



Durham Social Housing Directives

Housing Services Division | Financial Housing Services
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Subject:	ABSENCE FROM UNIT
Directive Number:	RGI 2012-06
Date:	September 20, 2012

Purpose

Establish limits on the amount of time that a household can be absent from their unit and continue to be eligible for RGI assistance.

Background

Under the *Housing Services Act*, Durham may establish a local eligibility rule limiting the number of days that all members of an RGI household can be absent from their unit and continue to be eligible for RGI assistance.

This is referred to as the local absence rule.

Local Absence Rule

An RGI tenant or co-op member ceases to be eligible for RGI assistance if all members of their household have been absent from the unit for either:

- 60 consecutive days
- 90 cumulative days in the preceding 12 month period.

Exceptions for Medical Reasons

RGI tenants or co-op members who have been absent from their unit for a longer period than permitted under the local absence rules, continue to be eligible for RGI assistance if the absence is due to:

- a temporary stay in a hospital or other acute health care facility
- residential treatment in a substance abuse recovery program
- alternate care of children arising as a result of a parent's temporary stay in hospital, an acute care facility or a residential treatment program.

- caring for another member of the household who is temporarily in hospital, an acute care facility or a residential treatment program.

Exceptions due to medical reasons should be clearly documented on the tenant/member file.

Other Exceptions

Housing providers may approve an exception to the local absence rules if the RGI tenant or co-op member is temporarily absent from the unit in order to care for a family member – even if the family member is not part of the household. Reasons for this exception should be clearly documented on the tenant/member file.

Longer absences for other reasons may be permitted in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Housing Services Division. Reasons for the exception and details of the authority for the exception should be clearly documented on the tenant/member file.

Notice

Housing providers should ensure that RGI tenants and co-op members are advised of the local absence rules at the time of move-in and annually thereafter. Notice should include:

- a statement of the local absence rule limits
- a request that the RGI tenant or co-op member advise the housing provider if they will be absent from their unit for more than 15 consecutive days.

Effective Date

The new requirements under this directive come into effect September 1, 2012.

Repealed Rules

This directive replaces Directive 2006-16 Absence from Unit that was previously issued under the authority of the *Social Housing Reform Act*.

Legislative Authority

Housing Services Act, s. 42
Ontario Regulation 367/11, s. 37