

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL	
Section: I. Social Housing	Effective Date: October 1, 2020 Revised Jan.15, 2021
Topic: I.2. Tenant Policies	Replaces: October 1, 2020
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POLICY

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB wishes to embrace the new Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy and begin the transition of our housing portfolio in order to better suit the needs of our communities in order to create a more vibrant mixed-income community and ensure the viability of our assets.

The Housing Services Act (HSA) stipulates that a Service Manager shall establish and administer a centralized waiting list for the service area.

Additionally, as part of the Act, flexibility in some areas is granted to Service Managers to create local rules which will enhance and support their communities' housing needs.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB embraces this concept and wishes to establish local priorities for waiting applicants, and to embrace recent changes to the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) that is making a commitment to modernize Ontario's Social Housing Programs into a more people-centered, outcomes-focused and sustainable approach to housing for Ontario Families.

As of July 1, 2016, the Housing Services Act has been amended to remove the requirement for public housing projects to have as many RGI units as possible.

The DSB will establish the following priorities, in the following order when ranking applicants on the Social Housing waiting list:

1. **Victims of Family Violence and/or Human Trafficking (provincially mandated)**
2. **Homeless – local priority**
3. **Senior – local priority**

Great care will be taken to ensure that Service Level Standards as guided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing are maintained. These standards are currently being exceeded with the adoption of the Direct Shelter Subsidy Program.

Consideration will be given to the waiting list at the time the vacancy occurs to ensure that the ratio is conducive to the community needs and to determine the best mix for the building based on the existing waiting list in order to create a more

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vibrant mixed-income community.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB maintains the Service Level Standards as prescribed in the Housing Services Act.

The DSB will use the High Need Household Chart as determined in the procedure to calculate Market Rent values.

PROCEDURE

To ensure community needs are met, a thorough examination of the waitlist will occur in order to create a more vibrant mixed-income community based on local needs. The units will be filled with rent geared-to-income applicants, affordable applicants and market renters. For example, if the waiting list contains a majority of RGI applicants, then vacancy will be filled with more RGI applicants. Similarly, if a majority of applicants are deemed as affordable applicants, the vacancies will be filled with more affordable applicants.

All applications for RGI assistance are submitted to the DSB, and when deemed to be complete, are added to the central waiting list.

Ranking Priority:

To establish priority, households applying for housing will be provided a score based on a matrix ranking system that will place the households in order of priority.

1. Victims of Family Violence and/or Human Trafficking

This category is for victims of domestic/family abuse and human trafficking has some provincially defined rules.

2. Homeless

This category has been established for situations where persons are deemed homeless through circumstances beyond their control. There are no provincially defined rules.

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A household considered to be homeless would include a household without shelter or living in temporary/emergency housing due to circumstances such as:

- Fire or natural disaster.
- Notice of early termination due to their landlord taking over their unit for its own or family member's use.
- Building condemnation.
- Financial hardship incurred due a drastic change in income.

3. Seniors

A senior is defined as someone who is 65 years or older.

All Other Applicants

All other applicants will be ranked on the waiting list based on their income and assets. For applicants with the exact same ranking score, the date of application will be used to determine priority on the wait list where no other special priority ranking exists.

Waiting Lists for Non-Profit Housing Providers

Applications for Housing Providers are received and processed in the same fashion as any other application for housing and are then added to the Centralized Waiting List. Applicants who are applying for the Non-Profit Buildings in Espanola, Little Current and Gore Bay will be given the option to be placed on the waiting list for the non-profit housing building **ONLY** or all buildings in the community.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will provide each Housing Provider with the next eligible applicant on the waiting list when an RGI unit becomes available in the Non-Profit provider building. Non-Profit Providers will be responsible to advise the DSB as soon as they know of a vacancy in order to prevent any vacancy loss.

Applicants are advised that, while on the waiting list, they must notify the DSB in writing, of any changes to the information they have provided on the application form, within thirty (30) business days of the change.

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Applicants are responsible to advise of any changes to their income or household information. If extenuating circumstances exist, the Service Manager may use discretion when rendering a decision related to eligibility or allow the applicant a longer period to provide such information.

Application Process

A system has been designed to assist with the ranking of individuals applying for housing that applies the ranking based on the screening questions embedded within the revised housing screening application.

