



Housing Allowance Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS for Tenants and Applicants

1. How does the Housing Allowance (HA) Program differ from the regular rent-geared-to-income program?

The HA Program is a supplement payment that Niagara Regional Housing (NRH) makes to the landlord to reduce the rent that you (the tenant) has to pay. The HA Program temporarily assists households in meeting their monthly rental obligations for a set period of time, or until they are housed in a permanent rent-geared-to-income unit, whichever comes first. The supplement is intended to lower housing costs while you remain on the Affordable Housing Waiting List. If you accept a permanent rent-geared-to-income unit while you are in the HA Program, you will be required to move to that unit, moving out of the HA unit.

2. What is the maximum amount that NRH can pay to the landlord?

Families are eligible for a supplement to a maximum of \$300 per month based on income and shelter costs. Adults without dependants are eligible for a supplement to a maximum of \$250 per month based on income and shelter costs.

3. Should I give notice now to my current landlord?

No. You will be contacted directly by Niagara Regional Housing (NRH) staff when a unit that fits your needs is available based on your position on the Affordable Housing Waiting List. At that time, if the unit is acceptable, NRH staff will notify you to give the required sixty (60) days notice to your current landlord.

4. I am listed as a single adult on the Affordable Housing Waiting List . Can I apply for a 2-bedroom unit with a roommate?

No. NRH staff is using the same criteria for housing needs as applied under the Affordable Housing Waiting List.

Should you wish to add an additional person to your application, both of you will need to complete a new application and supply appropriate information. If the additional person qualifies, they will be added to your original application.

5. When will I be offered a unit?

NRH staff works with private landlords interested in participating in the program. As units become available, staff will notify applicants. As with the Affordable Housing Waiting List, staff cannot estimate when units will become available.

6. How do I know how much subsidy my household qualifies for?

Calculations on subsidy amounts will be based upon income and the amount of the market rent. Depending on the source of income and the rent, families may qualify for up to \$300 per month. Adults without dependants may qualify for up to \$250.

7. How long will I have to decide if I want an offered unit?

If you live in Niagara you will have 2 days to view and accept the unit. If you live outside Niagara you will have up to 4 days to view and accept the unit.

8. If I don't want the unit offered to me, what happens?

NRH staff will contact the next eligible household to view the unit. Your name will remain on this program's waiting list and you will be offered another unit based on availability and position on the waiting list. You're permitted a maximum of 2 units to consider. If the second offer is refused, your name will be removed from this particular program. However, you continue to remain on the Affordable Housing Waiting List for rent-gear-to-income accommodation.

9. If I don't participate in the HA program, or if I turn down 2 units and am removed from the HA program, what happens to my status on the Affordable Housing Waiting List?

Your status on the Affordable Housing Waiting List will not be affected if you refuse one or two units. Your name remains in the chronological order on the Affordable Housing Waiting List for rent-gear-to-income accommodation.

10. We are expecting a child in January. Do we qualify for an additional bedroom?

Any change in the information you gave on your application must be reported to Niagara Regional Housing. Staff will update your file to reflect your most current housing needs.

11. My friend has a unit available. Can I move in there and have the program assist my rent?

No. Ask your friend to contact NRH so that our staff can determine if it is an eligible unit. If the unit qualifies, the next person on the program's waiting list will be offered the unit.

12. My income varies because I am seasonally employed. How do I show that on the income verification form?

The amount of housing allowance will be determined using the income you are receiving at the time that you are offered a unit. This income will be reviewed quarterly the first year, then once each following year.

13. What happens if my income changes while I am living in a HA unit?

NRH staff will verify your income each year to determine the housing allowance amount paid to your landlord and to ensure your continued eligibility for the program. However, you are required to report all changes in income to NRH. Should your income increase to an amount that would make you ineligible, you will be required to pay the full market rent for the unit you're occupying or give the landlord sixty (60) days notice that you intend to move.

14. Is Niagara Regional Housing my landlord under this program?

No. Tenants are required to (1) sign a lease directly with the landlord and (2) sign an agreement with NRH so that NRH can pay the rent supplement portion directly to the landlord on your behalf. NRH has no role in the tenant-landlord relationship. Tenants speak directly to the landlord about any needs they have regarding the unit.

15. Where can I get more information about this program?

You can contact the Rent Supplement Analyst at 905-682-9201 ext. 3955 or 1-800-232-3292 ext. 3955.