

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

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**DRAFT**



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## INTRODUCTION

### Preamble

Standards are statements that reflect what is expected of an organization. These standards were developed in partnership with the housing community stakeholders. Seven areas or sections are used to cover the key but interrelated performance areas of an effective housing organization. Each of these sections has a number of broad “Statements” or “Standards” that clearly outline these expectations. Each of these standards is further divided into subsection statements that require an organization to evaluate the processes, which support the overall “Standard Statement”.

### Introduction

**Purpose:** The purpose of developing Housing Standards is to integrate ongoing quality improvement in the delivery of social housing. Ongoing quality improvement relies on staff and stakeholders within an organization committed to always looking toward improving and finding better ways of achieving the vision, mission and goals of the organization. Standards also need to be re-evaluated and developed over time to ensure relevance.

Standards must be based on:

- Legislated requirements;
- Good Business Practices and accountability practices;
- Asset Management and sustainability;
- Related to the vision, mission and goals of social housing; and
- Reflect a best practices approach.

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## STANDARD 1

### Governance and Organizational Management

This section covers the organizational framework and the factors that contribute to effective leadership and management of an organization. It also focuses on accountability, not just financial accountability to its source of funding but provides a more holistic accountability to all its stakeholders, which include the residents, staff, community, funding bodies and relevant authorities.

Governance is concerned with the overall direction of the organization – setting policies, adopting budgets and other plans, supervising management and generally to ensure the well being of the organization. Governance is the job of the Board of Directors, which is accountable to the members who elect them.

Key elements for consideration when creating policies and procedures to support good governance include:

- Selection of Board of Directors;
- Training;
- Board composition and competence;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Organization effectiveness;
- Long-term Strategic Planning;
- Regular review and update of bylaws/policies; and
- Enforcement of legislated requirements/compliance.

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### Standard 1.1

Establishing and maintaining governing bodies - there are clear and accepted processes to establish and maintain a “Board of Directors” that have the knowledge, skill and experience to lead the organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
1.1.1 The organization has a documented system for the nomination, selection and election of a Board of Directors, which is clear and transparent.	<p>The system must represent the relevant legal Act that applies to the organization.</p> <p>The following may assist the Board in achieving this standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization By-law #1;</li><li>• Nominations Committee;</li><li>• documented nomination process;</li><li>• Board succession planning; and</li></ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>1.1.2 The organization has processes to endeavour that the Board of Directors is composed of members who have a complementary mix of knowledge, skills and experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear terms of office/maximum terms.</li> </ul> <p>A board functions best when its members have a range of skills that complement each other and might include knowledge of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial and legal;</li> <li>• project design and development;</li> <li>• property/asset management;</li> <li>• organizational management and human resources management; and</li> <li>• tenant/resident advocacy and representation.</li> </ul> <p>The Board may review the skills matrix of the Board annually– to facilitate Board succession planning.</p> <p>The Board should consider the matrix required in its recruitment strategy.</p>
<p>1.1.3 The organization has an effective orientation and training process for new Board members.</p>	<p>It is important for new and returning Board members to have a sound knowledge of the organizational goals, history, and the work of the organization along with an understanding of their role and responsibility as Board members. Board members need to be clear and understand the separation in roles between staff and Board members.</p> <p>Some suggestions as to how Board members can achieve this knowledge are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ONPHA – Board orientation: “Board Basics”;</li> <li>• CHF Canada document: “Getting Governance Right” and “Getting our Co-op Principles Right”;</li> <li>• annual Board refresher;</li> <li>• spending 15 minutes at each meeting reviewing Board responsibilities;</li> <li>• tours and information to ensure Board members are conversant with the organization; and</li> <li>• Board manual developed in-house specific to the organization.</li> </ul>
<p>1.1.4 The Board of Directors identifies training needs and ensures that members of the Board have access to ongoing education or development opportunities relevant to their role as members of the Board of Directors.</p>	<p>Develop a Board training plan based on a self-identification survey of the Board as to its learning needs.</p> <p>Ensure Board Officers training is available and is specific to the duties of the officer (i.e. Treasurer, Secretary, President, etc.).</p>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<p>Committee training related to the specific tasks of the Committee (Finance or Executive Committee may require training regarding understanding financial reporting documents).</p> <p>Develop ways to ensure specific skills are passed on to other members, for example, establish a mentor system between existing and new members, rotate members of committee to help members gain experience, set maximum terms for executive positions.</p>
<p>1.1.5 The Board of Directors has processes in place to ensure good working relationships are developed between Board members and staff. A conflict resolution process has been established and communicated to all parties.</p>	<p>Annual evaluation – how are we doing?</p> <p>Providing opportunities for Board members to work together with staff on committees and work groups.</p>
<p>1.1.6 The Board of Directors evaluates its own performance on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Board evaluation on an annual basis, which might include a review of whether the Board has the appropriate skill/ expertise to fulfill its role.</p> <p>Feedback from management, tenants /members, and other staff about the effectiveness of the leadership and governance provided.</p>

### Standard 1.2

Good governance, roles and responsibilities: There are clear and accepted processes to ensure good governance and management of the organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>1.2.1 The organization has documentation that clearly states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the organization's vision, values, mission and goals;</li> <li>• roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors/Committee terms of reference;</li> <li>• how it conducts its business and makes decisions;</li> <li>• how it manages conflict of interest/confidentiality; and</li> <li>• the requirements for the Annual General Meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>The governing body is responsible for broad issues such as defining the purpose of the organization and setting its directions.</p> <p>The difference between governance and management needs to be understood so that decisions made at a governing body level need to be distinguished from decisions that Managers have been delegated responsibility for making. Appropriate roles and responsibilities for the governing body include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting strategic directions;</li> <li>• monitoring organizational performance;</li> <li>• appointment of key staff (i.e. the CEO or Managing</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 48px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-15deg);">DRAFT</p>	<p>Director and reviewing their performance);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overall policy setting;</li> <li>• financial accountability and risk management; and</li> <li>• legal accountability.</li> </ul> <p>The Board should have written guidelines that clarify the frequency of meetings, the process of meetings, decision-making of the Board, attendance requirement of Board members and the confidentiality of Board work (refer to: Incorporation documents/By-law #1 - Organizational By-law).</p> <p>There should be clear terms of reference for all positions on Board.</p> <p>Clearly articulated policies and Board member requirements with each member upon recruitment (manuals from CHF, ONPHA regarding developing of vision, values, terms of reference, Board job descriptions, etc.).</p> <p>Clear guidelines on how conflicts of interest can help guard against conflicts of interest. Members should declare any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest at each board meeting as per Conflict of Interest Policy.</p>
<p>1.2.2 The Board of Directors meets regularly enough to ensure effective management of the organization. Board minutes reflect the work of the Board and any decisions made.</p>	<p>By-laws outline governance structure, minimum frequency of meetings.</p> <p>A Board calendar may reflect a scheduled review of such items as budget, annual planning, management review to ensure core responsibilities are dealt with.</p> <p>Board agenda reflect a focus on strategic issues rather than day-to-day operations. Priority is given to issues requiring discussions and decisions rather than information sharing.</p>
<p>1.2.3 The Board is provided with timely, accessible and relevant information to inform its decisions.</p>	<p>Management report should provide adequate background information for the Board to make decisions.</p> <p>Board agenda reflects purpose of each agenda item and whether an item is for information, discussion or approval by the Board.</p>

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### Governance and Organizational Management

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>1.2.4 The Board reviews financial reports at Board meetings on a monthly or quarterly basis - actual expenses/income against budgeted expenses/income. Reports are presented in a clear and concise manner for the Board to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• budget approval process follows an open and transparent path that is consistent with all funding agency requirements;</li> <li>• budget development, reports to funding agencies adhere to requirements;</li> <li>• Board reviews financial situation at least quarterly Board meeting as reflected in the Board's minutes; and</li> <li>• the composition of the Board must reflect at least one or more members with financial management knowledge and experience. All Board members need to understand the financial statements (part of Board training).</li> </ul>	<p>Every member of the Board needs to be able to understand the financial report. This may require additional training. There should be at least one person at the Board level with particular expertise in financial management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board information packages outline issues requiring decision;</li> <li>• information provided in advance of Board meetings;</li> <li>• information is well organized and to the point; and</li> <li>• financial implications of any Board report are clearly indicated.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2.5 The Board of Directors has an established process that regularly reviews the delegated management responsibilities of the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• processes are in place to monitor that the management of the organization is implementing the strategic directions set by the Board as planned and as measured against a set of performance targets; and</li> <li>• processes are in place to monitor the performance of staff and officers that have been delegated responsibility for management.</li> </ul>	<p>Boards can only confidently delegate responsibility to management, if they have systems in place to monitor performance of those who are given this responsibility. Organizations without paid staff also need to monitor their delegations to make sure things are being done as planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear policies and reporting mechanisms related to the delegated responsibilities of management or Officers of the Board;</li> <li>• clear Board terms of reference/position descriptions and responsibilities of Committee along with reporting mechanisms to the Board;</li> <li>• organizational work plans; and</li> <li>• clear reporting timelines and templates for reporting, i.e. report on the progress and attainments of the strategic plan, financial reports, service level reports, complaints reports, unit turnover reports, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>1.2.6 The Board reviews its own performance in terms of its effectiveness of its own processes and structure to ensure good governance of the organization. This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the effectiveness of meetings, including attention to: Board member attendance,</li> </ul>	<p>Annual Board evaluation which might include comment and reflection on such issues as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how effectively meetings are conducted;</li> <li>• attendance of individual members at meetings;</li> <li>• timeliness of its response to important issues; and</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>response time to important issues, effectiveness of Board structures (includes Committees) in resolving issues and maintaining financial control, Board orientation and awareness of roles and responsibilities and liabilities as members of a Board, and a defined process to ensure the review of performance occurs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regular Board planning/review that reflects on the progress of the organization; and</li> <li>resident feedback, both formal and informal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>members' awareness of their responsibilities and liabilities in governing the organization.</li> </ul> <p>A short survey of individual Board members and or staff could be done to assist the review. Formal exit interviews could also be done with outgoing Board members.</p>

