

Subject: 2026 Update to Local Priority Rules Under the Housing Services Act, 2011

File Number: ACS2026-CSS-GEN-007

Report to Community Services Committee on 28 April 2026

and Council 13 May 2026

Submitted on April 17, 2026 by Clara Freire, General Manager, Community and Social Services

Contact Person: Kale Brown, Interim Director, Housing and Homelessness Services

613-580-2424 x 33014, kale.brown@ottawa.ca

Ward: Citywide

Objet : Modification des règles de priorité locales prévues dans la Loi de 2011 sur les services de logement – 2026

Numéro de dossier : ACS2026-CSS-GEN-007

Rapport présenté au Comité des services communautaires

Rapport soumis le 28 avril 2026

et au Conseil le 13 mai 2026

Soumis le 2026-04-17 par Clara Freire, Directrice générale, Services sociaux et communautaires

Personne-ressource : Kale Brown, Directeur intérimaire, Services du logement et de la lutte contre l'itinérance

613-580-2424 poste 33014, kale.brown@ottawa.ca

Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve the Local Priority Rules, as updated and set out in full in Document 1, which includes updates to the Category 3 – Local Priority Rules, as described in this report.

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des services communautaires recommande au Conseil d'approuver les règles de priorités locales mises à jour et présentées intégralement dans le document 1, qui comprend également les modifications apportées à la Catégorie 3 – Règles de priorité locales, comme décrit dans le présent rapport.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing, regulated by the Housing Services Act, 2011, is a limited resource and is one of the most deeply affordable housing options available. Ottawa is required to subsidize 16,502 RGI units as a provincial requirement through the Housing Services Act. With over fourteen thousand households waiting for an RGI housing offer, it is imperative that the rules to access and remain eligible for this important resource are up to date and meeting local needs.

On July 23, 2025 Council approved seven recommendations to Category 1, Local RGI Eligibility Rules and Category 2, Local Occupancy Standards in the [2025 Update to Local Rules Under the Housing Services Act, 2011](#). As described in the July report, Category 3, Local Priority Rules impact the broader housing and homelessness sector requiring a wider range of stakeholders to provide input as described in this report.

As Service Manager under the *Housing Services Act, 2011 (HSA)*, the City has the ability and the responsibility to establish certain local eligibility policies, referred to as Local Rules, in order to administer, implement and distribute social housing resources, which include access to RGI assistance in an equitable and consistent manner. Local priority rules are made pursuant to section 48 of the *HSA* and are in addition to the provincial priority rules set out in Section 53 of O. Reg. 367/11. These rules determine the priority of households waiting for RGI assistance. This includes whether a household is given a local priority over the chronological list.

While Council last approved the Local Priority Rules on September 13, 2017 (Council Report # [ACS2017-CSS-GEN-006](#)) following extensive sector consultation, the City periodically reviews these rules to respond to operational experience, stakeholder feedback, and evolving community needs.

The recommended updates to Category 3 are based on feedback and administrative experience gained since they were last updated eight years ago and are not the result of recent legislative changes.

This report presents the outcome of a comprehensive review of the Category 3 - Local Priority Rules, which includes six Local Priority Access Status (LPAS) and the associated operational requirements. The review consisted of consultations with housing providers, community stakeholders and a review of practices in other service manager areas across the province. The focus of the review aimed to address the evolving operational challenges and respond to the changing needs of the community, ensuring compliance with legislation, promoting fairness and equity for households in greatest need and improving clarity and transparency.

Following the broader review, four (4) types of LPAS' were reaffirmed and remain unchanged. There are two (2) LPAS' that have been refined based on consultation feedback. The number of housing offers and operational processes for making offers will continue as previously approved in the 2017 report.

RÉSUMÉ

Le logement à loyer indexé sur le revenu (LIR), réglementé par la *Loi de 2011 sur les services de logement*, est une ressource limitée et constitue l'une des options de logement les plus abordables. Conformément à la *Loi sur les services de logement*, la Ville d'Ottawa doit subventionner 16 502 logements à LIR. Comme plus de 14 000 ménages sont en attente d'un logement à LIR, les règles d'accès et d'admissibilité à cette ressource importante doivent absolument être à jour et respecter les besoins locaux.

Le 23 juillet 2025, le Conseil a approuvé sept recommandations relatives à la Catégorie 1 – Règles locales d’admissibilité au LIR et à la Catégorie 2 – Normes d’occupation locales présentées dans le document [Modification des règles locales prévues dans la Loi de 2011 sur les services de logement – 2025](#). Comme décrit dans le rapport de juillet, la Catégorie 3 – Règles de priorité locales a une incidence sur le secteur du logement et de la lutte contre l’itinérance dans son ensemble, ce qui nécessite la contribution d’un plus grand éventail d’intervenants, comme décrit dans le présent rapport.

