



Notice

No: 11-02

APPLICABLE TO:

DATE: April 20, 2011

<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: Modified Units – Eligibility & Selection

BACKGROUND

As per O.Reg. 298/01, and NRH Notice 06-07, Niagara Regional Housing (NRH) determines eligibility of all requests for modified units.

To provide better service to housing providers and applicants, NRH has streamlined the process for determining eligibility for, and the filling of, modified units. Due to the complexities associated with requests for modified units, we have determined that if a person requires **at least one** of the modifications of a unit, then they are deemed to be **eligible** for a modified unit, in compliance with:

O.Reg. 298/01, s. 19 – A household is eligible for special needs housing if one or more of its members requires accessibility modifications or provincially-funded support services in order to live independently in the community.

There will no longer be designations for partially and fully modified units.

NRH will continue to identify applicants on the waiting list who are approved for a modified unit, so that housing providers can quickly identify them. This process will allow applicants to view the unit and decide if the features of the unit meet their specific needs.

Housing providers are required to forward all requests for modified units to NRH to determine eligibility. There are two scenarios where a modified unit may be requested from current tenants/members. The process for both scenarios is as follows:

Tenant/Member Currently Occupying a Modified Unit

Prior to the introduction of the *SHRA, 2000* some tenants/members, living in a modified unit, were not required to make a formal request and be deemed eligible for that modified unit. For current tenants/members occupying a modified unit, the following shall occur:

- Housing providers are to review the tenant/member file for appropriate documentation (*letter from doctor/care provider clearly identifying the need for the modified unit*) to support the need for at least one of the modifications of the unit;
- Housing providers are to review the situation on an annual basis to ensure continued eligibility for the modified unit;
- If no supporting documentation is in the tenant/member file, the tenant/member must complete a *Request for a Modified Unit Form* and have the information verified by a physician or other medical professional;
- Once complete, the request is sent to NRH Access for review and eligibility determination;
- NRH will advise the tenant/member of the decision in writing, within 10 days;
- A copy of the request and decision letter from NRH will be forwarded to the housing provider for placement in the tenant/member file;
- If approved, the tenant/member will remain in their modified unit and will be subject to an annual review to ensure continued eligibility for the unit;
- If denied, the tenant/member will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the NRH Appeal Committee;
- If the appeal is denied, the household will be placed on the housing provider's internal transfer list for relocation to an appropriate sized unit;
- If the housing provider does not have an appropriate sized unit within its portfolio, the household will be required to join the centralized waiting list for an appropriate sized unit elsewhere;
- The household will be able to choose as many communities as they wish.

Tenant/Member Requests a Transfer to a Modified Unit

- Tenant/member must complete a *Request for a Modified Unit Form* and have the information verified by a physician or other medical professional;
- Once complete, the request is sent to NRH Access for review and eligibility determination;
- NRH will advise the tenant/member of the decision in writing, within 10 days;
- A copy of the request and decision letter from NRH will be forwarded to the housing provider for placement in tenant/member file;
- If approved, the tenant/member is placed on the housing provider's internal transfer list for a modified unit;
- If denied, the tenant/member will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the NRH Appeal Committee;
- If the appeal is denied, the household will remain living in their current unit.

SELECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS FOR MODIFIED UNITS

When a modified unit becomes vacant, the housing provider will offer the unit to tenants/members on their internal transfer list who have been deemed eligible for the unit. If there are no internal applicants, or the unit has been declined by all internal applicants, the unit will be offered to applicants on the housing provider's waiting list, who have been deemed eligible for a modified unit.

Applicants that are deemed eligible for a modified unit are placed on the housing provider's waiting list and the universal disabled symbol  is used as an icon to identify these applicants. (*Housing providers have found this practice helpful in filling their modified units*). Staff will endeavor to ensure that the communities chosen by applicants have units with the modifications required by the applicant.

The process for selecting households for a modified unit will generally remain the same in that modified units will only be offered to applicants with the universal disabled symbol  beside their name. At the time of offer, the housing provider will give the household information about the modification(s) of the unit and offer the household the opportunity to view the unit. The applicant will decide, based on their specific needs, if the unit has the feature(s) that the applicant requires in order to live independently within the unit. If the applicant declines the offer, the housing provider will move on to the next person on the waiting list who has been approved for a modified unit.

NOTE: Refusals will not count if the unit is unsuitable for the applicant's physical needs. All other refusals will be counted as part of their three-offer maximum.

Implementation

This process is effectively immediately.

Service Manager's Role

NRH will continue the practice of accepting requests for modified units from all households. This includes applicants, current tenants/members requesting a transfer to a modified unit, as well as tenants/members who are currently occupying a modified unit and have not been deemed eligible for the unit.

Upon receipt of a request for a modified unit, NRH will:

1. Review the request for eligibility for a modified unit;
2. Advise the household of the decision in writing, within 10 days; and,
3. Forward a copy of the request and decision letter to the housing provider for the tenant/member file, or place in applicant file.

The Housing Administrator will ensure compliance with this policy during the operational review process.

Housing Provider's Role

Housing providers will continue to perform certain specific functions related to eligibility for modified units.

Housing Providers are required to:

1. Forward any new requests for modified units to NRH – Housing Access;
2. Ensure ongoing eligibility of all tenants/members occupying modified units by:
 - a. Reviewing the household's need for the modified unit at annual review;
 - b. Requesting that the household submit verification of their continued need for modified unit (if necessary/applicable);
 - c. Keep records regarding modified unit eligibility in the tenant/member file;
 - d. Ensure the specific needs of new applicants/tenants/members match the modification(s) of the unit.

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

Lora Beckwith, General Manager

Attachment: Request for Modified Unit Form