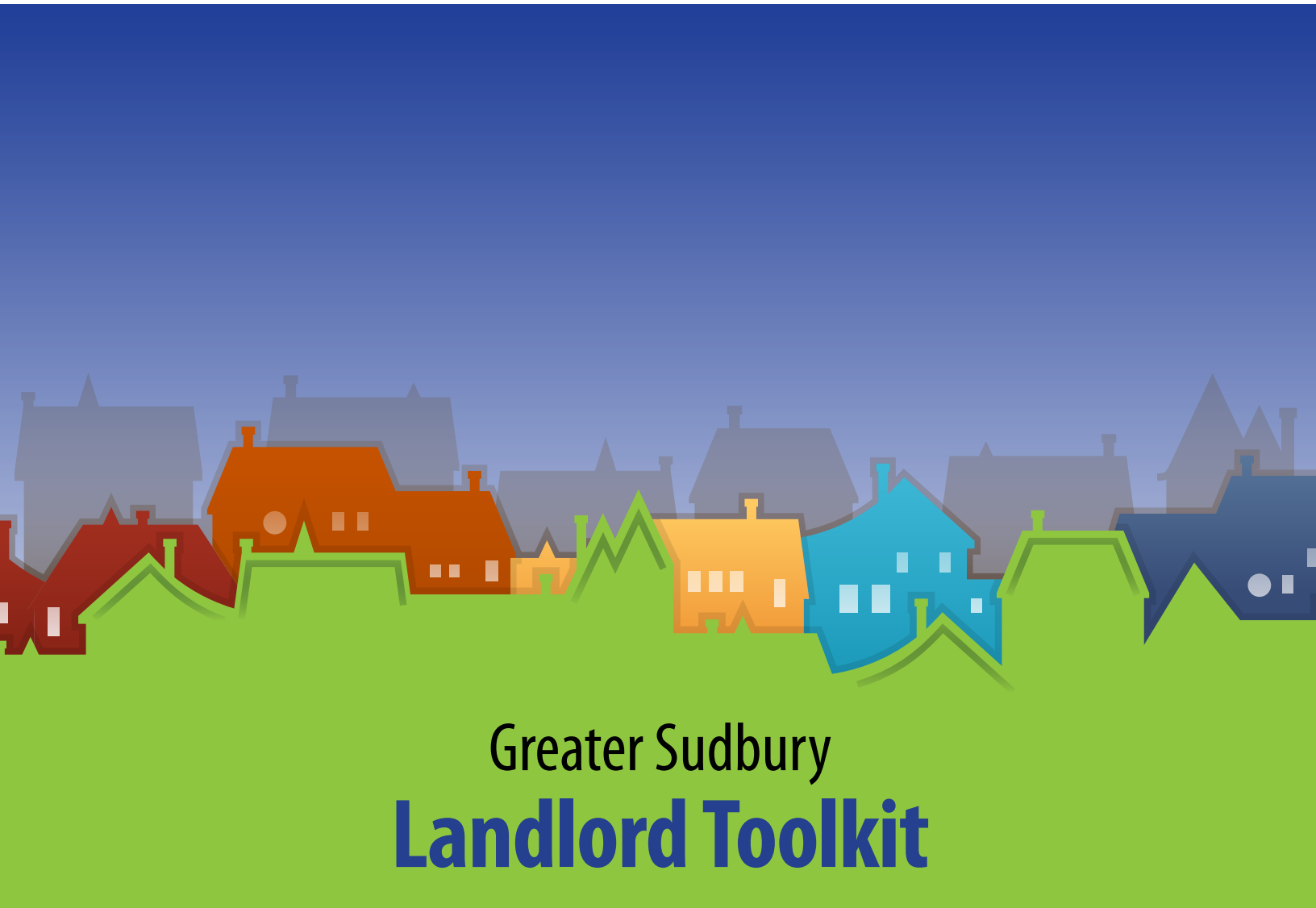




**HOMELESSNESS** Network  
Réseau des **SANS-ABRI**  
ENDAASGWOK MAAMWI-NAADMAAGEWIN



# Greater Sudbury **Landlord Toolkit**

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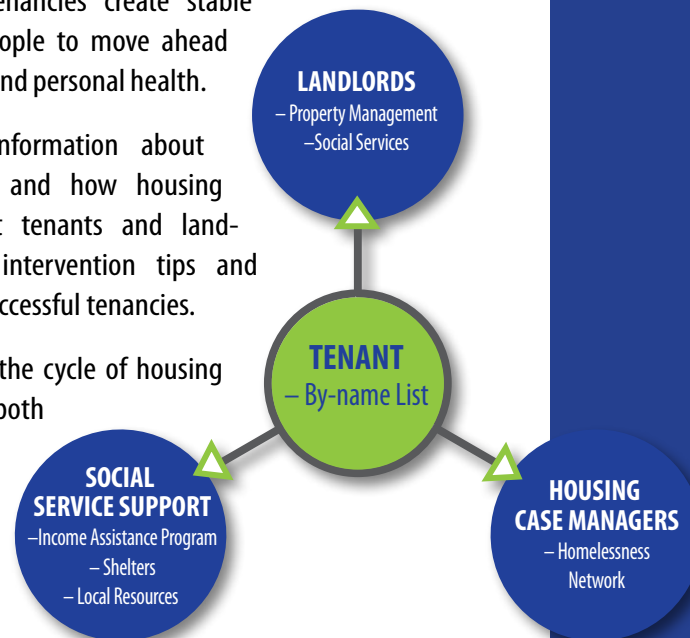


The purpose of the Landlord Toolkit is to make available an easily accessible guide to provide local landlords, social service providers, and housing caseworkers with information about Housing First and how the approach can support people who have experienced homelessness transition to housing stability and prevent eviction.

The costs of eviction include legal fees, vacancy loss, bad debt, financial and social impacts. Successful tenancies create stable communities and support people to move ahead with education, employment and personal health.

The toolkit will provide information about The Homelessness Network and how housing case managers can support tenants and landlords by identifying early intervention tips and recommendations to secure successful tenancies.

We are committed to reduce the cycle of housing instability and support both landlords and tenants throughout their housing experience. The role of the landlord is a crucial component to assist tenants to remain successfully housed.



‘Housing First’ is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centers on quickly moving the most vulnerable people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness into independent and permanent housing and then providing additional supports and services as needed.

The basic underlying principle of Housing First is that people are better able to move forward with their lives if they are first housed. Housing is provided first and then supports are provided including physical and mental health, education, employment, substance abuse treatment or supports and community connections, at participants’ request.

Housing First is a successful and transformational housing model used in a number of Canadian and American communities and is at the heart of all successful 10 Year Plans to End Homelessness.

