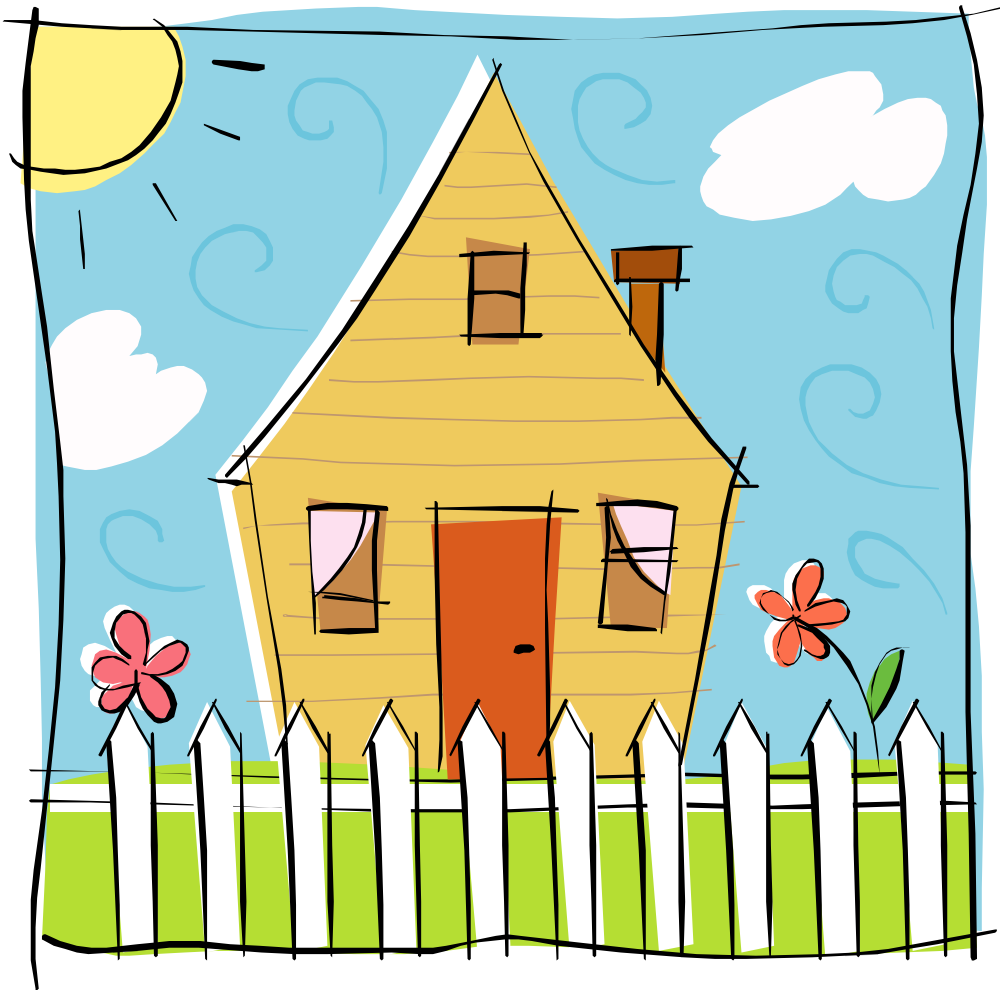


BRUCE COUNTY HOUSING CORPORATION

TENANT Handbook



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Bruce County Housing Corporation

325 Lambton Street, Box 1450, Kincardine, ON, N2Z 2Z4

Email: bchc@brucecounty.on.ca

Main Reception Toll Free: 1-800-265-3022

Main Reception Telephone: 1-519-396-3439

Fax: 1-519-396-3499

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday

Maintenance Repairs 1-519-396-3450 Press 1
1-877-396-3450 Press 1

Client Manager 519-396-3450 ext 105
1-877-396-3450 ext 105

For EMERGENCIES

After Hours/Weekends/Holidays Call:
(Maintenance or Tenant)

519-396-3439 or 1-800-265-3022

**CALL 911 IF YOU NEED AMBULANCE,
FIRE DEPARTMENT OR POLICE**

Table of Contents

CONTACT

INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Introduction	1
Who We Are	1
Mission Statement	1

MOVING IN

Move-In Inspections	1
Keys	1
Parking	2
Decorating	2

YOUR RENT

About Your Rent	3
Paying Your Rent	4
Changes to Household Income	4
Changes to Your Rent	4

YOUR NEW HOME

Telephone, TV, Satellite Dishes	5
Utilities	5
Furnaces – Family Units Only	6
Laundry	6
Garbage & Recycling	6
Storage Room	9
Insurance	9
Accessibility	9
Air Conditioners & Ceiling Fans	10
Common Areas	10
Smoking	10
Pets	11
Pest Control	11
Yards, Balconies, Patios, Porches	12
Lawns, Walkways, & Driveways	12

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your Lease	13
Transferring to a Different Unit	13
Internal Review	14
Guest Policy	14
Absence from Your Home	15
Damages and Chargebacks	15
Eviction	15

TENANT COMPLAINTS

16

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Secure Entrances	16
Safety Tenants	17
Workplace Safety Policy	11
BCHC Staff Entering Your Unit	17
Mould & Mildew	18
Asbestos	18
Electrical Baseboard Heaters	18
Electrical Cords	18
Window Safety Stops	19
Fire Safety	19

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Unit Inspections	22
Non-Emergency Repairs	22
Maintenance Emergencies	22

MOVING OUT 23

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Introduction

Welcome to Bruce County Housing Corporation (BCHC). We hope your life here will be a happy one. The Tenant Handbook provides you with important information to answer some of your questions and help you understand both your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of BCHC. You should also refer to your lease or tenancy agreement, as it is a legal document containing more detailed information.

