

Tenant Council Terms of Reference

Tenant Councils are part of Toronto Community Housing's (TCHC) Engage Together model, which aims to build tenant leadership, foster inclusive decision-making, and promote strong, connected communities.

Purpose:

- Amplify tenant voices on community development or engagement priorities and matters that shape their communities.
- Act as a collaborative bridge between TCHC and tenants to advance community-wide engagement and shared priorities.

Mandate:

- Identify and elevate community-wide priorities and solutions beyond site-specific concerns.
- Collaborate with staff and tenant leaders to strengthen the tenant engagement system.
- Support tenant leadership through shared learning, mentorship, and development opportunities.
- Foster collaboration across communities by connecting initiatives, sharing practices and strengthening collective action.
- Support local tenant engagement by sharing best practices and enhancing communication across communities.
- Provide input into key areas, including:
 - Tenant communications
 - The Tenant Engagement System and Tenant Directed Funding
 - 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. These are to be addressed with the appropriate staff or departments.

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 elections.
- Each Tenant Council represents a geographic district and includes tenants from buildings and townhouse communities within that district
- Members serve a fixed 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 in 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:

- Attend quarterly tenant council meetings
- Share tenant feedback, highlight successes, and identify barriers that tenants experience in their communities in relation to engagement
- Focus on broader community matters, such as capacity-building, vendor concerns, community gardens, Tenant Circles, Tenant Funding program (LIFT) Local Initiative Funding for Tenants, and tenant communications.

- Continue to co-create the scope and operations of the Tenant Council, alongside TCHC staff.
- Communicate with staff in advance if you are unable to attend. *Please note that honorariums are paid only for meetings attended.*
- Review materials ahead of time to come prepared.
- Actively engage and participate in meetings, including raising your hand to speak or offer suggestions.
- Respond to communication in a timely manner.
- Support an inclusive environment where all Tenant Council members' voices can be heard.
- Fill vacancies on Council.

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 during 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, ensuring 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 or community-specific maintenance, operational, or individual tenant concerns are not within the scope of Tenant Council meetings. These matters should be directed to the appropriate TCHC departments that are responsible for supporting and resolving these types of issues. Please refer to the Tenant Council Roles and Responsibilities document, which outlines all TCHC departments in place to support.