



Guidelines and information package

**2025 TCHC Tenant Elections information
to become a member of Tenant Councils**



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Introduction

Your journey to get involved in the 2025 Tenant Elections starts here. This guide is intended to serve as a reference for Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) tenants who are interested in becoming a member of the Tenant Council.

Tenant Councils are one of the four components of Engage Together - the Tenant Engagement System at TCHC.

There will be one (1) Tenant Council in every district, with three (3) councils per region and nine (9) in total across the City.

Tenants will elect one (1) Member of Tenant Councils for every community with less than 700 bedrooms, and two (2) Member of Tenant Councils for every community with more than 700 bedrooms.

Tenant Council Members will aim to address tenant priorities to build vibrant communities.



Key dates

Event	Date
Nominations open: nominate yourself or another eligible tenant.	Tuesday, August 5
Nominations close	Thursday, September 4
Tenant campaign training sessions	East - Wednesday, August 13 West - Thursday, August 14 Central - Tuesday, August 19
Advance voting days	Thursday, October 2 to Thursday, October 9 (During business hours at one location per region; to be announced)
Election day – East region	Tuesday, October 14
Election day – West region	Wednesday, October 15
Election day – Central region	Thursday, October 16

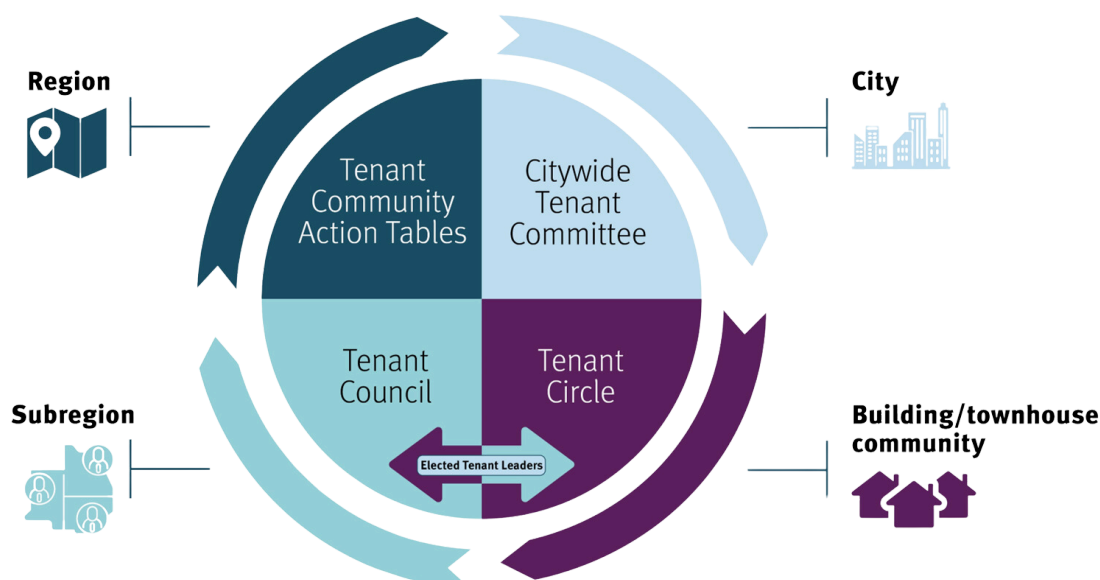


About Engage Together: The TCHC Tenant Engagement System

TCHC aims to promote relationships with tenants to build vibrant communities through diverse, inclusive and collaborative methods that give all TCHC tenants a platform to share their input on community decision-making.

The Tenant Engagement System provides the framework for how TCHC will deliver on a commitment made by the City of Toronto through shareholder direction, calling for tenant input on decisions at the local and corporate levels. TCHC is committed to this effective engagement system which allows tenants from all TCHC communities across the city to get involved.

TCHC is actively working to implement Engage Together, the new tenant engagement model approved by the Board of Directors. As a tenant, you are in the best position to understand the needs and assets of your community.





Interested in becoming a member of Tenant Council?

Why run?

There are many reasons why you should run to be a member of Tenant Council

1. Develop your leadership skills and resume
2. Connect and network with other tenant leaders
3. Help shape and improve TCHC
4. Work alongside your neighbours and

Who qualifies as a candidate?

