

The Regional Municipality of York

Housing York Inc.
May 3, 2018

Report of the
General Manager

Agency Partnership Practices and Facility Use Principles

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The Board approve the following principle statement respecting use of common rooms and amenities in Housing York Buildings:

Housing York Inc.'s common rooms, amenities and resident spaces are provided for the benefit of the residents of that property and Housing York Inc.

2. Purpose

This report provides an overview of Housing York Inc.'s (Housing York) approach to partnerships for a variety of programs and the related use of Housing York facilities where applicable. The report also recommends a principle statement to guide allocation of Housing York facilities, with Attachment 1 providing an updated list of permitted uses of resident common rooms.

3. Background

Housing York works with partners to connect individual residents to supports to preserve their tenancies

Housing York offers referrals to Regional programs and/or community agencies when an individual resident needs support to maintain a successful tenancy. Depending on the situation, Housing York may offer to connect the resident to homelessness prevention programs, mental health supports, a social worker or other community services. Housing York does not have a direct relationship with the organization providing supports to the resident. In order to comply with privacy legislation, Housing York must request and obtain the resident's consent

before providing the resident's contact information to the program or service to make the referral.

While Housing York can encourage residents to work with Regional program partners and/or community agencies, the resident is responsible for the support service relationship. The referral process is guided by the Tenancy Management Policy approved by the Board in [December 2017](#).

Housing York partners with others to deliver programs and services open to all residents in a Housing York building

Housing York works with Regional partners and community agencies to offer a range of programs and services in Housing York communities that are expected to be of interest to many of the residents in that particular building. Examples include community paramedicine initiatives and exercise programs in seniors' buildings or after-school clubs at family sites. These programs are typically open to everyone in the building.

Housing York's role in these partnerships is in the form of "in kind" contributions, such as staff resources and use of resident common rooms or other ancillary spaces. Housing York does not purchase or fund the services provided. Partners normally receive government funding to deliver programs.

These partnerships are often informal, without written agreements that specify responsibility for insurance, security requirements or program participation reporting.

Housing York partners with support service agencies to provide affordable housing for people with special needs

Some people with special needs require both affordable housing and long term support services. Supportive housing programs are designed to ensure coordinated delivery of both housing and supports. In supportive housing partnerships, Housing York dedicates specific units to a community agency. The agency selects a client who is eligible for their support services to occupy the unit, and Housing York provides the housing services.

Housing York enters into lease agreements with the agency's client, usually providing rent subsidies, assuming full responsibility to address any accommodation requirements, and managing the tenancy. The client can terminate their relationship with the agency and remain a Housing York tenant without the supports they may need to remain a successful tenant. In these relationships, the agency has no responsibility to Housing York beyond referring the client to other service providers, which the client may or may not access.

Housing York currently has supportive housing arrangements with six different community agencies for a total of thirty-eight units, all located in family properties. For example, Housing York has a partnership with the March of Dimes, where Housing York assigns units modified for accessibility to the March of Dimes and they select clients with physical disabilities who need assistance with activities of daily living.

In more recent supportive housing partnerships, Housing York has entered into a lease agreement with the agency for all of the units allocated to them, making the community agency the tenant. The agency then enters into rental arrangements with their clients. This approach gives the agency more flexibility in using the units, and provides Housing York with assurances that the client will be appropriately supported and managed.

The Central Local Health Integration Network funds assisted living programs for seniors who live in or near eight Housing York buildings

Assisted Living is a health service for seniors with complex care needs, providing 24/7 assistance to seniors who need both scheduled and unscheduled supports on a daily basis to continue to live independently. These programs are funded and administered by the Central Local Health Integration Network and delivered by agencies such as Community Home Assistance to Seniors.

The Central Local Health Integration Network uses a “Hub and Spoke” model for assisted living services with designated centrally located seniors’ buildings as hubs. Eight Housing York buildings are designated hubs. Agency staff supports eligible residents in the building and in the surrounding neighbourhood. As part of their program delivery model, Community Home Assistance to Seniors rents space for their staff in four Housing York buildings.

4. Analysis and Implications

Housing York’s common rooms and ancillary facilities are primarily used by residents

Housing York properties typically include a resident common room. Additional amenity spaces may include shared kitchens, sitting areas, patios and gardens. Housing York uses resident common rooms for resident meetings and provides access to partners for programs that are delivered to residents in the building. Residents may also rent their common room for personal events.

The resident common rooms are primarily used by residents for informal social activities, such as children and youth dropping in to use the quiet space to do

homework, seniors meeting for tea or working on a communal puzzle while waiting for laundry. Some buildings have active resident committees that organize social activities like pot-luck dinners. Over the past two years Housing York has invested in wireless internet services as an additional resource for residents using the common rooms.