All applicants will be required to submit current income and asset information at the time an offer is made to ensure that the information is current and correct. At this time, the file will be checked to ensure that outstanding arrears have not presented since the time of application as this affects the applicant's eligibility to receive rent subsidy.

Additionally, waiting applicants may be reviewed for other programs, such as the Direct Shelter Subsidy Program, that may assist with affordability of housing costs. This will decrease the number of people who are on the waitlist and will provide them with a portable housing benefit where they are currently living. The DSB aims to move towards a more coordinated, effective system that better matches people with housing needs to an appropriate form of assistance.

1. A household that is applying for RGI assistance within the DSB's service area is required to complete a screening application.
2. Designated sections of the screening application are designed to indicate if a household should be included in one of the Priority Categories.
3. More specifically, applicants/tenants who indicate that they are a victim of family violence are immediately sent a Request for Special Priority package for completion.
4. Completed screening applications are ranked by the current system based on their situation, income and assets.
5. Eligibility for RGI subsidy is determined using Provincial eligibility

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requirements.

6. An applicant shall be added to the central waiting list upon the DSB determining that the household is eligible
7. The unit size will be determined by the size of the household according to occupancy standards, based on the largest size for which the household is eligible.
8. Applicants will be asked to indicate which community they wish to live in, this will assist the DSB in determining housing needs across the entire jurisdiction. In addition, applicants will be asked in which DSB community they wish to reside, where Community Housing already exists. This will ensure all applicants have an opportunity to be housed if their initial preference was a community where no Community Housing exists.
9. If a household does not indicate any preference for a community in which they want to live. The area will be based on the address on the application.
10. A household's preference for a community in which they would like to live in can be amended if the applicant requests it.
11. Once notice to vacate is received from a household, the offer process begins to minimize vacancy loss.
12. At this time applicants meeting the criteria of the vacancy are required to submit a complete application package to update income and asset information to confirm their eligibility for the vacancy **and that their ranking on the Community Housing waiting list has not significantly changed based on actual verified income and assets.** In addition, verification is done to ensure that no rental arrears exist that deem their application ineligible.
13. It is preferable to contact applicants via telephone to expedite the offer process. Three attempts should be made to contact the applicant eligible for the offer. These attempts should be documented in the applicant file. If the applicant does not have a telephone, the alternate number can be

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used.

14. If the application does not indicate a telephone number or alternate contact number, only then should the applicant's offer of accommodations be sent by mail. The applicant is given 5 days to reply to the offer. The mailing should include all forms required to be completed by the applicant to determine eligibility.
15. Once an offer of accommodation is accepted by an applicant, the verification documents and unit type (RGI/Affordable/Market) will determine the rent payable. At this time the Service Request is updated to inform IAM Staff of the tenant and move-in dates. The amount of time given to complete the form is determined by the date of the offer but must be within 2 weeks of the move-in date to allow processing. (note: Special Priority applications and applications of persons in high need may be processed quicker depending on circumstances)
16. A household shall be removed from the central waiting list if
 - a. it requests to be removed or if it ceases to be eligible to be included.

OR

 - b. if it has accepted an offer from a housing program, including Direct Shelter Subsidy.
17. The rent calculation is done using the appropriate software and passed on to the Program Supervisor for verification.
18. Once the rent calculation is approved the lease can be prepared.
19. Move in dates are dependent on the readiness of the unit as determined by the Community **Housing Program Supervisor responsible for property maintenance**. The vacant units listing on SharePoint must be verified before advising a potential tenant of a move in date in order to ensure that the unit has been released.
20. If the tenant moves into the unit at a time other than the first of a month, pro-rated rent is to be calculated except where the tenant supplies

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a valid rent receipt from a landlord for the period.

Pro-rated rent is calculated by dividing the full monthly rental amount by the number of days in the month and multiplying the result by the move in date.

Example: Rent is \$122.00 starting September 1
 Tenant wants to move in on the 20, of August
 Divide \$122 by 31 days = 3.935
 Multiply 3.935 x 12 days (31 days in month- 19 days past)
 Rent from August 20 – 31 = \$47.22 rounded to \$47.00

Applicants will be offered housing or Direct Shelter Subsidy by the DSB in accordance with their ranking on the appropriate waiting list.

Refusal of A DSB Unit

The new waitlist system will re-rank the applicant at each refusal and cancel the application. The number of refusals will not be limited; however, each refusal will result in a re-ranking of the applicant on the waiting list and the application cancelled. Applicants may reapply at any time.