En tant que gestionnaire de services au titre de la *Loi de 2011 sur les services de logement*, la Ville d’Ottawa a la capacité et la responsabilité d’élaborer des politiques d’admissibilité locales, connues sous le nom de *règles locales*, pour administrer, mettre en œuvre et répartir les ressources de logement social, y compris en accordant l’accès au LIR de façon uniforme et équitable. Les règles de priorité locales sont établies en vertu de l’article 48 de la *Loi sur les services de logement* et s’ajoutent aux règles de priorité provinciales établies à l’article 53 du *Règlement de l’Ontario 367/11*. Ces règles déterminent la priorité des ménages qui attendent pour obtenir une aide au LIR. Elles permettent également de déterminer si un ménage se voit attribuer une priorité par rapport à la liste chronologique.

Le Conseil a approuvé les règles de priorité locales pour la dernière fois le 13 septembre 2017 (rapport au Conseil municipal n° [ACS2017-CSS-GEN-006](#)) à la suite d’une vaste consultation du secteur. La Ville examine périodiquement ces règles pour réagir à l’expérience opérationnelle, à la rétroaction des intervenants et aux besoins communautaires changeants.

Les modifications que l’on recommande d’apporter à la Catégorie 3 reposent sur la rétroaction et l’expérience administrative acquise depuis que les règles ont été mises à jour il y a huit ans et ne découlent pas des récents changements apportés à la loi.

Ce rapport présente les résultats d’un examen approfondi de la Catégorie 3 – Règles de priorité locales, qui comprend six statuts d’accès prioritaire local (SAPL) et leurs exigences opérationnelles connexes. L’examen a comporté des consultations avec des fournisseurs de logements et des intervenants communautaires ainsi qu’un examen des pratiques dans d’autres secteurs de gestion des services partout en province. L’examen visait à résoudre les problèmes opérationnels en constante évolution et à répondre aux besoins changeants de la collectivité en veillant à garantir la conformité aux lois, à favoriser la justice et l’équité pour les ménages les plus démunis et à améliorer la clarté et la transparence.

À la suite de l'examen général, quatre (4) types de SAPL ont été reconfirmés et demeurent inchangés. Deux (2) SAPL ont été précisés en fonction des commentaires recueillis lors de la consultation. Le nombre d'offres de logement et de processus opérationnels pour présenter les offres restera identique à celui approuvé dans le rapport de 2017.

BACKGROUND

As Service Manager under the Housing Services Act, 2011, the City is responsible for establishing Local Rules and Local Priority Access Status (LPAS) to administer social housing resources and RGI assistance equitably and consistently, in addition to the legislated rules and provincial priorities.

The demand for social housing is very high. At the end of 2025, there were 16,347 households on the Social Housing Registry waiting list. The average wait time for a unit was between 5 and 8 years for a household on the chronological list, depending on household composition.

As of December 31, 2025, there were 2,468 households with a homelessness priority on the waiting list, comprised of 530 households with dependents, 1,832 households with no dependents and 106 seniors. In 2025, 955 households applied to the Registry and were accorded a homelessness priority on the waiting list.

Investments in social housing stopped in 1993. As a result, no new units have been built for decades, and the demand for these units far exceeded the supply. In place of new RGI housing, the focus is now on the construction of affordable housing. It is important that the types of local priorities in Ottawa address the current local housing need.

City Council first adopted Local Rules and four local priorities in 2002, expanded and refined them in 2008, and maintained them following the transition from the Social Housing Reform Act to the HSA in 2012. In 2017, Council reduced the number of Local Rules from 56 to 26 and affirmed the six local priorities, updating rules for households with LPAS on the Centralized Waiting List.

Since 2020, the Province has introduced regulatory changes to streamline and standardize RGI administration, resulting in amendments to eligibility, offer refusals, household preferences, and occupancy standards. In response, Council approved updates to the Local Rules in 2023, increasing them to 27 and incorporating nine changes required by provincial legislation.

Given the time since the last full review of Local Rules in 2017, staff and an external Local Rules Working Group conducted a comprehensive review of the Local Priority Rules and consulted with the housing sector to identify areas for refinement. Council approved amendments to some Local Rules in the [2025 Update to Local Rules Under the Housing Services Act, 2011](#) approved July 23, 2025. The work on Local Priority Rules continued and refinements are now being recommended in this report.