Housing York's current common room rental application permits resident use but does not address use by agency partners and external entities

Housing York has a long standing practice of permitting residents to reserve common rooms for personal activities for a nominal fee. Residents can book their common rooms for family events like birthday parties. At times, residents have requested the room on behalf of another person or organization rather than for personal use. For example, requesting the room for a family member's business event or as meeting space for an organization of which they are a member. Housing York also receives external requests for resident common room use, for example from a non-profit organization looking for space for a fundraising event. Moving forward, Housing York will clarify, as noted in Attachment 1, that these uses are not permitted.

Adopting the principle that Housing York Inc.'s common rooms, amenities and resident spaces are provided for the benefit of the residents of that property, will support Housing York in responding to ineligible requests for facility use.

Housing York is formalizing its approach to agency use of resident common rooms

There are competing pressures for room use, particularly in larger or well-located buildings and in buildings with a significant presence of staff from community agencies. Pressures have been particularly acute at the Richmond Hill Hub where agencies have frequently requested use of the resident common room for staff and board meetings as well as for programs serving external clients. Many agency relationships are informal in nature and there has been a lack of clarity regarding agency access to resident amenities.

Housing York residents sometimes express concerns about agency use of their shared spaces. The informal nature of agency arrangements also contributes to competing expectations. Moving forward, Housing York will clarify that agency use of resident amenities is provided for activities that directly benefit residents. Housing York may also permit limited agency rental of the resident common room for activities that indirectly support a resident program, for example, allowing a brief monthly staff meeting for a supportive housing agency operating in a building if no other space is available.

Housing York is formalizing its approach to partnerships

Both Housing York and its partners would benefit from formal agreements addressing matters such as building security, parking provisions, insurance requirements, outcome reporting and program evaluation. Housing York will work with legal services to establish standard agreements for resident programs and services and supportive housing. These agreements will be used for new partnership arrangements and will be transitioned to existing arrangements over time.

The principle statement supports Housing York's vision and mission

Planning for supportive housing contributes to Housing York's vision to build inclusive communities. Formalizing agency partnerships and prioritizing resident use of common rooms aligns with Housing York's mission to work with residents and partners to deliver housing programs and services that are important to our communities.

Housing York will update agreements, policies and communications for partnerships and resident common room usage

As a next step, Housing York will work with legal services to establish standard partnership agreements, and to review and update the common room rental policy to align with the principle statement proposed in this report, subject to Board approval. Any changes affecting residents will be shared at resident meetings and through updated communication materials. Housing York will work with affected partners individually to transition to new agreements.

5. Financial Considerations

Most agency partnerships are informal, without requirements for partners to carry appropriate insurance. Future agreements will include insurance requirements and indemnity provisions that better clarify the responsibilities of Housing York and partner organizations. Housing York will also review the fee structure to better reflect the operating costs associated with common room rentals while maintaining affordability for residents.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Housing York works with Regional partners and community agencies to deliver programs and services to residents across the Region.

7. Conclusion

This report provides an overview of Housing York's approach to partnerships for resident programs, proposes as a guiding principle that Housing York Inc.'s common rooms, amenities and resident spaces are provided for the benefit of the residents of that property and Housing York Inc., and outlines permitted uses of Housing York's resident common rooms.

For more information on this report, please contact Rick Farrell, General Manager at 1-877-464-9675 ext.72091.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Recommended by:

Approved for Submission:

Rick Farrell
General Manager

Katherine Chislett
President

April 19, 2018

Attachment (1)

#8258275

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

Permitted Uses of Resident Common Rooms

Permitted Uses	Reservation Required	Rental Fee
Use by Residents		
<p>1. Informal, non-exclusive use by residents</p> <p><i>Examples: student internet access to do homework, seniors working on communal puzzle doing laundry</i></p>	No	No
<p>2. Resident organized social events open to all residents in the building</p> <p><i>Examples: pot-luck dinners, card games</i></p>	Yes	No
<p>3. Exclusive use by a resident for a family or social event that would otherwise be held in their homes if space permitted</p> <p><i>Examples: resident's birthday party or baby shower. Residents are not permitted to reserve the room on behalf of another person or organization</i></p>	Yes	Yes
Use by Housing York		
<p>4. Housing York meetings with residents, staff, contractors, guests, etc.</p> <p><i>Examples: annual resident fire safety information sessions, meetings with site staff, meetings with contractors during capital repair projects</i></p>	Yes	No
Use by the Region, agencies and other partners		
<p>5. Delivery of a program or service to residents of the building, approved by Housing York</p> <p><i>Examples: exercise classes, after-school activity programs, community paramedicine programs</i></p>	Yes	Determined through partnership agreement
<p>6. Occasional use for Regional activities and Regionally approved events on behalf of other levels of government</p> <p><i>Examples: housing related provincial funding announcements, grand openings of new buildings</i></p>	Yes	No

Permitted Uses	Reservation Required	Rental Fee
7. Rental by members of Regional Council for resident information sessions	Yes	Yes
8. Use as polling stations for federal, provincial or municipal elections*	Yes	No

*No other campaign-related activities permitted