



# Tenant communications focus group report

## Processes and tenant rights

December 2025



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# Background

In 2025, Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) hosted three focus groups with tenants. These focus groups aim to help improve the way TCHC shares information with tenants. At these sessions, tenants can share their experiences and ideas.

You can read the reports from the first two focus groups, on the TCHC website.

- Session 1 (building and community information):  
[torontohousing.ca/focus-group-report-1](https://torontohousing.ca/focus-group-report-1)
- Session 2 (community supports and services information):  
[torontohousing.ca/focus-group-report-2](https://torontohousing.ca/focus-group-report-2)

The final session for 2025 took place on Tuesday, December 2. The topic was processes and tenant rights. TCHC processes can include:

- how you receive or access services from TCHC
- how you ask for information from TCHC
- how you raise a concern with TCHC
- and more.

Tenant rights means your freedoms and protections as a tenant of TCHC.

## Goals

- Learn how tenants currently find information about how to do things at TCHC.
- Understand if tenants know their rights.
- Hear from tenants about their lived experience.

## Tenant participation

- One hundred and fifty-eight tenants registered.
- Thirty-three tenants attended the online meeting.
- Seventy-one people responded to the online survey. The survey was sent to all registered tenants.

## What we did

### Survey

Before the focus group, we sent a survey to everyone who registered. The survey had six questions. The questions were either multiple choice or open-ended response.

We re-sent the survey after the sessions. This meant that people who missed the session could share feedback.

### Focus group

During the online session, TCHC shared the survey results for each question.

Tenants gave more feedback. People also shared about their own experiences.

### Support

When signing up, tenants could ask for supports. This included interpreters, large print, and closed captions.



# What we heard

## Key themes

### Keep raising awareness

Tenants would like to see more information about their rights. It's helpful to re-share information about who your TCHC team is, and how to make a complaint. Use plain language. Look for ways to make important information stand out. For example, mailing a letter separate from the Tenant LOOP magazine.

### Processes can be difficult to understand

Even if information is available, it may still be difficult to understand what to do. It may not be clear who to talk to when, or how to follow up during the process. Sometimes it is difficult to know where your own complaint fits within a process.

### Provide opportunities for tenants to learn

Some processes can be intimidating. Workshops could be a helpful way for tenants to learn, ask questions, and get involved.

### Share information in different ways

Right now, people find out about processes and consultations through:

- email
- posters
- the TCHC website
- their neighbours
- tenant leaders

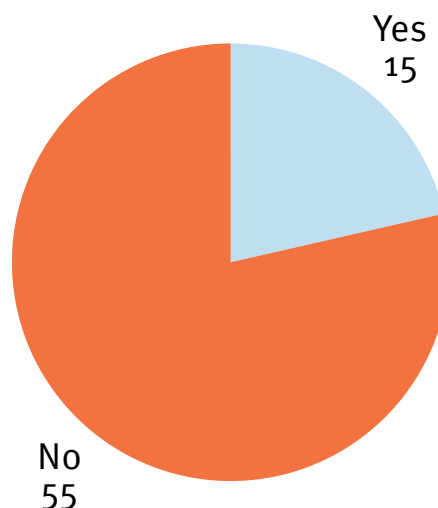
It is also important that local staff are aware of programs and policies. This enables staff to guide tenants to the right place for information.

# Overview of feedback

## Awareness of communications/information

### Discussion question:

Are you aware that TCHC ran a communications/information campaign about making deputations to the Board of Directors and its committees?



