

Toronto Community Housing Corporation
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Briefing Note

To: Building Investment, Finance and Audit Committee (“BIFAC”)

From: Sheila Penny, Chief Operating Officer (“COO”)

Date: August 10, 2021

Re: **In-Camera Action Item #5:** Application and Screening Process for Potential RGI Tenants

At the June 23, 2021 BIFAC meeting, the BIFAC requested Management to provide an overview of the application and screening process for rent-geared-to-income (“RGI”) housing applicants.

Background

All Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) RGI tenants are selected through the City of Toronto’s Centralized Waitlist (“CWL”), which is managed by Access to Housing at the City of Toronto.

The CWL is managed on a first-come-first-serve basis, where applicants receive an offer for RGI housing based on the date of their application approval. In addition, provincial regulations stipulate the prioritization of specific groups ahead of those without a priority code on the CWL. These groups include:

1. Special Priority Program: survivors of family/domestic abuse and human trafficking (provincial-mandated priority);
2. Terminal Illness: applicants who have less than two years to live (provincial-mandated priority); and
3. Overhoused Households: tenants living in RGI units that are larger than units they qualify for.

Acting in its capacity as the Service Manager, the City is empowered to implement its own priority policies in addition to the provincial regulations listed above. In Toronto, there are local priority rules, which outline the prioritization of the following applicants:

1. Homelessness: applicants experiencing homelessness, living in a shelter, including homeless newcomers;
2. Separated Families: families separated because of a lack of affordable housing; and
3. RGI Youth Applicants: youth who are 16+ years old at the time of application for RGI housing.

It should be noted that one in every seven tenants placed through the CWL are from one of these categories.

In order to maintain a fair application screening process, this process is facilitated directly by the Service Manager through the Access to Housing program. In addition, the CWL facilitates access to RGI units through the various RGI housing providers, including TCHC. As part of the application screening, applicants on the CWL must identify their preferred communities and outline the number of individuals in the household. The number of individuals in the household will determine what bedroom size they qualify for based on occupancy standards, as set by the City of Toronto Building Standards. Once the screening process is complete, Access to Housing ensures the applicant is placed on the waitlist for the unit they qualify for based on eligibility requirements and in chronological order based on their application date.

Applicants are then offered available units by the TCHC rental task force staff based on their requirements and priority; once an applicant is matched to a unit, the TCHC rental task force staff proceed to inform the applicant and facilitates a lease signing, which involves the completion of the initial annual review.