In March 2024, the City established a Local Rules Working Group made up of community housing sector representatives and staff to develop collaborative recommendations on Local Rules and Local Priorities under the Housing Services Act. From March 2024 to December 2025, the working group met regularly, conducted sector-wide consultations in 2024 and fall 2025, and reviewed the Local Rules, using member expertise and stakeholder input to inform its recommendations. There are currently 27 Local Rules separated into five categories:

- Category 1 – Local RGI Eligibility Rules (Rules 1-16)
- Category 2 - Local Occupancy Standards (Rules 17-21)
- Category 3 - Local Priority Rules (Rules 22 – 26.3)
- Category 4 - Wait List System (Rules 26 - 26.3)
- Category 5 - Service Manager Consents (Rule 27)

On July 23, 2025 Council approved seven recommendations to Category 1, Local RGI Eligibility Rules and Category 2, Local Occupancy Standards. As described in the July report, Category 3, Local Priority Rules impact the broader housing and homelessness sector requiring a wider range of stakeholders to provide input which has now concluded.

According priority status to certain households over others in Rule 22 recognizes that there are some designated households that should be given priority access to subsidized housing based on their current living situation, notwithstanding the chronological nature of their application. Following the broader review of the Category 3 - Local Priority Rules, of the six LPAS groups set out in Rule 22, staff recommend that four (4) be reaffirmed, and two (2) be refined based on consultation feedback.

Rule 23 outlines the requirement for households with Local Priority Access Status to select a minimum number of appropriately sized units and the timeframe for making the

selections. Staff recommend increasing the number of selections in order to generate timelier housing offers.

DISCUSSION

As described in the [2025 Update to Local Rules Under the Housing Services Act, 2011](#) report approved by Council on July 23, 2025, Category 3 - Local Priority Rules impact the broader housing and homelessness sector requiring a wider range of stakeholders to provide input.

Local priority rules are made pursuant to section 48 of the *HSA* and are in addition to the provincial priority rules set out in Section 53 of O. Reg. 367/11. These rules determine the priority of households waiting for RGI assistance. This includes whether a household is given a local priority over the chronological list.

This report presents the outcome of a comprehensive review of the Category 3 - Local Priority Rules, which includes six Local Priority Access Status (LPAS) and the associated operational requirements.

There are three recommended changes to local priorities for Committee to consider. Changes are identified in bold for ease of reference.

Local Rule number 22 accords Local Priority Access Status (in addition to the Provincial Priorities for Special Provincial Priority (SPP) survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking and households who are overhoused) to certain households. Staff recommend refining the definition of the households that are in situ (rule 22.1) and homeless (rule 22.3).

22.1 In situ market rent households

The recommendation being brought forward is to redefine In situ market rent households to support eligible households currently residing in social housing that are at risk of homelessness.

Current Rule	Recommendation
<p>Current Definition:</p> <p>Households residing with a prescribed social housing provider, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. moved into their current unit as market tenants paying market rent; 2. have continued to pay market rent since moving into the unit; 3. meet local occupancy standards; 4. have been living with the provider for a minimum of one year; and 5. who, by no fault of their own, have experienced a significant loss of income since moving into their current unit <p>may apply for RGI assistance for the current unit that they occupy. Eligible households will receive a priority ranking date that is the effective date of their application to the CWL. Market rent households applying for RGI assistance in either another project or another unit will not be eligible for this priority.</p>	<p>Recommended Definition:</p> <p>Households residing with a prescribed social housing provider that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. are market rent tenants; 2. meet local occupancy standards; 3. have been living with the provider for a minimum of one year; 4. who, by no fault of their own, have experienced a significant loss of income since moving into their current unit; and 5. have not previously lost eligibility for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance except paying market rent for 24 months and in extenuating circumstances approved by Service Manager <p>may apply for RGI assistance for the current unit that they occupy. Eligible households will receive a priority ranking date that is the effective date of their application to the CWL. Market rent households applying for RGI assistance in either another project or another unit will not be eligible for this priority.</p>

22.3 Homeless households

The recommendation being brought forward is to add clarity to the eligibility rule that has been in place since 2017 as it relates to homelessness. The update to the rule reflects changes and updates to the City funded shelter system.

Current Rule	Recommendation
<p>Households who are confirmed as experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>For the purpose of this priority, “homeless” means households who are staying in a City of Ottawa shelter or who are living unsheltered.</p>	<p>Households who are confirmed as experiencing “Homelessness”.</p> <p>1) “Homelessness” means households who are staying in a City of Ottawa funded shelter or transitional housing program, or who are living unsheltered in the City of Ottawa.</p> <p>2) Applicants staying temporarily with friends or family do not qualify for homeless status as they do not meet the “Homelessness” definition.</p>

Local Rule 23 states, “A Household with a Local Priority Access Status must apply to the CWL for a minimum number of appropriately sized units...”.

