

## Office of the Commissioner of Housing Equity (OCHE) – 2021 Work Plan



The Office of the Commissioner of Housing Equity (OCHE) 2021 Work Plan has two sections:

1. New OCHE Projects: New items to be completed in 2021; and
2. Standing Items: Ongoing OCHE activities

OCHE Goals and Objectives	OCHE Actions	OCHE Key Performance Outcomes
New OCHE Projects: New items to be completed in 2021		
<p>1) In Partnership with TCHC’s Tenant Resolution Office (TRO) and Senior Management the OCHE will work to develop a new policy and process for identifying and working with vulnerable tenants at TCHC, which will result in a 10% increase in referrals of vulnerable tenants to the OCHE by year end 2021.</p>	<p>a) Work with TCHC’s Tenant Resolution Office and Senior Management to develop a work plan in Q1 and establish a working group that includes external experts in the field of vulnerability.</p> <p>b) Ensure that all stakeholders, including tenants, are involved throughout the policy development process.</p> <p>c) Offer training to tenant-facing front line staff on the new policy and process to identify and work with vulnerable tenants.</p>	<p>a) i. A collaborative working group comprised of TCHC’s Tenant Resolution Office, Senior Management and external experts will be developed, and a new policy and process for identifying and working with vulnerable tenants will be created by the end of Q2 2021.</p> <p>b) i. Tenants and external stakeholders will be included in the development of the new policy and process, in collaboration with TCHC. The OCHE will identify potential stakeholders to TCHC for inclusion in the development of the new policy and process.</p> <p>c) i. The OCHE will offer 100% of TCHC tenant-facing staff training, in collaboration with TCHC, by year-end.</p>

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<p>2) In Partnership with TCHC evaluate the new Arrears Collection Process (ACP) to ensure the changes have been effective and that staff are complying with the new process.</p>	<p>a) The OCHE will collaborate with TCHC to complete an evaluation of the new ACP and review TCHC’s compliance to ensure that the anticipated positive outcomes of the revised process are realized and identify areas requiring revision (if required).</p> <p>b) Ensure that all stakeholders, including tenants are involved throughout the evaluation process.</p>	<p>a) i. The OCHE will provide a review and audit findings regarding the new ACP to TCHC staff and the Board of Directors by the end of Q2.</p> <p>a) ii. The OCHE will support TCHC in making revisions as needed to the new ACP (if required).</p> <p>b) i. The OCHE will engage with TCHC Tenants, internal and external stakeholders to participate in the evaluation and identify potential stakeholders to TCHC for inclusion in the evaluation of the new ACP.</p>
<p>3) As the City moves into Phase one of a new Seniors Housing Corporation (SHC) through the Integrated Service Model (ISM) in 2021, work with the City of Toronto, TCHC and the new SHC to ensure that the key roles of the OCHE will be available to all senior tenants living in the two City Corporations and their tenancies are sustained.</p>	<p>a) Participate in the planning for this change in governance and work with the City of Toronto, TCHC and SHC to review the role of the OCHE.</p>	<p>a) i. The OCHE will have a clearly defined role in the structure, which will ensure that senior tenants have access to the OCHE’s specialized services, to assist them with getting their support needs met and stabilizing their tenancies.</p> <p>a) ii. 100% of seniors who engage with the OCHE will be connected to the supports they require in order to sustain their tenancies.</p>

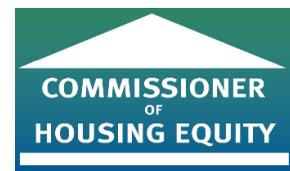


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	<p>b) Work closely with the General Manager, Seniors Housing Unit to develop a new processes to address arrears early and to incorporate Early Resolution Officers (EROs) interventions into the SHC’s Arrears Collection Process.</p>	<p>b) i. EROs will be integrated into the work of the City’s SHC and ISM and deliver services within the new structure, targeted specifically to address challenges specific to seniors.</p> <p>b) ii. Tenant arrears in the SHC will be reduced, due to the OCHE’s early intervention, in 90% of the cases referred to the OCHE.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>b) iii. The OCHE’s early intervention will result in the avoidance of evictions for seniors in 85% of cases.</p>
<p>4) Work with TCHC to integrate the OCHE into the new restructuring plan (HUB Model) to ensure services are brought closer to where tenants live. Ensure that the OCHE is integrated into the new processes and structure, so that the OCHE and TCHC</p>	<p>a) Work closely with the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), Chief Operating Officer (COO) and 3 General Managers to ensure that the OCHE is integrated into the new HUB model and develop a process for the OCHE’s early intervention in the ACP.</p>	<p>a) i. In Q1, review the findings from 2020 COVID Pilot to determine if a direct referral process can be established between TCHC and the OCHE, where cases are sent to the OCHE earlier in the ACP.</p> <p>a) ii. If warranted, develop a direct referral process between TCHC and the OCHE, where cases are sent to the OCHE earlier in the ACP, by the end of Q2</p>

<sup>1</sup> The OCHE process is voluntary for tenants; thus if OCHE is unable to resolve arrears, the CHE recommends that TCHC proceed to the Landlord Tenant Board (LTB) and thus arrears are not reduced but addressed through an LTB Order.