## How can tenants be supported?

The Homelessness Network has Housing First Case managers who can support people who have experienced homelessness and may require additional supports to get and stay housed.



# The Purpose of the Toolkit



# What is the ‘Housing First’ Approach?



# What is the Homelessness Network?

**Housing First ...  
BUT NOT Housing only !**

The City of Greater Sudbury's Homelessness Network consists of six community social service agencies which is led by Le Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury and partnered with The Elizabeth Fry Society, L'Association des jeunes de la rue, The John Howard Society of Sudbury, Sudbury Action Centre for Youth and N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre. The goal of the Network is to prevent homelessness, reduce shelter usage and assist persons in finding and staying housed.

People may become homeless or be at risk of homelessness for a number of reasons including job loss, domestic abuse, family breakdown, addiction, mental illness or physical disabilities. Research shows, however, that the main causes for homelessness are poverty, economic circumstances, and housing affordability problems.



We are looking for landlords who are willing to rent to people who may have experienced homelessness and are now being supported by a Housing First case manager.

People who have experienced homelessness sometimes face discrimination by landlords. The laws about human rights say that a landlord must not discriminate. Discrimination happens when a landlord refuses to rent to a person or treats them badly because:

- » Of their race or ethnic background
- » Of their religion
- » Of their sex
- » Of their sexual orientation
- » They have a disability
- » They are in receipt of social assistance
- » They have children or are pregnant

Studies show that Housing First programs have been successful across Canada in increasing housing stability for people who have experienced chronic and episodic homelessness.

