

Toronto
Community
Housing



Human Rights Policy Consultation

Summary of tenant feedback
2024



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Background

Learn about the path to improving the tenant human rights process at Toronto Community Housing (TCHC).

October 2022

Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) started a project to improve its tenant human rights system. This project includes rewriting several of TCHC's policies and procedures, increasing supports for tenants and staff and training for staff to better understand and use the human rights system. The goal of the project is to make sure that TCHC is meeting its obligations to tenants under the Ontario Human Rights Code in a way that is consistent, equitable and tenant-focused.

June 2023

The Ombudsman Toronto published a report titled *An Investigation into Toronto Community Housing Corporation's Tenant Human Rights Complaints Process*. This report made several recommendations for TCHC to improve the way in which it receives, investigates and resolves tenant human rights complaints. TCHC has accepted all these recommendations. Since the report was published, TCHC has implemented a new interim tenant human rights complaint procedure and is working on implementing the rest of the Ombudsman's recommendations.

TCHC held tenant consultations in May and June 2023 to ask tenants how they would like the human rights complaint procedure to work.

[Read the Summary of Tenant Feedback \(PDF\) from these consultations.](#)



Background (continued)

Learn about the path to improving the tenant human rights process at Toronto Community Housing (TCHC).

February to March 2024

TCHC held a second round of consultations to gather tenant feedback on its proposed new tenant human rights system. This proposed system includes a permanent tenant human rights complaint procedure and a new process for tenants to make accommodation requests. It also changes the way tenants make transfer requests.

[Track the path to improving human rights at Toronto Community Housing \(TCHC\).](#)



Overview of feedback

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

What we heard

TCHC held three in-person tenant consultations in February and April and one virtual tenant consultation in February. Over 200 tenants attended these consultations. TCHC also held a consultation with its Tenant Advisory Committee (TAC) in April.

Through both these and the 2023 consultations, we heard that tenants and other stakeholders are eager for improvements in TCHC's tenant human rights system. They shared that they would like the system to be more user-friendly, consistent and for staff to be more aware of human rights issues and how to resolve them.

Tenants want TCHC to better communicate with them when they make a complaint or request so they know they have been heard and understand what resolution TCHC will provide them and when.



**A more consistent,
user-friendly system.**



**Better communication
from start to finish.**



**More staff supports
and training.**



Topics and feedback

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Four topics were covered during the consultation sessions:

- Tenant participation in consultations
- How we intake or receive accommodation requests
- How we resolve accommodation requests that we receive
- What type of staff and tenant resources should be in place in TCHC's human rights system



Tenant participation in consultations

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- Tenants want to be involved in developing TCHC's human rights policies and procedures, not just okaying them once they're revised and in the final approval stages.
- Tenants want staff available at consultations who can help them resolve issues they are having with TCHC.
- Tenants want to receive a summary after consultations about what TCHC learned from tenants at the consultations.



How we intake or receive accommodation requests

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- Tenants want as many options as possible to make a complaint, including over the phone, in writing/by email and on the website.
- Tenants want the intake process for complaints and requests to be as simple as possible, and not have confusing procedures that do not work with each other.
- Tenants want to be able to speak directly to the staff involved in investigating and resolving their human rights complaints and requests to make sure they have all the relevant information.



How we resolve accommodation requests that we receive

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- Tenants want different options for communicating with TCHC staff investigating and resolving their complaints and/or requests; some tenants want to meet with staff while others only want to communicate in writing.
- Regular communication with tenants about where TCHC is in the process of investigating and resolving their complaint or request is very important so that tenants are not left in the dark.
- Tenants need clear explanations for what decisions TCHC has made about their complaint or request, what information they used to come to that decision and how they're going to resolve the issue.



How we resolve accommodation requests that we receive (continued)

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- If TCHC finds that a complaint or request is not a human rights issue, staff should direct it to whatever part of the organization is responsible for resolving it rather than just closing the request.



What staff support do tenants need to use the human rights system at TCHC?

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- TCHC should have a human rights office or team of staff who are dedicated to advising on and resolving human rights complaints issues and complaints; they must be experts in human rights and available to help other staff.
- TCHC staff must understand the policies and procedures well enough to answer questions for tenants.



What resources do tenants need to understand the human rights system at TCHC?

An overview of the feedback we received from the in-person and online consultation sessions.

Summary feedback

- Information about the human rights system needs to be available in as many formats as possible (written policies, visual guides, videos).
- Tenants would like an info session to help them understand the new system before it goes into place.



Summary of consultations

A summary overview of the various themes identified throughout the consultation series.

Several themes emerged through the consultations:

- TCHC's policies, procedures and practices must be flexible to meet diverse tenant needs.
- Tenants need to feel like TCHC is respecting their dignity by being sensitive, understanding the importance of upholding tenants' human rights, and applying consistent and predictable practices and clearly communicating with tenants.
- TCHC needs to improve its customer service and this will lead to better human rights outcomes for tenants.
- Staff need better training and access to subject matter expertise on how to identify and resolve human rights issues.



Next steps

You might be wondering “what’s next?”

Improving the human rights system

In January 2024, TCHC implemented an interim tenant human rights complaint procedure and will continue to work with the Ombudsman Toronto to make sure the process meets the standards of the Ombudsman.

TCHC is currently revising its policies and procedures that relate to human rights. Once the new policies and procedures are approved by management and the Board of Directors, TCHC will provide extensive staff training to familiarize staff with the new system.

Finally, TCHC will create materials to help tenants understand the new system and carry out info sessions for tenants that want to learn more. We will then implement the new policies and procedures.

Visit torontohousing.ca/human-rights to learn more about tenant human rights at Toronto Community Housing (TCHC).