

# **CHRISTIAN SENIOR CITIZENS HOME ASSOCIATION OF CHATHAM, ON. INC.**

**Operating: South Chatham Village  
97 - 40 Elm Street, Chatham, Ont. N7M 6A5**

## **Internal Transfer Policy**

Approved by the Board of Directors: Oct. 30, 2002

### **Goals**

The Transfer Policy applies to tenants who want to move from one South Chatham Village unit to another. Households who wish to move into South Chatham Village from other social housing or from South Chatham Village to another social housing provider are external applicants, and must apply through the centralized access system.

This policy is designed to:

- allow South Chatham Village tenants to move from one unit to another
- give priority to tenants who qualify as special priority, who are over-housed, or urgently need a different unit
- balance the needs of South Chatham Village tenants with the needs of people hoping to move into South Chatham Village for the first time.

### **Eligibility**

Any household in good standing may ask for a transfer after it has lived in a unit for at least one year.

A household is in good standing if:

- it has not been given an eviction notice
- it does not owe arrears or any other money to the non-profit (unless financial hardship has made this household a "priority move.")
- it has paid its rent on time for the last six months
- it has no history of damage to the unit, disturbing neighbours or harassing staff. The eligibility criteria and "one year rule" will be waived if the household qualifies for special priority status or is over-housed. Consideration may be given to waiving the eligibility criteria for "priority moves" (see below).

## **Applications**

To transfer, tenants must complete an application form (Attachment #1), and give it to the property manager. A tenant who is also applying for special priority status must do so in writing and must consent to the disclosure of any information or documentation required to verify the validity of the request. The tenant applying for special priority status should also provide instruction to the property manager as to the best way to contact the tenant.

The property manager will:

- confirm the household is eligible for a transfer, based on local occupancy standards for RGI households, the non-profit's occupancy standards for market rent households and other policies
- advise the tenant applying for special priority status within 7 business days as to whether their request is complete or not and if not what further information is required
- confirm the tenant's eligibility for special priority status, if applicable
- add an eligible household to the waiting list, according to the policy below
- inform the tenant of her decision.

Tenants may appeal the property manager's decision. (See appeals, below.) If the decision to deny a transfer is upheld, the tenant may not re-apply for a transfer on the same grounds for one year.

## **Internal waiting list**

### **Special Priority tenants**

Tenants will qualify for special priority status if:

a member of the household has requested the status in writing, signed the request and consented to disclosure of information in connection with their request. The member requesting the status does not have to be the victim of the abuse.

the abuser is or was living with the victim or is sponsoring the household member as an immigrant the tenant intends to permanently live apart from the abusing individual the tenant has provided the necessary information or documentation the necessary information or documentation has been confirmed by an appropriate person (as listed in 0. Reg. 339.01)

A special priority tenant will be placed at the top of the internal transfer list. If there is more than one special priority tenant on the list, they will be ranked according to the potential risk of further abuse. Special priority tenants who are still living with their abuser will be given higher priority than those who are not.

### **Over housed RGI tenants**

An "over housed" RGI household is a household living in a unit which is larger than the largest unit for which they qualify under occupancy standards set by the Service Manager (or the standards set out in Ontario Regulation 298/01) Over housed tenants who are paying rent-geared-to-income will be placed at the top of the internal waiting list after special priority applicants, in the order of the date they applied to move into the non-profit. This is a Provincial rule. It does not apply to market rent tenants. (No application form is required.)

A household is over housed when it has more bedrooms than allowed by the municipal Service Manager's occupancy standards. (See Attachment #2)

Tenants must report any change in household size to the property manager within 10 business days of the change. The property manager will automatically add any over housed households to the internal waiting list, and will tell the household in writing. If True North does not have an appropriately sized unit for the household, as defined by the Service Manager's occupancy standards, the household will instead be placed on the central waiting list (the list for all social housing in the area).

Tenants may ask for a review of the property manager's decision (see appeals below).

Over housed tenants may choose the location of the unit they would be willing to accept. However, if the tenant receives rent-geared-to-income subsidy, they will be placed on the central waiting list if they do not move into an appropriately sized unit within 12 months. If they refuse three units while they are on the central waiting list, they will lose their RGI subsidy, and must pay market rent.

### **Priority moves**

After over housed tenants, households with an urgent need to move are given priority over other transfer applicants. Priority applicants will be offered units in order of their application date for a transfer.

These urgent needs include:

tenants needing to escape abuse but who have not lived with or been sponsored by the abuser and so do not qualify for special priority status, including tenants being threatened or harassed by neighbours. The manager will establish the level of documentation required to substantiate the abuse

- financial hardship due to the loss of a partner, or a significant drop in income, that makes the market rent unaffordable (tenant requests move to unit with lower market rent)
  
- a household member has a medical condition or permanent disability, and their current unit:
  - is inaccessible, or
  - substantially aggravates the condition, or

- prevents or substantially increases the cost of treatment.  
(Documentation needed.)

Note: A separate waiting list is kept for wheelchair accessible units. Tenants who need a wheelchair accessible unit should ask to be placed on the "Special Needs waiting list."

### **Under-housed households**

- Households who have more than two household members per bedroom or who have opposite-sex household members other than spouses sharing bedrooms will be placed on the waiting list after over-housed and priority households, in the order they applied for a larger unit.

### **Others**

All other eligible applicants will be placed on the internal waiting list *below* special priority, over-housed, other priority and under-housed applicants, in the order they apply for a transfer.

Applicants on this list will alternate with applicants on the external list. Every second unit (that has not been taken by a special priority, over-housed or priority applicant) will be offered to applicants in this category.