# Some of the Benefits of The Housing First Program

For Landlords	For Tenants	For the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Stable tenancies</li> <li>✓ Contact person for support of tenant</li> <li>✓ Reduced legal costs from evictions</li> <li>✓ Reduced maintenance costs from unit turnovers</li> <li>✓ Reduced staff hours and stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Stable housing</li> <li>✓ Support available</li> <li>✓ Better health outcomes</li> <li>✓ Connection to community</li> <li>✓ Ability to move ahead with employment and education</li> <li>✓ Improvement in overall quality of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduced costs for emergency and shelter services</li> <li>✓ Reduced social services costs due to evictions</li> <li>✓ Fewer police detentions</li> <li>✓ Fewer emergency department visits</li> <li>✓ Healthier communities</li> </ul>

The Homelessness Network Case Managers work closely with individuals to find immediate housing, assess their needs and remain involved to provide on-going support for all of their areas of life. The goal is to assist in the transition into stable housing and connect individuals to appropriate community services to encourage them to develop and regain their sense of independence to stay successfully housed. They form the partnerships between the client, landlords and resources.

## Housing case managers will...

- Assist with basic needs such as food, clothing, transportation and shelter
- Acquire all appropriate identification such as social insurance number, birth certificate, passport and health card
- Organize applications for income assistance such as Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, and additional funding programs
- Assemble proper documentation such as intent to rent forms and social housing application
- Acquire housing by assisting in finding and confirming housing
- Budget income to pay rent on time, as well as utilities and other essential bills

## Role of the Housing Case Managers



## Income Support Programs



- Assist the client with life skills such as cooking and cleaning, communication
- Engage with landlord (home visits) to develop an open communication to prevent issues such as rent arrears, eviction and behavioral conflicts
- Intervene early if there is an issue that arises
- Support the tenants in developing positive social networks
- Connecting the individual to supports such as mental health, physical health, and education when requested by the participant tenant

The Housing Case Manager develops collaborative partnerships between the tenant, landlord and community services. They assist participants in achieving stable housing by clarifying expectations, responsibilities, and encouraging positive working relations with all those involved.

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**Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (O.D.S.P)** are Ontario's social assistance programs.

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- › **Ontario Works** helps people who are in temporary financial need.
- › **ODSP** helps people who are in financial need and have disabilities.

### OW and ODSP offer two types of assistance:

- **Financial assistance**, including income support to help with the costs of basic needs, like food, clothing and shelter, health benefits for clients and their families.
- **Employment assistance** to help clients find, prepare for and keep a job. This assistance may include workshops on resume writing and interviewing, job counseling, job-specific training, and access to basic education, so clients can finish high school or improve their language skills.

The amount of funding a person receives from OW or ODSP is based on their family size, shelter costs and additional requirements. The benefits rates are set by the Province.

A person in receipt of OW or ODSP will be required to provide confirmation of their address, landlord's name and contact information, and rental amount to his case worker.

On occasion, if a person has a history of housing instability, the OW or ODSP office can pay a tenant's rent directly to the landlord.

OW and ODSP recipients may be eligible for discretionary benefits for things like beds, bedbug covers, moving costs, and health related items.

## CHPI — Community Homelessness Preventive Initiative

People in receipt of **OW** and **ODSP** can apply through their caseworker for assistance through the CHPI program for items such as:

- ✓ Rental arrears when facing eviction
- ✓ Utility arrears when facing disconnection
- ✓ Last month's rent deposit
- ✓ Utility connection fees

*The Homelessness Network Housing Support Services also assist those with lower incomes, not in receipt of OW or ODSP, with CHPI applications.*

## What is the Residential Tenancies Act?

Most residential tenancies are covered by the **Residential Tenancies Act** (the Act). This law:

