

## Definitions of terms used by Housing Connections



**Affidavit** is a written statement sworn before a legal professional or another person who has the authority to witness an oath

**Alternative housing provider** is a non-profit housing provider with a mandate to provide housing to households that are homeless or hard to house. They are not required to use the centralized waiting list to fill their vacancies.

**Arrears** is money owed as rent or as a result of damage caused by a household member in a previous tenancy.

**Caregiver** is an individual who is not a member of the household but who is employed by a household member to provide support services for a household member's disability or medical condition.



A **child of an individual** can be any of the following:

- A child who is born within or outside of a marriage
- A child that has been legally adopted
- A child that the individual treats as their child

*A foster child is not considered a child of an individual.*

A **child of the household** can be defined as a child who:

- is a child of any household member
- has always lived at home except for short periods while in full-time attendance at a recognized educational institution.
- has never had a spouse or same-sex partner
- is not the parent of a child living in the household

**Co-operative housing (co-op)** is collectively owned and managed by its members (the people who live there). Members actively participate in decision making and share the work involved in running the housing community.

**Deportation, departure or exclusion orders** are immigration orders that require a person to leave Canada.



**Household** refers to one person who lives alone or a group of people who live together in a housing unit.

**Housing Connections Community Link** is an agency that is affiliated with Housing Connections but does not have access to applicant information or the waiting list database. They provide clients with housing information and referrals.

**Housing Connections Community Partner** is a community agency partnered with Housing Connections providing services in a variety of languages and helping clients with their housing search and application process. They have access to the waiting list database and are trained in Housing Connections policies and procedures.

**Housing development** refers to houses and apartments that are built and managed in groups or small communities.



**Housing provider** is an organization that provides social housing, such as Toronto Community Housing, co-ops, private non-profits, etc.

**Housing Services Act (HSA)** is the Ontario law that sets all the rules for social housing in Ontario.

**Landed immigrant** is an immigrant who has permanent resident status in Canada.

**Living independently** is when a person can do basic day-to-day living tasks, such as dressing, eating, or bathing, by themselves or if support services are in place to help them.



A **mandate** is a commitment to house a specific group of applicants. The province of Ontario has approved mandates for some housing providers including:

- Aboriginal people
- Frail seniors
- Homeless or hard to house (alternative housing)
- People living with AIDS
- People recovering from substance abuse
- People with disabilities
- Seniors

Toronto also recognizes special mandates to house:

- Artists in live/work spaces
- Performing artists

**Market Rent** is rent paid by a household that is not receiving rent-geared-to-income assistance.

**Modified unit** is a unit that has been modified to be accessible to an individual with physical disabilities or to allow an individual with a physical disability to live independently. Modifications may include lowered counter tops, grab bars, etc.

**Mixed housing or buildings** is housing without a mandate. All clients on the waiting list can add mixed buildings as housing choices, as long as their unit size is offered.



**Overhoused** households are tenants living in a unit that has more bedrooms than what the rent-geared-to-income occupancy standards allow.

**Private non-profit housing** is usually owned and managed by a sponsoring group such as a religious group, labour union, or other community organization.

**Recognized educational institution** is any of the following:

- A school of private school as defined in the Education Act
- A university
- A college of applied arts and technology established under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act
- A private vocational school as defined in the Private Vocational Schools Act

**Refugee claimant** is someone who has made a claim to the Government of Canada to be accepted as a Convention Refugee.



**Rent-gear-to-income (RGI)** is rent that is based on the tenant's income, about 30 per cent of the gross monthly household income. If the tenant receives social assistance, the rent is based on the rent benefit set by the Ontario government. RGI housing subsidies are usually available in publicly-owned social housing, and also available in co-ops, non-profit and private housing.

**Rent supplement** units are located in private rental buildings, but tenants still pay their rent-gear-to-income amount of 30 per cent of their total income. To select rent supplement housing choices, applicants add rent supplement sub-zones to their application, rather than individual buildings.

**Residential property** is property or part of a property that can be lived in.

A **Review** can be requested by any household member who is over the age of 16. They can request a review of some Housing Connections decisions made on their application or rent supplement tenancy.



Housing Connections' **Resource Centre** at 176 Elm Street provides clients with access to affordable housing options including self-serve tools for access to the waiting list for RGI housing and various housing programs.

**Same-sex partners** are two individuals who refer to themselves as same-sex partners. It is also defined as two individuals of the same sex who live in the same unit and:

- the social and familial aspects of the relationship amount to cohabitation, and
- one individual provides financial support to the other, or
- the individuals have a mutual agreement about their finances.

A **senior** is an individual who is 59 years of age or older. Some housing providers have mandates that consider seniors to be at least 65 years of age. One member of the household must be at least 59 years of age in order to apply for a building with a seniors' mandate.

In **shared** accommodation, an individual will usually have their own room but share amenities such as the kitchen, bathroom and other common living spaces, with other tenants in the unit.



**Special needs housing** may have special features to make it accessible to a person with physical disabilities, or may provide provincially funded support services to help a person live independently.

A household may request for a **special priority** if a household member is being abused by someone they live with or have recently lived with, or by a person who is sponsoring them as an immigrant. Special priority households go to the top of Housing Connections' centralized waiting list.

If two individuals of the opposite sex refer to themselves as **spouses**, they are considered spouses for RGI issues. Spouses can also include two individuals of the opposite sex that live in the same unit if:

- the social and familial aspects of the relationship amount to cohabitation, and
- one individual provides financial support to the other, or
- the individuals have a mutual agreement or arrangement regarding their financial affairs.



**Transferred assets** are assets that a person has sold, leased or given to someone who is not a member of their household. Special rules apply if the transfer took place within 36 months of the person applying for RGI assistance.