Who we are

Bruce County Housing Corporation operates under the County of Bruce, Social Services; Social Housing legislated under the Social Housing Reform Act, 2000. We manage over 600 units across Bruce County. These units are located in Chesley, Kincardine, Lucknow, Mildmay, Paisley, Port Elgin, Ripley, Southampton, Tara, Teeswater, Tobermory, Walkerton, and Warton and include apartment buildings, townhouses, and single-family homes. Selections of units are accessible for individuals with disabilities.

Mission Statement

We are committed to planning, delivering and advocating for responsive and innovative services that help individuals and families to enhance their level of participation and quality of life in our communities.

Move-In Inspections

Your unit was inspected before you moved in. Damage to the unit was recorded and work orders for needed repairs were issued. It is possible, however that we may have overlooked something. We have included a Move-In Inspection Report with your Tenant Handbook. Please complete and sign this form and return it to the Bruce County Housing Office within 14 days of moving in. If you do not return the Move-In Inspection Report, this indicates that the unit is in good condition and that no repairs are needed.

Keys

The keys that you were given when you moved in give you access to your unit, the front door of your building and mailbox. During office hours if you lose or forget your keys contact the Maintenance Department for assistance. You will be charged the approved Key Replacement Charge and the Standard Key Charge for the number of keys being replaced. If you lose or forget your keys after hours call the after hours emergency numbers listed at the front of this manual. You will be charged the approved labour & service charge hourly rate for staff time and mileage as well

as the replacement of keys cost or in the case of a locksmith their time, mileage and replacement cost. We ask for your own convenience, that you arrange to have a spare key with a friend or family member. Lift keys will be issued at no cost initially. In the case of a lost lift key the tenant will be charged the Lift Key Replacement Charge. Each tenant who requires the use of an electronic door opener will be issued one at no charge. In the case of a lost door opener the tenant will be charged the Door Opener Replacement Charge.

Parking

Each household is permitted parking for one vehicle free of charge. Where space is available two person households may request a second parking spot. The additional parking spot is a charge of \$20.00 per month. Bruce County Housing Corporation may refuse a second parking spot when parking availability is limited. Vehicles parked in BCHC parking must be licensed, insured and road worthy. No trailers, boats, lawn tractors or snowmobiles are permitted. Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owners' expense.

Tenants are responsible to register their vehicle with BCHC by completing the Vehicle Registration Form. If a household has a change in their parking needs, buy, sell or change vehicle(s) they are responsible to let the Client Manager know. Tenants' are responsible for making sure their guests' park in the designated visitor parking only. Please confirm with on site staff where you should park.

Decorating

Do not make any changes/renovations to the property of the Bruce County Housing Corporation without the approval of the Maintenance Supervisor

Bruce County Housing Corporation (BCHC) does not permit tenants to paint their units unless approved in writing by the Maintenance Supervisor. Stenciling is not allowed. Wallpapering is not allowed.

Prior to November 1, 2007 some tenants had already painted their units or rooms within the unit. Tenants that have painted must prime the painted areas using the appropriate primer as directed by the Maintenance Supervisor before vacating their unit.

Cycle painting of units will be completed at the discretion of the Maintenance Manager based on budget. Tenants may be permitted to paint their units themselves with paint provided by BCHC at the discretion of the Maintenance Manager based on budget if the unit has not been painted for ten years. If a Tenant would like to paint their unit prior to ten years since the last painting, Tenants may be permitted to paint their units with BCHC designated paint at their own charge on the approval of the Maintenance Manager.

Carpet Installation

Effective April 2009 according to the Bruce County Housing Corporation carpet policy, installation of carpet is not allowed. Tenants may use a mat on the floor or purchase an area rug with bound edges. No nailing or gluing of floor covering is allowed.

Window Coverings

Please refer to your lease for rules regarding window coverings. If you are unsure of the information contained in your lease please contact the Client Manager or Maintenance Supervisor for clarification.

Hanging Pictures

Please use picture hangers with nails for hanging things on the wall. Do not nail anything into the kitchen/bathroom cupboards or the doors. If there are damages to the cupboards when a tenant vacates the unit they may be charged for the cost of the repairs. Do not use sticky hooks on walls. Do not use nails or screws in any of the doors, kitchen cupboards or vanity cupboards.

About Your Rent

BCHC tenants pay one of the following types of rent:

Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI)

RGI rent is a financial subsidy provided to a household in order to reduce the amount that a household must pay for rent. RGI rent, plus or minus a utility allowance, is based on approximately 30% of a household's gross (before taxes) monthly income or is based on social assistance scales for tenants who receive OW or ODSP.

Market Rent

Market Rent is approximately the same amount of rent you would pay in the private sector. The market rent rates are set annually as approved by the Bruce County Housing Corporation Board. Bruce County Housing Corporation market rents are posted on our website at www.brucecounty.on.ca

Affordable Rent

The affordable rent is set at a rate below the average market rent for Bruce County (approximately 80% of the average market rent). Tenants must meet the eligibility criteria of the program at the time of move in based on the unit bedroom size. The affordable rent of each tenant will be increase annually by the rate approved by the Bruce County Housing Corporation Board as per the allowable rent increase guidelines.

Your rent is due on or before the 1st of every month.

Paying Your rent:

You may pay by cash, money order, post-dated cheques or preauthorized debit. This is where the money comes directly out of your bank account. If you receive Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Benefits you may be able to have them pay your rent directly. We encourage you to consider setting up either a pre-authorized debit or providing post dated cheques to ensure that your rent is always paid on time and to save you time.

A \$20.00 NSF charge will apply to returned cheques or direct withdrawals.

Report Changes to Your Household Income - RGI (Rent-Geared-To-Income) Tenants Only

Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI) rents are reviewed normally once a year, but you must understand that your rent may change more than once a year if your income changes. You must report any changes to your household income, or changes to the source of your income to BCHC **within 30 days of the change**. Failure to do so may result in your household losing its rent subsidy.

When RGI rents are reviewed, you will receive a rent change decision letter. If it is determined that your rent will change (an increase or decrease), you will be given notice of when the rent change takes effect and what your new rent will be. If your rent will be increasing from RGI to Market you will be given 90 days notice.

