

<b>Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board POLICY &amp; PROCEDURES MANUAL</b>	
Section: I. Community Housing	Effective Date: <b>July 1, 2021</b>
Topic: I.3. Eligibility	Replaces Dec. 1, 2020
Subject: 3.1. Determining Unit Size & Occupancy Standards	
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**POLICY**

**The Housing Services Act** establishes a Service Manager’s authority to determine the size of unit a geared-to-income household is eligible for using what is known as occupancy standards.

These policy standards have been developed for the purposes of determining the size and type of unit in respect of which an applicant(s) or tenant(s) may be eligible. Departure from the policy guidelines will only be considered on an individual basis with a requirement that the respective file be fully supported with written documentation in the event that a household requests a review of these standards or for project audit purposes.

The number of bedrooms a household is eligible for will be determined by applying the standards outlined in the following text. Additional bedrooms may be granted only if the household requests it. Occupancy standards may take into consideration the number and type of rooms in a unit, the number of members in a household, the age and gender of each member, relationship of the members to each other, space for equipment or support services and other factors.

**PROCEDURE**

**The Housing Services Act** establishes the service manager’s authority to determine what size of unit a rent-geared-to-income household is eligible for, using what are known as occupancy standards. Additional bedrooms may be granted only if the household requests it and such request can be justified within the policy.

**A) The Largest Unit a household can have is: (O.Reg. 298/01, s.27)**

- One bedroom for spouses (including same-sex partners).
- One bedroom for each additional member of the household
- An additional bedroom if the request falls under the criteria of the SHRA 298/01 s. 27 (2), O. Reg. 342/05 s.2 (1)
- Additional bedrooms above will only be granted if they are requested and where:
  - One of the spouses or same-sex partners requires a separate bedroom

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- because of a medically documented disability or medical condition;
  - A member of the household is disabled or has a medical condition that requires separate bedroom to store equipment related to their medical condition;
  - Fulfilling the requirements of a joint custody agreement where the child(ren) is/are not a member of the household;
  - Fulfilling the requirements of a visitation agreement where the child(ren) is/are not a member of the household;
  - An additional bedroom if a member of the household is pregnant
- Children up to the age of 26 years, are deemed to be part of the household if their primary residence is in the household that is eligible for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance and if they are attending at a recognized educational institution out-of-town, on a full time basis.

**B) The Smallest Unit a household can have is: (O.Reg 298/01, s.28)**

- A bachelor unit for one (1) individual.
- One bedroom for every two household members.
- For households consisting of an odd number of members, one bedroom will be assigned according to the following minimum standards: 3 members = 2 bedrooms; 5 members = 3 bedrooms etc.
- One bedroom will be assigned to two (2) children of the same sex who are no more than three (3) years apart in age
- One bedroom may be assigned to a parent and child in a family housing unit if the child is under the age of five (5), and if:
  - this is agreed to by the tenant/applicant, and
  - if the housing provider consents.

**IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES:**

**REQUESTING ADDITIONAL BEDROOMS:**

A request for an additional bedroom(s) may be included in an application for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance, or after the application is submitted and/or processed. All requests for additional bedrooms must be submitted to the housing provider in writing. If a request for an additional bedroom(s) is/are subsequently withdrawn by the household, the housing provider will ensure that the request to withdraw is submitted to them in writing. When a request for an additional bedroom(s) is made, the housing provider will ensure that standard application procedures/occupancy standards are met.

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## **REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY – Applicants**

Upon application updates, the information received from the applicant or household should be reviewed to determine if the unit size determined at initial application or as of the last review, still applies.

## **REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY - Tenants**

When conducting annual verification reviews of households occupying Rent-Geared-to-Income units, the housing provider will include a review of the size and type of the unit to verify that the unit is within the acceptable occupancy range set out in these occupancy standards.

## **OVER-HOUSED HOUSEHOLDS:**

The rules relating to Housing Providers and Service Manager differ somewhat, and so the steps outlined, will take on the role of the Provider. Refer to the Guide to Rent-Geared-to-Income Assistance when determining the role of the Service Manager.

If the review determines that a tenant(s) occupies a Rent-Geared-to-Income housing unit that is larger than the largest unit in respect of which the household is eligible to receive Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance, the following steps will be taken. [These steps are not applicable to households that are eligible for Special Needs housing.]

- If the housing provider has a unit in a housing project that they operate, occupied or not, that is of a size within the range in respect of which the household is eligible to receive Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance according to the occupancy standards of the DSB, the housing provider shall give the household written notification of the household's over-housed status and that the provider has added the household to their internal waiting list.
- If, after one year from the date that the household was added to the Housing Provider's internal waiting list and the household is still residing in a unit in a housing project that they operate that is not of a size within the range in respect of which the household is eligible to receive RGI assistance according to the occupancy standards in the DSB, the housing provider shall give both the household and the Service Manager written notice of that fact and the household shall be added to the centralized

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- waiting list.(if the Service Manager and the provider are one in the same, this step does not apply)
- If the household requests that they be removed from the waiting list, the household becomes ineligible for RGI assistance and should receive 90-days notice to Market Value.
  - The household will remain on the internal/centralized waiting list until they accept an offer of a suitably sized unit, or until the household has refused three offers of an appropriate sized RGI unit.
  - An RGI household who refuses three offers of such a unit is given 90-day notice to market rent and can have their tenancy terminated for such ineligibility.
  - Tenancies who are at market rent, no longer qualify for subsidy and must reapply for RGI subsidy. They do not receive priority of any kind on the waiting list.

### **REFERENCES:**

Ontario Regulation 298/01 Sections 26-34  
**Housing Services Act**