### Standard 1.3

The organization has demonstrated effective management processes to ensure accountability and delivery of good outcomes for residents.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>1.3.1 Organizational documentation clearly outlines the structure of the organization and defines levels of decision-making, reporting arrangements and delegated authority.</p>	<p>This would include adherence to Board directed instructions and prescribed limitations of authority for specific positions, roles and job functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organizational chart (both administration and governance model);</li> <li>Delegation of Authority Policy;</li> <li>job classification;</li> <li>signing authority; and</li> <li>spending limits.</li> </ul>
<p>1.3.2 The organization has established and followed processes that provide reports to the Board on all key areas of performance.</p>	<p>Organization may use a report card system or other methods that regularly provide updates to the Board. These may include: occupancy rate, vacancy loss, maintenance and capital repair reports, financial results, etc.</p>
<p>1.3.3 Required reporting to funding sources and other regulatory bodies is complete and done on time.</p>	<p>Housing Provider Social Housing Annual Information Return (AIR) or other annual reporting requirement as prescribed with a specific social housing operating agreement.</p> <p>Budgets related to social housing program funding.</p> <p>Human resource reporting, such as Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance Plan, Provincial and Federal</p>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	income taxes, employer pension plans, union affiliations, and Workman Compensation Insurance and other employee medical/dental and disability insurance plans. Corporate reporting requirements.
1.3.4 The organization has developed strategies and processes that keep people informed about its activities.	Such strategies could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monthly newsletters that are widely distributed;</li> <li>• articles in the local press;</li> <li>• having a website that is regularly updated;</li> <li>• wide distribution of the annual report;</li> <li>• Annual General Meeting;</li> <li>• open house days, forums and other meetings; and</li> <li>• two-way communication.</li> </ul>
1.3.5 The organization has established methods to regularly review existing management structures to ensure efficiency and accountability.	For larger organizations this could be done as part of the annual planning process. It would be beneficial to obtain input from an objective external source that has relevant expertise in this area on a periodical basis.  This could be in the form of an external consultant or a sector organization such as Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) or the Cooperative Housing Federation (CHF).  Review Strategic Plan, accountability reports and results of internal/external audit.

#### Standard 1.4

The Board and Management have established processes to determine organizational strategic directions, which will maximize the use of its resources towards achieving identified goals and priorities.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
1.4.1 The organization has a written plan which sets out its priorities for a specific period and which corresponds to the organization's long-term goals. Plans assist in thinking about how to develop services and provide a way of assessing achievements.	Plans assist organizations to think about how to develop services and provide a way of assessing achievements. Planning need not be complex but should contain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statements about long-term goals;</li> <li>• the aims/objectives will be met and by when (strategies and timeframes);</li> <li>• how performance will be measured;</li> <li>• resources needed;</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual responsibilities;</li> <li>• Strategic Plan; and</li> <li>• Business Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Planning could be linked to Annual General Meetings in the case of small organizations. Larger organizations could have dedicated strategic planning sessions that develop and monitor 3-5 years strategic plans.</p>
1.4.2 The organization assesses its ongoing viability and efficiency (financial management, organizational effectiveness, social relevance) and uses this information in developing its plan.	Areas to consider: size, partnerships, collaboration and financial sustainability.
1.4.3 The organization gathers and uses information on community needs and issues that could affect its tenants and target populations to set priorities for its work.	Local priority statistics, demographic information and service level targets.
1.4.4 Information about the organizations own housing management and about the broad sector is used in the planning process.	<p>Data from within the organization can be very useful in informing the planning process along with information from the housing sector.</p> <p>Data could include information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback from tenants;</li> <li>• research and best-practices literature;</li> <li>• vacancies; and</li> <li>• building maintenance and condition.</li> </ul>
1.4.5 The planning process deals with organizational issues as well as goals for services and programs.	<p>Organizational issues might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expanding and applying for funds; and</li> <li>• restructuring the Board/organization.</li> </ul>
1.4.6 The organization identifies the training and development goals of staff, members, governing body as part of its planning process.	Should be related to the organizational needs as well as the individual needs.
1.4.7 The organization has strategies for finding the resources it needs in order to achieve its goals.	This might include developing partnerships, applying for funding opportunities, exploring finance options, or it might consider ways to maximize existing resources such as sharing administration with another agency.
1.4.8 The process of developing the priorities for the plan of the organization as a whole involves input	This could include a planning forum or asking stakeholders for feedback through a survey or other

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
from: staff, tenants, governing body members and other agencies.	means to provide input.
1.4.9 The organization can cite improvements that have been introduced as a result of the planning process.	Improvements might relate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback from tenants;</li> <li>• feedback from other agencies; and</li> <li>• critical reflection among the staff and governing body members.</li> </ul>

### Standard 1.5

There are processes to ensure a regular review and evaluation of the organization and its performance.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
1.5.1 There is documentation that supports the organization's commitment to organizational review and service improvement.	Balanced score card, clearly stated performance objectives.
1.5.2 The organization reviews its progress against its stated plan.	The review should be inclusive of the full range of stakeholders when possible and feasible. The Board should be interested in whether the goals as set out in the plan were achieved.
1.5.3 Information from the review is used to improve service delivery and practices.	For example, a balanced score card will assist not only the Board but the management team in monitoring progress and the effect of changes they have made to improve service.
1.5.4 There is an established process by which the organization reviews all policies and by-laws so they are current and relevant.	This might include a schedule to review all policies over a set period as determined by the Board so that all policies are reviewed periodically as to their relevance.
1.5.5 Review of progress shows where the organization has achieved the majority of its goals.	Where targets and or timeframes have not been achieved it is important to ask why. Was the target realistic to start with? Did unexpected things happen which affected the outcomes?

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## STANDARD 2

### Administrative Systems

This section gives a general framework of the financial, administrative and information systems, which needs to be in place to support effective service delivery, management and accountability.

Elements of administrative systems include:

- Financial systems;
  - Administrative systems;
  - Management information systems;
  - Insurance coverage;
  - Communications system; and
  - A regular review of these systems and resources to ensure they are effective.
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### Standard 2.1

Financial systems: The organization has established reliable financial systems that support effective management and accountability.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>2.1.1 There are systems to guide the organization's financial management, to ensure viability and integrity. This would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• financial management systems;</li><li>• policies regarding the processes required for all financial transactions; and</li><li>• policies and procedures regarding the maintenance, investment, and use of dedicated reserves.</li></ul>	<p>Processes to monitor the year-to-date financial situation, including year-end forecasts.</p> <p>Processes outlining levels of authority and appropriate sign-off procedures.</p> <p>Processes for cash-flow monitoring.</p>
<p>2.1.2 Budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• budgets are established in accordance with Board direction and social housing program/funding formula rules. Budgets should accurately reflect the revenues and expenses associated with the programs that are funded.</li></ul>	<p>Clearly identified timelines for preparation and approval of budgets.</p> <p>Budget includes funding reserves, when possible.</p> <p>Protocols to identify deficits, both in-year and at year-end, e.g. Excel files.</p>
<p>2.1.3 Recording of financial transactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• financial transaction procedures follow acceptable accounting practices and are completed in a timely fashion.</li></ul>	<p>Updated financial records are provided to the Board on a regular basis (frequency will vary depending upon the size and type of the housing provider).</p>

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## STANDARD 2

### Administrative Systems

2.1.4	The organization uses cash-flow projections to ensure ongoing financial viability of the organization.	Processes for cash-flow monitoring, e.g. Excel files.
2.1.5	The organization's audited financial statements meet appropriate accounting standards, funder, and statutory requirements.	Co-op Corporations Act; Business Corporations Act.  Audit Committee (i.e. auditor selection process, timeliness of conducting the audit, reporting to the Board and members). Board receives Management letter and recommendations.
2.1.6	The organization has rent/housing charge collection policies and procedures and guidelines for management of rent arrears and debt.	Systems are in place that encourages timely rent payments, such as late fines and reminders.
2.1.7	The organization has internal controls in place to ensure that funds are managed appropriately.	Procedures to be followed with appropriate oversight: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• systems that minimize cash handling to avoid any incidences of theft or embezzlement;</li> <li>• control of the cheque stock;</li> <li>• financial reports to the Board listing all cheques written for the period;</li> <li>• two signatories to all cheques;</li> <li>• two people to check cash income and bank deposits; and</li> <li>• rent-receipting procedures should ensure only official receipts are issued.</li> </ul>
2.1.8	The organization has sound financial management practices that ensure its ongoing financial viability.	Asset management plans.  Adequate funds set aside to meet liabilities.  Investment strategy.

### Standard 2.2

Administrative systems: The organization has administrative systems that support effective management and accountability.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
2.2.1 The organization maintains resident files that contain appropriate and adequate information to assist good residency management.	Household file contents should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant application details;</li> <li>• lease/occupancy agreement; and</li> <li>• all administrative, financial and legal correspondence pertaining to the household.</li> </ul>

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## STANDARD 2

### Administrative Systems

2.2.2	The privacy of all tenant information is protected.	All resident documentation that is collected, maintained, stored and shared must be in adherence with all current protection of privacy legislation, e.g. the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).
2.2.3	The filing systems of the organization are efficient, ensuring timely appropriate access to documentation.	Appropriate security protocols and measures are in place for both the access to and storage of documentation.
2.2.4	The organization has a comprehensive records management system.	Procedures are in place for ensuring the secure retention of and the proper disposal of corporate records, e.g. identify appropriate legislation affecting retention and disposal.

