to discuss your transfer request.
- The Intake Specialist will meet with you to discuss your situation, help with filling out the required forms (including consent forms), and explain timelines and next steps.
- If applicable, the Intake Specialist will coordinate involving other TCHC business units (such as our Accessibility Coordinators) to further evaluate your situation and assess whether steps can be taken to accommodate your needs in your current unit.
- With your consent, the Intake Specialist will contact relevant external agencies and stakeholders (such as Toronto Police Service or your medical practitioner) to gather the required documentation to support your application.

Is TCHC's Community Safety Unit (CSU) a law enforcement agency that can confirm the details of my transfer request?

No, the CSU cannot confirm the details of your transfer request. If not the Toronto Police Service, then the law enforcement agency must be either another municipal police force (such as Peel Regional Police), a provincial police force (such as the Ontario Provincial Police) or a federal police force (such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police).

How will a decision be made?

- Once your application has been completed, the Intake Specialist will review it and determine whether your request meets the criteria for a Crisis priority transfer. The Intake Specialist will communicate the decision to you both verbally and in writing.
- The written notice of decision will include details to explain the reason for the decision.

What happens once I am approved for a transfer?

- If your application is approved, the Intake Specialist will identify up to three suitable transfer locations. Offers will be made based on the identified restrictions in your specific situation and the number of immediately available units that meet your needs at that time.
- All unit offers will be made at the same time.
- You will have two business days to consider the housing options and respond. A unit viewing can be coordinated to assist you in making your decision.

What happens after I get an offer?

- When you accept an offer, the Intake Specialist will coordinate a leasing appointment for you to meet with a Tenant Services Coordinator (TSC) from the new Operating Unit office.
- If you decline the offer(s) of suitable transfer location(s), your file will be closed.

Can I reapply if my application was denied?

You cannot reapply for a transfer for the same reason unless there has been a substantial change in circumstances since your last application.

Questions & Answers

What is an Intake Specialist?

Toronto Community Housing has created a new position called Intake Specialist. There are several Intake Specialists, and their job is to administer Crisis priority transfer requests from intake through to unit offering and transfer.

Intake Specialists will be responsible for:

- Receiving Crisis transfer referrals through EasyTrac
- Contacting tenants to discuss their crisis situation
- Assisting tenants to gather required documentation
- Assessing applications against the Crisis transfer criteria
- Communicating the decision to the tenant in writing
- Coordinating the transfer

What if I have a pending application for a priority transfer?

If you submitted an application for a Medical or Safety at Risk transfer prior to June 22nd at 4:30 p.m., your application will be reviewed based on the old transfer criteria. All such applications were reviewed by June 27th and decisions have been or will be sent to all affected households.

What if I am overhoused?

There are no changes to the Overhoused process.

What if I am underhoused?

There are no changes to the Underhoused process. If you are underhoused by two or more bedrooms, you can submit a transfer application at your local Operating Unit office. If an Intake Specialist receives an Underhoused application, they will refer it back to the local Operating Unit office for resolution.

How will you manage the existing waiting list for Medical and Safety at Risk transfers?

Toronto Community Housing stopped accepting non-priority transfer requests effective June 22nd at 4:30 p.m.

TCHC is developing a process to “match” available vacant units against the needs of households on the existing waiting list for Medical and Safety at Risk transfers. This will be a fair, transparent, one-time process that will offer households on the waiting list an opportunity to assess the available vacant units and express an interest in one or more of them. The highest ranking applications (in date order) will be matched with the available unit in which the household expressed interest and a transfer approved.

The specific details and timeline will be worked out in the coming weeks. Toronto Community Housing will communicate the process to all households on the existing Medical and Safety at Risk waiting list during the first week of August.

Given the limited number of available units (at different bedroom sizes), Toronto Community Housing may be unable to match everyone on the existing waiting list with an available unit. However, the process does present a good opportunity for many households on the waiting list to consider, through a fair and equitable process, available vacant units that could meet their needs.

How will you manage the existing waiting list for non-priority transfers?

Toronto Community Housing stopped accepting non-priority transfer requests effective June 22nd at 4:30 p.m. We will be conducting a comprehensive review of the non-priority waiting list after the Crisis transfer process is in place. More communication will be provided once the review is complete.

Can I appeal a transfer decision?

Transfer decisions are final. There is no appeal. If, however, you believe there was an error in how your application was handled (bias or certain documents were missed by the Intake Specialist), you can request a procedural review.

Is there a form that will be used for accessibility or accommodation requests?

Yes, we have a Medical Questionnaire form that will be used for all requests relating to accessibility and accommodation. This form will be available online for staff and tenants to access and use.

What if I want to apply for major accessibility modifications in my current unit?

If you need major accessibility modifications in your current unit, you will need to complete the Medical Questionnaire. You can submit the completed form to your local Operating Unit Office or mail it to 931 Yonge Street to the attention of the Intake Specialist. The Intake Specialist will assign the file to the Accessibility Coordinator for follow-up.

What if I want to apply for a minor modification in my unit, such as grab bars?

If you need minor accessibility modifications in your current unit, you will need to complete the Medical Questionnaire. You can bring the completed form to your local Operating Unit Office. Local staff will complete your request.
