



Notice

No: 18-10

Revising No: 14-13

APPLICABLE TO:

DATE: October 4, 2018

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

Mandatory

For Information

SUBJECT: Internal Transfer Local Rule - Revised

Background:

The *Housing Services Act* (HSA) requires Housing Providers to establish an internal transfer policy for rent geared to income (RGI) households within their communities. The HSA also gives Service Managers the option to develop a local rule related to internal transfers.

In 2014, a local rule was established, which required Housing Providers to maintain an internal transfer list that complied with the *Local Priority Groups* (i.e. SPP, Overhoused and Urgent). See NRH Notice 14-13. Providers were permitted to add priorities in their internal transfer policy, as long as they do not contravene local rules.

NRH recently surveyed Housing Providers to determine the number of internal transfer requests received under the local rule. The results of the survey revealed that the elimination of the Urgent priority category would not have a significant impact on the nonprofit housing providers.

The local rule has therefore been revised to **remove** the Urgent (URG) priority category for internal transfers.

Transfer requests approved with Urgent (URG) status up to this point can be grandfathered.

POLICY

Rent geared to income tenants/members on internal transfer lists are housed before those on the Centralized Waiting List.

Housing Providers must continue to maintain an internal transfer list for rent geared to income transfers. The priority order for internal transfer is:

- SPP (Special Priority – victims of domestic violence). NRH Housing Access will continue to assess the eligibility of all SPP applicants including internal transfer requests
- Overhoused – members/tenants deemed overhoused (see NRH Notice 14-05)

Approved transfers will be offered vacancies on a chronological basis, within priority categories, based on the transfer request date.

Housing Providers continue to have the flexibility to include additional priorities in their own internal transfer policy. Housing Providers can opt to continue to include urgent priority in their internal transfer policy.

The maximum number of offers made to households on a housing provider's internal transfer list will remain at one (status quo). Should the household decline the offer, they are to be removed from the internal transfer list.

Housing Provider's Role

The Internal Transfer policy applies to member/tenants who wish to move to another unit within the Housing Providers portfolio. If a member/tenant wishes to move to a unit owned by another social housing provider, they must apply through the centralized wait list administered by NRH Housing Access.

The Internal Transfer policy does not apply to requests received from market rent households.

Housing Providers are directed to revisit and confirm their Internal Transfer policy. Each housing provider's Internal Transfer policy should contain the following:

- The policy has a clear, fair and transparent process for all tenants/members
- The policy describes the procedural steps the tenant/member must take when requesting a transfer
- The policy must include a statement indicating that the tenant/member may request a review of the decision made by the housing provider regarding the eligibility for an internal transfer

Each housing provider has the ability to develop their own eligibility criteria for tenants/members applying for internal transfer. The eligibility criteria should be included in the internal transfer policy.

It is recommended that the following be considered when establishing eligibility criteria for Internal Transfer requests:

Any household in good standing may submit a written request for a transfer after having lived in a unit for at least one year. *A household is in good standing if:

- They have not been given an eviction notice
- They do not owe any arrears to the housing provider
- They have paid their rent on time for the last six months
- They have no history of damage to the unit, disturbing neighbours or harassing staff or any other unacceptable behavioural issues.
- They continue to meet all other RGI eligibility and lease/occupancy agreement criteria

*The eligibility criteria and “one year rule” will be waived if the household qualifies for special priority status or is overhoused.

Service Manager’s Role

Niagara Regional Housing will review the Internal Transfer list and review compliance with this notice during the operational review process.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice, please contact your Housing Administrator at (905) 682-9201.

(Original signed by Donna Woiceshyn)

Donna Woiceshyn, Chief Executive Officer