The recommendations brought forward in Rule 23, have resulted in adjustments to numbering within subcategories, in Document 1.

23 Selection of Communities by Households

The recommendation for Rule 23 being brought forward is to provide consistency between the “unit selection by Overhoused Households” in Rule 8.3 of the Council approved report [2025 Update to Local Rules Under the Housing Services Act, 2011](#) and the unit selection by approved LPAS Households, excluding Homeless Households. Additionally, having the same consistent percentage of required selections and timing to make selections will reduce confusion for applicant households and streamline administration for housing providers. The result of this is that people must immediately select more housing options resulting in higher chances of an appropriate unit becoming available and quicker exits from priority circumstances. The LPAS for Homeless households is not affected by this recommendation as since 2017 all appropriately sized units are required to be selected.

Local Rule	Current Rule	Recommendation
23.2	Upon receipt of Local Priority Access Status: households must select a minimum of 30 per cent of the communities that have appropriately sized units.	Upon receipt of Local Priority Access Status: households must select a minimum of 70 per cent of the communities that have appropriately sized units.
23.3	After 365 days of having a Local Priority Access Status: Households must select a minimum of 50 per cent of the communities that have appropriately sized units.	Eliminate Rule 23.3 as the recommendation for 23.2 sets out the new ongoing requirement.
23.4	Unit Selection by Homeless Local Priority Access Status Households.	No change to the rule. As Rule 23.3 is being eliminated, this Rule will be renumbered to 23.3.
23.5	Upon receipt of Homeless Local Priority Access Status: households must select all communities that have appropriately sized units.	No change to the rule. As Rule 23.3 is being eliminated, this Rule will be renumbered to 23.4.

The impact of this recommended change is illustrated in the two tables below. The first table sets out the current number of community selections with the multi-year approach. The second table sets out the number of selections should the recommendations be approved.

Current Minimum Community Selections - LPAS Households

	Non Accessible Units	30%	50%	Accessible Units	30%	50%
Bachelor	33	10	17	3	1	2
1 Bedroom	144	43	72	70	21	35
2 Bedrooms	184	55	92	77	23	39
3 Bedrooms	161	48	81	24	7	12
4 Bedrooms	80	24	40	2	1	1
5 Bedrooms	16	5	8	0	0	0

* Note that all totals exclude communities with specific mandates - French speaking, Supportive Housing, First Nation, Seniors, and Limited Dividend (OCH)

Recommended Minimum Community Selections - LPAS Households

	Non Accessible Units	70%	Accessible Units	70%
1 Bedroom	144	101	70	49
2 Bedrooms	184	129	77	54
3 Bedrooms	161	113	24	17
4 Bedrooms	80	56	2	1
Bachelor	33	23	3	2

Based on consultation feedback, no updates are recommended for the remaining rules within Category 3. As a result, the following list below will remain unchanged.

Local Priority Rule	Current Rule
22.2 Displaced RGI households	Households who are displaced as a result of their housing unit no longer being available for RGI housing will receive priority for a new RGI placement.
22.4 Households with Life Threatening Medical Conditions	Households where a member has a terminal illness, or a life-threatening medical condition made worse by the current housing situation. The household must demonstrate through a licensed physician's medical opinion that a move in housing will remove the life-threatening aspect of the condition.
22.5 Households requiring Urgent Safety	Households where a member does not qualify for SPP but is subject to current abuse from a family member or former partner or where a member of the household is subject to ongoing or extraordinary threat to personal safety by a non-family member and a change in housing will result in a significant increase in personal safety.
22.6 Graduate Households of Supportive Housing	Households who, as tenants of a supportive housing agency with onsite support have demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the supportive housing agency, that they are now capable of independent living with or without support.
24 Number of Offers	If a household does not accept the first valid RGI housing offer, they will lose their eligibility to remain on the Centralized Wait List for RGI housing.
Selection of Priority Households by Housing Providers	
25.	Housing providers will be required to select a minimum of 1 in 5 RGI placements from the local priority access status list.

Local Priority Rule	Current Rule
25.1	It is also recognized that at any given point in time due to extenuating circumstances, there may be a need for housing providers to balance their communities and as such, a business case may be presented to the Service Manager for approval when a housing provider wishes to exempt a particular housing community, for a particular period of time, from the requirement of selecting households from the local priority access status list.
25.2	Housing providers will not be apprised as to which particular local priority a household may be qualifying for.
25.3	The Service Manager will determine provider compliance with priority group selections as part of the site visits/operational reviews.

