



Housing Services Division
 The Regional Municipality of Halton
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Community Housing Program Directives

Directive No. 5

Subject: Pursuit of Income

The Directions in this notice are to be implemented by the housing providers administered by the Region of Halton under the following programs.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Provincially Prescribed Non-Profit and Co-operative Housing Programs, including Public Housing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal Non-Profit Housing Programs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rent Supplement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Halton Access to Community Housing (HATCH)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other –

Effective Date:

January 1, 2021

Authority:

Housing Services Act, 2011 s. 42
O. Reg. 367/11 s. 31

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the rules for households in receipt of rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance and the requirement to pursue certain types of income.

Background:

The Housing Services Act, 2011 and O. Reg. 367/11 requires that households in receipt of RGI assistance may be required to pursue certain types of income to remain eligible for RGI assistance. Halton Region requires housing providers to have households pursue the income they may be eligible for as a condition of receiving RGI assistance.

Directions:

Who must pursue income?

Halton Region requires that all households in receipt of RGI assistance must pursue all income they may be entitled to.

What sources of income must be pursued?

Households are required to pursue income from the following sources:

- Ontario Works (OW)
- Employment Insurance
- GAINS (Guaranteed Annual Income System)
- Old Age Security (OAS)
- Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- Immigration sponsorship income

These are the only income types households can be required to pursue as a condition of RGI eligibility

Child and Spousal Support

Household members are no longer required to pursue child or spousal support as a condition of RGI eligibility. For household members who may be eligible to receive child and/or spousal support it is recommended that housing providers provide them with information and resources that may assist them to pursue support income if they choose to do so.

Notice to Pursue Income

If the housing provider is of the opinion that one or more members of the household may be eligible to receive an income source listed above, and they are not receiving such income, the housing provider must provide notice to the household that they are required to pursue the income.

The notice must state:

- That the household member(s) may be eligible to receive income of the type specified in the notice.
- The household member's requirement to make reasonable efforts to do whatever is required to obtain a decision on the application and receive that income.
- That the household has a period of **thirty (30) days** to provide the housing provider with the results of the application.

Failure to pursue income

A household that has been given a notice to pursue income ceases to be eligible for RGI assistance if:

- The household does not respond to the notice within the thirty (30) days.
- The housing provider concludes, after receiving a response that the household member has failed to make reasonable efforts to obtain the income specified in the notice.

The housing provider must issue a notice of increase to the market rent/housing charge with 90 days notice.



Households are eligible for a review of a decision to deem the household ineligible under this program instruction. (HSA, s. 156)

Extenuating Circumstances

O. Reg. 367/11 s. 31 (4) prescribes that a household may remain eligible for RGI assistance if the service manager is satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances.

A housing provider may defer the requirement to pursue income in certain extenuating circumstances including:

- The household member was a survivor of domestic violence/human trafficking (SPP applicant) and it would be unsafe for them to obtain information or documentation required to pursue income. A sworn affidavit may be requested to verify. At the next annual review, follow up with the household member to assess if the circumstances have changed where the household member would no longer be at risk to pursue income.
- A household member is ill or is in hospital (medical documentation required). A deferral may be granted for up to 3 months in this circumstance.

Where a housing provider feels additional extenuating circumstances may apply, they are to submit a recommendation to their Housing Programs Administrator for consideration.

Reasonable Efforts

A reasonable effort to pursue income under this Directive means that the household has, at a minimum:


- Completed and submitted an application for the income they may qualify for;
- Submitted all required documentation required to be assessed for the income source;
- Notify the housing provider if additional time is required to obtain documentation to pursue the income source; and
- Provide proof of the effort to pursue income to the housing provider.

If a household member does not comply with the requirements to obtain an income source, this would not be a reasonable effort to pursue income.

For example, a household that applies for OW assistance and receives a letter that they are not eligible as they failed to comply with a requirement of the OW program would no longer be eligible for RGI assistance.



Please refer to the RGI Guide for additional information on the types of income households are required to pursue.

DocuSigned by:

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Alex Sarchuk
Commissioner, Social and Community Services Department

Replaces: Program Directive No. 6
Date Released: December 18, 2020
Revised: N/A



Appendix I

Sample Letter - Notice to Household

Note: Letter must be on housing provider's letterhead.

[Insert Date]

Re: Pursue Income

Dear Resident(s),

In order to continue receiving rent subsidy, household members must pursue all sources of available income.

Based on a review of your household income, ***[insert name of household member(s)]*** may be eligible for the following benefits:

- ***List the type(s) of income to be pursued in accordance with this directive and how to pursue the income (see RGI Guide)***

You must make reasonable efforts to apply for and receive these benefits and you must provide proof of your application by ***[+ 30 days from the date of the letter]***.

If we don't receive this information by the due date, your household could lose your rent subsidy.

Questions?

Please contact the office at ***[insert housing provider phone number or alternate contact information]***