### Feedback:

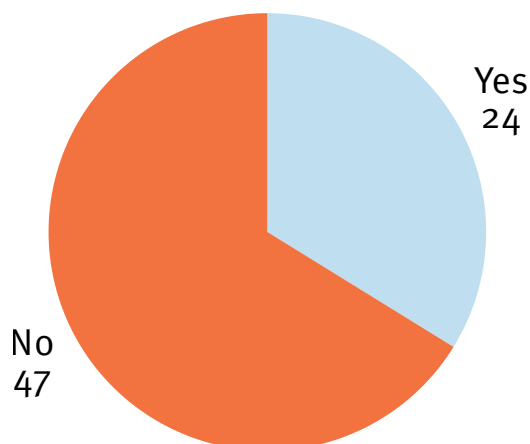
- People have learned about deputing to the Board from past or current tenant representatives. Information is also available on the TCHC website.
- It's helpful that the meeting day and time are posted in advance.
- The Public Agenda is only posted seven days in advance. This does not give tenants a lot of time to see if there is an issue they would like to speak on, or to prepare. It may also create barriers to accessibility. For example, a tenant who needs to book WheelTrans may not be able to arrange this in time.
- It can also be difficult to know where your concern appears on the agenda.
- The deputation process is confusing and feels very corporate. Tenants suggested TCHC host a workshop on the process, what you can do, and what not to do. Tenants who have experience deputing could help train other tenants. They can also help explain the process. This workshop could be recorded and shared on the TCHC website.

# Overview of feedback

## Awareness of communication/information

### Discussion question:

Are you aware that TCHC ran a communications/information campaign about the work we are doing to update our Human Rights policy and procedures?



### Feedback:

- Email is a helpful way to learn about consultations or to get information.
- Information could also be shared on lobby screens.
- Posters are one of the main ways people find out about consultations, but sometimes they aren't put up. Sometimes they are not put up with enough notice. Sometimes a community has more than one building, but there is only one poster put up in one of the buildings.
- Continue to do campaigns about specific topics, like Human Rights. This helps it stand out from regular communication from TCHC.
- Processes can still be confusing, even if information is provided. For example, it's hard to know which category a tenant Human Rights complaint falls under. Use plain language and explain steps clearly.
- Make sure staff are trained on processes and can answer questions from tenants.

“Having awareness of something and knowing how to navigate it is two different things.”  
- Tenant participant

# Overview of feedback

## Accessing information and escalating concerns

### Discussion question:

Do you know how to get information or escalate a concern/issue with TCHC?



### Feedback:

- TCHC's website has been improved over the years to provide information in an easier and clearer way.
- Some communities have their own Facebook or Whatsapp group. Residents share information from TCHC with each other in these groups.
- Some tenants are familiar with the process if they were a tenant rep or if they've spoken to their tenant rep.
- It's helpful to see reminders about the complaints process, and who your TCHC team is.
- Remind people to ask for a reference number when they call the Client Care Centre, so that you can follow up.

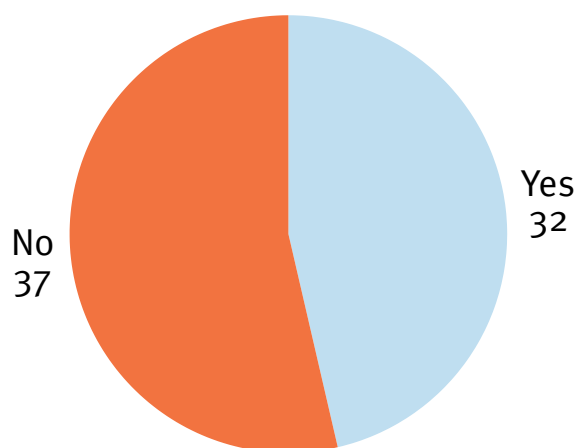


# Overview of feedback

## Advocating for rights

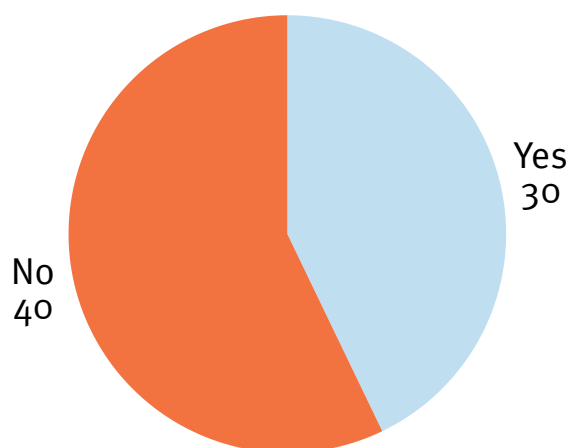
### Discussion question:

Do you know where to find information about your rights as a TCHC tenant?