The recommended refinements support the Local Rules Working Group review objectives to ensure the types of local priorities address Ottawa’s current local housing need efficiently and in a timely manner. The recommendations arise from integrating consultative feedback, working group expertise and operational experience over the past eight years. The changes will streamline and simplify complex rules for all community stakeholders as well as clarifying eligibility requirements for a fair, consistent process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the implementation of the report recommendation.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to the implementation of the report recommendation.

CONSULTATION

To support the review of the Local Priority Rules, a Working Group was established with representatives from across the community housing sector. The group included large, medium, and small providers, the cooperative housing sector, The Registry, and tenancy advocacy organizations, working in collaboration with City staff.

Beginning in March 2024 and until December 2025, the working group has convened on a regular basis. The group facilitated a full sector consultation event in September 2024 and issued a survey to the community housing sector to provide input. This consultation included Indigenous Housing Providers. The working group reviewed the Local Rules and formulated recommendations using a consensus-based decision-making model.

The Local Priority Rules required a broader consultation and were withheld from the Update to Local Rules Report approved by Council July 23, 2025 pending further consultation.

During September and October 2025, consultations with the supportive housing sector, tenant advocacy agencies and applicants to the Centralized Waiting List occurred through issuing a survey, both in person and electronically. The feedback from broader sector consultations was incorporated into the Local Rules Working Group recommendations within this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The City of Ottawa is committed to ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities and older adults. All actions resulting from the approval of this report will meet both Provincial and Municipal accessibility regulations and policies, including the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* O.Reg. 191/11 under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)*, as well as the City of Ottawa Accessibility Policy and the Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Procedure.

All updates to the Local Priority Rules under the Housing Services Act 2011 will provide a direct benefit to persons with disabilities, especially those in need of housing assistance. This plan reflects the goals of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan which focuses on housing those in the shelter system and others on the waitlist, or who are at-risk of homelessness, many of whom are persons with both visible and invisible disabilities.

Recommendations from this report continue to support households requiring accessible housing. Households will be able to directly access and maintain appropriate accessible and affordable housing to meet their needs.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

The Director, Housing and Homelessness Services has been designated the authority to perform the role of Service Manager pursuant to Schedule D, Subsection 8(2) of the Delegation of Authority By-law 2025-69.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

Indigenous Policy Considerations

The need for Indigenous housing is very high. It is widely known that there is an over-representation of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness. The 2024 Ottawa Point-in-Time Count reported 29 per cent of survey respondents identified as First Nations, Metis, Inuit or having Indigenous ancestry. The number of respondents increased from 428 surveyed in 2021 to 479 individuals in 2024. The City recognizes that the Indigenous community feels the actual overall percentage is higher, as many Indigenous individuals and families do not identify for fear of discrimination and ostracism from mainstream services.

The City has housing mandated specifically for Indigenous applicants. The Centralized Waiting List applications allow applicants to self-identify as Indigenous. The Indigenous housing providers determine approval of any applicants selected from this list for their available units.

Gender and Equity Implications

The legislation requires that available RGI units first be offered to applicants with the Special Provincial Priority for victims of abuse and human trafficking. Most of these applicants are female. Local Rules assist with guiding the administration of, and access to the approximately 17,000 RGI units under the HSA. It is important to protect this access for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking who are disproportionately female.

Further, poverty negatively affects equity deserving vulnerable populations disproportionately. Retaining Ottawa's deeply affordable housing stock and access to housing through the Centralized Waiting List ensures equity in opportunity possibly not available through the private rental market where applicants compete for vacant units and report discrimination. A March 2025 national report from the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights [Measuring discrimination in rental housing across Canada - Canadian Centre for Housing Rights](#) highlights discrimination experiences of equity deserving groups.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The City has four housing providers operating rent geared-to-income units under the Housing Services Act, 2011 in rural wards. The access to these units and how rent is

calculated is prescribed by the Act or by the Local Rules including the Local Priority Rules in this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This report has a direct impact on one of the 2023-2026 Term of Council Priorities. Local Rules relate to the access and administration of deeply affordable housing directly supporting “A city that has affordable housing and is more liveable for all”.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 immediately follows report

DISPOSITION

Community Housing and Benefits Branch staff, from Housing and Homelessness Services, will action the recommendations.