Changes to Family Composition

If there are any changes to your family composition (the number of household members) you must report these changes, to the Client Manager **within 30 days of the change**. For example, if someone moves out of your unit you need to let us know.

Do not wait for your annual review to report changes in your income or family composition. Your RGI subsidy and tenancy could be in jeopardy if you do not report changes. You may be required to pay money back to BCHC should you fail to report changes within the 30-day time period.

Changes to Your Rent

Any changes to your rent will be reported to you in writing according to the Regulations under the Social Housing Reform Act and the Residential Tenancies Act.

Your New Home

Telephone/Television/Satellite Dishes/Aerials

It is your responsibility to arrange for and pay for your own telephone and cable television installation and service. Satellite dishes are NOT allowed. A few buildings are equipped with aerials; however, these are not maintained by BCHC and will be removed in the future.

Utilities

Some of the Adult and Senior apartment buildings and some of the Family Units have the utilities included in the rent. The units that do not have their utilities included are given a monthly deduction in their rent. Your lease will state whether your utilities are included. If you require clarification, please check with the Client Manager. For households that pay their own utilities the following numbers will be useful.

Westario Power	1-866-978-2746
Union Gas	1-866-774-3111
Reliance Home Comfort	1-877-267-7902
Hydro One	1-888-664-9376

Please be energy conscious and follow the tips provided to conserve energy and keep costs down:

- Turn off lights when not in use. Do not leave exterior lights on during the day.
- Use compact fluorescent lights when replacing light bulbs as they use less energy and last 7 to 10 times longer and generate less heat which will help to keep your unit cooler in the summer.
- Lower your settings for your air conditioner or heat as low as is comfortable to conserve energy
- Turn off computers when not in use and turn off your printer when not in use as it consumes a lot of energy.
- Unplug small appliances like coffee makers, toasters, hair dryers, etc when they are not in use as they continue to use energy when plugged in even on the off mode.
- Keep windows and doors closed in winter months to keep the heat in the home. If the home is too hot or stuffy turn down the heat.
- Consider using low energy appliances (washer, dryer) during off peak time use.

Furnaces - Family Units Only

The furnace in your unit is designed to require the minimum of maintenance. BCHC staff will change the filters periodically during the heating season. To assist the furnace to work at peak efficiency and reduce your utility costs please follow the suggested housekeeping as follows:

- Vacuum out the floor air vents to ensure good air flow
- Do not store anything near the furnace

Laundry

Coin operated laundry facilities are provided for the tenants use only in all adult complexes as well as at the family complex at 920 Old Durham Road in Walkerton. We would appreciate your conserving energy by using the time of use hours. No appliances are to be installed in units that do not have proper hook up for laundry. If you are unsure please contact the Maintenance Department to ask. The appliances use loonies or quarters. Dishwashers are not permitted in Housing Corporation units.

Garbage & Recycling

Please note the following rules to keep the Garbage Room in good order:

- Please dispose of your moving boxes away from the property when you first move in.
- Daily cardboard and box board must be flattened and tied before putting in the Garbage room
- Do not place large items in the garbage room such as carpet, underlay, unwanted furniture or small appliances – these items must be taken to the dump by the tenant
- Place cans, glass and paper in the appropriate recycle bins
- If you are cleaning out your refrigerator or freezer, please do so within a day or so of garbage day so that high-odour items can be discarded quickly to minimize the smell in the Garbage room
- Any needles must be disposed of by placing inside a sealed container
- In some Municipalities Styrofoam is not accepted in the garbage. Tenants must take the Styrofoam to the designated landfill site.
- Please help to keep the garbage room clean and tidy by cleaning up any spills that you make.
- In the apartment buildings there is a garbage room where you should place your garbage and recycling.

In the Family Units you will be responsible for placing garbage and recycling out to the curb for pick-up or to the designated waste bins at your complex.

The following page highlights the rules for Bruce Area Recycles. If you have any questions about garbage and recycling speak to the Maintenance Department at 1-877-396-3450 ext. 100.

YOUR BLUE BOX

INSIDE YOUR BLUE BOX	BESIDE YOUR BLUE BOX	DO NOT RECYCLE
<p>GLASS BOTTLES & JARS -Food & Beverage containers only</p> 	<p>NEWSPAPERS, INSERTS, MAGAZINES, CATALOGUES & PHONE BOOKS -Please place together in your blue box or in an unried bag NOTE: paper grocery bags will not be left behind and they are recyclable.</p> 	<p>HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF ITEMS THAT CAN NOT BE PUT IN YOUR BLUE BOX.</p> 
<p>ALUMINUM & STEEL FOOD & BEVERAGE CONTAINERS -Place lids inside cans -Please rinse</p> 	<p>BOXBOARD, KRAFT PAPER BAGS & PAPER TOWEL/TOILET PAPER ROLLS -Please remove all wrap, spoils and liners -Flatten and place inside larger box</p> 	
<p>PLASTIC SCREW TOP BOTTLES -Clean SCREW TOP BOTTLES marked on the bottom WITH the following symbols:</p>  	<p>FINE PAPER -Computer paper, white and light coloured paper -Place in clear plastic bag</p> 	
<p>WIDE MOUTH TUB PLASTIC -Clean PLASTIC TUBS marked on the bottom WITH the following symbols:</p>  	<p>RIGID PLASTIC PACKAGING -Clean RIGID PLASTIC PACKAGING marked on the bottom with the following symbols:</p>  	
<p>NEW SPIRAL BOXBOARD -Do not remove metal ends. -Place inside blue box.</p> 	<p>NEW NOTE: see important exceptions listed under DO NOT RECYCLE</p> 	<p>QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? COMMENTS? Call us at: 1-800-794-9770 or 519-797-5557</p> 
<p>ALUMINUM FOIL & TRAYS -Please rinse</p> 	<p>plastic inserts</p> 	<p>WHAT DO I DO WITH MY CARDBOARD BOXES? -Flatten and take to a depot location in your area.</p> 
<p>EMPTY AEROSOL & METAL PAINT CANS -Ensure that aerosol cans are completely empty -Please remove lids from paint cans & place inside blue box. Cans must be 1 gallon size or less and completely made of metal.</p> 	<p>Single serve plastic cups</p>  <p>plastic balls (under 20L size & no metal handles)</p>  <p>clanmetal plastic</p>  <p>Moulded retail packaging (boxboard & paper removed)</p> 	<p>CAN I PUT MY RECYCLABLES IN BAGS? Blue boxes must be used. If your blue box is full, extra recyclables may be put in bags AND they must be sorted.</p>