### Standard 2.3

Management information systems: Information about the organization's activities, applicants, residents and staff (where applicable) is used to support management of the organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example	
2.3.1	<p>The organization has efficient methods for collating and analyzing the information collected so it can be used in reporting and monitoring. Analysis and summaries of the data inform management decisions.</p>	<p>Data needs to be collected regularly and in the most efficient (and simple) way.</p> <p>Information is used to prepare annual report to the funder.</p>
2.3.2	<p>Residency and management databases are adequate and well maintained.</p>	<p>Appropriate security and access protocols are in place.</p> <p>Files are systematically backed-up on a regular basis.</p> <p>Security measures are in place to ensure confidentiality of information within the system.</p> <p>Virus protection.</p>

### Standard 2.4

Insurance System: The organization has adequate and up-to-date insurance.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples	
2.4.1	<p>The organization has adequate and up-to-date insurance, which covers all assets and potential liabilities such as housing stock, public liability, workers compensation and professional indemnity.</p>	<p>Adequate levels of coverage for all types of insurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sector standards and/or limits met (e.g. Cooperatives or SHSC requirements);</li> <li>• replacement cost on assets;</li> <li>• liability;</li> <li>• Workers Compensation;</li> </ul>

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## STANDARD 2

### Administrative Systems

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directors; and</li><li>• errors and omissions.</li></ul> <p>Regular visits by insurer.</p> <p>Regular reviews of coverage including limits and deductibles.</p> <p>Appropriate insurance and claims management.</p>

### Standard 2.5

Communications System: The organization has an effective communications system.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
2.5.1 There is an updated communications plan outlining how and when information and decisions are to be communicated, both internally and externally.	Regular newsletters.
2.5.2 The organization has established effective communication systems that ensure the correct people receive all mail including electronic mail in a timely manner.	

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## STANDARD 3

### Asset Management

Health and Life-Safety can be affected by decisions made during asset management, repairs, restoration and replacement of assets can be done in a variety of ways to reflect priorities including quality, aesthetics and cost effectiveness. We are obliged, both legally and morally, to include Health and Life-Safety as an overriding consideration in the guidelines and processes of asset management.

Standard 3 covers the various approaches the organization may apply to preserve the housing stock.

Key asset management elements to consider:

- Part 3.1 - Responsive Maintenance and Repairs including:
  - Quality and cost of repairs and maintenance standards; and
  - Response time standards to work order priorities.
- Part 3.2 - Planned Maintenance and Repairs including:
  - Routine and preventative maintenance;
  - Regulatory maintenance; and
  - Seasonal maintenance.
- Part 3.3 - Capital Asset Planning and Implementation including:
  - Planned asset condition assessments – yearly assessment;
  - Reserve Fund analysis and asset replacement priority; and
  - Implementation plan for repairs, restoration or replacement.

### Standard 3.1 – Responsive Maintenance and Repairs

The organization attends to maintenance and repair of its assets as the need arises.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>3.1.1 The organization has a documented system for responsive maintenance and repairs that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provides appropriate service in a timely manner;</li><li>• is applied efficiently and equitably;</li><li>• ensures all performance and repair activity is documented; and</li><li>• ensures repair practices, installation methodologies, and material standards are consistently and safely applied.</li></ul>	<p>A maintenance and repairs system might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• clear documented and published criteria for work prioritization, e.g. priority listing – life-risk, emergency, routine, special project, etc.;</li><li>• published criteria for completion timelines, e.g. list of expected work durations for specific and/or routine tasks;</li><li>• published work order process, e.g. assessment of work requests, approvals process for initiating work orders, implementing work orders, intake and recording of completed work orders;</li><li>• work order tracking system, e.g. software that logs</li></ul>

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## STANDARD 3

### Asset Management

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<p>repairs by unit and asset, nature of problem, solution to problem, cost of repair, materials used and any associated billing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• procurement process, e.g. software that tracks inventory, purchase orders, receivables, pricing and stock depletion. Routinely evaluate suppliers for cost, quality and dependability (seek out wholesale suppliers);</li> <li>• scopes of work, e.g. description and extent of work are defined, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o procedure for specific work is defined;</li> <li>o materials for specific work are defined; and</li> <li>o expected timeline for specific work is defined.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• training, e.g. courses could include: Health and Safety, WHMIS, Damage Assessment, Repairs Practices, Installation Methods, Material Standards, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>3.1.2 The organization has a budgeting process that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequately addresses the needs of responsive maintenance and repairs;</li> <li>• is distributed fairly across individual units and properties; and</li> <li>• is accountable.</li> </ul>	<p>A budgeting process might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• criteria for how budgets will be established:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o examine historical documents for trends and predictable data;</li> <li>o review outstanding work requests and work orders;</li> <li>o interview staff regarding known or suspected items;</li> <li>o contact suppliers regarding any anticipated cost increases or decreases; and</li> <li>o allow for contingencies (inflation, labour rates, substitutions).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• guidelines for budget management, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o expenditures prioritization;</li> <li>o expenditures authorization;</li> <li>o use of software that tracks accumulated expenses, revenues and balance sheets, and</li> <li>o strategic adjustment of expenditures to meet the budget.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.1.3 The organization has established strategies for working with residents that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote community pride and foster a sense of resident ownership; and</li> <li>• encourages respect for the property.</li> </ul>	<p>Strategies might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tenant education and recognition, e.g. changing furnace filters, cleaning HRV filters, reporting damage before it gets worse, causes of and strategies to avoid mould, energy conservation etc.</li> <li>• Set a standard for living that promotes constructive</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<p>responses, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o completion of good quality repairs to both common areas and units;</li> <li>o encourage resident participation in design or materials selection processes, where applicable; and</li> <li>o provision of good quality tools for resident participation in landscaping and/or cleanup.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seek resident feedback, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o to suggest ways of encouraging participation and community involvement;</li> <li>o to discourage vandalism; and</li> <li>o to improve common area assets that promotes positive social responses (inclusion of a picnic table, swings, horseshoe pit, etc.).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.1.4 The organization selects and works with contractors and vendors to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality, cost and standards are met.;</li> <li>• contractors and vendors understand expectations and are accountable for deficiencies;</li> <li>• respect is shown for the resident's right to the quiet enjoyment of their home;</li> <li>• all work complies with building codes and all applicable health and safety legislation;</li> <li>• compensation for good and timely work and/or materials is accurate and efficient;</li> <li>• purchasing policy in place and adhered to; and</li> <li>• contractor is certified for applicable work (boiler, electrical, mould, plumbing, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p>Assistance in selection and working with contractors/ vendors might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pre-qualification process;</li> <li>• use of standing offer agreements, e.g. for repetitive and routine work;</li> <li>• a company profile documenting the types of services/materials offered, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o (contractor) description of company: type, scope and scale of work experience, professional qualifications, description of processes and materials used, list of recently completed projects, proof of performance statements, statement of insurance; membership in any professional organizations; and</li> <li>o (vendor) description of company: products and suppliers listing, delivery timetable, proof of performance statements, statement of insurance, membership in any professional organizations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• a tender process, e.g. a request for bids is sent to pre-qualified contractors or vendors (may be based on above profiles or references). Included is a scope of work and a form of bid along with any terms and conditions and safety requirements the organization might have and a request for references, responses to bids are evaluated for comprehension of scope of work, timelines and process as well as reference checks and dollar</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<p>value of the bid;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• getting help, e.g.:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o an engineering firm can determine the scope of a project and recommend solutions for large-scale projects; and</li><li>o a Project Manager can manage a project from initiation through to closure while best meeting client and contractor/vendor expectations in an efficient manner.</li></ul></li><li>• communication skills, e.g.:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o contractor/vendor understands and complies with established protocols for communicating with staff and residents (especially where disputes may arise);</li><li>o contractors/vendors and their employees are courteous to staff and residents; and</li><li>o foul language will not be tolerated.</li></ul></li><li>• conflict of Interest, e.g. your organization has a clear description of what defines “conflict of interest” and a policy statement regarding the management of any such circumstances;</li><li>• contracts and agreements:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o contractors/vendors must be willing to agree to the requirements of the organization, in writing, prior to commencement of any work. It is vital that the organization maintain control by having contractors/vendors sign the organizations agreement <u>not</u> the other way around. A good contract or agreement serves many useful functions, e.g.:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provides a tool to monitor and evaluate the work;</li><li>• clearly defines expectations and deliverables and helps to improve performance;</li><li>• provides necessary documentation and verification when problems or disputes occur (either cost overages or incomplete/unsatisfactory work);</li><li>• has a clear statement of expectations for corrective measures and who will assume costs;</li><li>• includes a position on the use of subcontractors and the contractor/vendors obligation to manage and compensate any</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 48px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-15deg);">DRAFT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>subcontractors;</li> <li>• has a clear definition of “when a job is complete” (usually after final inspection and all deficiencies have been attended to); and</li> <li>• has a clear statement for consequences of being in default of the agreement or contract.</li> <li>• in-process monitoring; e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o inspect to ensure compliance with scope of work;</li> <li>o feedback to contractor/vendor on reliability and timeliness;</li> <li>o feedback from residents (communication, safety, impact on normal activity, etc.);</li> <li>o feedback to contractor/vendor on communication skills;</li> <li>o feedback to contractor/vendor infractions of safety requirements; and</li> <li>o feedback to contractor/vendor infractions of behaviour or language.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• post-work evaluation, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o inspection for deficiencies, poor work or sub-standard materials, using the scope of work as a guide;</li> <li>o inspection for completion of deficiencies, repairs or replacement of sub-standard materials; and</li> <li>o written evaluation provided, in a formal setting, to contractors/vendors who have not performed well, providing clear feedback on expectations to improve performance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.1.5 The organization measures its performance in the area of repairs and maintenance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain a reasonable level of resident satisfaction; and</li> <li>• determine process effectiveness and efficiency.</li> </ul>	<p>Useful approaches to measuring performance might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• resident feedback, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o complaints are investigated and problems noted and addressed;</li> <li>o positive feedback is noted and passed on to staff or contractors; and</li> <li>o assess expectations (refer to appropriate policies and standards to determine likelihood of realistic expectations).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• staff feedback, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o seek solutions for recurring problems;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o seek recommendations for preventative maintenance; and</li> <li>o seek input for predicted problems and effective solutions.</li> <li>• review work requests, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o multiple requests for the same work in the same unit negatively impacts administration and processing;</li> <li>o deal with unrealistic requests to reduce or eliminate repeats; and</li> <li>o look for repeats that may indicate recurring repairs due to resident mis-use (plugged toilet, broken window hardware, cabinet hardware, doors and drawers, closet hardware, etc.).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• review software log, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o look for multiples in failing assets by category or sub-category;</li> <li>o look for excessive logs by unit; and</li> <li>o look for seasonally related logs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• establish corporate goals, measure and report performance to Board/review outcomes with staff, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o work-order completion, time to complete, meeting priority targets (urgent, routine, seasonal, etc.);</li> <li>o adherence to budgets;</li> <li>o reduction in complaints; and</li> <li>o reduced call-backs, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Standard 3.2 – Planned Maintenance and Repairs

