



Addressing Violence in Non-VRP Communities

Item 6G

July 5, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-53

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Acting Chief Operating Officer

Date: July 5, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an overview of how Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) addresses violence in non-Violence Reduction Program (“VRP”) communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the TSC receive this report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

At the December 5, 2019 and May 4, 2021 meeting, the TSC requested information on TCHC’s approach to address violence in non-VRP communities from a tenancy management perspective, including how we are addressing violence in revitalization communities.

BACKGROUND:

Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) is committed to providing tenant-focused services through the delivery of initiatives aimed at enhancing safety and security across its communities.

In 2019, TCHC embarked on a restructuring that decentralized the delivery of services to bring them closer to tenants. In addition, tenant-focused services are in alignment with four pillars: Tenancy Management, Community Safety and Support, Cleaning, and Maintenance.

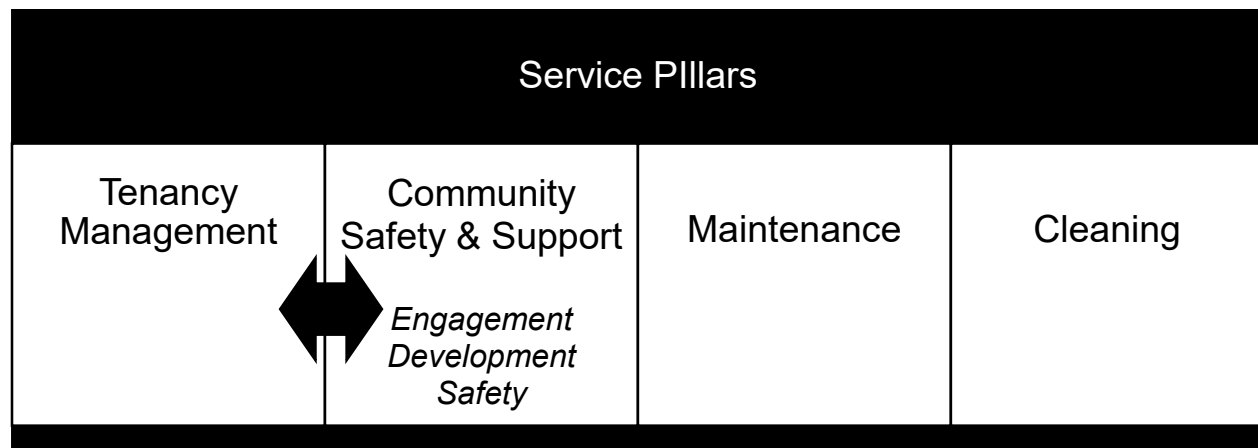
The new service model brings the services closer to tenants and allows for a better understanding of tenants living in the communities and their localized needs through the appropriate engagement and dialogue. It provides better insight into communities with a high prevalence of violence and by having a better understanding of the communities, it informs the delivery of solutions to address any violence in those communities.

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE THROUGH TENANCY MANAGEMENT

To address violence in TCHC communities, the Violence Reduction Program (“VRP”) was implemented in selected communities with a focus on improving safety and security tenants through community support and enhanced security presence. In non-VRP communities, an integrated approach has been adopted that leverages the Tenancy Management pillar.

The Tenancy Management pillar focuses on the delivery of tenancy management activities, including providing access and support to tenants. In addition, the Community Safety and Support pillar focuses on improving community safety and security across TCHC communities. It is through this symbiotic relationship that a coordinated and integrated response to violence in Non-VRP communities is possible. As incidents occur within the Tenancy Management pillar across communities, they inform actions taken within the Community Safety and Support pillar, and vice-versa.

Figure 1: TCHC Service Pillars



As part of the coordinated and integrated approach to violence, staff within the Tenancy Management pillar work in partnership with staff within the Community Safety and Support pillar to address violence in non-VRP communities.

In the Tenancy Management pillar, staff manage tenancies while applying the appropriate rules to govern tenancies through the terms of the TCHC residential lease, TCHC policies, City of Toronto Municipal Codes, and the *Residential Tenancies Act* (“RTA”).

In instances where a tenant is directly involved in violent or safety incidents in a non-VRP community, the incident is reviewed by the Tenancy Management staff to inform the development of a safety report, review whether the tenant is in violation of the terms of their tenancy, and to determine an appropriate course of action.

The tenant involved in the violent or safety incident will be verbally cautioned and advised that they are in breach of the terms of their tenancy. As well, the tenant is provided with the appropriate supports to maintain their tenancy, as required. If the tenant continues to be involved in violent or safety incidents, the tenant will be sent a formal caution letter. If the disturbances continue beyond the first caution letter, a second and final caution letter will be sent to the tenant. The Community Safety Unit is contacted with every disturbance throughout this process so that information is documented on the tenant’s file.

If disturbances continue, the Tenancy Management staff will request the Legal Department to prepare and mail a *Notice of Termination*. The tenant will still have an opportunity to maintain their tenancy by stopping the disturbances that are noted in the *Notice of Termination* and caution letters. If the disturbances cease, then the *Notice of Termination* cannot be forwarded to the Landlord and Tenant Board (“LTB”). If not, the LTB will schedule a hearing, at which point the tenant will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Adjudicator will then make a decision to either terminate the tenancy, suggest mediation, or provide another decision.

It should be noted that applications submitted to the LTB is an additional mechanism used by TCHC to evoke a change in behaviour and promote compliance; it seeks mediated agreements and deploys processes to monitor behaviour change. Only in extreme cases where TCHC has exhausted all support mechanisms would TCHC pursue termination of the tenancy, which includes working with TCHC partners to establish a landing plan for the household. To provide additional support to the tenancy management staff, the Tenant Resolution Office (“TRO”) is available to provide specialized support to manage and maintain complex tenancies.

Lastly, TCHC has a suite of policies in place to address violence in non-VRP communities. As well, the Tenancy Management staff can leverage its partnerships with the TRO and community partners to provide tenants access to crisis supports for the following:

- Suicide;
- *Mental Health Act* Apprehension;
- Concerning tenant behaviour;
- Unit condition; and
- Unit take-over.

TCHC’s procedure for addressing violence in non-VRP communities, regardless of its location (e.g. revitalization community).

SIGNATURE:

“John P. Angkaw”

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