



## Harm Reduction Policy

Item 6A

February 26, 2021

Board of Directors

**Report:** TCHC:2021-01

**To:** Board of Directors (“Board”)

**From:** Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

**Date:** January 25, 2021

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to seek the Board’s approval of the Harm Reduction Policy.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Board approve the Harm Reduction Policy as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.

### **TSC**

This report was approved by the TSC on January 25, 2021.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In June 2018, City Council directed Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) to undertake actions in support of the Toronto Overdose Action Plan. Following Council’s decision, TCHC assembled an inter-divisional team to respond to the three directed areas:

- staff training on overdose;
- training and safe disposal of drug use equipment; and
- review of policies related to eviction that could discriminate against people who use drugs.

In its December 6, 2018 report to the Board of Directors (TCHC:2018-48), Management identified a number of ways in which we can build on our existing business practices, and expand activities to support harm reduction, including developing a corporate-wide harm reduction policy.

Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Relations consulted with and received input from staff in Operations (Community Safety Unit and Tenant Resolution Office), the Legal Division, and Human Resources (both Health and Safety and Labour Relations), as well as a stakeholder working group comprised of tenants with lived experience, and agencies that support harm reduction approaches and services.

### **HARM REDUCTION POLICY:**

TCHC recognizes that a harm reduction approach allows tenants who use substances to receive the services and resources that they need while supporting a healthy and safe environment for all members of the community. It reiterates TCHC's commitment to ensuring that all tenants are treated fairly and equitably under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, and are able to access services and supports that help them to maintain successful tenancies.

The policy outlines responsibilities of staff, agencies and service providers for ensuring that harm reduction services are provided in a way that prioritizes the safety and security of Toronto Community Housing communities while delivering necessary harm reduction services.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

The Harm Reduction Policy is intended to validate work already being done by staff to support tenants. Once approved, TCHC will implement staff training, and improve how we safely dispose of drug use equipment in our buildings. In addition, TCHC will implement a robust partnership strategy with community based agencies who support harm reduction in a manner that supports tenants and those who may be involved in drug use.

**IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:**

The implementation of the Harm Reduction Program will address the direction given by City Council in 2018, help the City address safety needs of vulnerable populations, and prevent deaths.

**SIGNATURE:**

*“Lindsay Viets”*

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Lindsay Viets  
Director, Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Relations

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Harm Reduction Policy

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