- Gives landlords and tenants specific rights and responsibilities
- Provides rules for increasing the rent and for evicting a tenant, and
- Creates the Landlord and Tenant Board

## The role of the Landlord and Tenant Board is to

- Inform landlords and tenants about their rights under the Act , and
- Resolve disputes between landlords and tenants through mediation or adjudication, or by providing information

# Legal Responsibilities of the Landlord and Tenant

To Contact the Landlord and Tenant Board  
**Toll free: 1-888-332-3234**

Tenant Rights and Responsibilities	Landlord Rights and Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Right to security of tenancy</li><li>✓ Right to privacy</li><li>✓ Responsible for paying rent on time</li><li>✓ Responsible for keeping the unit clean</li><li>✓ Responsible for repairing any damage</li><li>✓ Not allowed to change the locks without landlord's permission</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Right to collect a rent deposit</li><li>✓ Right to increase the rent under guidelines</li><li>✓ Responsible to keep the rental property in good state of repair</li><li>✓ Responsible to provide the tenant with a copy of the written tenancy agreement</li><li>✓ Not allowed to shut off or deliberately interfere with the supply of a vital service (heat, electricity, fuel, gas, hot or cold water)</li><li>✓ Not allowed to take a tenant's personal property</li><li>✓ Not allowed to lock the tenant out of the rental unit</li></ul>

# Before Move in Day



Before allowing a new tenant to move in, it is important to understand the legal obligations of a landlord through the Residential Tenancies Act. The tenancy agreement will differ depending on what housing services and rental units are provided, such as an apartment, a home, seniors' housing, social housing, rooming homes and so on.

## Step #1: Maintenance and Repairs: Evaluating the current condition of the unit.

It is imperative to ensure that the unit meets health and safety guidelines to ensure the security of the rental unit. The landlord is responsible to fix, replace, upgrade, and renovate the interior and exterior of the unit. This includes upgrading appliances, fixing leaky faucets, replacing damaged flooring, renovating windows and doors, maintaining common areas and ensuring proper heating, water and electrical conditions.

**Note:** It is crucial to deal with an issue involving an infestation of mold, bedbugs, cockroaches and/or mice. There are numerous legal, health, and psychological consequences that these infestations can have on a tenant's well-being.

## Step #2: Arranging rental prices and rent deposits

Determining the amount of rent depends on various factors. These factors include the size of the rental unit, the current local market value, the cost of maintaining and operating the unit. The building location and overall features may increase the value attributable to rental units.

A landlord usually arranges the collection of a rent deposit prior to a new tenancy. This deposit can be a last month's rent. The purpose of the deposit is to provide security for the landlord and to ensure that the unit is paid for. This means the landlord will be protected in the event of a sudden vacancy or eviction. There are options available for tenants who may have trouble providing a last month's rent or other deposit.

1. Payment plan between the landlord and tenant
2. Increase the amount of rent for a couple of months
3. Accessing community funding resources or other subsidies.

**Note:** Having agreements in writing will help deal with any misunderstandings or future disagreements about rent and other deposits.





### Step #3: Organizing rent payments

The method of payment is usually determined by the landlord; although, options may include postdated checks or automatic bank payments. Whatever payment option is chosen, it is important to provide a written form, receipt and/or documentation of the withdrawal of payment or any financial transaction. Individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness may have challenges with budgeting and income management such as paying bills, budgeting for food, etc. If the individual demonstrates difficulties such as those and is in receipt of OW or ODSP, they may be eligible for the rent pay direct option. "Pay Direct" options may provide the best assurance for rental payments to landlords and to ensuring stable tenancy for participants.

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### Rent receipts

During a tenancy, a landlord should always provide a rent receipt. This piece of documentation is a safeguard for both individuals involved in a rental agreement and it is a preventative measure to reduce conflicts in the future. The rent receipt can be useful in terms of proof of payment, eviction prevention and is a necessary piece in a persons' ability to file for income taxes. Filing for income tax usually allows persons on social assistance to claim additional financial benefits, thus increasing their ability to afford and maintain their tenancy.