Document 1

Approved Local Rules

Category 1 – Local RGI Eligibility Rules (Rules 1-16)

Summary of recommended changes to the rent-geared-to-income¹ (RGI) eligibility local rules:

- **Rule 8.3:** Sets amount of required unit selections by overhoused households.
- **Rule 12.1:** Sets the number of days households in receipt of RGI assistance have to report changes.
 - **Rule 12.1.2:** Has been incorporated into 12.1.1
 - **Rule 12.1.3:** Has been re-numbered 12.1.2
- **Rule 16:** Sets the changes and events a household in receipt of RGI assistance must report and the associated timeline to report them.

Maximum Household Income

1. That the Service Manager continue to set maximum Household Income Limits (HIL) at the HIL prescribed under Ontario Regulation 370/11 of the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, currently as follows:

Bachelor	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom
\$46,500	\$56,000	\$66,000	\$77,500	\$92,500

The HIL shall be applicable to determining whether a household that is applying or waiting for RGI assistance is eligible and not in determining continued eligibility for RGI assistance for households currently in receipt of RGI.

¹ Rent Geared to Income (RGI) is a housing benefit generally calculated so the household pays 30 per cent of their income toward the full market rent (except OW and ODSP when required to use “rent scales”) and the RGI subsidy makes up the difference between what the household is required to pay and the full market rent for the unit. The subsidy is paid directly to the landlord by the City

The Service Manager continues not to make any additions to the list of excluded income identified in legislation.

Maximum Household Assets

2. That the Service Manager set maximum Asset Limits at \$50,000 for a single person and \$75,000 for a couple without children or for a family with children at \$75,000.

The Asset Limits shall be applicable to determining whether a household that is applying or waiting for RGI assistance is eligible and in determining continued eligibility for RGI assistance for households currently in receipt of RGI assistance.

The Service Manager continues not to make any additions to the list of exclusions as identified in legislation.

Pursuit of Income

3. A household ceases to be eligible for RGI assistance if a member of an RGI household is eligible to receive income of a type as set out in O. Reg. 367/11 section 31 (2), and the member has failed to make reasonable efforts to obtain the income within thirty-one (31) days of notice being issued to pursue such income.

Divestment of Residential Property

4. That the Service Manager continues to not extend the provisions set out in the regulations requiring divestment of residential property within 180 days from the first day of the month in which a household receives RGI assistance.
5. That the Service Manager continue to allow housing providers to extend the time for effecting the divestment period on a case-by-case basis, for such time periods as the housing provider considers appropriate, if the housing provider is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to do so.

Maximum Absence from a Unit

6. All members/leaseholders of the household cannot be absent from their unit for more than 60 consecutive days or a total of 90 cumulative days in a calendar year and still be eligible for RGI assistance.

7. That the Service Manager continue to allow housing providers to make exceptions to the local rule regarding maximum absence from a unit in extenuating circumstances² that are well documented.

Overhoused

8. Overhoused

- 8.1** A household becomes overhoused when it no longer qualifies for as many bedrooms in a unit as they once did as a result of a change to the household composition. The required bedroom count is based on the HSA and local Occupancy Standards.
- 8.2** Once it is determined that a household is overhoused and the household has been notified, they must make an application on the CWL within 31 days of notification.
- 8.3** Unit Selection by Overhoused Households: Overhoused households will be required to select 70 per cent of the communities and a default of 100 per cent selections if the minimum number of selections is not made by the household within 31 days.
- 8.4** Provides, as per the HSA, that overhoused households may refuse offers to transfer to appropriately sized unit(s) during their first year of being overhoused, however, a valid offer that is received and refused in the second year or later will result in the loss of RGI assistance

RGI Ineligibility Period

9. That the Service Manager continue to not set a rule to extend the automatic two- year period of ineligibility for future RGI assistance if a member of a household has been convicted of an offense under section 55 of the HSA (knowingly obtained, aided, or abetted a household to obtain RGI assistance for which it was not entitled) or a crime under the Criminal Code in relation to the receipt of RGI assistance.

² Extenuating circumstances are unforeseen circumstances which were out of the control of the household, are unlikely to occur again and resulted in the household not being able to meet the requirement in order to remain eligible for RGI

Rent Increases of Less than \$10

10. That an increase in RGI rent payable of less than \$10 is not required, except at the annual review.

10.1 That housing providers be granted the discretionary authority to verify geared-to-income rent payable every second year for households that meet all of the following ongoing requirements:

10.1.1 They are unemployed

10.1.2 They have no dependents

10.1.3 They receive Old Age Security (OAS) or Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)

10.1.4 They receive only fixed income

Fraud Control

11. That the Service Manager conduct random audits of RGI households to ensure household eligibility for RGI assistance.

Reporting Changes in Information

12. A household is required to notify their housing provider of certain changes or the occurrence of certain events to maintain eligibility for RGI assistance:

12.1.1. Households in receipt of RGI assistance are required to report the following changes within 31 calendar days:

a) A member of the household begins to or stops receiving financial assistance under Ontario Works (OW) or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);

b) A permanent increase in monthly income for any member of a benefit unit receiving OW or ODSP financial assistance who is not a full-time student; and

c) A member of the household's income tax has been reassessed or additionally assessed.

d) A permanent change in the composition of the household; and

- e) A change in a member of the household's full-time student status.

