

Guidelines for Applying for Subsidized Housing

If you do not speak English, choose someone you trust to help you with your application and to be your interpreter. Put that person's name and contact information in Section 1. There are also agencies that can help you. If you don't know of any, ask Access to Housing for a list of them.

How To Get Help Filling Out the Application Form:

- Call the information line at 905-524-2228
- Come to our offices at 499 King Street East.
Business Hours are:
Monday – Wednesday: 9:00 – 5:00
Thursday: 8:30 – 5:00
Friday: 8:30 – 4:00

What Is Access To Housing?

Access to Housing is the point of access for people who want to apply for subsidized housing in the Hamilton area. We maintain a centralized waiting list for more than 11,000 units across the City and we work with a network of agencies and housing providers to help you find housing. Access to Housing is not a landlord. Access to Housing does not offer housing.

Who Can Apply For Subsidized Housing?

1. All members of the household must be:
 - A Canadian Citizen, or
 - A landed immigrant (permanent resident), or an applicant for permanent resident status, or
 - A refugee, or a refugee claimantYou must attach proof of status for each member of your household to your application
2. At least one person in your household must be 16 years of age or older and able to live independently. You must attach proof of age.
3. If you or any member of your household has arrears owing to any social housing provider within Ontario, Access to Housing will require confirmation that the member has entered into an agreement with the housing provider for the repayment of the arrears before we can process your application.
4. Your application will be rejected if any member of the household has been convicted in court or at the Ontario Rent Tribunal within the last 2 years of an offence related to rent-geared-to-housing under section 85 of the SHRA or a crime under the Criminal Code in relation to rent-geared-to-income assistance.
5. If anyone in your household has a financial interest in another home anywhere in the world, you must agree, in writing, to divest yourself of the property within one-year of getting housed. You do not have to make this decision when you first apply but you will have to make it before you get housed.

All decisions made by ATH regarding your eligibility to apply for social housing can be APPEALED (are subject to an Internal Review) when requested

How To Fill Out Your Application:

1. Complete all sections of the application. If any required documents are missing we will advise you in writing that your application is incomplete without placing you on the waiting list.
2. Using the Building Profile Manual located at the Access to Housing Office select where you want to live.
3. Attach all of the documents required. Use the checklist at the back of the application to make sure you have included everything.
4. Mail or deliver your application to Access to Housing at the address in the top right hand corner of this document. You can also fax your application to 905-524-1199.

How Long Will You Have To Wait?

Access to Housing will process your completed application and add you to our centralized waiting list. You will be provided with a copy of “Where Am I On The Waiting List?” This list will provide you with the estimated “wait” for the various projects/units throughout the City.

How To Keep Your Place On The Waiting List?

Stay Connected. If your contact information changes, tell us right away. We will make your file inactive if we cannot contact you. You cannot be offered housing if your file is inactive.

Keep Your Application Up To Date. The government regulations for social housing make it your responsibility to keep your application up to date. If you do not tell us about changes in your information, you could lose your place on the waiting list. Access to Housing will also review your eligibility once a year.

Stay Eligible. Every member of your household must continue to meet the five conditions listed under “Who can apply for subsidized housing?”

Review Your Needs Regularly. Review your housing needs regularly and tell us right away if your needs or preferences change. **You may apply for as many projects as you want;** however, you only get three offers of housing. If you turn down three offers (excluding rent supplement units) your name will be removed from the waiting list and you will have to re-apply and start at the bottom of the waiting list again. So contact Access to Housing if you need to update your building selections.

Permission to Gather Information. Access to Housing has permission to gather the personal information we ask for in this application under the Social Housing Reform Act, S.O. 2000, c.44, s. 62(2) and 68(2). We will use the information to determine your eligibility for subsidized housing and to compile statistics. We will not identify you in the statistics.

What Is Co-Operative Housing (Co-op Housing)?

People who live in a co-op are not tenants, they are members. As a member you share responsibility for the management of and the decision making in the co-op. You are obligated to participate in the co-op by attending meetings, sitting on committees including the board of directors, and voting on annual budgets and by-laws and rules for the co-op. Members volunteer for specific tasks. Co-ops are not governed under the rules of the Tenant Protection Act, but rather the Co-operatives Corporation Act and the by-laws of the co-op.

All important decisions are made by the members. Having input into decisions that affect your life results in a very satisfying sense of control. Be advised that there is no landlord in a co-op, there is a board of directors elected by the membership. Each co-op unit is self contained. Members share the common space in each co-op.

- Who is responsible for maintenance? Staff and members.
- Who decides what the housing charges (rent) should be? Members vote on budgets to cover costs.
- Who gets the profits? No one – there are no profits.
- How long can someone live at a co-op? As long as they want to, subject to being a member in good standing, and the unit is suitable for the family size.
- What is required when you want to leave? You must give proper notice to vacate.

If you apply for a co-op unit, you will be required to attend an orientation/information meeting and be interviewed by a co-op committee. A credit check and a landlord/tenancy report will be done. The board of directors will either approve or reject your application.

Important: You must be willing to accept the responsibilities of living in a co-op before applying to live at one. If you choose a co-op as one of your choices and you are accepted as a member, a unit will be offered to you. If you decide that you do not want to live in a co-op, this will be treated as a refusal. After your third refusal, your name will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

If you do not want to participate in a co-op, do not apply for a co-op.