



Notice

Number: 08-17

APPLICABLE TO:**DATE: December 8, 2008**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Municipal & Private Non Profit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Co-operatives
<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal Non Profits
<input type="checkbox"/>	OCHAP/CSHP
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rent Supplement

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Information

SUBJECT: Provincial Arrears Database**BACKGROUND**

The Provincial Arrears Database is used by Service Managers across the Province to determine eligibility for applicants on the centralized waitlist, and to determine ongoing eligibility for current tenants/members in receipt of rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance. Niagara Regional Housing's (NRH) local arrears database is directly connected to the Provincial Arrears Database.

In order for a record of arrears to be uploaded to the Provincial Arrears Database, the person's date of birth or social insurance number is required. The record cannot be transferred from NRH's local arrears database to the Provincial Arrears Database without this information.

Former Tenant/Member Arrears Records

In order to maintain an accurate record of arrears, housing providers are required to submit to NRH a completed *Former Tenant/Member Arrears Form (Appendix A,)* as per *NRH Notice 07-10*. This information is entered into NRH's local arrears database and uploaded to the Provincial Arrears Database on a monthly basis. It is important for housing providers to submit all the required information as soon as the tenant/member moves out. Arrears information cannot be accepted by NRH until the tenant/member has actually moved out of the unit. If damages are still being assessed at move-out, the amount currently owed can be reported to NRH, followed up with a final amount when the repairs have been completed.

Housing providers are required to report to NRH any changes to former tenant/member arrears such as:

1. Updated arrears amount.
2. New or amended repayment agreement.
3. If the former tenant/member does not honour a signed repayment agreement.
4. When the arrears have been paid off.

Ongoing Eligibility

As part of the annual ongoing eligibility for RGI subsidy (*NRH Notice 07-07*), Niagara Regional Housing will check the Provincial Arrears Database, on behalf of housing providers, to ensure that current households do not owe any former arrears to any other housing provider in Ontario.

Process

1. On an annual basis, housing providers are required to complete an *Arrears Database Ongoing Eligibility Check Form (Appendix B)* for their current RGI tenants/members, including social insurance numbers and dates of birth and fax it to NRH at 905-935-0476.
2. Housing Access will check the Provincial Arrears Database and report back to the housing provider any RGI household members that owe arrears to a former housing provider.
3. The housing provider must notify the household of the arrears (sample letter attached as *Appendix C*) and advise them to contact their former housing provider to either enter into a repayment agreement or pay off the arrears. Households that do not comply are no longer eligible for RGI assistance.

Arrears Already Reported from Former Tenant/Member

Attached is a listing of all the arrears that have been reported to NRH (specific to each housing provider). To ensure that the database is accurate, housing providers are required to review the attached information and advise NRH of all changes/updates, as follows:

1. Cross off all the records that have been paid in full.
2. Adjust the balance on a record if payments have been made.
3. Add a date of birth or social insurance number if none is listed.
4. Indicate if there is a signed repayment agreement in place that is currently being honoured.

Please return your updated arrears records to NRH by fax or mail, by **Wednesday, December 31, 2008**, to the attention of:

Jeanette McKay, Housing Access Supervisor
Niagara Regional Housing
P. O. Box 344
Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3
Fax: 905-935-0476

Once a former tenant/member has signed a repayment agreement (or paid off the arrears), they will be deemed eligible to be placed on the centralized waitlist. It is the housing provider's responsibility to notify NRH if a household defaults on their repayment agreement. Once advised, NRH will review the household's eligibility to be on the waitlist.

In the event that the household is housed with another provider, NRH will notify that provider of the default. The current housing provider will then advise the household of their ineligibility (refer to *Appendix C*).

Service Manager's Role

NRH will:

- Maintain NRH's local arrears database and upload the information to the Provincial Arrears Database on a monthly basis;
- Check the Provincial Arrears Database for former member/tenant arrears during the housing providers' annual review process; and,
- Advise housing providers of all defaults to repayment agreements.

Housing Provider's Role

Housing providers are required to:

- report tenant/member arrears on move-out using the form provided;
- complete an arrears check during the ongoing eligibility process using the form provided; and,
- update the enclosed arrears listing and return it to NRH by December 31, 2008.

This process should help ensure that housing providers receive monies owed to them by former tenants/members, and that households are eligible to be on the centralized waitlist and/or receive RGI assistance.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Jeanette McKay, Housing Access Supervisor, at 905-682-9201, ext. 3928 or email jeanette.mckay@niagararegion.ca or your Housing Administrator.

Lora Beckwith, General Manager

Enclosures:

Appendix A - Former Tenant/Member Arrears Form
Appendix B - Arrears Database On-going Eligibility Check Form
Appendix C - Sample Loss of Subsidy Letter