www.brucerecycling.com

Plastic Recycling 101

www.brucerecycling.com

Symbol	Name of Plastic	% of all Plastics	Examples	Accepted in blue box?	
				YES	NO
	polyethylene terephthalate	20-30%	soft drink & water bottles	✓	
			cookie trays & frozen food trays clam shell containers	✓	
	high density polyethylene	50-60%	milk, juice, detergent & bleach jugs shampoo & conditioner bottles	✓	
			ice cream and margarine tubs oil bottles	✓	
	polyvinyl chloride	5-10%	vegetable oil, dish soap	✓	
			PVC piping, cling wrap		✗
	low density polyethylene	5-10%	mustard bottles, cosmetic bottles	✓	
			shopping bags, bread bags		✗
	polypropylene	5-10%	margarine tubs, deli tubs, yogurt tubs	✓	
			microwavable, disposable, and reusable containers; planters		✗
	polystyrene	5-10%	foam coffee cups, meat trays egg cartons, take-out food containers		✗
	other plastics	5-10%	ketchup and barbeque bottles	✓	
			electronic casing, CDs & DVDs		✗

Storage Room

In some apartment buildings there is limited space in the storage room for tenants seasonal items. BCHC cannot provide storage space for all tenants. Some existing tenants may already have items in storage. BCHC is not responsible for items in the storage room. If you are moving out remember to take your personal belongings that are in storage.

Insurance

Tenants are liable for their own contents in the event of fire, smoke, or water damage, etc. BCHC insures the building, but this does not cover your personal property. Damage costs due to tenant neglect are billed to the tenant. It is recommended that you obtain your own content insurance. Insurance can be obtained through any local insurance provider or through SOHO.

SOHO is tenant insurance specific for tenants of Social Housing. SOHO can be contacted at:

SOHO Insurance
390 Bay Street, Suite 705
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2Y2
1-866-440-2492 or fax 1-416-360-3711
www.sohoinsurance.ca

Accessibility

Bruce County Housing Corporation has made efforts to make our units accessible to individuals with varying abilities. Some of our multi storey senior buildings are equipped with lifts and many units have been modified to assist in independent living. If you require a scooter or other equipment to assist in your mobility and have questions about storage availability or where it should be parked please speak with our staff. If your level of ability changes during your tenancy you can contact the office to discuss any barriers or issues of accessibility.

Lifts/Elevators

For buildings that are equipped with a lift there is no charge to be issued a key to operate the lift. The lifts/elevator are an essential part of apartment living for a number of our residents. Unfortunately there is risk that they could stop working. If the lift/elevator is damaged or not working please call us immediately at 1-800-265-3022 or 1-519-396-3439, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you discover someone is stuck in the lift/elevator, try to maintain verbal contact if possible and provide assurance that help is on the way. If you think medical attention is required call 911. In the case of a power outage the lift will return to the ground floor.

Air Conditioners & Ceiling Fans

Air conditioners are not supplied. If you are living in a Bruce County Housing Corporation unit where the utilities are included in your rent you will be responsible to pay a seasonal fee to offset the cost of the electricity. Tenants who had air conditioners installed in the previous year will automatically be charged the air conditioner fee for the next year. It is the tenants' responsibility to call the Housing Corporation if you are not installing an air conditioner. Tenants can pay in four equal payments on June 1st, July 1st, August 1st and September 1st by cash, cheque or preauthorized debit (automatically from bank account)

Ceiling fans are not supplied. If you purchase a ceiling fan a qualified electrician, using the existing electrical outlet, must install it. When you move out you must remove the ceiling fan unless you have received permission from the Landlord to leave it.

Common Areas

A common room is located in each adult and senior building as well as at 920 Old Durham Road in Walkerton and Wellington Shores in Pot Elgin. There is no alcohol or smoking allowed in the common room

Smoking

The County of Bruce has a no smoking by-law that prohibits smoking in public areas of the buildings as per the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, March 1, 2006. Report any infractions of **Smoking in Public Spaces** (hallways, common rooms, laundry rooms) by phoning **1-800-263-3456**.

Additionally, effective April 1, 2011 smoking is prohibited inside all buildings, including private units, balconies, and patios and within a distance of five (5) meters away from any windows, entrances or exits to any building of Bruce County Housing Corporation. The no smoking policy will be adopted through attrition. This means that: a) existing tenants will be grandfathered (exempted) for the length on their tenancy in their current unit, unless they transfer or choose to sign a no-smoking policy lease addendum; and b) New tenants will sign leases with the no smoking policy included. Report any infractions of the Bruce County Housing Corporation No Smoking Policy to the Client Manager.

Due to the irritation and known health risks of exposure to second-hand smoke, increased risk of fire and increased maintenance, cleaning and redecorating costs, all forms of smoking shall be prohibited. Exemptions to the No Smoking Policy are for the medical use of marihuana and for the traditional use of tobacco for aboriginal cultural or spiritual purposes. For the full details of exemptions from the policy please speak to the Client Manager or Operations Manager.

For Information or help on how to stop smoking, please contact the following:

- Smokers Helpline -1877-513-5333 or online at www.smokershelpline.ca;
- The Driven to Quite Challenge at www.quitsmokingontario.ca; or
- Grey Bruce Health Unit at 1-800-263-3456.