The organization plans for the maintenance and repair of its assets in order to ensure the quality and value of the housing is maintained.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>3.2.1 The organization ensures that regular maintenance of all properties is scheduled and performed on time to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet applicable health and safety legislation;</li> <li>• allow remedial work to be completed before a problem becomes significant;</li> <li>• reduce impact of repairs on the resident; and</li> </ul>	<p>Planned maintenance might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attending to life-safety equipment, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o replace all smoke detectors every ten years. Yearly inspection and verification of smoke detectors;</li> <li>o hydrostatic tests of fire extinguishers per manufacturer's recommendations; and</li> <li>o testing and verification of fire alarm systems (fire alarm panel, sprinklers, etc.).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure efficient use of resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>replacement or repair of vital unit components, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repair or replacement of exhaust fans; and</li> <li>repair or replacement of weather-stripping.</li> </ul> </li> <li>grouping of tasks for the efficient use of resources and reduction of unit visits, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inspection for mould and grout and caulking deterioration while repairing unit exhaust systems;</li> <li>replacement of broken window hardware while replacing or repairing weather-stripping; and</li> <li>schedule work orders by unit, by building, by discipline, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.2.2 The organization selects and works with contractors and vendors as indicated in Section 3.1.4.</p> <p>The organization uses certified technicians to carry out all regulatory maintenance.</p>	<p>Assistance in selection and working with contractors/ vendors is covered in Section 3.1.4 Toolbox &amp; Examples.</p> <p>Certified Technicians for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specialty repairs or replacement, e.g. elevators, furnaces, electrical panels, etc.;</li> <li>repairs involving compliance with applicable building codes and regulations, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>installation of new plumbing or electrical;</li> <li>replacement of structural components; and</li> <li>service contracts for regulatory maintenance work.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.2.3 The organization has a documented maintenance checklist that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is used to schedule maintenance work by the season;</li> <li>is used to schedule planned work by priority; and</li> <li>is used to guide staff and contractors during emergency situations.</li> </ul>	<p>Checklists might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spring checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>landscaping, grounds clean-up and sign repair; and</li> <li>landscaping tools are serviced and in good order.</li> </ul> </li> <li>summer checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wash windows and buildings and paint the building exterior; and</li> <li>restore failing caulking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>fall checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>test all smoke detectors;</li> <li>replacing furnace filters;</li> <li>turn off outside water hose-bibs; and</li> <li>clean drains and eavestroughs of leaves.</li> </ul> </li> <li>winter checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fire hydrant winter flags installed; and</li> <li>roadways, parking and dumping areas prepared for snow removal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>priority checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>urgent items (like repair of serious winter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<p>damage scheduled first thing in spring), routine items (to be scheduled for a specific time), special projects (non-mandatory items to be completed at a specific time).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emergency checklist, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o location of shut-off valves, electrical service, gas mains, clean-outs, etc.; and</li> <li>o emergency contact list.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.2.4 The organization has a program for regularly inspecting properties that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contributes to a safe living environment;</li> <li>• identifies problems not reported by residents;</li> <li>• prevents unnecessary damage to assets;</li> <li>• contributes update data for Building Condition Assessment and Reserve Fund Forecast; and</li> <li>• identifies workload for unit turnovers.</li> </ul>	<p>Inspections might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual inspections of capital assets for each unit and property, e.g. each asset is assessed for current age, predicted life remaining and cost to replace;</li> <li>• contracted preventative maintenance, e.g. mechanical systems, venting systems, elevators, furnaces, generators, emergency back-up systems, etc.</li> <li>• seasonal inspections, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o pre-winter water shut-off to hose-bibs; and</li> <li>o post winter damage inspection.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• routine inspections, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o fire safety inspections (smoke detector, fire extinguisher, clutter around furnaces, blocking of exits, etc.);</li> <li>o ventilation inspections (exhaust fans, signs of condensation, mould, window operation, etc.); and</li> <li>o standard preventative maintenance (caulking, grout, plumbing leaks, etc.).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• in-process work inspections, e.g. contractor work to ensure proper repairs/value for money;</li> <li>• unit turnover inspections, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o pre-move-out inspection that generates a work list for residents and staff and reflect associated time and costs (<i>project management software is very useful</i>);</li> <li>o post-move-out inspection (have all belongings been removed? Has all work assigned to resident been done? Are there any new problems)?</li> <li>o move-in inspection with tenant, e.g. identify status of unit and assets (note any concerns new resident may have).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<p>3.2.5 The organization has a plan for unit turnovers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lists all work to be done;</li> <li>• provides reports to stakeholders on workload, time and costs; and</li> <li>• schedules work efficiently</li> </ul>	<p>A good plan for turnovers might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workload listing, e.g. tasks from move out inspection are listed sequentially according to priorities and resource availability;</li> <li>• duration for tasks, e.g. durations in minutes, hours or days are attributed to each task;</li> <li>• assigning resources, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o materials for each task are identified and costs allocated; and</li> <li>o workers are assigned. Labour rates should be included if charge-backs are a possibility.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• timeline management, e.g. workers' schedules are managed and strategically adjusted to meet deadlines;</li> <li>• reporting, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o workload for resident prior to move out is identified;</li> <li>o workload and schedule for staff is generated;</li> <li>o workload, schedule and costs are identified for contractors;</li> <li>o project total cost by tasks and resources are available; and</li> <li>o charge-backs to resident are listed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### Standard 3.3 – Capital Asset Planning and Implementation

The organization lists all capital assets. Planning and implementation of capital asset repairs, restoration or replacement is done by budget, over time and by priority.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>3.3.1 The organization ensures Building Condition Assessments (BCA's) are available and relevant by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• having an initial BCA done if not done previously;</li> <li>• ensuring the capital assets listing is complete;</li> <li>• updating asset evaluations regularly; and</li> <li>• validating actual capital work and reserve requirements against BCA regularly to ensure viability of the assets.</li> </ul>	<p>BCA development might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initial BCA, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o a qualified consulting firm is hired to do an initial comprehensive inspection of capital assets and produces a BCA including a listing of all capital assets, current conditions of assets, predictions of replacement schedules and costs; and</li> <li>o qualified staff produces an initial BCA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• inclusion of new assets, e.g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o new asset is added to BCA asset listing including cost, expected life span, warranty information, depreciation factors, etc.; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o asset previously not assessed as a capital item is added to the asset list including current condition, expected remaining life, cost to replace, etc.</li> <li>• evaluation updates, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o contractor or consultant is brought in to re-evaluate capital asset repair or replacement data (usually to increase accuracy of predictions and help develop a scope of work);</li> <li>o staff evaluation is done regularly to determine rate of deterioration (results in greater accuracy in life-span predictions); and</li> <li>o identification of components not achieving their predicted life-cycle expectancy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>3.3.2 The organization has established a Capital Replacement Reserve Fund (RRF) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides financial resources for the repair or replacement of capital assets as required;</li> <li>• earns interest on unused portions of funds; and</li> <li>• complies with applicable legislation.</li> </ul>	<p>Reserve funds can be managed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reserve fund forecast, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o a spreadsheet is created that lists capital assets, reflects replacement cost over time and calculates yearly expenditures, annual contributions, reserve fund balance, interest earned on balance, predictable inflation rates, etc.; and</li> <li>o provides information that allows the organization to establish an annual capital work plan.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• capital expenditures on demand, e.g. spending is controlled by urgent need and reflected in the reserve fund balance (this may impact major impending costs like re-roofing, furnace replacement or resurfacing road-work, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p>3.3.3 The organization establishes a yearly capital work plan that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifies capital work to be done;</li> <li>• prioritizes work to be done;</li> <li>• identifies exact costs for the year's capital expenditures;</li> <li>• schedules processes and work for each capital item;</li> <li>• includes implementation of the plan; and</li> <li>• regards impact on future needs.</li> </ul>	<p>A yearly capital work plan may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generating a work list, e.g. a work/replacement list is developed by priority (<i>use reserve fund forecast and building (asset) condition assessments as a guide</i>);</li> <li>• generating a schedule, e.g. a work schedule is published which includes all processes and preparation times;</li> <li>• plan implementation, e.g. work or replacement is carried out as per schedule and scope of work;</li> <li>• record of work, e.g. a record of actual work and materials is kept for reference;</li> <li>• updates               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the Building Condition Assessment is updated with factual data for work and/or replacement;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the Reserve Fund Forecast is updated with factual numbers for work and/or replacement; and</li> <li>• review, e.g. the Reserve Fund Forecast is reviewed after actual costs and dates have been inserted (<i>consider impact on future spending and priorities</i>); and</li> <li>• lessons learned, e.g. may include interviewing staff or contractors to consider any possibilities for improvement on work or materials for future reference.</li> </ul>
<p>3.3.4 The organization ensures that it protects its interests when major capital expenditures are required by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring the expenditure is necessary;</li> <li>• following established processes that maintains control of project activity, accountability and costs; and</li> <li>• selecting and working with contractors and vendors as indicated in Section 3.1.4.</li> </ul>	<p>An organization might protect its interests by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inspection, e.g. item is inspected by a qualified individual and evaluated for repair or replacement;</li> <li>• cost/benefit analysis, e.g. determine best value solution (<i>cheapest isn't always best</i>);</li> <li>• source vendor (<i>product only such as appliances</i>), e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o select from pre-qualified list of vendors for price and quality; and</li> <li>o call for bids to multiple vendors, a list of products required by specification (<i>look for best price, availability, quality and warranty</i>).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• source contractor, e.g. see 3.1.4. selection of contractors.</li> </ul>
<p>3.3.5 The organization provides for the security of its capital assets by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• controlling access to units; and</li> <li>• restricting access to capital equipment.</li> </ul>	<p>An organization might secure its assets by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• control of locks and keys, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o locks are changed after all contract work on turnover is complete;</li> <li>o master keys for each unit are kept in the office for emergency entrance; and</li> <li>o locks are changed in units after eviction to prevent loss or damage to capital assets.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• control of restricted equipment, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o only people trained on specific equipment have access, such as snow blower or riding lawnmower;</li> <li>o equipment intended for professional use is not accessible to residents; and</li> <li>o equipment that could involve safety or liability issues is restricted from unauthorized access.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 4

### Human Resource Management

This section covers the best practices of managing people within an organization, appropriate recruitment methods, supervision, training and development for those organizations that employ staff and contracted management personnel. It also covers staff, residents' and volunteers' safety and health in the work place. Risk assessment is a recommended process that is used to identify potential hazards to the safety of staff, residents and other visitors.

