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Municipal Affairs
and Housing

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December 12, 2013

TO: Service Managers

FROM: Janet Hope,
Assistant Deputy Minister

RE: **New Reporting Requirements – Service Manager Annual Housing and Homelessness Plan Public Reporting Effective January 1, 2014**

As you know, in November 2010, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) released the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) as a foundation for providing an efficient, accountable and accessible framework for affordable housing in Ontario.

As part of the LTAHS, the government made several commitments related to performance measurement and reporting for both Service Managers and MMAH. One of the commitments was to have Service Managers report annually to the public on the progress of their Housing and Homelessness Plans. Creating an annual progress reporting requirement for Service Managers on their Plans will help to enhance local transparency and accountability, and will also ensure that local communities remain engaged in the Plan process through regular progress updates.

I am writing to inform you that in support of this commitment, new regulatory requirements will become effective January 1, 2014. These new requirements allow maximum local flexibility while ensuring accountability to the public through annual progress reporting.

Specifically, Ontario Regulation 367/11 under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, has been amended to include sections 8.1 and 9.1. These sections are effective January 1, 2014, and will require Service Managers to:

- Report annually to the public on the progress against their Plans starting in 2015 based on previous calendar year activities. Public reports are to be completed no later than June 30 of each year. In other words, the first public reports, on progress in 2014 will be required no later than June 30, 2015.
- Report to the public on the measures taken and the progress achieved to meet the objectives and targets in their Housing and Homelessness Plans. The format and content of

the reporting is not prescribed; however, Service Manager reporting requirements mirror certain Housing and Homelessness Plan requirements under section 6 of the *Housing Services Act, 2011* and section 3 of Ontario Regulation 367/11;

- Provide the Minister of MMAH with a report on the same information provided to the public and indicate how it was reported to the public (e.g. through press release, annual reports, web-based materials, etc.) no later than June 30 of each year.

A copy of the new requirements can be found on the province's e-laws site at the following address:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_110367_e.htm

In addition, I would also like to take this opportunity to provide you with a progress update on the other LTAHS commitments related to performance measurement and reporting including province-wide LTAHS reporting, the development of common local performance indicators and the implementation of tenant satisfaction surveys.

As you may know, the province already reports on the Ontario Housing Measure and on other housing related activities through the annual Poverty Reduction Strategy report. Going forward, MMAH will use the information reported in Service Manager annual progress reports to supplement the ongoing analysis of housing and homelessness issues in order to inform potential future province-wide LTAHS progress reporting.

Over the past year, MMAH staff have been working with an External Working Group made up of Service Manager representatives and staff from housing sector organizations to develop a series of draft performance indicators. Analyses of these indicators have been shaped by concerns about the move by the Federal government from the mandatory long-form census to the voluntary National Household Survey. In particular, there are concerns about the future availability and reliability of housing related data at the Service Manager level. MMAH continues to work with stakeholders and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to evaluate the impact of these changes.

Finally, staff are conducting analysis of potential policy options to inform future decision-making regarding the social housing tenant satisfaction surveys. The development of options will in part be based on lessons learned through the Housing Services Corporation's recently completed Resident Satisfaction Pilot Survey.

I look forward to your continued support and partnership. Please contact John Sawyer, Manager in the Housing Policy Branch at John.Sawyer@ontario.ca or by phone at 416-585-7348 if you have any questions regarding the new reporting requirements.



Janet Hope
Assistant Deputy Minister
Housing Division

Service Manager Annual Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Public Reporting

Questions and Answers

Q1. The regulation comes into effect on January 1, 2014. But, when do Service Managers actually start reporting to the public and the Minister?

A1. Service Managers will need to have their first public reporting (based on activities undertaken during 2014 calendar year) completed no later than June 30, 2015. The next round of reporting based on 2015 calendar year activities will have to be completed no later than June 30, 2016. This reporting cycle will continue each year thereafter.

Q2. Are Service Managers required to report on specific measures or activities? OR, Do Service Managers have to develop detailed reports?

A2. Regulatory requirements are set out at a high level to establish an overall local reporting and accountability framework for Housing and Homelessness Plans. The regulation does not prescribe any content for the public reporting or any specific reporting format, beyond requiring reporting on the measures taken and progress achieved to meet the objectives and targets in their Housing and Homelessness Plans.

This approach will allow Service Managers to be innovative and creative in their reporting styles, tailoring their approach to meet their local needs within available resources. This flexible reporting approach recognizes the varied capacity and practices across the province's 47 Service Managers. It is also consistent with the province's approach for Housing and Homelessness Plans.

Q3. What are the implementation costs of this new requirement? Will the Ministry provide funding to offset costs?

A3. Service Managers may incur additional costs associated with reporting progress to the public annually, particularly in cases where no previous reporting has taken place. In order to keep the costs to a minimum, the regulation provides Service Managers with the flexibility to produce reports in a manner most appropriate to fit their local needs and available resources. In other words, the regulation does not prescribe specific content or reporting format for the public reports, beyond requiring reporting on the measures taken and progress achieved to meet the objectives and targets in their Housing and Homelessness Plans.

Reporting to the public could be done in a number of ways including publishing annual progress reports, introducing a new progress reporting section within existing reports, providing web-based progress updates, issuing press-releases, etc.

This flexible reporting approach recognizes the varied capacity and practices across the province's 47 Service Managers. It is also intended to help Service Managers leverage existing progress monitoring and reporting mechanisms (where they exist) to meet the new obligations and minimize costs and duplication.

The province will not provide additional funding to Service Managers for implementing this new reporting requirement.