Pets

Tenants should notify the BCHC of the presence of any pets in the unit. Please contact the Client Manager for a copy of the Pet Registration Form. Tenants must follow the Municipal By-Laws regarding animal control within the Municipality that they reside. Tenants must pay for dog tags each year as required by the Municipality. If you have questions about the by-Laws in your Municipality please contact your local Municipal office.

Municipality of Arran-Elderslie

P.O. Box 70 1925 Bruce Rd #10 Chesley, Ontario N0G 1L0

Phone: (519) 363-3039

Municipality of Brockton

P.O. Box 68 100 Scott Street Walkerton, Ontario N0G 2V0

Phone: (519) 881-2223

Municipality of Kincardine

1475 Conc. 5 R.R. #5 Kincardine, Ontario N2Z 2X6

Phone: (519) 396-3468

Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula

56 Lindsay Rd. 5 R.R. #2 Lion's Head, Ontario N0H 1W0

Phone: (519) 793-3522

Municipality of South Bruce

P.O. Box 540 21 Gordon Street Teeswater, Ontario N0G 2S0

Phone: (519) 392-6623

Town of Saugeen Shores

600 Tomlinson Dr. P.O. Box 820 Port Elgin, Ontario N0H 2C0

Phone: (519) 832-2008

Town of South Bruce Peninsula

P.O. Box 310 315 George Street Wiarton, Ontario N0H 2T0

Phone: (519) 534-1400

Township of Huron-Kinloss

P.O. Box 130 21 Queen Street Ripley, Ontario N0G 2R0

Phone: (519) 395-3735

Pest Control

Unfortunately, pests can become a problem in any household. To control this problem, staff and tenants need to work together. Please make sure you store food in airtight containers and that your garbage is stored in a sealed container. Put your garbage out regularly for garbage pick up. Please report any pest infestations to the Maintenance Department as soon as it is noticed so that we can contact pest control contractors as soon as possible and minimize the spread of pests. Tenants will be charged for the cost of an exterminator if the pest infestation was caused by the tenants' pet or that of their guests.

We ask that you do not feed birds, squirrels or stray animals as this may attract unwanted pests to your building.

Yards, Balconies, Patios, Porches

You should not use outside areas for storage. Please keep the property clean and tidy. In winter you are responsible for clearing the snow in your private area or walkways.

Birdfeeders or wall hangings are not allowed on balcony or patio dividers. There is a limit of one hanging ornament as long as there is not damage to the property of Bruce County Housing Corporation. Do not put animal or bird feed out on your balcony, patio or yard as it can attract unwanted pests. Please use a clothes horse as opposed to a clothes line on your patio.

Fire pits are not allowed at any BCHC properties. Tenants are permitted to use electric barbeques as a safe alternative if you have an electrical outlet on your patio or balcony. Propane is regulated by the technical standards and safety authority (TSSH) Provincial legislation prohibits the use or storage of propane inside a building structure. (A balcony is considered part of the structure of the apartment building)

Lawns, Walkways, & Driveways

If you live in a single family home you are responsible for keeping your area clean and tidy by raking the leaves, mowing and weeding your yard and garden area. Please do not store unused personal items or garbage in your yard as it makes maintenance difficult for you and is unsightly for neighbours.

If you live in a single family home or townhouse complex, in winter months, it is your responsibility to remove snow and ice from your walkway and your driveway if you have one for your private use.

Clean up all pet excrement immediately.

Supportive Housing

Grey-Bruce VON and Bruce County Housing Corporation have an agreement to provide supportive housing services in the following communities in the County, Kincardine, Saugeen Shores, Southampton and Warton. VON Supportive Housing offers: personal support and homemaking services, tailored to the needs of the individual, response service 24 hours a day, emergency response system, friendly visiting and reassurance/security checks. For more information contact VON Grey Bruce at PO Box 969, 1280 20th St. East, Owen Sound, ON N4K 6H6 1-800-265-3138 or www.von.ca

Your Rights & Responsibilities

Your Lease

Prior to moving in you will be required to sign a tenancy agreement (lease). The Client Manager will review the terms of the lease with you and answer any of your questions. With this Tenant Handbook you will receive the Landlord and Tenant Board Information for New Tenants form. This form explains your rights and responsibilities as well as the rights and responsibilities of Bruce County Housing Corporation as your landlord. Please review this document and your lease carefully

Transferring to a Different Unit (Internal Transfers)

The Internal Transfer Policy applies to tenants who want to move from one Bruce County Housing unit to another. Households who require rent-geared-to-income assistance who wish to move into Bruce County Housing Corporation (BCHC) from other social housing provider or from BCHC to another social housing provider are external applicants. External applicants must apply through the centralized access centre.

Tenants of Bruce County Housing Corporation may apply for a transfer if they are making the request for one of the following reasons:

- Special Priority Status,
- Over housed,
- Medical,
- Employment,
- Extenuating circumstances and may include grounds related to the Human Rights Code that are not covered in the previous four reasons for transfer;
- Under housed (this would include residing in a bachelor unit (Note: there are only four (4) bachelor units within BCHC housing stock) or Social Housing to Affordable Housing where the tenant's rent-geared-to-income rent is equal or greater than the Affordable Housing Unit Rent.

Tenants applying for the transfer types of employment, under housed or social housing to affordable housing may apply when they meet the following eligibility requirements: must have lived in present unit for twelve (12) months; must not owe any money for damages or rent arrears in the past twelve (12) months; must not have persistent rent arrears for the past twelve (12) months and must meet the eligibility criteria as required by the Social Housing Reform Act.

For more information regarding the Transfer Policy or to apply for a transfer please contact the Operations Manager at Bruce County Housing Corporation.

Internal Review

Under the Social Housing Reform Act, (2000), you have the right to an internal review if you are not satisfied with certain decisions that have been made by BCHC. You must write a request for review within 10 days of receiving notice of the decision and send it to the BCHC. You can ask for a review if you believe:

- We have based a rent subsidy decision on incorrect information;
- We have calculated your RGI (rent-geared-to-income) rent incorrectly;
- Your rent subsidy was discontinued without appropriate cause;
- You have been wrongly asked to move to another unit because you are overhoused (more people in your unit than the rules allow).

