

Housing First Rent Supplement Program

Landlord Information

Program Description

The Housing First Rent Supplement Program is funded by the City of Hamilton and provides housing allowances to low-income individuals to help them maintain their housing and avoid eviction. This program is central to the vision of Hamilton's Housing and Homelessness Action Plan that *"Everyone has a Home and Home is the Foundation"*. This vision can only be possible with the development of strong partnerships and positive relationships with community minded landlords and housing providers in the City of Hamilton.

The program benefits tenants by reducing their monthly rent payment and safeguards the landlord by direct payment of the subsidy. In addition to monthly rent supplements, specially trained housing workers support the landlord and tenant in order to promote positive tenant-landlord relations and respond to any issues that may threaten the tenancy.

Benefits of the Rent Supplement Program

There are many benefits to participating in the Rent Supplement Program.

- A) **Reduced Marketing Costs** – The program eliminates the cost and time spent on advertising a vacant unit by referring potential tenants directly to participating landlords.

- B) **Improved Tenant-Landlord Relations** – The program will help improve communication between tenants and landlords to support successful tenancies.

How is the program delivered?

Housing First Rent Supports are coordinated by four community agencies including Wesley Urban Ministries, The Good Shepherd, Homeward Bound and the Catholic Children's Aid Society. Potential clients are screened to ensure they are meeting the eligibility criteria for a rent allowance. Rent allowances are granted to the individual client and paid directly to the landlord. If the tenant moves the subsidy goes with the tenant. Once suitable housing is located, the landlord is contacted and introduced to the Rent Supplement Program. For information concerning program access, contact one of the above agencies.

Who can access the program?

Clients participating in the Housing First program can apply for access to the program.

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Role of the Hamilton Housing Help Centre

The Housing First Rent Support Program is provided by four community agencies including Wesley Urban Ministries, the Good Sheppard, Homeward Bound and the Catholic Children's Aid Society.

Hamilton Housing Help Centre acts as the broker agency, paying the rental allowances to landlords and property managers through direct deposit or cheque. The Hamilton Housing Help Centre will also act as an information resource for participating landlords.

Getting Started

Landlord Registration

In order to receive payments landlords must complete a **Landlord Participation Agreement** and provide Hamilton Housing Help Centre with their payment details. To ensure prompt payment it is recommended that you use Direct Deposit. Complete forms are returned to Hamilton Housing Help Centre. They can be scanned faxed or mailed to the Hamilton Housing Help

119 Main Street East Hamilton, ON L8N 3Z3 Phone: (905) 526-8100 Fax: (905) 528-1448 Email: steven@housinghelpcentre.ca

Landlord Participation Agreement

The Landlord Participation Agreement is to outlines the terms and conditions that govern participation in the Rent Supplement Program. The Agreement is broken down into two sections:

Section 1- Landlord Billing & Contact Information

Section 2 - Terms and Conditions

Both the landlord and the Broker Agency (Hamilton Housing Help Centre) must authorize the landlord agreement. By signing the form, both parties agree to adhere to the obligations and responsibilities therein and as outlined by the Rent Supplement Program.

Electronic Fund Transfer Form (Direct Deposit Authorization)

This form must be completed by landlords/property managers who wish to have their rental payment electronically deposited into their bank account. The form is broken down into of three sections:

1. Landlord Information

Housing First Rent Supplement Program

Landlord Information

Complete this section with the following information: Landlord Name (print), Address, Phone & Fax numbers, web address and HST number.

2. Remittance Information

Indicate the person to be notified when a direct deposit payment has been made. Include the person's Title (i.e. Account Manager) and their email address. A secondary contact name is optional.

3. Banking Information

Complete this section with the following information: Bank Name (print) and Address, Bank Number (3 digits), Transit Number (5 digits) and the Account Number. Sign and date bottom of section.

Property Inspection

In order to ensure that the rental unit meets the requirement under the IAH guidelines, an annual inspection will be completed on the unit before a tenant client is eligible to receive subsidies. Basic living standards and maintenance levels are important for both tenants and landlords and landlords are responsible for meeting a minimum quality standard for their units. The inspection gathers basic demographic information (address, occupant information, price, utilities) assess the exterior and interior environment ensures that fire, plumbing and heating standards are being met. This inspection takes approximately fifteen minutes and requires access to the unit. The landlord does not have to be present. The inspection can be done with in the presence of the tenant only. A copy of the report will be sent to the landlord.