### Rent increases

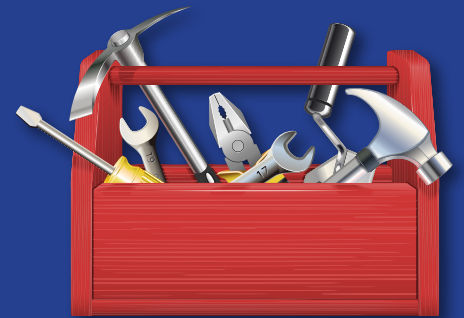
There are essential criteria that landlords must follow to increasing rent. A landlord can **only** increase the rent before a tenant moves in or unless a tenant has been residing in the unit for at least twelve months. Once the twelve months has passed, the landlord must issue the tenant with a 90-day written notice that the rent will be increased. The landlord must provide the appropriate documents from the LTB which are the N1, N2, and N3 depending on the housing services they provide. Additionally, the landlord must follow the Provincial guidelines for approved rent increases which is announced each year. If a landlord wants to increase the amount of rent more than the provincial guideline, they must apply through the LTB.

### Maintaining units

It is very important that a landlord maintains the unit throughout the tenancy to ensure safe, healthy and stable conditions. When a landlord does not provide a good condition unit, it can cause a variety of issues. A tenant can apply for a rent freeze when there are major repairs to be done and there has been a long delay in fixing the problem. When a landlord does not fix or respond to the request in a timely manner, then the tenant can submit a written request to ask for an inspection from the Landlord and Tenant Board. This request can affect rent increases. If the problem is not resolved, then the LTB can legally enforce



## Throughout the Tenancy



# Eviction Prevention, Ending Tenancy, or Moving



rules that cause a landlord to reimburse the tenant their rent for the time period the repair issues aren't resolved. However, a tenant must continue to pay rent unless they receive the proper documentation from the Landlord and Tenant Board to withhold rent payments.

People living on very low incomes often experience housing affordability problems. Once an individual or family secures a social housing unit, their shelter costs become less but their affordability issues may not go away. In private market rents, affordability is always an issue. The vast majority of evictions are economic in nature, involving some form of rent non-payment.

Preserving tenancies is a primary goal. Over time, a little eviction prevention can go a long way! Successful tenancies create stable communities and keep operating costs down.

## Key Financial and Human Costs of Evictions to Providers and Tenants

- \$ Legal fees and revenue loss
- \$ Maintenance costs from unit turnovers
- \$ Staff/superintendent hours and staff stress
- \$ Moving costs
- \$ Rent arrears and credit issues
- \$ Loss of belongings
- \$ Increased stress and family conflicts
- \$ Stigma of eviction
- \$ Negative effects on children
- \$ Difficulty renting again
- \$ Homelessness

The threat of eviction, let alone the eviction itself, can put a family through unnecessary stress and uncertainty which is often compounded by other factors in their lives such as loss of employment, violence against women, domestic abuse or ill health. If you are considering evicting a tenant supported by the Homelessness Network, contact their Housing Case Manager first to see if there is any way to resolve issues with the tenant or tenancy.

There are many legal and formal conditions that a landlord must follow in an eviction notice. The notice to terminate a tenancy agreement must come as a written document (see the Landlord and Tenant Board and the "Act"). The notice that is commonly used is called an N4 form and a landlord must follow the rules and regulations presented in the RTA when applying the N4. You must provide details of the tenancy agreement, proposed eviction date and outstanding rental payment information on an N4 form.

## What are reasons for an eviction?

- Rent arrears
- Consistently paying rent late
- Serious property damage
- Conducting or participating in illegal activities
- Requiring vacancy to do maintenance and renovations or repairs
- Harassment, discrimination and preventing the safety of others in the building
- Behavioral issues

All of the reasons listed require a specific time period after the notice is given to allow the tenant to leave the rental unit. The amount of days is noted on the forms provided through LTB and RTA and their websites.

When a tenant does not comply with the notice of eviction, then the landlord can apply to the “Board” for an application of eviction. There is a fee to file the documentation and a date for a hearing is provided on the documents for the tenant and landlord.

