



NIAGARA
REGIONAL
HOUSING



NRH Notice

Applicable to:

- Municipal & Private Non Profit
- Co-operatives
- Federal Non Profits
- OCHAP/CSHP
- Rent Supplement

NUMBER: 03-20A
DATE: November 28, 2003

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

Subject: Age Requirement for Senior Mandated Housing

Policy:

Niagara Regional Housing has approved a local policy that defines the age requirements for senior mandated housing as 55 years of age and older.

This change in senior age requirement is considered by Niagara Regional Housing to be a special program under Section 14 the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) that is intended to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage of persons who are aged 55 and older.

Background:

Niagara Regional Housing has been placing households where at least one member of the applicant household was 60 years of age on the subsidiary waiting lists of housing providers with senior mandates. This practice was previously endorsed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing prior to the establishment of the *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000*. The OHRC defines seniors as those 65 years of age and older. However, Section 14 of the OHRC allows special programs to be implemented that might otherwise be considered to be discriminatory if the program is intended to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage of targeted groups.

Federal housing providers have the option of participating voluntarily in the centralized wait list system. These providers are required to comply with all of the provincial and local rules governing the wait list. Since the establishment of the Niagara Regional Housing centralized waiting list, the demand for affordable housing options for low-income persons under the age of 60 far exceeds the demand for seniors over the age of 60. In Niagara region, people who were not yet 60 had very few affordable housing options available and yet were considered to be more economically disadvantaged. Defining the senior age requirement as 55 years and older will provide more affordable housing options and reduce the RGI waiting time for persons between the ages of 55 and 60.

Implementation:

This policy is effective immediately.

Service Manager's Role

- Housing mandated for seniors in the Niagara Region has been defined as a Special Program per Section 14 of the OHRC.
- Applicants aged 55 years and over, who request senior buildings, will be placed on senior mandated subsidiary wait lists.
- NRH will use the date that the household indicates a senior community preference as the chronological date for placement on the wait list.

Housing Provider's Role

- Federal housing providers with senior mandates that voluntarily participate in the centralized wait list will begin to see applicants 55 years and over on their senior wait lists.
- Federal housing providers affected by this policy are to advise their tenants/members/ applicants of this new local policy.

If you have any questions regarding the Centralized Wait List or Senior Mandate, please call Housing Access & Community Programs at (905) 935-7645.

If you have any questions regarding the *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000* go to www.e-laws.gov.on.ca or contact your Housing Administrator.

(Original signed by Lora Beckwith)

Lora Beckwith
General Manager