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<p>can continue to deliver services consistently, efficiently and with accountability in the new model, focusing on a reduction of unmanaged Hardened Arrears.</p>	<p>b) Collaborate with the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), Chief Operating Officer (COO) and 3 General Managers to ensure that the OCHE will be integrated into the new HUB model and develop a process for addressing longer-term arrears and reducing unmanaged Hardened Arrears by 75%.</p> <p>c) Create opportunities for the OCHE and TCHC to work closely in order to develop collaborative relationships between the OCHE and HUB teams.</p>	<p>b) i. In Q1, review findings from the 2020 Hardened Arrears Pilot to determine if a new approach should be adopted to address longer term arrears in the new HUB model.</p> <p>b) ii. If warranted, the OCHE will develop a new approach to address longer term arrears in the new HUB model by the end of Q2.</p> <p>b) iii. Files with unmanaged Hardened Arrears referred to the OCHE, will be managed and reduced in 75% of cases where tenants engage with the OCHE.</p> <p>c) i. 100% of the OCHE staff will participate in HUB simulations as HUB’s are opened.</p> <p>c) ii. ERO’s will work with HUB staff to resolve complex arrears cases.</p> <p>c) iii. The OCHE will provide training on the OCHE Approach to ensure knowledge transfer from the OCHE to TCHC tenant-facing frontline staff.</p>



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Standing Items: Ongoing OCHE activities		
<p>5) Support senior and vulnerable tenants to ensure successful tenancies and reduce the need for eviction from TCHC by effectively addressing underlying issues related to the accumulation of arrears and by brokering repayment agreements between TCHC and tenants.</p>	<p>a) The OCHE will connect with tenants to identify and address underlying issues leading to arrears in order to reduce them and ensure future ability to pay rent on time.</p> <p>b) The OCHE will broker repayment plans between tenants and TCHC.</p> <p>c) The Commissioner will provide TCHC with case-specific findings on each case, including case management recommendation improvements and audit findings.</p>	<p>a) i. Early Resolution Officers will successfully engage with tenants and identify underlying issues, which will then be communicated to TCHC, to increase service delivery quality in 80% of the tenants referred to them.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>b) i. Early Resolution Officers will successfully broker repayment agreements with 100% of the tenants the OCHE engages with and reduce Hardened Arrears in 75% of the cases with which they work.</p> <p>c) i. The Commissioner will provide reports for each case that summarize key findings and includes forward-looking recommendations to TCHC for continuous service improvement to ensure that the tenancies are sustainable after the file is returned to TCHC for ongoing case management.</p> <p>c) ii. Underlying issues will be identified for TCHC in 100% of cases in which the OCHE worked in order to assist TCHC with managing the tenancy and the arrears long-term.</p>

<sup>2</sup>Referrals by TCHC are mandatory but engagement by TCHC tenants is voluntary.



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	<p>d) Support tenants to pay off the arrears owing to TCHC within the shortest time possible, taking into account the financial resources available to the tenants and the size of arrears accumulated.</p> <p>e) Track repayment agreements and monitor for compliance via breaches referred back to the OCHE.</p>	<p>d) i. 100% of tenants will be connected with internal and external supports to address underlying issues contributing to arrears, such as mental health challenges or financial illiteracy.</p> <p>d) ii. 90% of tenants referred to the OCHE will be set up to pay their rent directly to TCHC by having PAP or direct payments set up.</p> <p>d) iii. 100% of repayment plans will be based on the financial circumstances of the tenants, including the completion of a budget document.</p> <p>d) iv. Tenants will be set up with voluntary trustees as needed and direct payment to TCHC to assist in their ability to pay rent.</p> <p>e) i. The OCHE will conduct a fulsome review of all breached files to determine if the circumstances leading to the breach were exceptional and warrant the OCHE further involvement.</p>

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	<p>f) Connect tenants with external funding available to repay arrears directly to TCHC and connect tenants with options to lower their financial obligations i.e. reduced cost cable service, credit counselling.</p> <p>g) Breached OCHE brokered repayments will be assessed by OCHE to identify if any additional supports/intervention will result in arrears being repaid and evictions avoided.</p>	<p>f) i. The OCHE will identify possible income sources available to tenants and a minimum of 50% of Tenants who work with the OCHE will be connected with income sources resulting in a lump sum direct payment of arrears to TCHC<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p>f) ii. Direct payments will be made to TCHC to reduce arrears owed by tenants referred to OCHE.</p> <p>g) i. The OCHE will work with 100% of tenants who have breached their first brokered repayment agreement only if the tenants have demonstrated exceptional circumstances.</p>
	<p>h) Breached OCHE brokered repayment plans will be reviewed to determine the reasons the agreement failed and learnings will be incorporated into the OCHE processes going forward and communicated to TCHC for continuous systemic improvement.</p>	<p>h) i. In 100% of the cases, the OCHE will identify and advise TCHC of the reason(s) for failed TCHC and OCHE brokered repayments.</p> <p>h) ii. The OCHE will consider exceptional circumstances as rare unforeseen hardships beyond tenants’ control and those which have a significant impact on tenants’ ability to meet the terms of repayment agreements. The OCHE has examined the underlying reasons regarding why the repayment agreement failed and communicate findings to TCHC to facilitate ongoing process improvement and continuous learning.</p>

<sup>3</sup> This is a conservative estimate as many tenants do not qualify for any additional external funding or subsidies.



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<p>6) Ensure the accountability of the OCHE’s work to ensure quality service is provided to tenants by ensuring TCHC compliance with OCHE recommendations.</p>	<p>a) Develop and deliver quarterly process improvement recommendations to TCHC.</p> <p>b) Ensure that audit findings will be reported to the TCHC Board and Senior Management on a regular basis.</p>	<p>a) i. The OCHE will ensure process improvement by providing strategic advice to TCHC regarding the Arrears Collection Process.</p> <p>a) ii. The OCHE will deliver one process improvement recommendation on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>b) i. The OCHE will provide strategic policy and process advice to TCHC on a regular basis by delivering process improvement recommendations.</p>