Issues discussed include:

- Recruiting and appointing skilled, experienced and committed staff and contracted management personnel;
- Supervision of staff and contracted management personnel;
- Training, and development of staff;
- Employment systems;
- Occupational health and safety standards; and
- Recruiting/supervision/training etc. of volunteers (if applicable).

#### Standard 4.1

Recruiting and appointing skilled, experienced and committed staff: The organization appoints staff who have the skills and experience needed for their work and for their ability to contribute to the overall strength of the organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.1.1 The organization has a documented process for recruiting, selecting and appointing all staff and is consistent with the Human Rights Code and any other relevant legislation.	Documentation covering processes for recruitment, selection and appointment should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• job descriptions and selection criteria;</li><li>• who is involved in the selection process;</li><li>• how selection decisions are documented;</li><li>• appointment documentation;</li><li>• how unsuccessful applicants will be informed; and</li><li>• how the position is advertised.</li></ul>
4.1.2 The organization has a documented process for contracting management personnel.	Documentation covering processes for recruitment, selection and appointment should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• job descriptions and selection criteria;</li><li>• who is involved in the selection process;</li><li>• how selection decisions are documented;</li><li>• appointment documentation;</li><li>• how unsuccessful applicants will be informed; and</li><li>• how the position is advertised.</li></ul>

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### Human Resource Management

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.1.3 The organization has clear processes for assessing and reviewing the need for positions or contracted management prior to recruitment.	
4.1.4 The organization selects staff and contracted management personnel through a transparent and fair process.	<p>Issues that could be considered to ensure transparency and fairness include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the position is advertised and what information is provided to applicants;</li> <li>• the selection process itself (how interviews are conducted and assessed against selection criteria, who will participate in the review and selection and what role they will play in the process, how references are to be checked);</li> <li>• how the appointment decision is to be made;</li> <li>• how feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants will be provided; and</li> <li>• how applicant confidentiality will be maintained and the final decision communicated.</li> </ul>
4.1.5 The organization offers a salary and set of benefits which is competitive within the social housing sector	Compare to industry standards (e.g. CHASEO, ONPHA salary survey).

### Standard 4.2

Supervision, training and development of staff: Staff is provided with appropriate supervision, training and development that enhances their skills, motivation and effectiveness and assists them to further the organization's goals.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.2.1 The organization has a documented system for the supervision, performance review and development and training of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy relating to employment practices might be a single, simple document or might include a range of inter-related documents if the organization employs a large number of staff; e.g. employment contract or personnel policy;</li> <li>• all staff has access to relevant training and professional development opportunities;</li> <li>• all staff has access to regular and effective supervision of their work; and</li> <li>• the organization has a process to complete annual performance reviews for all staff.</li> </ul>
4.2.2 The organization has a documented system for the supervision and performance review of contracted personnel.	Systematic review of the contract.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 4

### Human Resource Management

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.2.3 Staff receive appropriate orientation to the organization, the position and to the social housing environment when starting work.	Review of formal documentation (e.g. financial statements, annual information review, by-laws, relevant legislation); operations manual.
4.2.4 The organization can respond to staff turnover in a timely and effective manner.	The organization has an updated succession plan.
4.2.5 Protocols are in place to support and ensure confidentiality when dealing with human resource and staff related matters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confidentiality agreements;</li> <li>• restricted access to HR records; and</li> <li>• staff liaison.</li> </ul>

### Standard 4.3

Employment systems: The organization has fair and effective processes to support its employment role.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.3.1 The organization has documentation covering the employment conditions of staff.	Documented within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment contract or personnel policy; and</li> <li>• management contract.</li> </ul>
4.3.2 Personnel records are kept up to date and confidential for each staff member.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personnel files;</li> <li>• pay records;</li> <li>• leave entitlement and used;</li> <li>• benefits;</li> <li>• disciplinary actions or rewards; and</li> <li>• performance reviews.</li> </ul>
4.3.3 The organization has effective systems for managing employment issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grievance procedures up to and including dismissal are detailed in the employment and management contracts.</li> </ul>
4.3.4 Staff is satisfied that the employment practices of the organization reflect the terms of their employment and are in line with legislation.	Relevant legislation; i.e. current labour laws, Employment Standards Act.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 4

### Human Resource Management

#### Standard 4.4

Occupational health and safety standards: Staff and volunteers work in a safe and healthy environment. The organization regularly reviews its compliance with current legislation and success at providing a safe and healthy work environment for staff and volunteers.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.4.1 The organization has processes in place that ensure occupational health and safety of staff, volunteers.	<p>The organization's processes for occupational health and safety should be consistent with current legislation, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fire equipment and exit plans;</li> <li>• floor coverings that minimize chances of accidents;</li> <li>• adequate lighting and ventilation; and</li> <li>• an identified staff person to monitor and address health and safety issues.</li> </ul> <p>Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.</p> <p>The organization has an up-to-date risk management plan.</p>
4.4.2 The organization regularly reviews its compliance with current legislation.	Sector alerts, checklist and training..
4.4.3 Staff is trained in addressing work hazards, where hazards have been identified.	Training plan, i.e. WHIMIS, sector workshops.
4.4.4 The organization regularly reviews its success in providing a safe and healthy work environment for staff and volunteers.	Claims history (health and insurance) and safety audits.

#### Standard 4.5

Recruiting/supervision/training, etc. of volunteers (if applicable): Volunteers are supported to do their jobs well and effectively.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.5.1 The organization has a documented system to guide and record the use of volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a rationale for the use of volunteers and the type of work they will do;</li> <li>• how they will be recruited and screened;</li> <li>• code of ethics/guide for how the volunteers will work (including how resident confidentiality will be maintained);</li> <li>• orientation and ongoing training;</li> <li>• how supervision will occur;</li> <li>• what expenses will be reimbursed; and</li> <li>• records for each volunteer identifying the amount and type of work they have undertaken.</li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

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## STANDARD 4

### Human Resource Management

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box and Examples
4.5.2 The organization has effective approaches to recruit, support, train and supervise volunteers.	Similar to staff and contract workers.
4.5.3 The organization provides volunteers with opportunities to give and receive feedback on their work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• providing a written reference;</li><li>• opportunities for public recognition;</li><li>• providing occasional social events; and</li><li>• recognition within the organization's annual report.</li></ul>

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# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

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## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

This section covers the processes followed by housing providers while selecting residents, the strategies for establishing, maintaining and terminating residencies and the internal review/appeals process when housing decisions are disputed by applicants and existing residents. This standard also focuses on what housing providers need to do in order to adapt to the changing needs of residents and how residencies are terminated.

Issues discussed are:

- Resident selection process;
- Establishing and maintaining residency;
- Adapting to the changing needs of residents;
- Terminating residency; and
- Appeals process.

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#### Standard 5.1

Resident selection process is fair and reasonable: Selection for RGI units occurs either through the “Centralized Wait List” for social housing (CWL) for SHRA mandated housing providers or internally (in-house) with each provider for all other housing programs. Selection for all market units occurs internally (in-house) for all housing providers.