12.1.2. Households applying and/or on the waitlist for RGI assistance must report changes when the change occurs or at the time of the household's annual review, whichever occurs first and must be within 365 days.

- 12.2** That the Service Manager allow housing providers to make exceptions to the local rule on reporting in exceptional (extenuating) circumstances that are well documented.

Determining RGI Eligibility

- 13.** That the Service Manager continue to delegate, by way of service agreement, the responsibility of determining basic RGI eligibility, on a yearly basis, during the period that an applicant is on the waiting list.

- 13.1** That the Service Manager continue to delegate, by way of a service agreement, the responsibility of determining RGI eligibility at the point when a unit is offered to an applicant and on an ongoing basis once the applicant is housed.

- 13.2** That the Service Manager continue to monitor delegated duties regarding RGI eligibility determination in accordance with service agreements.

Income Verification and Rent Calculation

- 14.** That the Service Manager continue to delegate, by way of a service agreement, the responsibility for income verification and rent calculation.

- 14.1** That the Service Manager continues to monitor delegated duties regarding income verification and rent calculation in accordance with service agreements.

Review of Decisions Regarding RGI Eligibility

- 15.** That the Service Manager continue to utilize the Council-approved review panel system when households request a review of a decision affecting their RGI assistance.

In-Year Review of RGI Payable

16. In-year reviews must be completed for the following circumstances:

- a) The adjusted family net income (AFNI) of the household has decreased by at least twenty (20 per cent) for the year since the initial RGI calculation and the first annual review or the last annual review
- b) A member of the household begins to or stops receiving financial assistance under Ontario Works (OW) or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- c) A member of the household's income tax has been reassessed or additionally assessed; or
- d) A permanent increase in non-benefit monthly income for any member of a benefit unit receiving OW or ODSP financial assistance who is not a full-time student.
- e) A permanent change in the household composition
- f) A change in a member of the household's full-time student status.

Each circumstance set out above can be reviewed once in between annual reviews. The Service Manager, or its delegates, may at its sole discretion conduct more than one in year review of circumstances b, c, and d above if it is of the opinion there are extenuating circumstances. Circumstance (a) cannot be reviewed a second time in between annual reviews, even if there are extenuating circumstances.

Category 2 - Local Occupancy Standards (Rules 17-21)

Summary of recommended changes regarding the Local Occupancy Standards Rules:

- **Rule 18:** Definition of smallest unit size continues to be used
- **Rule 19:** Definition of largest unit size continues to be used

Local Occupancy Standards

17. That the Service Manager implements the provincial occupancy standards required in the HSA combined with the permitted local rule that households may choose to be underhoused as long as the housing provider agrees that the unit size is suitable for the household given the physical characteristics of the unit in relation to the number, gender and ages of the household members and as long as municipal occupancy standards are respected.\

18. That the definition of the smallest unit size continues to be used for the purposes of defining if a household is underhoused.

“Despite (a) and (b), if the household consists of one individual or two individuals who are spouses of each other, the smallest unit the household **may select** is a bachelor unit.”

19. That the definition of the largest unit size continues to be used for the purposes of defining if a household is overhoused.

“c) an additional bedroom if the household makes the request and meets one of the criteria for an additional bedroom as follows and further described in this Directive: Disability or Medical Condition, Pregnancy, **Joint Custody/Access to a Child, and Caregiver.**”

20. That all housing providers continue to be encouraged to harmonize their occupancy standards to adhere to the Service Manager’s standards.

21. For the purpose of a dependent child who may reside as part of a custody/access order with an applicant, the applicant must show proof (custody order/agreement, and if no order/agreement then an affidavit/statutory declaration made before a Commissioner of Oaths³) that the dependent child resides with the applicant at least 50 per cent of the time to qualify for a bedroom.

³ A Commissioner of Oaths is a person authorized to take an oath or solemn affirmation when someone signs an affidavit or a statutory declaration. A Commissioner does not certify that the statements being made in the affidavit or statutory declaration are true, but only certifies that an oath or solemn affirmation has been administered properly.

