



# Notice No: 07-19

**APPLICABLE TO:**

**DATE: October 29, 2007**

- Municipal & Private Non Profit
- Co-operatives
- Federal Non Profits (*information*)
- OCHAP/CSHP
- Rent Supplement

- Mandatory
- For Information

**SUBJECT: Amendment to Reporting Rule for Changes in Income and Assets of Seniors**

NRH has established a policy to extend the timeframe for senior tenants/members on fixed incomes to report changes in income and assets from 30 days to on an annual basis.

**BACKGROUND**

In November 2002, NRH approved the extension of the timeframe for tenant/member households to report changes in income and assets from 10 business days to 30 days.

NRH has noted this reporting requirement to be problematic for those senior households on a fixed income, as they can potentially receive insignificant or small raises in Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and/or in the Guaranteed Annual Income System as many as 4 times in any given year. Although these insignificant amounts often do not result in an increased rent or housing charge, housing provider staff are required to speak with each reporting tenant/member, request all pension statements, documentation and declarations, and determine if a rent/housing charge change will apply. If it is determined that the increase in income will result in a rent/housing charge increase of more than \$10 per month, the tenants/members are sent the appropriated notices, with rent/housing charge increases becoming effective the first day of the second month.

These reporting timeframes have proven to be excessive and time consuming with little added value in revenue, and have also put undue strain on many senior households. Seniors who do not report these changes within 30 days are then faced with the stressful process of a potential misrepresentation of income and/or an overpayment of rent/housing charge subsidy.

**Report Changes in Income and Assets on Annual Basis**

After consultation with the Provider Advisory Group, NRH has approved an amendment to the existing policy that allows senior households on fixed incomes to report changes in income or assets on an annual basis only. The change in reporting timeframes will reduce administrative inefficiencies and significantly reduce staff time for quarterly rental recalculations. In addition, this policy provides seniors with predictable annual rental amounts without fluctuations. This practice was in place for all households prior to the SHRA.

This revised policy does not affect non-senior tenant/member households who would continue to report changes in income and assets within 30 business days.

This change should reduce the appeals committee process and time commitment for seniors who fail to report the changes in income and subsequently do not agree with the staff decision of misrepresentation and/or overpayment of subsidy.

### **Definition of Senior on Fixed Income**

Seniors in this category must meet all of the following criteria to move to an annual reporting of income changes:

1. all members of the household must be retired from the workforce and expect to remain unemployed;
2. the income received by all members of the household is paid in fixed amounts for specified periods;
3. there are no dependants of any member of the household; and,
4. no household members are in receipt of social assistance.

All other tenant/member households who do not fall into the above noted categories would continue to report changes in income or assets within 30 business days.

**Effective Date: October 1, 2007**

### **Service Manager's Role**

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

### **Housing Provider's Role**

Housing providers are required to change the reporting timeframe for senior households on fixed incomes (*who meet the above criteria*) to an annual timeframe. Housing providers are required to advise all applicable senior households in writing of this change in reporting requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the above policy please contact your Housing Administrator at (905) 682-9201.

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Lora Beckwith, General Manager