A candidate for Tenant Council must be:

- A tenant, co-tenant or dependent of a tenant in the building or townhouse community where they are running.
- 16 years of age or older by the time the nomination form is submitted, or to nominate a candidate.
- Registered on the TCHC household lease or an occupant and supported by another TCHC tenant, ideally someone who lives in the same building/townhouse community where the candidate is running.
- In good standing as a tenant to be a candidate.
- Not a permanent, full-time staff of TCHC or engaged in a part-time/casual position that would provide an advantage to the candidate (for example: Senior Program Leader – Tenant Engagement).



What it means to have a tenancy in good standing:

A tenancy in good standing means:

- You, your household members, or your guests have not been reported for breaking serious laws on or near TCHC property.
- There have not been any documented and ongoing complaints about you, your household, or your guests causing problems or disturbing others, and any past issues have been resolved.
- You have not been removed from the Tenant Engagement System by TCHC.



Becoming a candidate

How do I become a Member of Tenant Council candidate?

- Submit a [nomination form](#) no later than September 4, 2025.
- You can nominate yourself, but your nomination form must be signed by another TCHC tenant supporter, ideally someone in the building/townhouse community where you are running.
- Each application must be signed by you, the potential candidate, which will indicate your acceptance. TCHC staff will confirm your candidacy and verify it has been signed by a tenant supporter.
- You will receive confirmation from TCHC to indicate whether your nomination was accepted, and you are eligible to become a candidate in the Tenant Council Elections.

How long do Tenant Council Members serve?

Members of Tenant Councils serve a two-year term ending August 2027.



How to submit a nomination form

Submit your completed nomination form to your region's Tenant Participation Coordinator (TPC) in person or by email.

Central Region:

Jermaine McLean

Telephone: 437-882-5756

Email: Jermaine.Mclean@torontohousing.ca

East Region:

Natalia Williams

Telephone: 647-297-5718

Email: Natalia.Williams@torontohousing.ca

West Region:

Nadein Girgis

Telephone: 416-981-4162

Email: Nadein.Girgis@torontohousing.ca



Tenant Council Terms of Reference

Tenant Councils are part of Toronto Community Housing's Engage Together model, which aims to build tenant leadership, make sure tenants are included in decision-making and promote strong, connected communities.

Purpose

- Provide a forum for elected or acclaimed Tenant Council Members to use their voices to bring forward issues that impact their communities.
- Build tenant capacity through leadership development and shared learning.
- Strengthen community development initiatives, collaboration between communities, and information sharing.
- Serve as a link between TCHC and tenants to support community-wide engagement and tenant priorities.



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- Identify and elevate community-wide needs, priorities and solutions that go beyond site-specific concerns.
- Strengthen collaboration with staff and other tenants to support the Tenant Engagement System.
- Strengthen and support local tenant engagement by sharing best practices and increasing communication between communities.
- Provide input into:
 1. Tenant communications
 2. The Tenant Engagement System and tenant directed funding
 3. Programs and policies that impact tenants across multiple communities

Note: The Tenant Council is not a forum for addressing building-specific maintenance or operational concerns. Those are addressed through Integrated Team Meetings (ITMs) between staff and tenant leaders at the local building/ townhouse community level.

Values and Code of Conduct

Tenant Councils follow the TCHC Tenant Charter values:

Accessibility, Collaboration, Integrity, Accountability, Respect and Transparency.
All members must adhere to the Tenant Engagement System Code of Conduct.



Membership, selection and term

- Tenant Council Members are elected or acclaimed through
- community-based Tenant Council Elections.
- Each Tenant Council represents a geographic district and includes
- tenant leaders from buildings across that district.
- Members serve a fixed two-year term, aligned with the TCHC Tenant Engagement System election cycle.
- Where there is a vacant position in a Tenant Council, two-thirds of members can appoint a tenant from the relevant Development ID to fill the vacancy until the next election.
- A tenant council member will serve a two-year term, ending August 2027.

Meeting Logistics and Format

- Meetings will be held quarterly or as needed and facilitated by meeting chair(s).
- Agendas will be developed collaboratively with staff and tenants.
- Materials will be circulated in advance to allow members to review and prepare.
- Meetings may be held in person, virtually or using a hybrid format (if possible) to support participation and accessibility.
- Interpretation, accessibility supports, and honoraria will be provided in accordance with TCHC policy.