If the Applicant has Special Priority Ranking and they refuse an offer of accommodation for the selection preference, the ranking priority for this category will be removed.

In extenuating circumstances, the DSB may determine that an applicant remains in the same ranking category after the refusal of a valid offer. Extenuating circumstances are unforeseen circumstances which were out of the control of the applicant, are unlikely to occur again, and resulted in the applicant not being able to meet a requirement to remain in the ranking category for the waitlist. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Endangerment of Special Provincial Priority (SPP) applicants
- Medical or health emergencies
- Family emergencies
- Court-ordered situations

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These extenuating circumstances do not, in and of themselves, guarantee that an applicant will remain at the same ranking for the waitlist. Any exceptions to the offer system must be well documented, available for review, and approved by the Director of Integrated Social Services.

High Need Household

The December 2015 High Need Household Chart for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB are as follows:

Bachelor	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4+ bedroom
\$32,100	\$37,500	\$40,800	\$44,100	\$54,000

Until further notice, the DSB will use the December 2015 High Need Households to determine eligibility.

Service Levels Standards

Households	High Need	Modified Units
323	186	14

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The DSB's Market rent is based on the **2015 High Need Household Chart listed as "Schedule 1 High Needs Households (Section 1)" dated Dec 2, 2015 of Ontario Regulation 370/11 under the Housing Services Act 2011 subsection 40(4) shown below.**

<p>Housing Services Act, 2011 ONTARIO REGULATION 370/11 HIGH NEEDS HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME LIMITS — SUBSECTION 40 (4) OF THE ACT</p> <p><u>Historical version for the period December 2, 2015 to December 31, 2015.</u> Last amendment: O. Reg. 375/15.</p> <p><i>High needs household criteria, s. 40 (4) of the Act</i></p> <p>1. (1) The criteria in subsection (2) is prescribed for the purposes of the definition of "high needs household" in subsection 40 (4) of the Act. O. Reg. 370/11, s. 1 (1).</p> <p>(2) To be a high needs household, the annual income for a household must be less than or equal to the maximum annual household income set out in Schedule 1 for the size of unit the household occupies and the area where the unit is located. O. Reg. 370/11, s. 1 (2).</p> <p><i>Household income limit, s. 40 (4) of the Act</i></p> <p>2. (1) The household income limit under subsection (2) is prescribed for the purposes of the definition of "household income limit" in subsection 40 (4) of the Act. O. Reg. 370/11, s. 2 (1).</p> <p>(2) The household income limit for a household is the annual household income limit set out in Schedule 2 for the size of unit the household occupies and the area where the unit is located. O. Reg. 370/11, s. 2 (2).</p> <p>3. OMITTED (PROVIDES FOR COMING INTO FORCE OF PROVISIONS OF THIS REGULATION). O. Reg. 370/11, s. 3.</p>

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**SCHEDULE 1_
HIGH NEEDS HOUSEHOLDS (SECTION 1)**

Item	Column 1 Service Manager	Column 2 Area	Column 3 Maximum annual household income Bachelor unit	Column 4 Maximum annual household income 1-bedroom unit	Column 5 Maximum annual household income 2-bedroom unit	Column 6 Maximum annual household income 3-bedroom unit	Column 7 Maximum annual household income 4-bedroom unit or larger
56	Manitoulin- Sudbury District Services Board	Whole Service Area	\$32,100	\$37,500	\$40,800	\$44,100	\$54,000

This policy will not automatically follow changes to the High Need Household Chart listed in the regulation however DSB Staff will review all subsequent changes to the regulation to determine whether this policy and procedure needs to be updated.

Definitions

Rent-Geared-to-Income is based on 30% of gross household income, plus or minus any utility charges.

Affordable Housing is based on 80% of DSB market rent. These rents will include heat, hydro and water.

Unit Size	Annual Household Income	Market Rents	Affordable Rents
Bachelor Unit	\$32,100	\$805	\$644
1 - Bedroom	\$37,500	\$940	\$752
2 – Bedroom	\$40,800	\$1,025	\$820
3 – Bedroom	\$44,100	\$1,105	\$884
4 – Bedroom	\$54,000	\$1,355	\$1,084

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Please refer to Ontario Works Policy #10.3 – Direct Shelter Subsidy