



WELCOME!

A GUIDE FROM HABITAT SERVICES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HABITAT-MONITORED SELF-CONTAINED UNITS

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HABITAT SERVICES 416-537-2721

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What is this guide about?

This guide will give you pointers and important information about living in a Habitat-monitored unit and what you're entitled to as a tenant. We hope this guide will answer some of your questions and help you feel more 'at home'.

Does Habitat Services run these buildings or own them?

Neither. Habitat is a community agency that works with the owners of about 45 boarding homes and 43 self-contained units in Toronto to provide good quality, affordable housing available for people with mental health challenges. Habitat refers potential tenants, monitors and inspects the homes and units, and gives the owners a subsidy to help with the costs of running the homes. This subsidy is a daily rate paid to owners for tenants with low income, and comes from the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto.

Habitat helps make the homes/units more affordable by setting the room and board rate that's paid by tenants on low income, including seniors and those on ODSP or OW.

What are these Habitat Standards? Why do they matter to me?

The Habitat Standards are part of a contract that the landlord/operator have signed with Habitat. They include a detailed description of all the services that the owners have to provide for tenants. See page 4 for a list of these services.

Note:

When you first apply to Habitat, you can choose which building or boarding home might be best for you from a list of suitable homes or self-contained apartment units with vacancies. However, like all landlords, the owners and operators of Habitat-monitored boarding homes make the final decisions about who can move in as new tenants.

Rights and Responsibilities

Rights	Responsibilities
You have rights as a tenant under the law in Ontario. When you move in, the landlord or owner needs to give you a Tenancy Agreement and another document called the Care Home Information Package. They describe what you're entitled to as a tenant in the home and what your legal rights are. Keep these documents and make sure you understand them.	The landlord or the owner of the home also has legal rights and the Tenancy Agreement explains what those are. You should know that if you don't pay your room and board on time, if you do something illegal here, or cause damage or problems for the other tenants or staff, you can be made to leave (evicted), as long as the owner follows the legal steps. You also could have problems getting into a Habitat monitored home in the future.
You have the right to look for or ask for help in finding other housing.	Give the owner at least 30 days' notice before you move.
You are entitled to the use of the laundry room in the building and the laundry equipment there.	You share these facilities so be careful with them and be considerate of other tenants.
You're entitled to a home in good condition: appliances, washroom, lights and the heating system should all work properly; the furniture, walls, floors, doors and windows should be in good condition.	Make sure that you don't misuse or damage anything in the home, and let landlord/operator know if something is damaged or not working. Also let the staff know of any house maintenance issues.
You have the right to be treated with respect, dignity, and without discrimination.	Treat all tenants and staff as you would like to be treated, with respect and consideration.
You're entitled to your privacy. The landlord/operator must give you 24 hours' notice to enter your unit unless there is an emergency.	Respect the privacy of others in the building.
When you move in, you're entitled to keys for the building front door, to your unit, and to your own private mailbox.	Take care of your keys. There is a cost for replacement.
You have the right to live in a home that is peaceful and safe. You should not have to worry about other tenants, or about strangers.	Harassment or abuse of tenants or staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Follow safety procedures. Let staff know about any strangers in the building, or if you feel unsafe.
You have the right to live in a clean, comfortable home, free of bugs and other pests.	Keep your room free of things that could attract pests, like garbage or dirty dishes. For the sake of other tenants, please shower and wash your clothes regularly.
You have the right to have guests.	You are responsible for the behaviour of your guests at all times while they are visiting you.

A List of Services for Tenants in Habitat-Funded Units

Talk to or call the Habitat RSI if you're not receiving any of these.

Furnishings, Decoration and Windows: At the beginning of tenancy, tenants are entitled to a bed, mattress, pillow, dresser, bedside lamp, chair and night table, all of reasonably good quality and residential in style. They should also have a broom and dustpan, mop and bucket, kitchen supplies, air-conditioner, fridge and stove (in good working order), microwave and kettle, and kitchen wastebasket. The bathroom should have a towel rack, wastebasket, shower curtain and liner. All windows must be covered with working drapes or blinds that provide privacy. Windows must be washed every 6 months, and must have screens that open. Tenants may arrange their units to suit their taste, subject to fire and safety regulations. Tenants may hang pictures in their units.

Standards of Conduct and Building Services: Landlords/operators are required to follow the "Standards of Conduct" of the owners' contract with Habitat Services. The landlord/operator must provide a contact number for the 24 hour building security to all tenants.

Maintenance: The landlord/operator is responsible for maintaining the property and keeping common areas clean, safe and free of clutter. The landlord/operator and Habitat Services will inspect each unit at least twice each year, or as needed. The landlord/operator is responsible for dealing with maintenance and pest control concerns in the unit in a timely manner.

Laundry and Laundry Facilities: Laundry facilities must be available to all tenants. There may be a charge for the machines.

Locks and Keys: Tenants must receive keys to the building front door, their unit and their own private mailbox when they move in. Keys are provided at no cost; if they're lost, replacement keys will be provided at a reasonable cost.

Interior and Exterior Maintenance: All equipment and appliances must be kept in good working order. Tenants may be involved in the upkeep of the house and yard if an arrangement can be made with the owner.

Personal Mail: Tenants receive their mail in their own personal, locked mailbox.

House Temperature: Minimum temperature in the building must be 21°C.

Fire Safety: Fire drills happen each month; for their safety, all tenants are encouraged to take part.

What to do when you have a complaint

If your complaint is about the services in the building or unit **you live in:**

- Speak to the landlord/operator. This gives them an opportunity to address your concerns.
- If you feel you cannot speak directly to the landlord/operator, speak to the Residential Services Inspector assigned to your building. They will take the details of your complaint. Their number should be on the notice board in the common area.
- If you don't know the name of the Residential Services Inspector, please call the Habitat office at (416) 537-2721.
- If you wish to make your complaint anonymously, Habitat staff will protect your name. **Your name will not be used unless you give us consent to do so.**
- Please be specific in your complaint. It is easier for us to investigate complaints if we have as much detail as possible.
- Tell us how you would like your complaint to be handled. **If you wish us only to document your concern, we will do so.**

If your complaint is about the services or staff **at Habitat Services:**

- If you have a complaint about the Habitat Contract Monitoring Program services or Residential Services Inspectors, please call Clare Nobbs at (416) 537-2721, extension 252.
- If you have gone through the above channels and still feel your complaints have not been fully addressed, you may call Habitat's Executive Director, Chris Persaud at (416) 537-2721, extension 232.