

Please see below an update from Access to Housing in response to questions posed by THSP workers and managers.

Hello all,

I realized that I did not include the answers to the other questions. Here you go.

1. We are having difficulty reaching a 'live-body' at Access to Housing. How can we connect with staff at Access to Housing regarding SPP-related questions, process and outcomes?

As a result of COVID-19 there have been significant impacts to City of Toronto operations including Access to Housing. The Application Support call centre staff have been redeployed until further notice. I understand how challenging this is for staff and more importantly the clients you work with. As such, Access to Housing Management and staff are doing our best to monitor and respond to voicemail and general email enquiries as quickly as possible. Caseworkers who have been assigned to review new priority applications will include their contact information on Decisions Letters and will do their best to respond as quickly as possible. Please continue to submit new Special Priority applications by Canada Post to Access to Housing 176 Elm St, Toronto ON M5T 3M4 for processing. Information about the application process is available on the City of Toronto website at www.toronto.ca/accesstohousing.

2. Is the assessment and processing of SPP applications being expedited during COVID?

Although the Access to Housing Resource Centre is closed until further notice, we have a small team of Caseworkers who are responsible for assessing SPP eligibility and requests associated with Social Housing Provider housing offers. My goal is to increase staffing levels when we return to regular business to help expedite the SPP application backlog.

3. It seems that one of the criteria to establish proof of abuse – financial dependency – is being used in the SPP application process to deny people SPP eligibility. As per the legislation, financial dependency is one of several criteria utilized to establish proof of abuse. Financial dependency is not itself a required criteria to establish proof of abuse if other criteria are present that establish abuse. Could you please clarify the process for determination of eligibility.

Eligibility for Special Priority is based on the HSA Legislation and determined by a review of the details provided within the SPP Application, Record of Abuse, and supporting documents. We are currently developing tools and re-introducing Quality Assurance that will help improve the way we are assessing eligibility. I will provide an update at our next policy meeting.

I appreciate your feedback.

Stay safe.

Sharon Campbell, Manager (Interim) – Access to Housing
Shelter, Support & Housing Administration
Housing Stability Services Unit



Thanks Trish.

Hello everyone. Hope you are doing well.

I wanted to add the following in reference to the 2nd agency signature:

Clarification regarding Agency binding signature on SPP Applications:

The same professional who writes the Record of Abuse (on agency letterhead) must be the same person who completes and signs the SPP Application (Section E). If this professional works at a social services agency, holds one of the professional designations listed in the Act **and has been authorized to bind their agency**, Access to Housing will accept **one** signature on Section E. A second signature is required on Section E if this professional was not **given the authority to bind the Agency**. The Agency determines who has the authority to bind the Agency and verify the contents of the SPP application. **Note**: This person does not have to be at the Executive Director level, it is your decision to assign this role within your organization.

I am conducting an assessment of SPP protocols and procedures and anticipate changes that will be implemented to enhance and improve our service levels. Looking forward to our continued collaboration on this process.

Please feel free to contact me regarding additional concerns, questions or feedback.

Looking forward to meeting you all in person.

Warm regards,

Sharon Campbell, Manager (Interim) – Access to Housing
Shelter, Support & Housing Administration
Housing Stability Services Unit



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