At the hearing, the landlord and the tenant should provide specific evidence to support their claims. Displaying pictures, videos, receipts, and other formal documentation will help ensure a successful hearing. Tenants can seek representation from the Legal Clinic and other knowledgeable housing supports.

A tenant who wants to end a tenancy (or move), must provide adequate notice. They could include a written notice and/or an N9 form, available through the LTB. The amount of notice depends on when the tenant pays rent. For example, if the tenant pays by the month, then they must provide a minimum 60 day notice to the landlord. However, depending on the circumstance, arrangements can be negotiated between the tenant and landlord. A Housing First Case Manager can also assist with these changes to ensure a smooth transition and a lasting positive relationship between all parties.

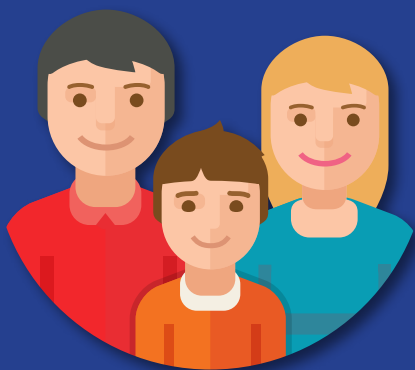
## What are the options?

1. Establish a professional yet positive relationship with your tenant
2. A partnership with a housing case manager which will provide support for the landlord and tenant throughout the tenancy
3. Become knowledgeable about the available community social services and funding sources for individuals who have experienced housing instabilities
4. Develop strategies to reduce conflict and miscommunications

<http://www.sjto.gov.on.ca/ltb/>



# Help in Creating Successful Tenancies



The Landlord toolkit is intended to engage landlords in understanding the applicable laws, knowing their responsibilities and how to formalize agreements pertaining to the operation of rental properties.

- ▶ Informing landlords with regards to the homeless community, housing first philosophy and urgent housing status.
- ▶ Learning about reducing stigma, barriers, and impacts on the homeless and near homeless in our community.
- ▶ Establishing a concrete relationship with housing case managers, tenants and community social service providers to better ensure a successful transition from the streets to a home.
- ▶ Alleviating the potential of conflicts, financial problems and the threat of eviction.
- ▶ Creating an open communication and partnerships with local social networks.

Integrating landlords into the circle of care that seeks to reduce shelter usage; increase stable housing for those who are most challenged with achieving it; reducing financial cost to them and the larger community by diminishing emergency responses and visits; reducing police and ambulance interventions; increasing physical and mental health; and building a better community.

The City of Greater Sudbury wants everyone in the community to acquire safe, secure and long-term affordable housing. The goal is to embrace and incorporate the Housing First approach. This model will provide direction, and assist with greater acceptance, and respect, for those challenged with chronic homelessness, by dispelling the common myths surrounding homeless persons and creating better understanding of how to resolve the problem.

## Declaration of Support

We applaud the efforts of housing providers and landlords who help tenants preserve their tenancies. We would like to see every housing provider and landlord do the same thing. Our target is to have everyone practice eviction prevention strategies to help achieve 100% housing in this city.

The Homelessness Network, as part of the City of Greater Sudbury's 10 year Housing First initiative, wants to be a key partner in assisting the chronically homeless find housing, and stay housed once they've found it. We want to do this by creating positive working and supportive relationships with all housing providers and landlords, while continuously supporting participants in their tenancy.



Rooming houses are an important kind of housing for people exiting homelessness, on social assistance or limited income. It is often the most affordable option, but sometimes the living conditions are less than acceptable.

As a landlord, you have a business to run. High tenant turnover is NOT good for business. Research shows that tenants stay longer in a rooming house that uses good practices. Here are some good practices, identified through our research.

