

# Program Instructions



## This Program Instruction applies to the following:

- ✓ HSA Part VII Housing Providers (Provincial Reform)
- ✓ Rent Supplement – Social Housing Rent Supplement Program
- ✓ Rent Supplement – Commercial and Strong Communities
- ✓ Former Federal Program Housing Providers (s.15. 1/27, s.56. 1/95)
- ✓ Housing York
  - ✓ Public Housing
  - ✓ HSA Part VII

## MINIMUM RENT FOR 2021-2022

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

### Summary

The *Housing Services Act, 2011* and associated regulations sets the minimum rent-geared-to-income (RGI) payable by tenants and co-operative members receiving RGI. From July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, minimum rent is \$131, with two exceptions:

- A phased-in minimum rent applies to tenants and members paying RGI below this amount before July 1, 2021
- Minimum rent for Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefit units of one is the rent scale amount for the benefit unit

## Background

Minimum rent rules are set by *O. Reg. 316/19*. Minimum rent is the lowest monthly RGI amount a tenant or member can pay. To support the initial application of minimum rent, York Region issued [Program Instruction 2020-06: Minimum Rent Payable for Tenants and Co-Operative Members Receiving Rent-Geared-to-Income](#) in June 2020.

The following changes took effect beginning July 1, 2020:

- Minimum rent increased from \$85 to \$129, and is indexed each year by the Ontario rent increase guideline
- Tenants and members paying the previous minimum rent of \$85 were subject to a phased-in minimum rent of \$93, to be increased by \$8 each year until the phased-in amount catches up to the indexed minimum rent, or their calculated RGI increases above the indexed minimum rent
- The phased-in minimum rent of \$93 also applied to tenants and members paying a calculated RGI amount between \$86 and \$92
- Minimum rent for OW and ODSP benefit units of one remained at \$85

A new program instruction is issued each spring outlining the updated minimum rents for RGI reviews completed during the period of July 1 to June 30.

## Action Required

When reviewing RGI, housing providers must compare the calculated RGI to the minimum rent for the unit. The calculated RGI is the base amount of RGI, plus or minus standard utility charges and allowances. If the calculated RGI is less than the applicable minimum rent, increase RGI to the minimum rent. Utility allowances cannot bring RGI below the minimum rent.

Minimum rent applies to the entire household and not to individual family units or benefit units within the household. Additional charges, including parking and sector support, are added after the calculated RGI is compared to the minimum rent.

## 2021 PROVINCIAL RENT FREEZE

The Government of Ontario froze rents in 2021 at 2020 levels for most residential tenancies, prohibiting rent increases between January 1 and December 31, 2021. The rent freeze applies to tenants and members receiving RGI, including planned increases or phase-ins of minimum rent, which must be deferred to January 1, 2022. Additional details are provided in [Program Instruction 2020-11: Administering Rent-Geared-to-Income During the 2021 Provincial Rent Freeze](#).

Phase-ins for 2021 must be deferred to January 1, 2022. Additionally, tenants or members paying minimum rent of \$129 will not have their RGI indexed to \$131 until January 1, 2022. As a result of the rent freeze, housing providers may have tenants and members paying various minimum rent amounts of \$85, \$93, \$129 or \$131.

## MINIMUM RENT AMOUNTS FOR 2021/22

The minimum rent amount applied during an RGI review varies depending on a tenant's or member's current RGI. Any increases to minimum rent are implemented at the next RGI review, and not on July 1.

Minimum rent rules for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Minimum Rent Scenarios**

Scenario	Minimum Rent between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022
1. Tenants/members moving in on or after July 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is \$131</li> </ul>
2. Tenants/members currently paying calculated RGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is \$131</li> </ul>
3. Tenants/members paying 2021/21 minimum rent of \$129 before July 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is indexed to \$131 if tenant/member continues to pay minimum rent at annual review</li> </ul>
4. Tenants/members paying phased-in minimum rent of \$93 before July 1, 2021  (those previously paying \$85 under previous minimum rent rules, or calculated RGI between \$86 and \$92)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is increased by \$8 to \$101 if tenant/member continues to pay minimum rent at annual review</li> <li>If at any time calculated RGI increases above \$131, phase-in no longer applies; tenant/member is subject to minimum rent of \$131</li> </ul>
5. Tenants/members paying calculated RGI above the phased-in amount (\$101) and below minimum rent (\$131) before July 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenant/member continues to pay calculated RGI until phased-in minimum rent exceeds calculated RGI</li> <li>If at any time calculated RGI increases above \$131, phase-in no longer applies; tenant/member is subject to minimum rent of \$131</li> </ul>
6. Ontario Works (OW) benefit unit of one paying RGI at scale (non-benefit income under the limit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is the scale amount for OW-1 of \$85</li> </ul>
7. Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefit unit of one paying RGI at scale (non-benefit income under the limit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent is the scale amount for ODSP-1 of \$109</li> </ul>
8. All other OW/ODSP benefit units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum rent rules apply as outlined in scenarios 1-5 above</li> </ul>

**Authority:** *Housing Services Act, 2011, s. 50*  
*O. Reg. 316/19, s. 2*

Please contact your Program Coordinator with any questions.

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