For those housing providers required to use the CWL for resident selection of RGI units, the housing provider selects residents based on a legislated placement criteria. This criterion includes provincially mandated priority placements, local priority placements, followed by chronological placements, all in adherence with local occupancy standards. For housing providers not required to use CWL, RGI unit selection of residents is based on a placement criteria as specified within individual social housing operating agreements. In many cases this criteria is limited to targeted household income ranges. For both RGI and market units, all housing providers select residents openly and fairly, consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the housing provider.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
5.1.1 Centralized Wait List Process: For SHRA housing providers, the provider allocates housing in compliance with the SHRA and Service Manager directives from the CWL for RGI units, ensuring transparency and consistency.	A housing provider that uses the CWL for unit allocation has systems in place that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• processes for regular updates from the CWL for subsidiary lists of applicants for each housing priority category and bedroom number, which could include on-line access to information;</li><li>• a selection process from the CWL consistent with legislation and Service Manager directives;</li></ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a unit offer process that meets the requirements of the priority categories and housing occupancy standards; and</li> <li>• processes to notify the CWL when housing offers are accepted or declined, with use of up-to-date forms and on-line tools.</li> </ul>
<p>5.1.2 Eligibility Criteria: Eligibility criteria for RGI units must comply with the SHRA and associated regulations, Service Manager Directives, Human Rights Code, and RGI subsidy guidelines.</p>	<p>Refer to SHRA regulations and Service Manager directives.</p> <p>The housing provider should not discriminate unlawfully against people on the grounds of gender, race, age, marital status, disability or sexual preference.</p>
<p>5.1.3 Housing Selection and Placement and Process: The housing provider has a process that addresses all elements of housing selection and placement in compliance with legislation and Service Manager Directives. This process should address: eligibility verification, unit offer, refusal of offer, and communication with the CWL. Supporting documentation should be in place.</p>	<p>Eligibility verification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the verification process should ensure that household composition and income information is collected so that the appropriate bedroom count/allocation and RGI rent determination can be made;</li> <li>• the verification process should ensure that the household does not have current arrears with a social housing provider. Current arrears would exist when either the arrear has not been previously paid in full or a when a repayment agreement is not in place with the provider or the repayment agreement is not being adhered to by the applicant/household;</li> <li>• the verification process may include a formal financial credit check with an established credit bureau; and</li> <li>• the verification process should ensure that households requesting special needs units have submitted documentation supporting the need for accommodation with the physical modifications or support services associated with the special needs unit being offered.</li> </ul> <p>Unit offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the selection process should ensure that households are offered a unit with the correct number of bedrooms for the size of their household, consistent with provincial and local occupancy standards);</li> <li>• the selection process should ensure that households are offered a unit with the correct RGI rent determination, for the income of the household,</li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<p>consistent with current regulations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the selection process should ensure that households are offered a special needs unit in accordance with the households documented and verified special needs;</li> <li>• the housing provider should regularly monitor offers to ensure that they are made as quickly and efficiently as possible, while adhering to legislation and Service Manager local priority placement criteria; and</li> <li>• the housing provider should have a process for properly notifying applicants of an offer, giving adequate opportunity to make an informed choice about whether to accept it.</li> </ul> <p>Refusal to offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the refusal of an offer must be in adherence with legislation and Service Manager local policies. For Co-operatives refusal of an offer could include the applicant's unwillingness and capacity to participate in member activities of the co-operative"; and</li> <li>• the housing provider should have a process for properly notifying applicants of a refusal of offer, which includes written notification that clearly documents the reason for refusal of offer and providing notification of the right to request an internal review (appeal) of the decision, where appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>Communication with the CWL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the housing provider should regularly communicate with the CWL providing the status of RGI unit offers, utilizing up-to-date forms and on-line tools;</li> <li>• the housing provider should have a process to notify applicants/household of the right to an internal review for certain RGI decisions made by the housing provider (refer to Housing Standard 5.6.).</li> </ul>
<p>5.1.4 Internal Reviews/Appeal of Decisions: The housing provider has an internal review/appeal of decision process that meets the requirements of the SHRA and Service Manager directives.</p>	

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

#### Standard 5.2

Establishing and maintaining residency: The housing provider is resident focused and works to establish and maintain successful residencies.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p><b>Documentation that can support good practice</b></p> <p>5.2.1 Administrative processes: The housing provider should have documentation outlining administrative policy and procedures related to RGI administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility;</li> <li>• offers and refusal to offer;</li> <li>• RGI rent calculations;</li> <li>• annual reviews;</li> <li>• internal reviews; and</li> <li>• internal transfers.</li> </ul>	<p>Policies and procedures should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• who makes decisions;</li> <li>• how information used to make a decision is recorded;</li> <li>• how the decisions are made;</li> <li>• how and when decisions are communicated to applicants and residents;</li> <li>• how and when information is communicated with the CWL for RGI applicants and residents (offers, housed, arrears); and</li> <li>• how internal reviews will be handled.</li> </ul> <p>Sector organizations may be able to provide tools and/or assistance to the housing provider in establishing and maintaining policies and procedures.</p>
<p>5.2.2 The housing provider has processes that provide clear, useful information to ensure that households understand their rights and responsibilities as residents.</p>	<p>The housing provider has a process to ensure that the household is shown all of the major clauses in the lease/occupancy agreement, which may include RGI reporting requirements and processes.</p> <p>These may include expectations related to: the RTA, the SHRA, Co-op Act, disclosure of information related to arrears and relevant housing provider procedures. Housing providers should include either a clause within the lease/occupancy agreement or a letter of consent signed by the household to disclose information where relevant and appropriate.</p>
<p>5.2.3 The housing provider ensures that unit condition assessments are completed on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Written unit condition assessments should be done at both move-in and move-out, and on an annual basis where possible. Providers should have procedures in place to address unfavourable inspections.</p>
<p>5.2.4 The housing provider uses a rent payment system designed to maximize the ability of households to keep up-to-date with their payments and maintain successful residencies.</p>	<p>This would include a property management system with associated protocols to ensure efficient input and back-up of rental payment, charges and adjustments in a timely manner. A standardized household notification process should support the ongoing rent administration.</p>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<p>It is beneficial to provide residents alternatives to pay their rent to support regularized payment on or by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. These may include pre-authorized payment/direct debit from the tenant's bank account, pay direct from Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), payment at the office, post-dated cheques or other payment arrangements. Cash payment should be discouraged.</p> <p>Strategies for reducing rent arrears could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rent payment reminder notices to households for late payers;</li> <li>• meetings with households who have ongoing problems paying rent on time to discuss and develop a plan to facilitate more timely rent payment;</li> <li>• regular reminders within resident news bulletins/community updates to outline rent payment options; and</li> <li>• providing residents with information about various social funding programs and community resources.</li> </ul> <p>When the resident goes into arrears, prompt identification of the problem can prevent the debt from becoming unmanageable, and can prevent the loss of RGI subsidy for the RGI households.</p>
<p>5.2.5 The housing provider regularly reviews current legislation to ensure that the notification timelines and rent changes are in compliance. Based on the applicable legislation (market vs. RGI unit) the housing provider clearly communicates processes and timelines to residents.</p>	<p>Issues communicated include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RGI households should be provided with a simple explanation of how the rent is calculated, what documents are required and when they are required. Households must complete an annual review, and submit any in-year changes to the provider when they occur; and</li> <li>• market unit households must be provided with a rent increase notice within appropriate timelines.</li> </ul>
<p>5.2.6 <b>Complaint Management:</b> The housing provider has processes in place to deal with tenant complaints and have regard for protection of individuals involved.</p>	<p>The process for complaint management might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• determining whether the housing provider has a responsibility for addressing the matter;</li> <li>• processes to gather relevant information;</li> <li>• identify appropriate resolution, where possible;</li> <li>• identify referrals to appropriate support service agencies, if necessary; and</li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>procedures for taking legal action, where necessary.</li> </ul>

#### Standard 5.3

Adapting to the changing needs and requirements of residents: The housing provider responds to the changing needs of the residents in a fair and flexible manner within the capacity of the housing provider.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>5.3.1 The housing provider has a documented system for how it will respond to changes in household composition and/or income that is consistent with legislation and its own eligibility criteria and placement system.</p> <p>The housing provider must have a transfer policy in place to deal with Special Priority (SPP) households and over-housed RGI households.</p>	<p>The provider may have an internal transfer policy to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RGI households who request internal transfers;</li> <li>RGI households who are under-housed;</li> <li>RGI households who request urgent safety or urgent medical transfers and SPP;</li> <li>RGI household who request modified unit transfers;</li> <li>in-situ market households who are requesting RGI assistance; and</li> <li>market household transfers.</li> </ul>
<p>5.3.2 The housing provider has strategies to provide information to residents who require home modifications due to aging or disability.</p>	<p>This may include referring the household to the Community Care Access Centre, and other appropriate support agencies and funding sources, such as CMHC RRAP Program and March of Dimes.</p>
<p>5.3.3 The housing provider monitors its service delivery to residents to ensure it is meeting the needs of the residents.</p>	<p>The housing provider could seek regular feedback from residents on the usefulness and accessibility of information, what is effective and what changes could be made to meet the current needs of the residents.</p> <p>The housing provider may provide residents with appropriate links and information about relevant support agencies and resources when crisis situations arise.</p> <p>The housing provider seeks feedback from households when they end their residency to identify current practices that have supported the residents and practices that could be reviewed to better meet the needs of residents.</p>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

#### Standard 5.4

Loss of RGI subsidy: The housing provider has processes to ensure they adhere to RGI subsidy funding model requirements, terminating RGI assistance to a household when the household no longer meets eligibility criteria for RGI assistance.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>5.4.1 The housing provider has written documentation to notify RGI households of loss of RGI assistance.</p> <p>Procedures should be in place to support RGI households in advance of subsidy termination due to "non-reporting" to facilitate submission of required documentation.</p>	<p>The housing provider ensures that proper written notice is given within prescribed timelines to the household outlining the reason for the loss of eligibility (either as a result of household income changes, household composition changes, rental arrears or failure to provide household documentation as required), and the ability of the household to appeal the decision.</p> <p>This would include advanced notice of reporting requirements, opportunities for RGI households to meet with staff to better understand reporting requirements and the encouragement of households to obtain appropriate support services within the community if they require assistance in meeting these obligations.</p>

#### Standard 5.5

Terminating residency: The housing provider ends residencies in a way that is legal and that minimizes the impact on the housing provider and on households.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>5.5.1 The housing provider has written documentation to deal with voluntary and forced termination of residencies that is consistent with legislation. It ensures that a residency is secure unless the household has broken specific conditions of the lease/occupancy agreement.</p>	<p>Security of tenure means that housing providers cannot evict without a just cause or without adherence to proper legal procedures for eviction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• termination proceedings need to be both efficient and respectful of resident's rights;</li> <li>• given the number of legal notification procedures involved in termination, it is important to keep good documentation and systems for monitoring each step in the process; and</li> <li>• where a household terminates with arrears there are processes in place to report the arrears to The Registry so that it can be added to the social housing arrear database. The provider should also have regard for any local reporting requirements to the Registry as determined by the Service Manager, such as the current <i>Eviction for Cause</i>.</li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>5.5.2 When the housing provider considers that termination proceedings may be necessary, it continues to treat the household fairly and with respect while attempting to work with the household to rectify the issue triggering termination proceeding.</p>	
<p>5.5.3 When a household gives a notice to vacate, the housing provider should attempt to carry out an inspection of the unit to identify any damages/repairs that the household may be responsible for and to plan for regular unit turnover. This should occur as soon as possible once notice is given.</p>	<p>Housing providers are encouraged to have a written move-out inspection form that details the state of the unit. Residents should be given a copy of this report so that they are aware of their obligations and possible required action prior to move-out.</p>
<p>5.5.4 The housing provider should ensure the resident is aware of outstanding rent arrears/housing charges prior to vacating the premises.</p>	<p>Where a rental arrear exists a written payment schedule arrangement should be in place prior for the household vacating the unit. A forwarding address for the household should be obtained, where possible. It may be appropriate for the housing provider to contact collection agencies to assist in the recovery of arrears.</p>
<p>5.5.5 The housing provider has a procedure that is consistent with legislation to recover possession(s) of an abandoned property and to deal with any of the household goods left behind.</p>	