- The basis of all landlord-tenant relationships must be respect. “If you treat tenants courteously and with dignity, they will be a better tenant.” A good practice is to do something nice for the tenant every once in a while. “I offer a drive to the food bank each week and I think they appreciate that. It pays off for me.”
- Checking references for all tenants, and involving existing tenants in decisions regarding new tenants are good practices. Calling local rooming house owners is a good way to check references. Talk to other landlords as well.
- Having an on-site manager or superintendant is a “must have”. It can improve relationships inside the rooming house substantially and reduce crime, property damage, and undesirable visitors.
- Post “house rules” and enforce them firmly, but fairly. Make expectations clear to everyone, and follow-up with those who do not respect the rules. “Deal with the rule breakers fast — one tenant can make the whole house unliveable.”

## Good Practices for Rooming House Landlords



- Having a tenant-to-bathroom/kitchen ratio of around 4-5 :1 is a good practice, and have someone clean them daily with tenants being responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- A house that has some 'comforts of home,' such as a table with lamp in a hallway, framed art or common areas for people to gather such as a living room, can instill a sense of community and pride in their space.
- Safety for tenants should be a priority. Each tenant should have a working lock on their door, fire and smoke alarms should be in working order and tested regularly, hallways and fire escapes should be safe and well-maintained.
- Security cameras in common areas will reduce crime. "As soon as I put cameras in, the crime in and around the building dropped."
- Being knowledgeable about community resources to help tenants with mental health problems, addictions, health problems is a good practice. "Knowing where to send them to get help can solve a problem in my rooming house." Posting this information on a bulletin board hung in a common area is a practical idea.
- Using a 'neutral' mediation service for problems with a tenant is a good practice, and can reduce evictions or people moving out.

All provinces have a Residential Tenancies Act that outlines the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. Some legal requirements for landlords can include :

- ✓ Secure doors and locks to help keep tenants safe;
- ✓ Clean accommodation that is in good state of repair;
- ✓ All notices served in writing.

### Check your provincial legislation.

The development and promotion of a Landlord's Association, based upon an established code of ethics, is a good practice. It can lead to increased bargaining power with government-shared knowledge about tenant management, and up-to-date information about grants/loans for renovations or repairs to rooming houses.



**HOMELESSNESS Network**  
**Réseau des SANS-ABRI**  
**ENDAASGWOK MAAMWI-NAADMAAGEWIN**

The following agencies form the collaborative partnership called The Homelessness Network (H.N.):

**Association des jeunes de la rue ➤ (705) 675-6422**

*Provide street and shelter outreach*

307 Cedar Street, Sudbury

**Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury**

➤ (705) 280-7888 or (705) 673-3721

*Provides Central Intake, case management and coordination of the H.N.*

307 Cedar Street, Sudbury

**Elizabeth Fry Society of Northeastern Ontario ➤ (705) 673-1364**

*Provides case management*

204 Elm Street, Sudbury

**John Howard Society of Sudbury ➤ (705) 207-7621 or (705) 673-9576**

*Provides Central Intake and intensive case management (2 ICMs)*

204 Pine Street, Sudbury

**N'Swakamok Friendship Centre ➤ (705) 674-2128**

*Provides case management*

110 Elm Street, Sudbury

**Sudbury Action Centre for Youth ➤ (705) 673-4396**

*Provides case management*

95 Pine Street, Sudbury



## The Homelessness Network

**NEW!**



**Landlord  
Engagement  
Worker  
(705) 562-2968**

*(for Landlords / Property  
managers ONLY)*

For general program  
information or inquiries  
contact :

Coordinator of  
the Homelessness Network at

**705-207-5518**

or

**[rlandry@santesudbury.ca](mailto:rlandry@santesudbury.ca)**





**HOMELESSNESS** Network  
Réseau des **SANS-ABRI**  
ENDAASGWOK MAAMWI-NAADMAAGEWIN



Centre de  
**santé communautaire**  
du Grand Sudbury

**JohnHoward**  
SOCIETY SUDBURY



*Société Elizabeth Fry Society*  
*Succursale de Sudbury Branch*



**N'SWAKAMOK**  
Native Friendship Centre



**L'ASSOCIATION  
DES JEUNES  
DE LA RUE**

