

**Ministry of Housing**

**Minister Responsible for the  
Poverty Reduction Strategy**

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17-72213

Hello,

I am writing to inform you that Bill 7, the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016* received Royal Assent on December 8, 2016.

The *Promoting Affordable Housing Act* makes important and meaningful changes to the *Housing Services Act, 2011* and the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2016* by:

- Giving local service managers more choice in how they deliver and administer social housing programs and services to reduce wait lists and make it easier for people in Ontario to access a range of housing options.
- Encouraging more inclusive communities and strengthening tenant rights by preventing unnecessary evictions from social housing and creating more mixed-income housing.
- Gathering data about homelessness in Ontario by requiring service managers to conduct local enumeration of those who are homeless in their communities, so that Ontario can continue to work towards its goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025.
- Allowing tenants in social housing to retain more of their income without having to face higher rents or eviction.

These amendments support Ontario's update to the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) announced in March 2016. The update focuses on making housing programs more people-centred and co-ordinated, and provides municipalities with flexibility to meet local needs.

Promoting more affordable housing is part of the government's plan to create jobs, grow the economy and help people in their everyday lives.

Please see below further details on the amendments and implementation.

### ***Housing Services Act, 2011***

- **Ministerial Consents:** With the passing of the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*, Service Managers will have the authority to provide consent for the transfer of most social housing properties. This change will provide greater flexibility for Service Managers in meeting local housing needs and streamline the approval process.

In addition, the Minister will retain the authority, by regulation, to remove a Service Manager's consent authority for the transfer of social housing properties if the Service Manager makes consent decisions that are not in accordance with the Ministerial Directive. Specifically, Service Managers will be required to describe how the Ministerial Directive has been satisfied as part of the notification to the Ministry of Housing.

A Ministerial Directive has been issued to outline the details related to Service Manager consent for the transfer of social housing projects. Service Managers will be required to follow the Ministerial Directive when considering giving consents.

The Ministerial Directive will be in effect as of January 1, 2017. Prior to the planned January 1, 2017 implementation date, the ministry provided Service Managers with a Guide that highlights the increased autonomy and flexibility the Province is providing to Service Managers in social housing administrative matters, and notification requirements.

- **Homeless Enumeration:** The amendments in Bill 7 will require municipal Service Managers to undertake regular local enumeration of homeless populations and report their findings.

The Ministry of Housing intends to release a Minister's Directive and supplemental guidelines for Service Managers on the province's homeless enumeration requirement early in the New Year.

The Minister's Directive and supplemental guidelines will outline the provincial requirements and standards for conducting homeless enumeration at the local level and are aimed at assisting Service Managers with undertaking homeless enumeration in their communities.

- **Service Level Standards and the Portable Housing Benefit Framework:** The amendments will allow municipal Service Managers to use alternative forms of municipally-funded housing assistance to meet their service level standards and allow municipal Service Managers to remove families and individuals who accept alternative forms of municipally funded housing assistance from local waiting lists.

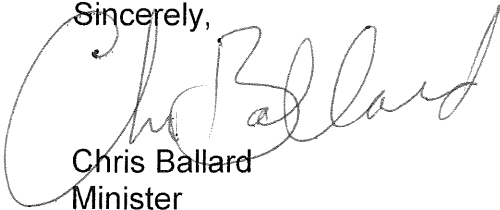
The ministry is currently working with stakeholders on developing a portable housing benefit framework and intends to consult more broadly on the framework in the coming months.

### ***Residential Tenancies Act, 2006***

- **Social Housing Evictions:** the amendment, which came into effect upon Royal Assent, clarify that under the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*, a tenant who ceases to be eligible for rent-geared-to-income assistance after paying 12 months of market rent can no longer be evicted on these grounds. This will help ensure that tenants who see their economic situation improve will not be penalized.

At this time, I would also like to recognize our various municipal, housing and tenant stakeholder groups who provided us with their valuable input on the LTAHS Update and the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*. Without you, these important changes would not have been possible.

Sincerely,



Chris Ballard  
Minister