

Please note:  
If your program is not checked, this Program Instruction is not applicable to your project(s)

- ✓ Public Housing
- ✓ Provincial Reform Housing Programs
- ✓ Municipal Non-Profit Housing Programs
- Federal Unilateral Housing Programs
- Rent Supplement - Commercial
- ✓ Rent Supplement - OCHAP & CSHP
- Rent Supplement Homelessness

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>RGI Assistance for Market Rent Households Local Priority Rule</b>
<b>Authority</b>	Sections 77 and 78 of the <i>Social Housing Reform Act, 2000</i>
<b>Summary</b>	Market rent households in social housing communities that experience a significant and involuntary financial loss can request priority status on their housing provider's subsidiary waiting list.
<b>Background</b>	<p>Under the Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA), market rent households requesting Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance (in-situ households) are treated as new applicants. They are ranked on the centralized waiting list based on the date they applied for RGI.</p> <p>A local priority category has been established on the centralized waiting list to assist in-situ households who require RGI assistance due to a significant involuntary loss of income. Eligible market households will be placed on their housing provider's subsidiary waiting list ranking below special priority applicants and above chronological applicants.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> An RGI household whose income increases to the market level remains an RGI household for twelve months. If the household income decreases during the twelve month period, the rent is recalculated. The household does not have to reapply for RGI. After twelve months, the household ceases to qualify for RGI. If the household income decreases at any point following the twelve month period, the household can apply for in-situ priority. The household must meet the in-situ eligibility criteria.</p>

## Procedure

### Eligibility for In-situ Priority

A market rent household living in a non-profit or co-operative housing community is eligible for in-situ priority if the household meets **all** of the following criteria.

- The household has experienced a significant loss of income.
- The loss of income was involuntary.
- The income loss is expected to be long-term.
- As a result of the loss, the household must pay more than 50% of their total gross income in rent and utilities. (heat, hydro, water)

Examples:

- 1) A senior couple has pension income only. If one spouse passes away, and the rent is greater than 50% of the remaining income, the surviving spouse is eligible for in-situ priority.
- 2) A two income family experiences a loss of income due to a maternity leave. Regardless of the percentage of remaining income required to pay the rent, this household is not eligible for in-situ priority as the income loss is not expected to be long-term. In-situ priority could be granted, however, if the mother was unable to return to work as planned because of a serious medical condition.
- 3) A single person loses their job and applies for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits. The gross EI benefits are \$1700 per month, and the rent is \$750. The rent is 44% of the EI income. This tenant is not eligible for in-situ priority.

### Requesting In-situ Priority

The household must complete an in-situ priority application form. (*see Appendix 1 – In-Situ Priority Application Form.*) The form is not considered to be complete unless all required documentation is attached.

The housing provider forwards the completed application form to the Program Co-ordinator. The Program Co-ordinator assesses the household's eligibility for RGI and the in-situ priority category. The Program Co-ordinator notifies the housing provider as to whether or not the household's application is approved. The housing provider is then responsible to notify the household and to advise the household that they are entitled to a review of the decision.

If the household is eligible for in-situ priority, the Program Co-ordinator forwards the application to the Supervisor, Housing Access Unit (HAU). HAU staff ensures that the household is added to the housing provider's subsidiary waiting list. Within the in-situ priority category, HAU ranks applicants based on the date they applied for RGI assistance.

### Allocating RGI Assistance to Market Households Without an RGI Vacancy

RGI subsidies can only be given to in-situ market households under very specific circumstances. The regulations allow a housing provider to give an RGI subsidy to the highest ranked market rent household on the chronological subsidiary waiting list only if:

- there have been no vacant units for at least one year,
  - there are no notices to vacate, and
  - the housing provider is under target for RGI units
- Regulation 339/01, s. 14.1*

Unless all three of the criteria above are met, an RGI subsidy can only be allocated when the housing provider has a vacant RGI unit. The housing provider cannot keep an internal list for subsidy. All RGI subsidies must be allocated using the subsidiary waiting list provided by HAU.

### **Allocating RGI Assistance to In-situ Priority Applicants**

Each housing provider's waiting list will now have three categories, ranked as follows:

- 1) Special Priority Applicants
- 2) In-situ Priority Applicants
- 3) Chronological Applicants

When the housing provider has an RGI vacancy, the following steps must be taken:

- 1) Offer the unit to applicants on the special priority waiting list.  
If the unit is filled with a special priority applicant, and the provider is still under target, the available RGI subsidies are allocated to the highest ranked applicants on the in-situ priority waiting list.
- 2) If the unit is not accepted by any of the special priority applicants, offer RGI assistance to the highest ranked market household on the in-situ priority list. The market household does not have to move to the vacant unit. All available RGI subsidies can be allocated to in-situ priority households.
- 3) After allocating in-situ subsidy, the housing provider determines whether the vacant unit is market or RGI. If all subsidies are allocated, the housing provider rents the unit at market. If the housing provider is still under target, the unit is offered to the highest ranked applicant on the chronological waiting list.

Examples:

- a) A housing provider has a target of 65 RGI units. They have only 62 RGI households and one vacant unit. The housing provider fills the RGI vacancy with a special priority applicant. The housing provider now has 63 RGI households and two available RGI subsidies. The RGI subsidies are allocated to the top two households on the in-situ priority waiting list.
- b) A housing provider has a target of 30 RGI units. They have 28 RGI households and one vacant unit. The housing provider has no special priority applicants and one in-situ priority applicant on their waiting list. An RGI subsidy is given to the in-situ priority household. The vacant unit is offered to the highest ranked applicant on the chronological waiting list.
- c) A housing provider has a target of 50 RGI units. They have 49 RGI households and one vacant unit. The housing provider has no special priority applicants and two in-situ priority applicants on their waiting list. An RGI subsidy is given to the highest ranked in-situ priority household. The vacant unit is rented at market.

## Action Required

Housing providers will make in-situ priority applications available to market households who need RGI assistance as a result of a change in circumstances. (*see Appendix 1 – In-Situ Priority Application Form.*)

Housing providers are required to allocate RGI subsidies only to applicants on the subsidiary waiting list provided by HAU.

Please contact your Program Co-ordinator if you have any questions.

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