



Housing Services Division  
 The Regional Municipality of Halton  
 690 Dorval Drive, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakville, ON L6K 3X9  
 Tel (905) 825-6000 1-866-442-5866 Toll Free  
[www.halton.ca](http://www.halton.ca)

# Community Housing Program Directives

## Directive No. 7

### Subject: Absence from the Unit

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Halton Access to Community Housing (HATCH)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other -  |

#### Effective Date:

January 1, 2021

#### Authority:

*Housing Services Act, 2011*  
 O. Reg 367/11 s. 37

#### Purpose:

To set out the local rule established for the purpose of O. Reg. 367/11 s.37 relating to the limits on the amount of time a household can be absent from their unit and continue to be eligible for rent geared to income (RGI) assistance.

#### Background:

O. Reg. 367/11, s. 37 gives Service Managers the discretion to create a local eligibility rule that limits the consecutive time period that a household can be absent from their unit and remain eligible for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance.

## Directions:

### **Maximum Absence from Unit**

A household receiving RGI assistance ceases to be eligible for this assistance if all household members have been absent from their unit for a time period of more than 90 consecutive days.

### **Exceptions - Absences due to Medical Reasons**

- If the household has only one member: if this member resides elsewhere for medical reasons, the unit is not to be considered vacant. As a best practice, this absence must be reviewed every 6 months.
- If the household consists of more than one member: if one member of the household resides elsewhere for medical reasons and the other members (usually the children in a single-parent household) subsequently cannot stay in the unit, the unit is not to be considered vacant.

*Example:* A valid medical reason for an absence may be a long stay in hospital, rehabilitation, or treatment in a facility. This must be supported by a document, such as a doctor's note and must be verified by the housing provider.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

Where a housing provider feels extenuating circumstances apply for non-medical absences of more than 90 consecutive days, they are to submit a recommendation to a Housing Programs Administrator for consideration. A possible extenuating circumstance involves the practical and/or cultural requirements following the death of a relative abroad.

### **Excessive Absences from the unit**

A household receiving RGI assistance may also cease to be eligible for this assistance if there are excessive absences (non-medical) that exceed 90 non-consecutive days in a 12-month period. These absences may be considered upon recommendation by the housing provider to a Housing Programs Administrator.

### **Review of the decision**

Households are eligible for a review of a decision to deem the household ineligible under this Program Directive. (HSA, s. 156 (5))

### **Communication to Households**

As a best practice, Housing Providers should incorporate this policy into their lease or occupancy agreement.

DocuSigned by:



E9F1C6774416461...

Alex Sarchuk

Commissioner, Social and Community Services Department

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| Replaces: Program Directive No. 2 |
| Date Released: December 18, 2020  |
| Revised: N/A                      |