Recommended Local Priority Rules

Category 3 - Local Priority Rules (Rules 22 – 25.3)

Priority Status

22. That the Service Manager accord “Local Priority Access Status” (in addition to the Provincial Priorities for Special Provincial Priority (SPP) survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking and households who are overhoused) to the following households:

22.1 In situ market rent households: Households residing with a prescribed social housing provider that:

1. Are market rent tenants;
2. Meet local occupancy standards;
3. Have been living with the provider for a minimum of one year;
4. Who, by no fault of their own, have experienced a significant loss of income since moving into their current unit, and
5. have not previously lost eligibility for Rent-Geared-to-Income assistance except paying market rent for 24 months and in extenuating circumstances approved by Service Manager

may apply for RGI assistance for the current unit that they occupy. Eligible households will receive a priority ranking date that is the effective date of their application to the CWL. Market rent households applying for RGI assistance in either another project or another unit will not be eligible for this priority.

22.2 Displaced RGI households: Households who are displaced as a result of their housing unit no longer being available for RGI housing will receive priority for a new RGI placement.

22.3 Homeless households: Households who are confirmed as experiencing “Homelessness”.

1. “Homelessness” means households who are staying in a City of Ottawa funded shelter or transitional housing program, or who are living unsheltered in the City of Ottawa.

2. Applicants staying temporarily with friends or family do not qualify for homeless status as they do not meet the definition of homelessness.

22.4 Households with Life Threatening Medical Conditions: Households where a member has a terminal illness, or a life-threatening medical condition made worse by the current housing situation. The household must demonstrate through a licensed physician's medical opinion that a move in housing will remove the life-threatening aspect of the condition.

22.5 Households requiring Urgent Safety: Households where a member does not qualify for SPP but is subject to current abuse from a family member or former partner or where a member of the household is subject to ongoing or extraordinary threat to personal safety by a non-family member and a change in housing will result in a significant increase in personal safety.

22.6 Graduate Households of Supportive Housing: Households who, as tenants of a supportive housing agency with onsite support have demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the supportive housing agency, that they are now capable of independent living with or without support.

Selection of Communities by Households

23. A Household with a Local Priority Access Status must apply to the CWL for a minimum number of appropriately sized units as set out below.

23.1 Unit Selection by Local Priority Access Status Households, excluding Homeless Local Priority.

23.2 Upon receipt of Local Priority Access Status: households must select a minimum of 70 per cent of the communities that have appropriately sized units.

23.3 Unit Selection by Homeless Local Priority Access Status Households.

23.4 Upon receipt of Homeless Local Priority Access Status: households must select all communities that have appropriately sized units.

Number of Offers

24. If a household does not accept the first valid RGI housing offer, they will lose their eligibility to remain on the Centralized Wait List for RGI housing.

Selection of Priority Households by Housing Providers

- 25.** Housing providers will be required to select a minimum of 1 in 5 RGI placements from the priority access status list.
- 25.1** It is also recognized that at any given point in time due to extenuating circumstances, there may be as need for housing providers to balance their communities and as such, a business case may be presented to the Service Manager for approval when a housing provider wishes to exempt a particular housing community, for a particular period of time, from the requirement of selecting households from the priority list.
- 25.2** Housing providers will not be apprised as to which particular local priority a household may be qualifying for.
- 25.3** The Service Manager will determine provider compliance with priority group selections as part of the site visits/operational reviews.

Approved Local Rules

Category 4 - Wait List System (Rules 26 - 26.3)

Waiting List System

- 26.** That the Service Manager continue to utilize the wait list system established under the *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000*, and continued under the HSA, when households request RGI.
- 26.1** That the Service Manager support the exploration of alternative approaches to wait list management, including determination of the merits of a “choice-based approach” and consideration for a small pilot for a limited test group to determine whether or not it is an effective approach for some or all of the wait lists. Any proposed pilot would be dependent upon the HCI CWL IT system being implemented and functioning at full capacity. A report will be brought to Council for consideration once the HCI system is functioning outlining the details of the pilot and any cost associated with the pilot.
- 26.2** That the Service Manager continue to be permitted to delegate, by way of a service agreement, the administration of the wait list system.

26.3 That the Service Manager continue to monitor delegated duties regarding the wait list system in accordance with the service agreement.

Category 5 - Service Manager Consents (Rule 27)

Authority to Consent

27. That the Director, Housing Services, be permitted to perform the duty of Service Manager as it relates to providing consent, where appropriate, for the development, mortgaging or transferring of prescribed housing provider properties, as set out in the HSA.