



Committee Report

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	May 28, 2020
Subject / Report No:	HDR-CW-05-20
Title:	Housing Services Act, 2011 Regulation Changes
Prepared by:	Anne Marie Shaw, Josh Gibson
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	County-wide initiative
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW100-20; Endorsed by County Council June 11, 2020 per Resolution CC58-20;

Recommendation

1. That report HDR-CW-05-20 be received for information regarding changes to Ontario Regulation 316/19 Section 50 of the Housing Services Act, 2011; and
2. That MS-HOU-002-002 Refusal of Offers Procedure be revoked effective July 1, 2020; and
3. That effective July 1, 2020 Grey County Housing refers to Section 32.2 and 38 of the Housing Services Act, 2011 when applicants refuse an offer of housing.

Executive Summary

On September 23, 2019 amendments to Ontario Regulation 367/11 under the Housing Services Act, 2011 were introduced and Service Managers are required to implement changes prior to January 1, 2021. Grey County Housing staff are recommending an implementation date of July 1, 2020 to coincide with other regulatory changes.

Background and Discussion

Section 32.2 under Ontario Regulation 367/11 states that a household will no longer be eligible to remain on the waitlist upon refusing an offer of housing where the offer has met the occupancy standards and the household had expressed a preference for that area. Households who refuse an offer of housing will have the option to be placed on the bottom of the waitlist or be removed from the list.

The regulation does offer the ability for Service Managers to determine if a household is experiencing extenuating circumstances and allow them to remain at the top of the waitlist and the offer would not be counted as a refusal. Potential situations which would be classified as extenuating circumstances include but are not limited to; hospitalization, safety, acute change in medical need, and/or receiving treatment for mental health or addiction.

In addition, section 38 has been amended to include current tenants who are on a transfer list to a more suitably sized unit. The same rule will apply, one offer will be made. Previously, these households had the opportunity to make two refusals of housing before no longer being eligible for a transfer or returning to the bottom of the list.

Grey County's current procedure MOU-HOU-002-002 will be revoked as of July 1, 2020. The former legislation required the Service Manager to enact a local rule to state the number of offers an applicant would receive. There is no longer a local rule required as the revised legislation only allows for one offer.

Notification

Prior to an implementation date of July 1, 2020 staff will make all reasonable efforts to inform current households on the waitlist of the changes in the legislation and how they affect the household or individual. It will be important moving forward that applicants work with staff to select buildings and locations that are best suited to their needs. At this time, many applicants put themselves on all or many buildings and locations when only a few will work for their situation. For example, if a person has family support and a doctor in Hanover and they apply to other areas such as Meaford, an offer for Meaford will often be refused.

Simplification of Calculating Rent

In addition to the changes to the offer rules there are legislation changes to the Rent Geared to Income calculations. A simplified approach to calculating rents has been developed using a tenants Adjusted Net Family Income from their Notice of Assessment to determine rental charges. This adjustment will also take place on July 1st, 2020. Protection for tenants whose income decreases by 20% through the year remain in place to allow for a rental reduction. Increase in income will no longer require a rental increase through the year, the rent would be adjusted at the next yearly review.

The changes to RGI rental calculations will reduce the administrative burden and provide consistency to tenants in community housing as it relates to their rental charges for the year.

Financial and Resource Implications

Staff will make all reasonable efforts to inform new applicants, and currently waitlisted households prior to the implementation date of July 1, 2020.

There are no financial implications of this change.

Relevant Consultation

Internal:

External: Grey County Non-Profit Housing Providers, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)

Appendices and Attachments

[SH - Notification Refusals](#)

[SH - Notification RGI Simplification](#)