Guest Policy

Please keep in mind that you are responsible for your visitors. If you have visitors, it is important that you and your guest are respectful of the rules, regulations and other tenants. You are not permitted to have boarders or lodgers under any circumstances.

Guests may come to the unit as frequently as the Tenant invites them to visit.

Any Tenant may invite guests into their unit for up to 2 days without gaining the permission of BCHC.

If a Tenant wants a guest to stay for longer than 2 days and up to 14 days, they must contact the Client Manager, stating the guests name and the length of time the guest would like to stay. The Client Manager may agree to the stay and may confirm in writing to the Tenant the length of the stay permitted. There may be extenuating circumstances where the Client Manager gives permission for the Guest to stay beyond 14 days. The Client Manager may refuse the request if: it appears that the Guest does not intend, or has no prospects of, moving at the end of the agreed to term; Staff or Tenants have complained about the Guest's behaviour, and those complaints have been found valid.

If a guest continues to stay in the unit without the permission of BCHC, the Tenant will cease to be eligible for rent geared to income subsidy with 90 days written notice and will be responsible to pay market rent. The household will be given an Opportunity to Comment if it is applicable. The Household has the right to an Internal Review regardless of if they have had an Opportunity to Comment.

If the Tenant moves out of the unit, the guest must also move out immediately.

Absence from a Unit

If you are going to be away from your home for an extended period of time, please notify the office. You should also make arrangements for your mail, newspaper and other routine delivery people. Lock all your doors and windows before you leave and turn all lights and appliances off. A household receiving rent-gear-to-income assistance ceases to be eligible for such assistance if all of the members of the household have been absent from the unit for at least 120 days unless extenuating circumstances apply as approved by BCHC.

Damages and Charge backs

If damages occur at your unit or in your building by you, or a person (guest) that you permit on the property or a pet (yours or one that you permit in your unit), BCHC will charge you the cost to repair or replace damaged property. This does not include regular wear of property but damage caused willfully or by negligence. Tenants are charged according to BCHC Charge Back Policy. Tenants will receive a letter outlining the labour and material charges enclosing any applicable invoices. Tenants are charged actual material costs less applicable tax rebates received by the Corporation.

Eviction

Eviction is always a last resort. Our goal is to provide safe, affordable and well-maintained housing and for you to remain in your home. If you have a problem paying your rent on time, please let us know right away and our staff will try to work with you to find a solution.

The *Residential Tenancies Act* provides the following grounds for eviction:

You may be evicted if you:

- Do not pay your rent; frequently pay your rent late;
- Have more people living in the unit than health, safety or housing standards allow;
- Give false information about your income or the income of other family members living in a rent-gear-to-income unit.
-

You may also be evicted if you or your guests:

- Cause damage to your unit or the building;
- Make noise or act in a way that seriously bothers any other tenant or the landlord; threaten the safety of another resident;
- Break the law on BCHC property.

You may be evicted if you keep a pet that:

- Injures someone;
- Causes damage and you fail to pay the cost of the repair when asked to do so;

- Makes an unreasonable amount of noise or is an unreasonable nuisance; disturbs the reasonable enjoyment or the other tenants.

NOTE: This section is not intended to be legal advice. For legal assistance, you can contact Grey-Bruce Community Legal Clinic at 1-877-832-1435 or 519-370-2200 or www.gblegalclinic.com Or if you require further information about the *Residential Tenancies Act* you can contact the Landlord Tenant Board at 1-888-332-3234.

Tenant Neighbor Complaints

Bruce County Housing Corporation asks that you keep in mind that everyone has the right to live as they choose, as long as this does not lead to risks for the safety or security of other tenants or disturb other tenants.

Bruce County Housing Corporation has a Tenant Complaints Process. At your lease signing you received a copy of the brochure *Tenant Complaints Process*. This brochure explains what a complaint is, what BCHC will do, and what steps you should take as a tenant. If you have questions about the complaints process contact the Client Manager for more information.

Bruce County Housing Corporation can only take action if the activities happen on BCHC property and are a threat or interfere with the reasonable enjoyment of BCHC tenants and guests and BCHC has the authority to deal with the complaint.

Safety & Security

Secure Entrances – Adult & Senior Buildings Only

All Adult and Senior buildings have a secure entrance. Please ask the Client Manager or Maintenance staff for instruction on the enterphone system. Guests must enter the building using the main entrances only. When using the enterphone system, be sure to ask the caller to identify him or herself so that “uninvited” persons cannot gain access to the building or your apartment. If someone you do not know is trying to enter the building, do not let him or her in. Ask them to contact the person they wish to see, and that person can let them in. Close and lock your apartment and building doors at all times.

Safety Tenants - Adult & Senior Buildings Only

Some Adult and Senior Bruce County Housing Corporation buildings have Safety Tenants to assist staff concerning the activities in the building after business hours and in the event of an emergency. The responsibilities of the Safety Tenant will include the following: react to fire alarms when activated; assist with fire drills; give access to contractors to the building when staff not available; and assist staff in emergencies. For assistance after hours, you are asked to call the after hours emergency number at 519-396-3439 or 1-800-265-3022.

Workplace Safety Policy

Bruce County Housing Corporation (BCHC) is committed to providing a healthy, comfortable and productive work environment for our employees.

To ensure staff safety while visiting in your home we ask:

- Please secure pets while BCHC employees visit, as pets are sensitive to their space and may become protective, putting employees at risk
- Please do not smoke while BCHC employees visit. In compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, smoking will be prohibited in all enclosed workplaces and enclosed public places in Ontario as of May 31, 2006. While employees visit in your home this area becomes their work place. This policy applies to employees and contractors.
- BCHC staff wears safety shoes in your home for their protection.
- Please ensure walkways to your home are clear so that the BCHC employee can safely approach your home.
- Please ensure there are no hazards in your home that would endanger you or the persons providing service.

