**Eviction Prevention Policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>POLICY STATEMENT</strong></th>
<th>The City of Hamilton as Service Manager under the <em>Housing Services Act, 2011</em> (HSA), has established eviction prevention best practices.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURPOSE</strong></td>
<td>To identify eviction prevention best practices for non-profit Housing Providers who adhere to the <em>Housing Services Act, 2011</em> (HSA), and for all Housing Providers and Rent Supplement Landlords to use these best practices to help tenants maintain their housing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eviction is a last resort. Tenants living in non-profit housing or rent supplement units are generally low-income households who, if evicted, would find it difficult to obtain housing either in alternate affordable housing or the private market. Therefore, all non-profit Housing Providers and Rent Supplement Landlords are encouraged to adopt the activities identified in the <em>Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit</em> to avoid evictions due to economic reasons.</td>
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<td>The Eviction Prevention Policy describes the information and key elements necessary for non-profit Housing Providers to engage in eviction prevention activities. This policy aligns with the City of Hamilton’s 2013 Housing and Homelessness Action Plan; specifically, Strategy 3.7: “Encourage the development and implementation of enhanced eviction prevention policies in the social housing system.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SCOPE</strong></td>
<td>This policy applies to:</td>
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<td>- Non-profit Housing Providers;</td>
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<td>- Rent Supplement Landlords;</td>
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<td>- All tenants living with any non-profit Housing Provider; when it comes to eviction prevention activities, there is no need to distinguish between tenants who are in receipt of rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance and tenants who pay market rent;</td>
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<td>- Social Housing Administration team members, particularly: Senior Policy Analyst, Housing Administration Officers and the Manager of Social Housing;</td>
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<td>The selection of best practices in the <em>Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit</em> is intended to represent the activities that are most commonly used to prevent rental arrears and economic evictions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Best Practices</strong> a set of operational practices generally accepted by an industry as leading to increased operational efficiency, and thus worthy of being shared and copied among like service providers</td>
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<td><strong>Eviction Prevention</strong> a range of strategies that help tenants remain housed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TERMS & CONDITIONS

The City of Hamilton provided hard copies of the *Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit* to all non-profit housing providers and rent supplement landlords under its jurisdiction. The *Toolkit* is available electronically on the City of Hamilton’s website.

The *Toolkit* gives information and key elements required for effective eviction prevention. Eviction Prevention is a range of strategies that help tenants remain housed. There are 36 Communication, Rent Repayment, Education and Training strategies in the *Toolkit*. Key strategies include:

- Develop and implement an Eviction Prevention Policy;
- Train new staff and have annual refresher training for existing staff;
- Host information sessions for tenants;
- Tell tenants about eviction prevention at lease signing, annual reviews and when tenants are having trouble paying their rent;
- Make rent repayment agreements that are fair and realistic.
- Establish a standard of three attempts to contact a tenant before giving the N4 – Notice to End a Tenancy Early for Non-Payment of Rent; a Notice should be preceded and followed up with personal, direct contact whenever possible; Direct contact may include a letter, phone call, visit or any other contact that gives tenants the chance to respond to the situation and discuss solutions.

The *Toolkit* also has five tools to be used along with the strategies:

1. Do you know there are things you can do to avoid eviction?
2. Top 5 Things You Need to Know about Your Lease
3. Language Translation Aid
4. Community Resource Sheet
5. Eviction Prevention Policy Template

### RESPONSIBILITIES

**Housing Provider:**
- Create new, revise and/or maintain eviction prevention practices
- Report eviction prevention practices to the Service Manager
- Approve a Board Resolution ensuring eviction prevention best practices are adopted.

**Housing Administration Officer:**
- Ensure each Housing Provider has received the *Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit*;
- Annually report to the Manager of Social Housing as to whether each Housing Provider has adopted Eviction Prevention Best Practices;
- Monitor each Housing Provider Board Minutes to verify the
| Resolution/Approval to adopt new or confirm existing eviction prevention best practices; obtain a copy of the Board Minutes wherein the best practices have been recorded  

Senior Policy Analyst:  
- Keep the Toolkit contents up-to-date; make necessary revisions;  
- Post information to City of Hamilton website;  
- Create, distribute, collect and analyze a survey for Housing Providers and other stakeholders in Summer 2015 to evaluate eviction prevention efforts  

**Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit**  

| COMPLIANCE | There is no legislated requirement under the HSA for Service Managers or Housing Providers to implement Eviction Prevention policies and procedures; however, the City of Hamilton, acting as Service Manager, strongly encourages all non-profit housing providers to adopt an eviction prevention policy and engage in eviction prevention activities.  

Housing Administration Officers monitor the number of evictions through RGI monthly reports and confirm new or existing eviction prevention best practices through annual operational reviews with Housing Providers.  

The Manager of Social Housing is responsible for encouraging compliance with this policy.  

| HISTORY | The Eviction Prevention Best Practices Toolkit was developed in consultation with representatives from non-profit housing providers, tenant advocates, the Hamilton Community Legal Clinic as well as a City of Hamilton staff.  

The Toolkit was released on March 4, 2014.  

| Approval | Author Name: Tammy Morasse, Senior Policy Analyst  
Manager Name: Bob McKnight, Manager of Social Housing  
Director Name: Gillian Hendry, Director of Housing Services  
Date: 2014-11-11 |