### Standard 5.6

The Social Housing Reform Act requires a mandatory review/appeal process for applicants and residents of certain RGI decisions. Decisions that may be appealed by an RGI applicant or household include:

- Households ineligible for RGI assistance;
- Household ineligible for special needs housing;
- Type of accommodation in which the household has been placed on the waiting list;
- Category in which the household has been assigned on a waiting list;
- Amount of geared-to-income rent payable by household; and
- Deferral of geared-to-income rent payable by household.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>5.6.1 For households in receipt of RGI assistance, requests for internal reviews must be dealt with within a prescribed timeline and manner as outlined within the SHRA, its associated regulations and Service Manager Directives. Housing providers must have a policy in place to address requests for internal reviews.</p>	
<p>5.6.2 Certain important principles are upheld when conducting internal reviews of RGI assistance decisions. These principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• review of documentation or a hearing;</li><li>• the internal review is conducted by an individual or panel that has not been involved in rendering the original decision being appealed;</li><li>• the review is conducted by individuals with knowledge and experience in the subject area of the decision being appealed;</li><li>• it must be consistent with legislative requirements of the SHRA or any subsequent legislation, as well as Service Manager policies with respect to RGI assistance decisions;</li><li>• it must be a transparent and open process that is easily understood;</li><li>• it must protect the confidentiality of the member of a household requesting a review;</li><li>• it must allow households to bring a representative to the internal review (does not apply if the internal review is a review of documentation);</li><li>• it must attempt to accommodate language, accessibility and literacy needs of the person requesting the review;</li><li>• it must have regard to decisions made by other decision-makers in the service area;</li><li>• it must only consider reliable and pertinent information; and</li><li>• it must treat all similar situations consistently.</li></ul>	

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## STANDARD 5

### Residential Selection and Ongoing Household Administration

5.6.3 The household who requested the internal review will be notified of the final decision of the internal review, in writing, within the prescribed legislative timeframe.	
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# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

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## STANDARD 6

### Residents Participation, Rights and Responsibilities

In this section distinction is made between residents (tenants or Co-operative members) in their role as residents within a Non-Profit or Co-operative Housing Corporation, and members in their role as active participants within a Housing Co-operative. Most of this section focuses on the resident role. Standard 6.3 (Participation in Housing Co-operatives) focuses on the participation role expected of a Co-operative member.

The standard entitled “Resident Participation” covers the involvement of residents in the organization’s decision-making process. This standard takes the perspective that organizations are encouraged to incorporate processes to ensure residents’ views can be heard and accounted for.

Tenants who are members of the Non-Profit Housing Corporation and especially Housing Co-op members also participate in the governance of their organizations. This form of participation is covered by Standard 1 - Governance and Organizational Management.

Standard 6.5 entitled “Complaints and Reviews” covers the right of an applicant or a resident household, or people or agencies in the community to voice concerns about issues they have with the organization or the service received.

Issues discussed within this standard include:

- Resident rights (where legislated);
- Resident empowerment and participation;
- Participation in resident run co-operatives;
- Confidentiality; and
- Complaints and review process.

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### Standard 6.1

Resident rights: Residents’ rights, whether legislated or as a good business practice, are upheld in all aspects of the organization’s work. Residents are informed and assisted in exercising their rights

Sign Posts of Good Practices	Tool Box & Example
6.1.1 The organization has policies and processes that demonstrate a clear commitment to upholding the rights of residents to receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fair and non-discriminatory treatment;</li><li>• safe and secure housing; and</li><li>• privacy.</li></ul>	Many of these rights are covered by legislation, and are included in lease/occupancy agreements (references: SHRA, Human Rights Code, RTA, PIPEDA, MFIPPA, Operating Agreements, co-op by-laws).  Examples of resident rights that may be covered in

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 6

### Residents Participation, Rights and Responsibilities

Sign Posts of Good Practices	Tool Box & Example
	<p>policies and processes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• security of tenure within the terms of the tenancy/occupancy agreement;</li> <li>• rent calculation processes under the terms of the SHRA;</li> <li>• reasonable enjoyment of their unit under the RTA/co-op by-laws;</li> <li>• maintenance of confidentiality of personal information provided;</li> <li>• complaint process and review of decisions; and</li> <li>• the right of residents to have access to their own information held on file by the organization in accordance with legislative requirements.</li> </ul>
<p>6.1.2 The organization has policies and processes that demonstrate a clear commitment to upholding the expectation of mutually respectful treatment.</p>	<p>Respectful treatment of all residents by staff and volunteers contributes to the quality of life residents experience in their housing. Staff and volunteers can also expect basic respect in their treatment by residents, to ensure safe and healthy working conditions. Tools may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training in conflict resolution;</li> <li>• training in dealing with difficult people; and</li> <li>• signage that promotes respect.</li> </ul>
<p>6.1.3 The organization has processes in place to consistently inform residents and applicants of their rights. This information is presented in an appropriate and accessible way.</p>	<p>The organization uses a range of strategies to facilitate residents in exercising their rights.</p> <p>The organization evaluates the effectiveness of its work around residents' rights. Tools may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• orientation for new residents;</li> <li>• newsletter articles/flyers;</li> <li>• information in annual lease renewal packages;</li> <li>• office signage;</li> <li>• bulletin boards; and</li> <li>• AGM report and meeting.</li> </ul>

# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 6

### Residents Participation, Rights and Responsibilities

#### Standard 6.2

Resident empowerment and participation: Residents contribute to and participate in the decision-making of the organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Examples
<p>6.2.1 The organization has written documents that reflect a commitment to enable resident participation.</p> <p>Resident participation might be sought in a number of different ways.</p>	<p>Documentation should indicate more than mere statements of principle and intent. They should set out processes/strategies for achieving resident participation and empowerment. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an annual survey;</li> <li>• an exit survey when households vacate their unit;</li> <li>• suggestion boxes;</li> <li>• residents/members' meetings;</li> <li>• conduct a vote among residents re their preferences;</li> <li>• resident/member access to Board minutes;</li> <li>• ability to attend Board meetings and AGM's;</li> <li>• ability to present to a Board meeting;</li> <li>• ability to communicate in writing to Board members;</li> <li>• process to elect resident representation on the organization's Board; and</li> <li>• ability to be a member of the Corporation and vote at the AGM, where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p>6.2.2 The organization has processes in place that regularly seek feedback from residents.</p>	<p>Feedback from residents provides the organization with an ongoing measure of how well it is meeting the housing needs of residents, how contractors are doing their work. Complaints and reviews are other important forms of feedback (see 6.5).</p>
<p>6.2.3 The organization has processes that allow them to consult with residents who will be directly affected by a decision before making major changes.</p>	<p>Proposals for major change are more likely to need formal meetings and other types of consultation. Consultation means that the organization takes into account the views of its residents when making a decision, but is not bound by them.</p>
<p>6.2.4 The organization provides opportunities for residents to participate in its decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Participation in decision-making is a more active process than consultation. Residents can participate in a variety of ways such as: holding positions on Committees, in policy development, working parties/groups on specific issues or local meetings between residents. In Co-operatives, all members need to have a voice in decisions (see Standard 1 about Governance for more information).</p>

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## STANDARD 6

### Residents Participation, Rights and Responsibilities

<p>6.2.5 The organization has identified and addressed barriers that might limit residents' participation in the organization.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language;</li> <li>• room size and availability;</li> <li>• accessibility;</li> <li>• time of day;</li> <li>• child care; and</li> <li>• appropriate notice.</li> </ul>
<p>6.2.6 The organization monitors the level of resident participation.</p>	<p>This would involve monitoring things such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the levels of feedback from consultations;</li> <li>• timeliness of information given to residents;</li> <li>• the range of residents actively participating;</li> <li>• feedback from residents about how easy it is to have input into decision-making processes; and</li> <li>• examples of recent decisions that have been influenced/made by residents.</li> </ul>

### Standard 6.3

Participation in Housing Co-operatives (applicable to Co-operatives only): Co-operative members are selected, trained and supported to maintain a sustainable organization.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>6.3.1 The organization's documents outline expectations for participation by co-operative members on an on-going basis to sustain the housing community.</p>	<p>Documents might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the by-laws;</li> <li>• policies;</li> <li>• minutes of meetings;</li> <li>• occupancy agreement; and</li> <li>• information provided to members/ applicants.</li> </ul> <p>(see Standard 1 on Governance as well).</p>
<p>6.3.2 The co-operative has documented processes for orientation and selection of members that ensure an understanding of what it means to be a co-operative member.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interviews;</li> <li>• orientation sessions; and</li> <li>• member handbooks.</li> </ul>
<p>6.3.3 The co-operative has strategies in place to identify gaps in skills and to build and maintain a strong membership.</p>	<p>A co-operative functions best when its members have a range of skills including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial management;</li> <li>• property management; and</li> <li>• organizational management.</li> </ul> <p>The co-operative can provide formal training to the members. In addition to formal training, a co-operative</p>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	Tool Box & Example might also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rotate jobs and tasks;</li> <li>• hire staff with the appropriate skills; and</li> <li>• purchase services from other organizations where skills cannot be met within the co-operative.</li> </ul>
6.3.4 The co-operative has strategies for building positive relationships and facilitating conflict resolution between members, when needed.	Some strategies for building positive relationships are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing a means of welcoming and introducing new members;</li> <li>• social events;</li> <li>• encouraging members to work together on committees or projects; and</li> <li>• developing some guidelines for conflict resolution for use when needed.</li> </ul>
6.3.5 The co-operative regularly encourages and reviews member participation.	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation Committee;</li> <li>• welcoming members;</li> <li>• Participation Bylaw; and</li> <li>• processes to identify participation possibilities for members.</li> </ul>