BCHC Staff Entering Your Unit

In some cases BCHC Staff may need to enter your unit without written notice as per the Residential Tenancies Act:

A landlord can enter a tenant's rental unit without written notice if:

- There is an **emergency** such as a fire or water leaks, etc.
- The tenant agrees to let the landlord in,
- The landlord or tenant has given a notice of termination, or they have an agreement to end the tenancy, and the landlord wants to show the unit to a potential new tenant (in this case, although notice is not required, the landlord must try to tell the tenant before entering for this reason).

In most cases BCHC will enter your unit only after having given you at least 24 hours written notice. In any case where at least 24 hours written notice has been given to the tenant the written

notice will set out: the reasons for entry; the date the Landlord will enter and the time of entry between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

BCHC will enter the unit once they have given the tenant **24 hours written notice** for the following reasons:

- To make repairs or do work in the unit,
- To carry out an inspection, where reasonable, in order to determine whether repairs are needed or to conduct an annual inspection of property
- To allow a potential tenant, mortgagee or insurer of the complex to view the unit,
- To allow a potential purchaser to view the rental unit (note: the Act also allows a registered real estate agent or broker to enter for this purpose if they have written authorization from the landlord),
- To allow an engineer, architect or other similar professional to make an inspection for a proposed conversion under the Condominium Act; or
- For any reasonable purpose allowed by the rental agreement.

Mould & Mildew

To prevent mould and mildew please run the exhaust fan in the bathroom when bathing or showering and the exhaust fan in the kitchen when cooking. Periodically wipe down walls and ceilings that contain condensation or moisture with hot water and dish soap or bleach or TSP.

Do not pile objects or furniture tight against walls; allow enough space for air to circulate behind furniture so that the walls can breath.

Asbestos

The Bruce County Housing Corporation has established an Asbestos Management Program to manage all asbestos found on the property in a safe and prudent fashion. If you have any questions regarding asbestos in your building, contact the Maintenance Department at 1-877-396-3450 press 1.

Electrical Baseboard Heaters

Do not place anything in front of or on top of baseboard heaters, as this is a fire hazard. Please keep all flammable materials, such as furniture, curtains, bedding or clothing away from heating sources.

Electrical Cords

For safety reasons:

- Do not place electric cords under rugs, where they can be walked on, or in a place where damage can go unnoticed.

- Check for cords that are broken, frayed, damaged, tied in knots, or that have melted insulation. Unplug them and replace immediately
- Extension cords should only be used as a temporary measure. Use power bars and avoid overloading plugs.
- Insert and remove plugs by grasping the plug, but be careful not to let your fingers touch the metal prongs. Removing a plug from a receptacle by pulling the cord can damage it.
- Do not run extension cords from inside your unit to outside.

Window Safety Stops

For safety reasons, do not tamper with or remove the safety stops that prevent the windows from opening fully. These safety features are for your protection. Maintenance Staff will be examining that these devices are still in working order as they conduct Unit Inspections.

Door Closure

An important note to tenants who live in apartment buildings: you must never disconnect your apartment door closer. A door closure has been installed in each apartment of all of the adult and senior buildings. The door closure is there to meet fire regulations and must be left on. Please do not block your apartment door open. Report any defective door closers to the Maintenance Department at 1-877-396-3450 ext 101 promptly.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

For your fire protection, your unit has been installed with a smoke/heat detector. Each unit has a hard wired smoke detector. The family units have both hardwired and battery detectors. Never disconnect the detectors. Your tenancy could be in jeopardy if you disable the detectors. It is a Provincial Offence to tamper with a smoke alarm. The smoke detectors are tested annually and the batteries replaced (where applicable). Contact the Maintenance Department if the detector is not working properly and it will be replaced.

Basements

If you have a basement, please do not use any part of it for sleeping. This is against fire regulations. Most basements do not have proper fire exits. The tenant is responsible for ordinary cleanliness in the basement. Please do not store garbage or overload the basement area with unused items.

Bruce County Housing Corporation will report any Fire Code Infractions to the local Fire Department to investigate, as violations to the Fire Code are a provincial offence.

Fire Safety - Emergency Procedures for Occupants

It is the responsibility of all tenants:

- To be familiar with and follow occupant emergency procedures in the event of alarm or fire.
- Assist persons not familiar with the building in the event of an emergency.
- Survey the building to determine the number of exits available.
- Know the location of fire protection equipment in the common areas of the building. (Know the locations of manual pull stations and fire extinguishers).
- Be familiar with fire hazards and control fire hazards in your own unit. Do not block exit doors. Exit doors must be accessible. Exit doors must not be held open unless they have approved hold-open devices that release upon activation of the fire alarm system. Keep exit routes and fire doors clear of all obstructions.

A) In the Event of Fire or Smoke

- Leave the fire area, taking any persons in the immediate vicinity with you.
- Close doors behind you to limit fire and smoke spread.
- Activate the fire alarm at the nearest pull station to alert occupants; pull the manual fire alarm pull station.
- Exit the building as soon as possible.
- Go to the designated meeting area outside of the building and follow direction of the persons in charge.
- Do not re-enter the building until it is declared SAFE to do so by the Chief Fire Official.

B) If You Hear the Fire Alarm Signal

- Shut down cooking equipment or other equipment that when left unattended could cause a fire.
- Leave the building immediately.
- Before opening door of unit or stairwell doors, feel door and doorknob for heat. If not hot, brace yourself against the door and open it slightly. If you feel air pressure or a hot draft, close door quickly. Use alternate exit. At the alternate exit repeat this process. If there are not safe exit doors or you are physically challenged follow the "Stay & Defend Procedures" as described later in section D.
- Close all doors behind you.
- Remain Calm.
- Go to the designated meeting area outside of the building as noted on the posted evacuation plan and follow the direction of the persons in charge.

