



NIAGARA
REGIONAL
HOUSING



NRH Notice

NUMBER: 04-08
DATE: August 20, 2004

Mandatory
 For Information

Applicable to:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Municipal & Private Non Profit |
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SUBJECT: Guidelines for the eligibility and allocation of an additional bedroom because of a disability or medical condition

BACKGROUND:

The *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000* (SHRA) allows for the allocation of an additional bedroom if one of the spouses or same sex partners requires a separate bedroom because of a disability or medical condition, or a second bedroom is required by a member of the household to store medical equipment because of a disability or medical condition.

The *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000* requires guidelines for the review and approval of such requests. Applicants/residents requesting an additional bedroom are required to provide medical documentation to support their request. However, the medical documentation received is usually very vague in nature and simply noted that the additional bedroom requirement related to the disability or medical condition.

REPORT

NRH has established guidelines for the determination of eligibility for an additional bedroom because of the following reasons:

1. Where one of the spouses or same-sex partners requires a separate bedroom because of a disability or medical condition; and,
2. Where the additional bedroom is required to store medical equipment required because of a disability or medical condition.

1. Spouse or same-sex partner requires a separate bedroom

Where a request is made by one of the spouses or same-sex partner for a separate bedroom because of a disability or medical condition, the individual would be considered eligible for an additional bedroom if:

- The disability or medical condition has proven to be permanent and lack of an additional bedroom would result in extreme hardship;
- The request is because of a serious diagnosed medical condition and not the symptom of a diagnosed condition (e.g., snoring is not a medical condition but may be a symptom of a diagnosed condition such as sleep apnea); or,
- The use of the required life sustaining medical equipment, which is linked to a permanent medical condition, substantially interferes with the day-to-day activities of another member of the household (e.g., member requires breathing apparatus, spouse cannot sleep in same room due to excessive noise of the life sustaining equipment).

2. Separate bedroom for storage of medical equipment

Households requesting an additional bedroom for the storage of medical equipment required because of a disability or medical condition would be considered eligible for the additional bedroom if:

- The equipment is essential to the sustenance, not the quality, of life of a household member and the equipment cannot be accommodated within the unit due to the size of the unit or storage space within the unit (e.g., dialysis equipment); or,
- There is a significant mobility issue of a household member such that more than one piece of large equipment is required for mobility purposes (e.g., requires wheelchair when indoors and scooter for outdoor use).

In all cases noted, requests for an additional bedroom require a medical letter outlining the nature of the medical disability or condition, long term prognosis for the condition or the type of equipment and the usage of such equipment linked to the above noted criteria.

Households denied eligibility for an additional bedroom would be entitled to request an appeal of the decision through the provider's appeal process.

Note: The guidelines apply to new requests for additional bedrooms and do not affect any current households occupying a larger unit because of a disability or medical condition unless the household member with the disability or medical condition no longer resides with the household, or the disability or medical condition no longer exists.

Implementation

This policy is effective immediately.

Service Manager's Role

NRH will review provider compliance with this policy during the operational review process.

Housing Provider's Role

Housing providers are to establish appropriate procedures to ensure that requests for an additional bedroom from existing households due to a disability or medical condition are reviewed and approved in accordance with this policy. When an additional bedroom is approved, the household is placed on the provider's internal waiting list for the appropriate sized unit. Priority on the internal waiting list is in accordance with legislative requirements, as follows:

1. Special Priority households
2. Overhoused households
3. Urgent Need (which includes medical condition/disability)
4. Underhoused

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact your Housing Administrator.

(Original signed by Lora Beckwith)

Lora Beckwith, General Manager