

## PRIVACY POLICY

*Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area is committed to protecting the privacy of the personal information that is shared with us by clients, employees, board members, volunteers, and other community members who may be involved in our activities or on our website. Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area personnel are authorized to access personal information based only on their need to deal with the information for the reason(s) for which it is obtained. We value the trust of those who deal with us, and we strive to maintain the accuracy, confidentiality and security of their personal information.*

### **DEFINING PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Personal information is any information that can be used to distinguish, identify or contact a specific individual. This information can include an individual's opinions or beliefs, as well as facts about or related to the individual. Business contacts information and other information that may be available to the public (e.g. names, address and telephone numbers as published in the telephone directories) are not considered personal information.

### **COLLECTING INFORMATION HELPS US SERVE YOU BETTER**

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area always identifies the purpose for which personal information is being collected either before or at the time it is collected. We do not automatically gather any information such as your name, phone number or e-mail address through our websites unless it is to provide you with a specific service. This information is only obtained if you supply it to us voluntarily, for example, through contacting us via e-mail for specific information requests, or by asking to access a service or join in a discussion forum.

We collect, use and disclose information only for purposes that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in light of the circumstances. For example we collect and use personal information for:

- Tracking changes in the client's position relative to their needs and measuring the quantity, type and scope of services provided
- Disseminating information about our services and activities
- For communication, services delivery and administration
- Complying with legal and regulatory requirements
- Reporting eligibility criteria to the government and other funding sources
- Collecting non identifiable aggregate data for research and planning purposes

### **SAFEGUARDING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION**

We take all necessary precaution that personal information is safeguarded and used for the purpose(s) for which it was provided, whether it is stored in electronic or paper format. In cases, information is protected from unauthorized access and kept only as long as is reasonably required. For example, servers are fully secured electronic files are data encrypted and password protected and accessible only by authorized employees on a need to know basis.

We do not sell, rent or share personal mailing list information with other organizations.

We will obtain your consent before using or disclosing your personal information for any purpose, except where the law provides an exemption. In certain circumstance we may be required to provide personal information for legal or regulatory purpose, for example in the Annual Charity Information Return for Canada Revenue Agency, and the Annual Information Return for Government of Ontario. In exceptional circumstances, we may also be required to share information with law enforcement agencies, in emergencies, where required by court order or search warrant, or to report suspected child abuse as required by legislation in all provinces and territories in Canada.

## THE INTERNET

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area may collect information and track user patterns anonymously on its website by using a browser feature called “cookies”, which is able to identify your browser – but not you – to our computer. This information is used solely to enable us to provide you with a useful outline experience and to find ways to improve our site. Although cookies are widely used, it may be possible to disable cookies via the browser setting on your computer. However, doing so may affect the functioning of some website. We cannot use cookies by themselves to disclose the individual identity of any site user, and we never combine information gather by cookies with personally identifiable information like your name, or even your e-mail address, without your consent.

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area is committed to ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of the personal information you provide to us through our website. We use security software, procedures and encryption protocols such as the use of Secure Socket Layer (SSL) protocol to protect your personal information from unauthorized access, use or disclosure.

## WEB SITE DISCLAIMER

The information contained in [www.housinghelpcentre.ca](http://www.housinghelpcentre.ca) is compiled and published by Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area as a resource for people who are seeking help or information related to housing help support.

Every effort has been made to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available and is committed to maintaining the content of this site. However, errors may occur, and information at this site may be, at times, dated. Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area cannot be held liable either directly or indirectly for consequential damages arising from the use of information or services provided at this site. Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area makes no guarantees, expressed or implied, as to the reliability or accuracy of this service. Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area has the right to discontinue, change or modify this site at any time without notice.

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Use of [www.housinghelpcentre.ca](http://www.housinghelpcentre.ca) is wholly voluntary and is at the user’s sole risk and will not result in any liability against Hamilton Housing Help Centre. Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area cannot and does not provide any warranties or make representation related to the information contained in or resulting services through its websites.

## OPENNESS & ACCESS

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area will provide information to individuals about our policies and procedures relating to the management of personal information that we hold.

On written request, Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area will inform an individual of the existence, use and disclosure of their personal information that we hold, and will give the individual access to that information. Individuals are entitled to challenge the accuracy and completeness of their personal information that is held by Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area and to request that it be amended as appropriate.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area is responsible for protecting the personal information under its control and has designed an individual to be accountable for compliance with these policies.

### **THIRD-PARTY**

Housing Help Centre – Hamilton & Area administers a variety of housing service programs on behalf of third-party providers. Consent forms are utilized to collect personal information on behalf of the program funder. Personal information is proprietary to the program funder. Any requests for release of information are referred to the program funder.

### **INQUIRIES OR COMPLAINTS**

If you have questions or concerns about your personal information that is held by Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area or about our privacy policies and procedures please write to:

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton & Area, 119 Main Street Hamilton, Ontario, L8N 3Z3

Larry Huibers Executive Director

or Email us at [info@housinghelpcentre.ca](mailto:info@housinghelpcentre.ca)

For more information about your rights regarding your personal information, please visit the website on the Privacy Commissioner of Ontario <https://www.ipc.on.ca>

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