Roles and responsibilities of Tenant Council Members:

Before meetings

- Review materials in advance to prepare for discussion.
- Confirm attendance and notify staff in advance if you cannot attend.
- Consult with community especially tenant circles to identify emerging issues

During meetings

- Attend all scheduled meetings (honoraria are only provided for meetings attended).
- Actively engage in discussion, bring forward community-wide perspectives.
- Stay focused on the agenda and support the Council in completing its work.
- Encourage a respectful and inclusive space where all voices are heard.
- Bring updates and ideas from your community to share with the Council.
- Take back information to your community to support ongoing engagement.



Between meetings

- Respond to staff communication and provide timely input when needed.
- Support local community initiatives and act as a connector between tenants and the broader engagement system through the Tenant Circles.
- Share updates and key messages from the Council with your community, to encourage two-way communication.
- Help identify emerging trends, successes, or shared challenges across communities.

Attendance and participation

- Consistent attendance is essential to the work of the Tenant Council.
- Members who miss more than two consecutive meetings without notice may be removed.
- All members are expected to fully participate in the meeting process, including reading materials and contributing to discussion.

Out of scope

Building/ community-specific maintenance, operational, or individual tenant concerns are not within the scope of Tenant Council meetings. These issues should be addressed through Integrated Team Meetings or by connecting directly with your local TCHC staff.



Candidate information

How does TCHC support you in your role?

TCHC staff will support you by:

- Delivering training, providing learning and capacity building opportunities leading up to the elections for tenants who become members of Tenant Council.
- Removing barriers to participation by providing food, public transportation reimbursement, honoraria, translation and interpretation support, etc.
- Providing tools and resources to carry out roles and responsibilities.

What if I have a comment or complaint about the process?

While efforts are being made to make the Tenant Engagement System and elections process as transparent, fair and responsive as possible, we are always open to comments, suggestions or complaints.

Please submit your comment, suggestion or complaint in writing by completing a complaint form. You can get a complaint form by contacting your local engagement Community Services Coordinator (CSC).

Don't know who your CSC is?

Call the Client Care Centre and an agent will connect you to the right person. Submit your complaint form to your local CSC once complete. If your complaint is regarding the election process itself, please email tenantengagement@torontohousing.ca

We will work to respond to any complaint and address it as soon as possible.



Campaign information

The following tips could help you with your campaign efforts.

This is your chance to help tenants understand why you would make a good Tenant Council Member. Here are four ways for you to do that:

1. Create and post flyers or poster to introduce yourself and what you aim to do.
2. Connect with tenants face-to-face, in the lobby, at their door or other places in the community.
3. Make content and post on social media.
4. Host a candidate meeting in your community.

What you need to know before you get started on your campaign

- Develop a key message: It is important to share the reason why you are interested in being a candidate with your neighbours.
- What motivates you to run?
- Is there a particular area that you are passionate about?
- What would you like to change in your community?
- Ask about and listen to the ideas and concerns of community members.
- What are their priorities? Is there something you could do to try and address those issues?
- Be courteous and respectful of your neighbours, fellow candidates and staff. Follow the Code of Conduct and if you are unclear, contact the Tenant Engagement team at tenantengagement@torontohousing.ca.



What you can do to campaign as a Tenant Council Member:

- Create a flyer: TCHC will provide you with a template of a flyer that you can use.
- Distribute/ post copies of the flyer: Your Community Services Coordinator, Engagement can make copies of your flyer for you to use, upon request. It must be letter-sized, single-sided, and at least 14 pt. font.
- Use social media: Make content and post on social media.
- Get volunteers: Getting friends or neighbours to help you with your campaign is always a good idea. They can accompany you when you are knocking on doors seeking support, help you to distribute flyers or put them on bulletin boards. Your volunteers can also encourage others to vote for you and accompany you at debates. All campaign volunteers must follow the Code of Conduct.
- Track supporters: TCHC cannot provide you with tenants' names and unit numbers. However, while campaigning, you can ask your neighbours if they wish to share that information with you so you can keep track of who is supporting you. When a tenant has pledged their support, make a note of their name and unit number. That way you can remind them to vote for you on Election Day. Your volunteers can also remind your supporters to vote.



What you need to know when preparing for meetings and trainings:

- There are a series of training being organized for tenants interested in running, as well as for those who decide to run. You can register for these sessions when they are posted.
- TCHC engagement staff may also work to organize candidate meetings and sessions depending on the number of candidates running and requests from candidates themselves.

