

Housing Division Notice

Date: May 05, 2005

HDN# 2005 - 90

This applicable legislation/policy is to be implemented by the housing provider(s) under the following programs:

Please note, if your program is **not checked**, this change is **not applicable** to your project.

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Federal Non-Profit Housing Program

Private Non-Profit Housing Program

Co-operative Non-Profit Housing Program

Municipal Non-Profit Housing Program (Pre-1986)

Local Housing Corporation

Subject: LOCAL SELECTION PRIORITY RULES (IN ADDITION TO THE PROVINCIALY LEGISLATED ELIGIBILITY RULES) (REPLACES HDN# 2002-39)

Selection Priority for Placements

When selecting an applicant from the waiting list, offers by the Housing Providers should be made in the following order:

1. Applicant households approved under the **Special Priority Policy (SPP)** for applicants who are abused;
2. Applicant households deemed to be in an **Urgent** situation ranked according to the date the status was assigned;
3. Applicant households in the **High Need** category by date of application;
4. Applicant households in the rent-gear-to-income category ranked **Chronologically** by date of application (see Placement Ratio below).

Placement Ratio: Housing Providers must ensure that, after all SPP applicants are first placed from their waiting lists, a maximum of 90% of placements must be from households in the Urgent and High Need categories and 10% from the Chronological category.

Market rent households are not included in the coordinated access mandate.

Definitions:

Special Priority status is determined by the Service Manager through the Housing Access Centre.

1. **Special Priority** Policy (SPP) household is defined in O. Reg. 298/01, Part VI, S. 24.
2. In order for a household to be considered by the Service Manager to have **Urgent** status it must fall within the High Income Need category and a helping professional has identified that a member of the household is at serious risk due to one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. Person(s) living in substandard housing which has been condemned by the municipality;
 - b. Person(s) whose accommodation has recently been destroyed by fire or natural disaster and who have no place to live;
 - c. Person(s) awaiting release from hospital or other medical facility, who cannot return to their former place or residence and have no place to live;
 - d. Households whose child(ren) would be returned to their custody by a child protection agency when adequate housing is provided and lack of housing is the only condition of custody left outstanding;
 - e. Person(s) with serious medical, health and or social needs which would result in severe hardship or personal risk to the applicant if required to wait a prolonged period of time to access housing;
 - f. Person(s) whose personal safety is significantly at risk (other than someone in the Special Priority category);
 - g. Households without permanent residence;
 - h. Households who use the emergency shelter system;
 - i. Families separated due to lack of affordable housing.
3. **High Need** household means a household whose annual income is less than or equal to the amount set in the Local Rule for High Need Household Income Limits for the size of unit the household occupies and the part of the service area in which the unit is located.

	Thames Centre, London Middlesex Centre Township	Rest of Service Area
Bachelor	\$14,700	\$14,700
1 bedroom	\$20,000	\$20,000
2 bedroom	\$23,000	\$23,000
3 bedroom	\$26,000	\$26,000
4+ bedroom	\$30,000	\$30,000

Housing Providers must adhere to their legislated targeting plan for the number of market rent units, the number of rent-geared-to-income units and the number of high need units in their portfolio.

Background:

Further to an extensive consultation process, changes to local eligibility rules for rent-geared-to-income assistance were approved by Municipal Council on April 18, 2005 as follows:

- a) New Placement Ratio in Selection Priority for Placements
- b) Clarifications in Urgent Status Wording
- c) Elimination of the Disadvantaged Status
- d) New High Need Income Limit Levels

a) This change will ensure that at least 10% of the geared-to-income assisted tenant base comes from the chronological list and give the applicant households in this category some sense of hope of accessing subsidized housing while still ensuring that the neediest get housed first. This change will also ensure an income mix in the social housing communities.

b) This change clarifies the priorities by requesting a third party professional assessment that the family is at serious risk.

c) This change will eliminate a former provincial policy that now creates confusion in the new legislated local centralized waiting list system. *The Disadvantaged status originated from the former provincial Modified Chronological Tracking System for applicants on the waiting list. A household in the disadvantaged category retains this status for one year. During that year the household may be near the top of the list. However at the one-year mark, the household moves from disadvantaged status to the chronological waiting list (unless it meets the criteria for urgent status) and is then ranked by date of application. This results in the household descending to a much lower ranking.*

With the very high number of households in both the SPP and Urgent Status categories, few if any households from the Disadvantaged category ever get housed. Advising these households, after the one year is up that their ranking has gone, for example, from 50th to 500th on the list, is very distressing to the households. Any newcomers in greatest need are captured in the Urgent or High Need categories. Therefore the Disadvantaged category was eliminated.

d) The changes in the High Need HILs will ensure that all households with incomes below accepted poverty measures will be eligible for Urgent or High Need Status.

Action: That Housing Providers implement the new local selection priority rules for rent-geared-to-income assistance.

Louise Stevens
Director Municipal Housing