Consideration will be given to increasing the priority of requests for transfer on compassionate grounds, where the household wishes to move because of a death of a household member.

### **Maintaining eligibility**

Except in the case of special priority and over-housed tenants, when a tenant reaches the top of the list, the property manager will confirm the household is still eligible for a transfer. Before offering a unit, she will make sure:

- there are no arrears
- no late payments within the last 6 months
- no complaints about disturbing neighbours or harassing staff
- no damage to the tenant's unit was found in a unit inspection.

### **Offering a unit**

The property manager will offer a vacant unit to households on the internal transfer list in the order they appear on the waiting list.

The property manager may exercise discretion in the decision to offer a vacant unit to anyone on the internal transfer list other than special priority, over-housed and priority transfer requests if the resources are not available to prepare the vacating units in a given month without incurring vacancy loss.

Tenants will have 24 hours to decide whether to accept the unit.

A tenant (other than a special priority or an over-housed tenant) who refuses three units will be removed from the internal waiting list.

Units may be offered "as is." South Chatham Village will ensure the unit meets the nonprofit's maintenance and safety standards, and that all electrical and plumbing fixtures are in good working order. But True North may choose not to paint the unit, do minor patching, or make decorative changes to the unit.

## **Review of decisions**

Tenants can request a review of the property manager's decision to declare the household to be special priority or over-housed (as required by provincial regulations).\*

Tenants may also appeal the property manager's decision to:

- refuse a transfer request
- refuse to give priority status.

1. To appeal the decision, the tenant must write to the property manager within 10 business days of receiving the written decision. This letter should explain why the tenant disagrees with the decision, and give any information that might affect the decision. In this letter, the tenant may also ask to meet with the Review Committee.
2. Reviews will be handled following the Review Committee's normal procedure. (See Review Policy) All decisions of the Review Committee are final.
3. If the tenant's appeal to transfer, or be given special or priority status, is not upheld, the tenant may not apply for a transfer on the same grounds for one year.

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## Transfer Request

Name of applicant(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Present address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time in present

accommodation \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for wishing to transfer

- your unit is unlivable
- substantial family abuse
- current rent unaffordable
- medical condition or disability makes your current unit inaccessible, or the unit aggravates the condition, or prevents or substantially increases the cost of treatment. (Please include a doctor's letter, describing your condition, and how a different unit would improve the situation.)

\_\_\_\_\_

- unit is too small
- other reason:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type and size of unit needed:|

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Rules for requesting and receiving special priority status on the internal waiting list

- Any household member 16 or older can apply for special priority status in connection with an internal transfer request.
- The request must be made in writing and must be signed by the person making the request, or their parent, guardian or attorney if they are unable to sign.
- In order to qualify for special priority the household member who is the victim of abuse must be living with or have lived with the abuser or the abuser is a sponsor of an immigrant. The victim must intend to permanently live apart from the abuser.
- The provider may accept a request for special priority status from a household member who has been living apart from the abuser for more than three months if the provider is convinced that the household member did not know it was possible to make the request or there was a time line, or is still at risk of abuse, or
- The abused member must sign a consent to the disclosure to the housing provider of information and documentation to verify the statement of abuse.
- If the abused household member is less than 16, the consent may be signed on their behalf by a parent, guardian or attorney.
- The household member making the request must provide the information and documentation that the housing provider may require to verify the need for special priority status. However, the housing provider can waive the requirement for documentation if the household member is unable to obtain the information.
- The housing provider must waive the requirement for information or documentation if the household member making the request believes that obtaining the information would put them at risk of further abuse. The housing provider cannot require information or documents as to whether the household member has started legal proceedings and cannot require information from more than one person in order to verify the information.
- The housing provider must respect and observe the communication method that is requested by the household member.
- The housing provider must respond in writing to the member making the request advising them as to whether their request is complete or not and if not what further information or document must be provided.
- The housing provider must accept the following information as verification of the household member's request for special priority status:
  - a record of intervention by the police
  - a record of physical injury caused to the member by the abusing individual

a record of application of force by the abusing individual to force the member to engage in sexual activity against his or her will a record of words, actions or gestures that threaten the member or his or her property  
a record of undue or unwarranted control by the abusing individual over the member's daily personal and financial activities

- The record of abuse must come from

- a doctor
- a lawyer
- a law enforcement officer a member of the clergy a teacher
- a guidance counsellor
- an individual in a managerial or administrative position employed by the housing provider
- a community health care worker\* a social worker\* a social service worker\* a victim services worker\* a settlement services worker\*
- a shelter worker\*

\* Definitions of these positions are contained in O. Regulation 339/01 S. 11.2(6)

- once the housing provider has determined that a household should be included in the special priority category on the waiting list for internal transfers, the housing provider shall not reconsider that decision.

**Appendix B**

**Application for Special Priority Status**

Tenant or occupant who is applying for special priority

Address of tenant: \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration**

I am applying for special priority on the internal transfer list because: I am being abused by a member of my household, or

A member of my household is being abused by another household member, or I am being abused by my sponsor (under the immigration Act)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

I am currently living with the abuser                      yes                      no  
If no, I have lived apart from the abuser for                      months, or I have  
never lived with the abuser.

**Consent to release information**

I hereby consent to disclosure of information to the Christian Senior Citizens Home to verify the statement I have made above and my eligibility for special priority status.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Name of tenant (or parent, guardian or attorney) \_\_\_\_\_

How to contact me

Please contact me at the following telephone number or by leaving a message with: \_\_\_\_\_