

## **EXCERPT FROM NRH EMERGENCY PLAN**

### **HOUSING PROVIDER EMERGENCY**

#### **6.1 Stages of an Emergency**

Generally, a housing provider emergency will go through the same three stages: assessment; response and follow-up. Within each of these stages, there will be decision points that determine the course of action and when to proceed to the next stage.

#### **6.2 Assessment Stage**

This stage starts with the first notification of the emergency which can be from many sources, including a phone call from a housing provider, housing provider tenant/member or NRH staff. The assessment stage will identify, where possible, the range of the emergency (one unit/building or entire complex), the involvement of the Emergency First Responders (fire, police, ambulance), the potential risk to tenants/members and buildings, likely duration of the emergency and whether an onsite response is required by NRH staff. It is critical that as much information as possible be obtained, as the assessment will determine the appropriate response.

The Manager Housing Programs will advise the General Manager where there is potential for any of the following:

- threats to the life, safety and/or health of housing provider tenants/members caused by environmental factors (i.e.: extreme weather, high heat, storms, flooding, etc.);
- property damage that makes a housing unit uninhabitable for housing provider tenants/members and/or poses an imminent risk of injury to neighbours; and,
- evacuation of household(s) as ordered by Emergency First Responders (fire, police, ambulance) and/or Niagara Region.

#### **First Decision Point**

At this first decision point, there needs to be clarity on what the current situation is. The Emergency Assessment Checklist is completed by the Housing Administrator in conjunction with the Manager Housing Programs (Appendix K).

Based on that assessment, the decisions that need to be made at this point are:

- is there a need for NRH staff presence on-site
- what other staff need to be notified
- what staff need to do; and
- who is the lead

## **Role of NRH Staff**

If the checklist determines that NRH staff are required on-site, and if the Emergency First Responders are on the scene, the role of NRH staff is to support them and the housing provider by following their direction and assisting where required. NRH staff should assess risks to the housing provider/NRH and ensure that provider is securing files and household lists, and retrieving insurance and other important documents where possible (*if these documents are at risk*).

If NRH staff are the only on-site personnel and there are no Emergency First Responders, but there should be, NRH staff will place the emergency call and also contact provider board members and/or provider staff. If this is an emergency that doesn't involve the Emergency First Responders, NRH staff are to take direction from the General Manager or designate.

### **6.3 Response Stage**

During the response stage, the degree of response will be in proportion to the extent and type of emergency. For example, a stove fire in a housing provider unit where the tenant has evacuated the unit would require a different response than a disaster that required the evacuation of a building.

Emergency First Responders (fire, police, ambulance) will arrive at an emergency scene within minutes of the call being received and will provide direction on the response.

### **6.4 Meeting with NRH Emergency Response Management Team**

When the immediate emergency (*identified in 6.2*) is addressed, the Manager Housing Programs will arrange a meeting of the NRH Emergency Response Management Team. The purpose of the meeting is for information sharing and coordination of a response (if required). Members of the ERMT team, related to housing provider emergencies, are:

- General Manager – Chair
- Manager of Housing Programs
- Manager of Community Programs
- Resource Unit Manager
- Manager of Housing Operations (for information sharing purposes)

The requirement for subsequent ERMT meetings, frequency and at what stages will be determined at this initial meeting.

### **Second Decision Point**

When the immediate emergency is addressed, the decision at this point is whether ongoing NRH follow up is required. Within an appropriate time period after the immediate emergency, the Housing Administrator will review next steps with the housing provider to ensure that proper follow up is taken related to tenants/members, insurance and building repair issues.

The Housing Administrator will also ensure that a provider board meeting is held as soon as possible to make decisions and approve next steps.

At this decision point, the questions that need to be answered are:

1. Are there any displaced housing provider households? How many households?
2. Will households need to find alternate accommodation in the short or long term?
3. Was there any property damage?
4. Is damage significant?
5. Is an insurance company involved at this point?
6. Is there any public communication needed?

### **Role of NRH Staff**

The Manager Housing Programs and Housing Administrator will assess the situation and determine the appropriate follow up.

### **6.5 Follow-Up Stage – Emergency Placement Policy**

Depending on the response at the second decision point, there may be follow-up required to find alternate accommodation for displaced households.

Depending on the number of displaced households and extent of damage, the Emergency Placement Policy (Appendix L) may need to be implemented. If the placement policy is required, the Manager Housing Programs will advise the Manager Community Programs accordingly. At this point the Tenant Placement Coordinator will become involved. The Housing Administrator will coordinate and ensure that a list of displaced households is provided to the Tenant Placement Coordinator (TPC). The TPC will find alternate accommodation for the displaced households, according to the established policy.

The Housing Administrator, TPC and Manager Housing Programs (*if required*) will attend meetings arranged by the housing provider (*as required*), to provide information, application forms, status of placement and to answer questions.

The Manager Housing Programs will report to the ERMT and provide status reports as determined in the initial ERMT meeting.

### **6.6 Non Evacuation Emergencies**

Housing Providers will be instructed to develop an emergency plan that contains procedures for non-evacuation emergencies (i.e., electrical power interruptions, failure of life safety systems and chemical emergencies) to ensure the safety of all households. Housing Providers will be required to advise their Housing Administrator of all non-evacuation emergencies that impact their tenants/members.

## 6.7 Committees/Teams

### 6.7.1 Communications Team

#### Members

- **Resource Unit Manager – Chair**
- *Manager, Housing Programs - Back-up Delegate*
- Tenant Support Representative (s)
- Eligibility Assessment Representative
- Receptionist
- Housing Initiatives Coordinator
- Administrative Assistant (s)

#### Committee Responsibilities

##### ***Duties are assigned to members by the Chair***

- Issue/distribute prepared communication as directed by the Emergency Response Management Team to housing providers, tenants/members, staff and other identified groups
- Provide a centralized source of expertise, judgment and accurate information for use by the spokesperson in response to media, public concerns and inquiries
- Monitor media coverage
- Address any rumors with factual information
- Follow Policy C – 2: Emergency Communications Response in determining communications and information sharing with all groups (See Appendix G)
- Maintain ongoing contact with Community Response Teams
- Ensure that messages are shared between the Communications Team, the Community Response Team and the Emergency Response Management Team

### 6.7.2 Community Response Team

#### Members

- **Manager Housing Programs - Lead**
- Housing Administrator (s)

#### Responsibilities in Emergency

The Community Response Team will:

- Go to the housing provider site, if assessment determines onsite presence is required
- Provide assistance to Emergency First Responders and housing provider as needed
- Assess risks to the provider/NRH and ensure that household files and important documents are secured

- Obtain list of affected (and potentially displaced) households
- Assist tenants/members in making calls to relatives, if needed
- Contact Agencies as needed
- Community Response Team members dispatched to the site will relay any media presence to the Communications Team Chair for decisions about NRH spokesperson and/or media statement content
- The Housing Administrator will provide a list of affected households to the TPC for implementation of the emergency placement policy, if required.