

APPLYING FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING IN YORK REGION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

York Region's Housing Access Unit is the first point of contact for you to apply for subsidized housing in York Region.

The Housing Access Unit maintains a wait list for subsidized housing in the Region and provides customer service to applicants on the wait list.

HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT APPLYING?

How can I contact the Housing Access Unit?

Call us: 1-877-464-9675

Email us: Housing.Access@york.ca

What is subsidized housing?

Subsidized housing is for eligible households who do not have enough income and/or assets to pay market rent.

Who is eligible for subsidized housing?

Anyone can apply for subsidized housing in York Region as long as they meet these basic eligibility requirements:

- At least one household member must be 16 years of age or older
- All household members must be Canadian Citizens, permanent residents or have refugee claimant status
- You must not owe any money to a former community housing provider
- Household members cannot be under a deportation, departure or exclusion order to leave Canada
- No household member has been convicted of an offence related to rent geared-to-income assistance
- No household member has been convicted of an offence under the *Housing Services Act (HSA)*, the *Social Housing Reform Act* or the *Criminal Code* in relation to the receipt of rent geared-to-income assistance
- Annual household income from all sources must be less than \$80,000
- Total value of all assets owned by you and all members of your household who are over the age of 16 must be less than \$75,000. Bank accounts, investments and real estate are examples of assets. Some assets, including Registered Retirement Savings Plans, Registered Education Savings Plans and Registered Disability Savings Plans are not counted toward the limit, but you must still declare them
- You must be able to live independently, with or without supports

What is proof of my status in Canada?

You must provide proof of your legal right to be in Canada for yourself and everyone in your household. This may include, but is not limited to:

- A copy of your Canadian birth certificate, Canadian passport, or Canadian citizenship card;
- Landed immigrant papers, permanent resident card (front and back); or
- Documents supporting your claim for refugee status

Note: We do not accept your health card or driver's licence as proof of your status in Canada.

How do I apply for subsidized housing in York Region?

You can apply for subsidized housing online at york.ca/applyforhousing

If you need assistance applying, you can call Access York at 1-877-464-9675.

When submitting your application:

You must include a copy of the most recent Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment for you and all members of the household 16 years or older.

Note: The copy must be legible and include all pages of the document.

What does 'living independently' mean?

An individual is considered to be able to live independently if they are able to perform the essential activities of day-to-day living, or can do so with the aid of support services and demonstrates that those support services. Applicants are responsible for arranging their own support services, as they are not provided by community housing providers.

I do not have an income. Am I eligible for subsidized housing?

Yes, but once you are housed you must pursue income from one or more of the following sources:

- Ontario Works (OW)
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Spousal or child support
- Employment Insurance
- Guaranteed Annual Income (GAINS), Old Age Security (OAS) and/or Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- Support or maintenance from a sponsor under the *Immigration Act*

What are the different types of housing?

Non-Profit Housing

Non-Profits are owned and operated by community-based, non-profit organizations. They are either self-managed or managed through a property management company.

Co-operative Housing

Co-operative Non-Profits are similar to other non-profit housing corporations, except each resident becomes a member and has a say in how the co-operative is operated.

Each member is expected to help in the day-to-day operations and the Board of Directors is established from members of the co-operative.

Housing York Inc.

York Region has its own housing company that owns and operates subsidized and market rent units under a variety of programs.

Rent Supplement

York Region has rent supplement agreements with various private landlords. Rent supplement tenants pay rent geared-to-income in private rental apartments. York Region will pay the difference between the tenant's subsidized rent and the market rent for the unit. We do not give out the addresses of these buildings as these agreements are with private landlords and the addresses can change.

Portable Housing Benefits

York Region offers some portable housing benefits, which provide direct payments to households renting in the private market to help with the cost of rent. Portable housing benefits are offered through the subsidized housing wait list.

Can I choose where I want to live?

York Region uses an online housing offer process, where available subsidized units and housing benefits will be posted to the online application portal for applicants to view and express interest in.

Please note new applicants will not immediately be able to view vacancies and express interest in them. After you apply and your name moves up closer to the top of the wait list, you will receive an invitation to participate in the online housing offer process.

Once you become eligible to participate, you will be able to view vacancies and express interest in units for all community housing buildings that you are eligible for. You may choose to only express interest in the units and buildings that meet your needs and preferences.

Please visit york.ca/MyHousingApplication for more information on the online housing offer process.

Do I get to pick how many bedrooms I want?

The number of bedrooms is determined by the occupancy standards that apply to your household size. Housing Access will confirm what size of unit you are eligible for. Once you become eligible to participate in the online housing offer process, you will only be able to express interest in units you are eligible for based on your household size.

How much rent can I expect to pay?

Generally, subsidized rent is based on 30 per cent of your household's total gross monthly income. Additional charges may apply depending on the building (e.g. parking).

If you are receiving assistance from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program, your rent is based on a pre-determined rent scale.

What if I need a wheelchair accessible unit?

Some housing providers have wheelchair accessible units. Your doctor must complete our [Request for Modified Unit](#) form. Once we receive the form, we will assess your eligibility for this type of unit.

Visit the [Housing Locations webpage](#) to review information about community housing locations, including the number of accessible units.

If you are approved for an accessible unit and become eligible to participate in the online offer process, you will be able to view and express interest in accessible units.

Do any housing providers have market rent units?

Some housing providers have market rent units as well as subsidized units. If you are interested in getting a market rent unit, please contact the housing provider directly. See all housing providers and locations at york.ca/housing

What is Special Priority Status?