What happens if there is misconduct?

- TCHC will not tolerate negative campaigning or behaviour. This includes but is not limited to:
 - inappropriate language or content in materials or while campaigning
 - damaging or vandalizing other candidates' materials
 - making untrue or disparaging statements
 - addressing or speaking about other candidates, or TCHC staff in campaign materials or while campaigning
 - harassing or threatening other candidates or their supporters
 - any other conduct that would be considered a breach of the Code of Conduct
- If there are concerns about violations of the Code of Conduct or of any behaviour that can be seen as misconduct, the Director of Tenant Engagement (who will act as the Chief Returning Officer) will investigate the matter and address it accordingly and progressively in alignment with the Breach of Tenant Engagement System Code of Conduct.
- Misconduct could result in a candidate being removed from the ballot.



Election Day Information

What you need to know for Election Day:

- You are not allowed to campaign on voting day.
- No one is allowed to linger in the polling station. Once you have submitted your vote, you must leave the polling station.
- Only polling station staff and authorized volunteers are allowed.

What voters need to know for Election Day:

- Each voter must present identification at the time of registering at the polling station.
- All tenants over the age of 16 are eligible to vote.
- Tenants may only vote once and can only vote in their designated polling station.
- Voters will get a blank ballot initialed by the Poll Captain. Once they receive their blank ballot, they must go behind the voting screen, mark their ballot, fold it and place it in the ballot box.

If a tenant is unable to vote, can someone else vote on their behalf?

- Yes. Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby you may delegate your voting power to someone else to vote on the candidate of your choice on your behalf.
- A voter must present a completed Proxy Voting Consent Form (available for download online or in TCHC offices) to the Poll Captain.
- It is the Poll Captain's responsibility to check to see if the form is signed, the voter is on the voters' list and the proxy voter is also on the voters' list and has not presented a previous proxy.



What if a tenant can't leave their home or require assistance to vote?

- A tenant who can't leave their home to vote can request support by calling Client Care or their local office.
- On day of voting, the Poll Captain will arrange for a ballot to be taken to a voter who is in the building but unable to physically go to the polling station. The Poll Captain sends a staff member and volunteer to the individual's unit with a ballot and pencil so the tenant may vote.
- A tenant may also require assisted voting, at home or at the voting station. The tenant may select their witness and have both the tenant, and the witness sign off on the Assisted Voting Consent Form. The staff member will return the ballot to the poll station, deposit it in the ballot box and give the Poll Captain the name of the voter to cross off the list.

What happens once voting ends on Election Day:

- All voters may return to the polling station once voting closes for a public ballot count and announcement of the results. Two tenant volunteers may participate in the public counting of the ballots.
- When all observers arrive, the ballot box will be opened for the public count to begin. All votes are recorded on a public tally sheet and results are documented in a poster template and posted in the community. The results will also be communicated to all tenants.
- The Poll Captain and two others (either staff, volunteers or observers) must sign-off on the results in a form attached with the ballot box. Results will also be posted in the building and communicated to all tenants.



What happens if there is a tie?

- If there appears to be a tie after counting all the ballots, votes will be recounted.
- If there is still a tie, the Poll Captain will declare a tie and pack up the poll. The Poll Captain then will ask the candidates if they want to either negotiate a winner or flip a coin.



Who to contact

Toronto Community Housing team members are available to support you. Here is a contact list of Tenant Participation Coordinators you can connect with.

Tenant Participation Coordinators

Central Region:

Jermaine McLean

☎ Telephone: 437-882-5756

✉ Email: Jermaine.Mclean@torontohousing.ca

East Region:

Natalia Williams

☎ Telephone: 647-297-5718

✉ Email: Natalia.Williams@torontohousing.ca

West Region:

Nadein Girgis

☎ Telephone: 416-981-4162

✉ Email: Nadein.Girgis@torontohousing.ca

Your local Community Services Coordinator (CSC) is also here to help guide you. Don't know who your CSC is? Contact our Client Care Centre at 416-981-5500 and an agent will connect you to the right person.

Want updates on the Tenant Engagement System? Reach out to our Tenant Engagement hotline.



Get in Touch

Visit, torontohousing.ca/tenantelections for all you need to know about the Tenant Council Elections.

Don't forget to follow us on social media!
@TOhousing @TorontoCommunityHousing

@torontohousing @TorontoCommunityHousing

#YourCommunityYourSay