



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB Board
From:	Donna Stewart, Director of Integrated Social Services, Amy Ingram, Community Housing Program Supervisor
Date:	September 24, 2020
Re:	Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing - Issue Report

Purpose

On July 22, 2020, the [Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020](#) received Royal Assent in the Ontario Legislature.

The *Act* amends the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*, the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, the *Building Code Act, 1992*, and repeals the *Ontario Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act*. The amendments to the Acts are a part of the following:

- [More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing](#) Supply Action Plan to make it easier to build housing, including rental housing, and to build the right types of homes in the right places;
- [Community Housing Renewal Strategy](#) – a multi-year strategy to stabilize and grow Ontario's Community Housing Sector; and
- Transforming the Delivery of Building Code Services by enabling the creation of a future administrative authority that would deliver faster, better, and smarter services to support the safe construction of buildings.
- The dissolving of the *Ontario Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act* would shift the financial responsibilities for various legacy housing programs from an agency to the ministry.

These amendments are intended to:

- Provide a streamlined legislative framework for community housing that will incent non-profit and co-operative housing providers to stay in the housing system once their original agreements and mortgages end.
- Make it easier for Service Managers and housing providers to meet the housing needs of their communities, while enabling opportunities for long-term sustainability and new community housing development.

The changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* (RTA) strengthen protections for tenants while making it easier to be a landlord by helping both landlords and tenants resolve disputes:

- Encourages repayment agreements
- Prevents unlawful evictions
- Compensates tenants for “no fault” evictions
- Increases maximum fines for individuals and corporations convicted of offences under the Act
- Increases tenant compensation for “bad faith” evictions
- Streamlines Landlord and Tenant Board Processes
- Reduces unnecessary and duplicative information
- Allows more tools for better enforcement of RTA offences
- Allows landlords to recover costs without resorting to eviction
- Updates land lease and mobile home rules
- Allows greater flexibility for employers to provide employee housing

The changes to the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA) would enable Ontario to update the community housing system to ensure it is sustainable. The changes build on the commitments in the Community Housing Renewal Strategy by:

- Removing rules that penalize people for working more hours or going back to school
- Making rent-geared-to-income calculations easier for tenants and providers
- Filling vacant community housing units faster
- Protecting people who live in community housing by allowing housing providers to turn away tenants who have previously been evicted for serious criminal activities

The changes to the *Building Code Act, 1992* are designed to:

- Help increase housing supply
- Enable the future creation of an administrative authority that would help deliver faster and better building code services

An overview of changes to the Act and what it means for future work with sector partners to develop regulations. The new legislative provisions provide:

- Streamlined Legislative Framework to Grow Community Housing: The framework for the government to work with Services Managers, housing providers and sector partners on baseline parameters and minimum standards for service agreements.

- Protection of Community Housing: A foundation for the province to work with Service Managers, housing providers and sector partners to develop rules and a process for housing projects to exit the system.
- Modernizing Accountability Approaches: The ability to broaden the types of housing assistance that could be counted towards a Service Manager's and sector partners to propose a modern, outcomes-based approach to accountability and service level standards in regulation.
- Improving Access Systems: A plan to work with Service Managers and sector partners on proposing a regulation on the housing assistance to be included in the access system to encourage the range of housing assistance delivered locally.
- More Consistent Local Eligibility Rules: A requirement for Service Managers to have local eligibility rules for rent-geared-to-income assistance would enable greater consistency across the province in how housing need is identified and prioritized.

The legislative amendments are broad and enabling. The government is committed to working with sector partners to develop proposed regulations setting out the details on how the new legislative provisions would work on the ground in communities. The new provisions in the legislation are planned to come into force incrementally over time, as regulatory details are developed. This will help give communities and housing providers the time they need to make important business decisions and to plan for implementation.

Conclusion

The changes outlined in the document will depend on the approval of future regulations to be developed over the coming years. The ministry is committed to continuing to work with its municipal partners and sector stakeholders in all areas of regulation development as we enter this period of transformational change.

We will provide more details to the Board as they become available.