Special Priority Status is intended to help victims of abuse and human trafficking permanently separate from their abuser. Special Priority Status:

- Is only given to applicants whose safety is at risk because they live with someone who is abusing them
- Does not apply to applicants who want to separate from someone because a relationship is not working
- Provides approved applicants a higher placement ahead of others on the wait list

You may qualify for Special Priority Status if you are eligible for subsidized housing and you, or a member of your household:

- Are currently living with someone abusing you or another person in your household or are a sponsored immigrant and your sponsor is abusing you or another household member
- Used to live with someone that was abusing you or another person in your household, and stopped living with them three months ago or less
- Plan to live permanently apart from the abuser
- Is a victim of human trafficking currently being trafficked, or you are a survivor of human trafficking and have exited trafficking within the last three months or less

How do I apply for Special Priority Status?

To apply for Special Priority status as a victim of domestic abuse or survivor of human trafficking, you must submit a Request for Special Priority package. This includes a request for Special Priority form that you must complete and a section that must be completed by a professional who is familiar with your situation. The same professional must also provide a letter that describes the circumstances of the abuse or trafficking. If you are applying as a survivor of domestic violence, you must provide proof that you are or were living with the abusive individual or sponsored by the abusive individual. The Special Priority application forms can be accessed from york.ca/applyforhousing.

Does York Region have any other priorities on the wait list?

There are no other priority categories in York Region. All applicants are listed on the wait list by the date they applied for subsidized housing.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU HAVE APPLIED?

How do I know if my application has been received?

You will be notified in writing once your application is eligible. If you applied online and your application is not complete, you will be contacted in writing to submit any required documents or information. Incomplete paper applications will be returned to you by mail.

What is my application date?

Your application date is the date we receive a completed application form from you.

What are my responsibilities after I submit my application?

Applicants for subsidized housing have a number of responsibilities:

- You must notify the Housing Access Unit of any changes to your information in order to maintain your eligibility status
- You must confirm your interest in remaining on the wait list for housing. This confirmation must be done with the Housing Access Unit once a year
- You must submit an updated Notice of Assessment each year for all members of your household 16 years or older

You must notify the Housing Access Unit if:

- Your address changes
- Your telephone number changes
- You want to live in locations other than those you chose on your application
- The number of people in your household changes
- The contact person on your application changes
- Your immigration status changes

When will I become eligible to participate in the online housing offer process?

Only applicants with the highest ranking on the wait list - those with the oldest application dates and those with Special Priority Status - can participate in the online housing offer process.

As your name moves up to the top of the wait list, you will receive an invitation to participate in the online offer process and you will become eligible to view vacancies and express interest in them.

How do I add or remove someone from my application?

You may add a new family member to your application using the online application portal. You will need to upload documents of legal status in Canada for each member added to your application and the most recent Notice of Assessment for members over the age of 16.

If you have not registered for the online application portal, you must complete a [Request to Make Changes to Your Application](#) form. The new family member must complete and submit the form called [Adding a Member to an Application for Subsidized Housing](#) to Housing Access. They will need to provide documents of their legal status in Canada for each family member added to your application.

You must include a copy of the most recent Notice of Assessment for all members 16 years or older being added to your application. Once a request to add a member to your application is received, Housing Access will determine their eligibility for the wait list.

How do I apply for seniors housing?

Seniors buildings are for people who are 60 years of age or older. All members of your household must be 60 years of age or older in order to express interest in seniors buildings.

The application process for seniors is the same as the regular wait list for subsidized housing. Once you become eligible to participate in the online housing offer process, you will be able to view vacancies and express interest in seniors buildings.

When will I be offered housing?

Housing providers will post available vacancies on the online application portal every two weeks. Applicants will be required to review the vacancy postings and express interest in units to receive an offer of housing. Applicants who express interest are considered in order of their application date.

How long will it take for me to be offered a unit?

Housing Access cannot provide you with your position on the wait list and cannot estimate when you will receive an offer of housing. Wait times vary depending on the location chosen, bedroom size, vacancy turnover and any specific requirements requested (e.g. parking, balcony). The table below shows the approximate wait times for applicants who accepted units in 2022 based on their application date. It does not reflect wait times for Special Priority applicants.

Unit size	Approximate wait time
One-bedroom	15 years or more
Two-bedroom	8.5 years or more
Three-bedroom	10 years or more
Four-bedroom	10.5 years or more
Seniors building (60 years of age or older)	9 years or more

How will I be contacted with an offer?

If you are expressing interest in units through the online portal, the housing provider will contact the highest ranked applicant when the vacancy cycle closes. The highest ranked applicant is determined by Special Priority status and application date.

You must call back the housing provider within the time frame they provide you, or they will offer the unit to the next person on the wait list.

Please make sure your contact information is up to date, and provide the number of a contact person who can pass on a message to you.

OFFERED HOUSING...NOW WHAT?

Can I turn down an offer of housing?

Wait list applicants receive one offer of housing, in accordance with provincial rules. If you turn down the offer of housing, you will no longer be eligible for subsidized housing and you will be removed from the wait list.

If I accept an offer that is not my first choice, will I stay on the wait list for my other choices?

No. When you accept an offer of housing, your application is closed. If you want to move to another building, you must re-apply to the subsidized housing wait list.

What if I still have questions?

To get more information about applying for subsidized housing call 1-877-464-9675

HOUSING ACCESS

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Call us: 1-877-464-9675

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