### Discussion question:

Do you know how to advocate for yourself as a tenant?



### Feedback:

- Tenant rights is an important topic.
- Tenants can find this information in the Tenant Guide, their lease agreement, and on the TCHC website.
- Some tenants feel they may be seen or treated negatively if they advocate too much.
- Third-party organizations can help tenants learn about their rights. For example, Advocacy Centre for Tenants in Ontario (ACTO).
- Tenants suggested TCHC host a workshop for tenants to learn about their rights.

# Overview of feedback

## Finding information

### Discussion question:

How do you find this information currently? Where would you go to find this information?

- By email
- I go to the TCHC website and navigate from there.
- I would check the website or ask my tenant rep
- I would go to TCHC office
- At the hub office or with my council member
- Speaking to other tenants
- Via other tenant leaders
- Printed material
- Checking info boards in building/community.
- Calling Client Care
- Talking to my superintendent
- City of Toronto website.
- TCHC social media.
- Ontario human rights codes
- TCHC Tenant Ombudsman
- Online/Google
- My community's Facebook page
- Speak to my Community Services Coordinator (CSC)
- Usually posted in common areas of the building.
- Tenant handbook given at the time is lease signing

### Feedback:

- Tenant reps can help share information with their community.
- Make sure local staff receive information as well. This way they can answer questions or provide updates to tenants.
- Posters are still helpful ways to communicate. It's also helpful that posters always have a take-down date.

# Next steps

We will continue to share information about processes and upcoming consultations. This information will be available through posters, email, website, social media, and text messages.

## TCHC will also take the following actions in the next 12 months:

Action checklist	How we'll make it happen	Notes
Continue to share information in plain language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share this information through our website, social media, email, posters.</li> </ul>	For example: how to follow up on a complaint, how to make a Human Rights complaint.
Continue to share standard information and reminders about existing processes on a regular basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule reminders into our editorial plans for Tenant LOOP, Community Corner, social media, Tenant Council Member newsletter, and monthly posters.</li> </ul>	For example: how to depute, how to make a complaint, who your TCHC team is.
Explore opportunities to host workshops on processes and tenant rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with other departments like Tenant Engagement and Governance to explore opportunities.</li> <li>Explore partnerships with third parties.</li> </ul>	May be dependent on funding and other community priorities.



# Contact information

For any questions or to share additional feedback, please email Zaira Shaal Hoeber, Director of Communications and Content Strategy  
**[Zaira.Shaal-Hoeber@torontohousing.ca](mailto:Zaira.Shaal-Hoeber@torontohousing.ca)**.

## More information

Looking for information about TCHC processes or your rights as tenants? Here are some places you can find this information.

### Tenant Guide

Visit **[torontohousing.ca/tenant-guide](https://torontohousing.ca/tenant-guide)** or ask your local staff for a copy.

### Email newsletters

Sign up at **[torontohousing.ca/email-updates](https://torontohousing.ca/email-updates)**. When you sign up, you can choose what type of information you want to receive.

### Deputation policy and process

We recently updated the Deputation Policy to make it more accessible. You can learn more at **[torontohousing.ca/deputation-policy-updates](https://torontohousing.ca/deputation-policy-updates)**.

You can also find more information about deputations, register to depute, and see upcoming meetings at **[torontohousing.ca/deputations](https://torontohousing.ca/deputations)**.

### Advocacy Centre for Tenants in Ontario (ACTO)

This is a third-party organization that supports low-income tenants. They provide information and resources. You can find more information online at **[acto.ca](https://acto.ca)**.



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