#### Standard 6.4

**Confidentiality and privacy:** The organization maintains and respects the confidentiality and privacy of their applicants and residents.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
6.4.1 The organization has written documents that outline how confidentiality and privacy will be upheld, consistent with relevant privacy legislation.	The Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA), The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) obligates the Service Manager to protect personal information collected from social housing applicants as well as residents. The City of Ottawa as Service Manager has delegated the collection of personal information to housing providers. Housing providers are responsible for complying with only those MFIPPA requirements that are specific to their contractual duties with the City, namely the requirements related to the collection, use and sharing of personal information for the purpose of RGI administration (PIPEDA and FIPPA requirements must be met).  Documentation that could help uphold confidentiality and privacy could include:

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specifications of what information can be released internally and externally, and to whom it can be released;</li> <li>• storage of resident files;</li> <li>• how applicants/households access their files;</li> <li>• limiting access to computer files; and</li> <li>• information about privacy that must be provided to applicants and residents.</li> </ul> <p>Communities under other programs should adopt practices based on these principles as well, as good business practice. The organization will respect all legislated privacy requirements.</p>
<p>6.4.2 The organization has processes in place to ensure that applicants and residents sign consent forms for the release of personal information.</p>	<p>This can take place at such times as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during lease signing;</li> <li>• at annual reviews, if required; and</li> <li>• when assistance from an outside agency is sought.</li> </ul> <p>This could include such elements as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a standard release form for each situation; and</li> <li>• training of staff regarding when to use the form.</li> </ul>
<p>6.4.3 The organization uses a private place for collecting information of a personal nature, where appropriate.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing space for private meetings at all times or time when meeting space can be private; and</li> <li>• a policy about how to balance confidentiality with safety concerns.</li> </ul>
<p>6.4.4 The organization takes steps to ensure that individual residents' personal information is protected whenever their situations are being discussed with others.</p>	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• except as may be required, names and unit numbers are omitted from documentation that goes to a Board or Committee meeting.</li> </ul>
<p>6.4.5 The organization has a documented process in place that confirms that personal information will only be released where consent has been provided, except as legally required.</p>	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy for release of personal information to external parties is in place.</li> </ul>
<p>6.4.6 The organization ensures that all resident files are stored and/or destroyed in a confidential manner.</p>	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a policy specifies how files are locked, when they are destroyed and how.</li> </ul>

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<p>6.4.7 The organization regularly reviews whether all those involved in the organization understand their responsibilities to protect confidentiality and the organization has a process for addressing inappropriate release of information, where identified.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board and staff sign confidentiality statement;</li> <li>• annual reminders; and</li> <li>• process for dealing with non-compliance.</li> </ul>
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### Standard 6.5

Complaints and reviews: The organization has established a system of addressing complaints and requests for review in a prompt and fair manner.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>6.5.1 The organization has a documented system for complaints and reviews that make it easy for individuals to lodge a complaint or request a review. This ensures that individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are dealt with promptly and fairly; and</li> <li>• have access to a body, not involved in the original decision, if the matter cannot be resolved to the person's satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p>An effective complaints procedure will benefit residents and the organization. It can reduce complaints in the long- term and provide the organization with important feedback on how to do its work better.</p> <p>A good complaints/reviews system might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition that complaints/reviews are welcomed and will be used to improve the organization;</li> <li>• acknowledgement that residents/ applicants will not be penalized for making a complaint or requesting a review of a decision, and will continue to receive respectful service;</li> <li>• a communicated process to make a complaint or request a review;</li> <li>• protocols to resolve complaints and review requests promptly and simply;</li> <li>• identified steps, timeframes and person(s) responsible for resolving all types of complaints and review requests;</li> <li>• processes to ensure complainants are kept informed of progress; and</li> <li>• identified independent bodies to which the complaint/review request may be taken if it is not resolved to the residents' satisfaction, which may include an independent mediator.</li> </ul>
<p>6.5.2 The organization has processes in place to ensure people are given easy access to simple written information about how to lodge a complaint or request a review.</p>	<p>This may include information provided at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lease signing;</li> <li>• lease renewal; and</li> <li>• rent recalculation due to change in income or household.</li> </ul>

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### Residents Participation, Rights and Responsibilities

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
6.5.3 The organization has a way of informing residents of how to access advocacy organizations or individual advocates to assist them resolve a complaint or request a review.	Reference: The Social Housing Reform Act outlines several decisions that a resident has a right to have reviewed and deadlines and notices that must be used. Under the SHRA, the review process is called an Internal Review.
6.5.4 Any member of the organization likely to receive complaints or handle reviews is trained in how to deal with them.	
6.5.5 The organization regularly monitors the effectiveness of the complaints and review processes.	Monitoring might include documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the number of complaints and review requests;</li><li>• the issues complained about or reviewed;</li><li>• the time taken to resolve complaints;</li><li>• the outcomes of complaints and reviews; and</li><li>• input from residents/applicants who have used the process.</li></ul>

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# A FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL HOUSING STANDARDS

## STANDARD 7

### Working with the Community

This section provides an overview of the variety of community supports that the organization may assist residents to access (beyond housing) and the organization's role in capacity building as a partner in working to improve the well being of the communities. Community capacity relates to the ability of individuals, organizations and communities to manage their own affairs and to work together to make and sustain positive changes in their lives and communities.

#### Standard 7.1

Access to support: The organization works with residents so that they are able to access relevant support.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>7.1.1 The organization has processes to facilitate linkages to assist residents to access relevant supports.</p>	<p>In situations where residents have a high level of need for support for their residency to be successful, a formal agreement with a support agency may be needed. In other situations, referrals can be made without a formal agreement between agencies. Some tools that may help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain a simple resource file of relevant agencies where residents can find information when needed; or</li> <li>• have a computerized database that includes individual contacts and a description of the services provided; and</li> <li>• Have the Blue Book – the Directory of Ottawa Community Services (<i>Community Information Centre of Ottawa</i>).</li> </ul>
<p>7.1.2 The organization has contact with key government departments and community agencies to foster good working relationships.</p>	<p>Key agencies might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Social Housing Registry;</li> <li>• OW;</li> <li>• ODSP;</li> <li>• CMHA;</li> <li>• Community Police;</li> <li>• Fire Marshall;</li> <li>• Housing Help/Action Logement;</li> <li>• Public Health;</li> <li>• Community Health and Resource Centres;</li> <li>• Shelters;</li> <li>• CAS;</li> <li>• Ottawa Salus; and</li> <li>• Options Bytown.</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
7.1.3 Where a tenant would benefit from support from another agency in order to remain housed and agrees to referral, the organization assists them to gain this support.	Organizations might, for example, contact other agencies to refer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• residents with mental health issues who would benefit from active support from a mental health team such as CMHA, Options By-town; and</li> <li>• an elderly or sick tenant who may need house modifications and support services to remain housed such as RRAP, HASI (Housing Accessibility for Seniors Independence), Homecare, CCAC.</li> </ul>
7.1.4 Where possible, the organization coordinates support services to maximize the success of residencies for people with high support needs.	The intent is not to act as a Case Manager but where possible to involve support agencies in creating solutions to behaviours that are jeopardizing residencies.
7.1.5 When measuring its performance the organization monitors its links to support agencies.	Monitoring might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring contact details and information is up to date; and</li> <li>• seeking feedback on how well communication and referral processes are working.</li> </ul>
7.1.6 The organization regularly reviews the arrangements it has set-up with support agencies.	This may include an evaluation of partnership or referral relationship that looks at how well the partnership or referral relationship is working and if there are gaps.

### Standard 7.2

**Building community capacity:** The organization contributes to sustainable improvements in the well being of residents and communities.

Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
7.2.1 The organization has established objectives that reflect a commitment to building sustainable improvements in the well-being of residents and communities.	Processes may be documented in policies or other documents or they may be a set of standard practices. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission Statement;</li> <li>• Strategic Plan;</li> <li>• Community Development Plan; and</li> <li>• Co-op By-laws.</li> </ul>
7.2.2 The organization has specific strategies to build sustainable improvements in the well being of residents and communities in response to identified needs.	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food security actions;</li> <li>• safety issues;</li> <li>• child and youth programming; and</li> <li>• health access.</li> </ul>

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Sign Posts of Good Practice	Tool Box & Example
<p>7.2.3 The organization collaborates with people and organizations in order to maximize resources and to increase participation in an effort to gain broader ownership of initiatives.</p>	<p>Examples include collaborations with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the City of Ottawa (Recreation, Health, Fire Department, etc.);</li> <li>• the Community Garden Network;</li> <li>• Boys and Girls Club;</li> <li>• Ottawa School of Art;</li> <li>• Community Resource Centres;</li> <li>• United Way; and</li> <li>• Gloucester Recreation Development Organization.</li> </ul>
<p>7.2.4 The organization promotes initiatives so that successes can be built upon.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• word of mouth;</li> <li>• news articles; and</li> <li>• sector newsletters.</li> </ul>
<p>7.2.5 The organization has processes in place in order to keep its residents informed of developments in the social housing sector.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• including information from CHASEO, CHF or ONPHA in a newsletter or on community bulletin boards;</li> <li>• having copies of material from sector organizations at the office for residents to pick-up;</li> <li>• announcements at meetings; and</li> <li>• articles on web-sites.</li> </ul>
<p>7.2.6 When measuring its performance, the organization reviews its contribution to building community capacity.</p>	<p>Regular reviews which measure the benefits that are gained for the community and residents, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impact on vacancy rates;</li> <li>• impact on maintenance call-outs for common areas (vandalism, etc.);</li> <li>• how safe community members report how they feel;</li> <li>• increased level of resident participation in community events; and</li> <li>• positive stories in the local media.</li> </ul>