

***Welcome to the Housing First Rent Support Program!***

This fact sheet outlines key information and guidelines to help you gain a better understanding the Housing First Rent Support Program.

**Overview**

The Housing First Rent Support Program is part of The City of Hamilton's 10 year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and central vision that *"Everyone has a Home and Home is the Foundation"*.

The Program is funded by the City of Hamilton and helps at risk Housing First tenants to secure affordable housing and to promote positive tenant-landlord relations.

The Program provides housing allowances of \$250.00 month directly to landlords on behalf of Housing First clients to bridge the gap between the monthly market rent charged for a unit and the rent portion paid by tenants.

**Who can access the program?**

Clients participating in any Housing First programs can access the program.

**How do I access the program?**

You are already accessing it. The Program is supported through your Housing First agency and the Housing Allowance is paid through the Hamilton Housing Help Centre directly to your housing provider landlord on your behalf.

**Rental Payments**

All participants are required to pay their portion of the rent to the landlord on the day it is due (usually the first day of each month). The housing allowance payment will be paid by the Hamilton Housing Help Centre to the landlord on the first of every month.

**What if my landlord does not receive the housing allowance payment?**

If your landlord does not receive a rent payment, have the landlord contact the Hamilton Housing Help Centre directly at **(905) 526-8100 x312** and speak with a member of staff to resolve the issue.

**What if I move or change addresses?**

If you move or change addresses while enrolled in the Housing First Rent Support program, the housing allowance will follow you to your new home.

**\*It is crucial that you inform the Hamilton Housing Help Centre of any change in address or relocation in order to ensure your rent is paid on time, and to the right housing provider.**



## **Notes for Program Participant:**

**i - Personal Information** - Personal information is as defined under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and can include information such as address, telephone number, date of birth, gender, criminal history, and medical history.

**ii - Consent** - This consent will expire no later than one (1) year after the participant has ceased receiving services under this program.

### **Statement of Use:**

Personal information that is collected will be used only for the purpose of providing services related the Housing First Rent Support Program. Information will not be used for any other purpose, unless required by law, and will only be disclosed to external parties with the consent of the individual to whom it pertains.

## **Notes for Staff:**

### ***How & When should Staff Use This Form:***

This form is to be used as a method of obtaining consent to use and disclose personal participant information in and between service providers. This form should be used by Housing First Providers after the intake process when they have identified participants are suitable for Housing Allowances. Housing First staff need to complete this form before sharing personal information with the Housing Help Centre.

### **Steps:**

1. Using the drop down box on the consent form (highlighted in red), select the maximum number of months the participant is eligible to receive a Housing Allowance. Unless prompted otherwise, the default is 60 months. If unsure, contact the Housing Help Centre
2. Have the participant complete the remaining sections of the form
3. Complete the Confirmation section of the form confirming you have witnessed the signature
4. After this form is completed, the Housing First Provider should circulate a copy to the Hamilton Housing Help Centre by email or fax. The Housing Help Centre will add this information to the file.

### **- Explanation of Key Terms/Elements of the Form:**

- Participant Name: Add the name of the participant to the appropriate areas in the form. These are needed to ensure that the participant file matches the consent form (identification verification)

- Participant Signature: demonstrates an understanding that participant is granting permission to the Hamilton Housing Help Centre to collect and use personal information as necessary to provide appropriate services

- Information Sharing: Housing First staff will be required to explain that personal information may be disclosed as part of this consent, but that it will be protected at all times. Staff will also read (and explain) the Statement of Use to the participant. This is to inform that the information is only going to be used for their participation in the program, and that any unauthorized use is against the law.

- Time Provision: Consent must never be indefinite. This consent form expires one (1) year after the participant leaves the Housing First Rent Support Program.