C) Evacuation Hints

- DO NOT DELAY WHEN YOU HEAR THE FIRE ALARM SIGNALS.
- WALK, DO NOT RUN.
- Do not retrieve personal belongings.
- Keep calm, assist others to exit.
- Reassure others and keep calm.
- Report to Chief Fire Official any persons who refused or were unable to exit the building.
- DO NOT return to the building unless authorized by fire and emergency services.

D) “Stay and Defend Procedures”

If you cannot leave the building by any exits because of fire or heavy smoke or you are physically challenged, remain and:

- Never open a door without first feeling the door for heat. Do not open a hot door. If door is cool, brace foot 6 inches from door, open slowly. Close quickly if you feel air pressure or a hot draft. If you are trapped in a room or area with no safe exit route, stay put.
- Inform 9-1-1 or fire department of your location if you must stay in the building.
- Close all doors to slow down spread of fire and/or smoke.
- Unlock doors for possible entry of firefighters.
- Seal all cracks where smoke can get in, especially around the doorframe and heating and air conditioning vents. Use wet towels and/or a roll of strong wide masking tape. Fill bathtub with water.
- Put a white sheet at your window or on your balcony to let firefighters know of your location from outside of the building.
- Crouch low to the floor if smoke enters the room.
- Move to the most protected area or balcony.

REMEMBER: Remain Calm

If you are being evacuated, report to the assembly area as instructed by the Police or Fire Department. Do not leave the assembly area until an Official has accounted for you.

Maintenance & Repairs

Unit Inspections

Generally inspections of the Family Units will take place annually and the Adult and Senior Units will be inspected every second year. If there is reason to believe that the unit is not being satisfactorily maintained building inspections will take place more often. You will receive at least 24 hours written notice prior to a unit inspection setting out the reasons for entry; the date the landlord will enter and the time of entry between 8:00 a.m. and 8 p.m. BCHC staff can enter the unit even if the tenant is not at home, after having given the correct notice.

Non-Emergency Repairs

Please report any non-emergency maintenance repairs to the Maintenance Department during regular office hours from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by calling 1-877-396-3450 or 519-396-3450 and press 1. A repairperson will be scheduled to come to your home. We aim to address all reports of maintenance repairs within the next business day.

Under normal circumstances 24 Hour Notice will be given before entering an apartment to do repairs.

**Maintenance Repairs During Business Hours Call:
1-877-396-3450 or 519-396-3450
Press 1**

Maintenance Emergencies

Emergencies include no water, no heat, no power in the unit, broken water pipe, and fire. Call day or night to report maintenance emergencies. A landlord is not required to give notice to enter a unit in the case of emergency.

**After Hours/Weekends/Holidays
Maintenance EMERGENCIES Call:
1-800-265-3022 or 519-396-3439**

Moving Out

The Residential Tenancy Act states, when you are moving out of your unit, you must provide at least 60 (sixty) days written notice or if moving to a retirement home or nursing home thirty(30) days is required or in case of a death the estate will be held responsible for (30) thirty days from the date of death. Please provide your written notice to the Client Manager. Your final day to move out will be the last day of the required notice. You are responsible to pay rent for the last two months of occupancy. We require that you provide us with a complete forwarding address or contact information.

Your unit should be left in good condition. We ask that you:

- Clean the refrigerator and stove
- Sweep the floor
- Wash out the interiors and surface of cupboards
- Clean sink, toilet and tub
- Remove all carpeting
- Remove any double faced tape under the carpet and marks made from tape
- Wash kitchen walls
- Remove all wallpaper
- Remove all nails and hooks (do not fill holes)
- Remove all garbage and unwanted personal items
- Remove all items from storage room
- If you have painted your unit, please contact the Maintenance Manager for instructions prior to move out. You may be required to return the unit to its original state.

Additionally if you reside in a family unit we ask that you:

- Remove all personal belongings and any garbage or debris from the yard
- Clean patios and balconies removing any personal belongings or garbage
- Sweep the basement floor
- Wash the laundry tub.
- Remove appliances if you own your own

If you are unable to do a satisfactory clean up, we suggest you hire a cleaner to do it for you. BCHC will invoice you for all labour and material costs incurred by us should we be required to clean or dispose of unwanted items in your unit. Please do not remove light fixtures, curtain rods and TV cables that are the property of BCHC.

All keys must be returned to Bruce County Housing Corporation. You may return them to the maintenance staff or directly to the office.

Community Services

211 Your Community Connection

(Information about financial assistance, children and youth services, supports, legal assistance, employment, programs for seniors and much more)

Dial 2-1-1

Bruce County Housing Corporation Kincardine

1-519-396-3439

1-800-265-3022

Bruce County Social Services (Ontario Works) Walkerton

For information regarding social assistance.

1-800-265-3005

Children's Aid Society of the County of Bruce Walkerton

1-800-461-1993

Closing the Gap Owen Sound

1-519-370-2165

Bruce Shoreline Team (Southampton) Central Grey Bruce Team (Hanover)

1-519-797-2880

1-519-364-7788

Home & Community Support Services Walkerton

1-519-881-4800

Landlord Tenant Board

For information regarding the Residential Tenancies Act

1-888- 332-3234

Mental Health Crisis Line of Grey & Bruce

1-877-470-5200

Ministry of Community & Social Services Owen Sound

For information regarding ODSP

1-800-265-3790

Grey-Bruce VON

1-800-265-3138

New Directions for Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Problems
Owen Sound **1-800-265-3133**

Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey
www.whbc.on.ca **1-800-2653026**
Kincardine **1-519-396-9814**

Y Housing Support Program **1-800-265-3711**

Canadian Mental Health Association **1-519-371-3642**

Alzheimer Society of Grey Bruce **1-800-265-9013**

Grey Bruce Community Access Centre **1-888-371-2112**

Community Connections: Housing & Support **1-800-235-2967**

Victim Services of Bruce Grey & Owen Sound **1-888-577-3111**

**CALL 911 IF YOU NEED AMBULANCE,
FIRE DEPARTMENT OR POLICE**

NOTES: