

Northumberland County Community Housing Directives

Housing Services Division

555 Courthouse Road

Cobourg, Ontario K9A 5J6

Subject: Social Assistance and Non-Benefit Income

Directive Number: 2021-11

Effective Date: Upon issuance, October 18, 2023

Intent

To set out the requirements for the determination and verification of social assistance income, benefit unit composition, and non-benefit income for the calculation of rent-geared-to-income (RGI).

Background

A benefit unit is a family unit (or part of a family unit) that receives social assistance – either Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). A benefit unit can consist of:

- a single person
- a person and their spouse
- a person, their spouse and their dependent children
- a person and their dependent children.

Dependents over the age of 18 may still be included as part of their parents' Ontario Works or ODSP benefit unit. Ontario Works and ODSP refer to these people as dependent adults.

When calculating rent-geared-to-income (RGI) for benefit units, housing providers are required to verify:

- the number of people included in an Ontario Works or ODSP benefit unit
- the current monthly net amount of social assistance received.

This information is required to determine the amount of non-benefit income and whether or not the social assistance scales apply.

The Ontario Works or ODSP office determines the size of the benefit unit and the amount of social assistance payable.

Statement of Assistance

Ontario Works and ODSP benefit units receive a monthly Statement of Assistance that sets out the names of all family members included in the benefit unit, as well as the net monthly social assistance payment. The net payment is the amount paid to the benefit unit after deductions (e.g. income deductions, overpayment deductions).

The Statement of Assistance is the standard for the verification of net social assistance income and the composition of the benefit unit. Social assistance recipients may access their Statement of Assistance through MyBenefits

Where the Statement of Assistance is not available, the RGI tenant or co-op member may provide a letter from the Ontario Works or ODSP office setting out the current net social assistance amount and the number of people in the benefit unit.

Ontario Works and ODSP pays out the following special benefits that are not based on basic needs and shelter. Recipients are not benefit units as defined under the Housing Services Act, and RGI is not calculated against this income.

- Temporary Care Allowances – payable through Ontario Works to an adult who is providing temporary care for a child who is not their dependent, and for whom they have no legal obligation to provide support. The benefit is payable on behalf of a child and is intended for their care.
- Financial assistance for financially dependent parents – payable through Ontario Works to a person under the age of 18 who lives with their parent(s) and has a child of their own. The benefit is for the care of the child only.
- Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD) – payable through ODSP to the parents of a disabled child to assist them with disability related expenses and respite costs.

Non-Benefit Income

Non-benefit income is the adjusted family net income (AFNI) of a benefit unit – excluding the income of full-time students – less the net social assistance amount set out in the current Statement of Assistance.

- If AFNI is determined based on approximated net income, all Ontario Works and ODSP payments are excluded, leaving only non-benefit income.
- If AFNI is determined based on tax-based net income, non-benefit income is determined by deducting the current monthly net social assistance income from the monthly AFNI (i.e. Line 23600 of the income tax return divided by 12 months).

Amounts on Statements of Assistance for Temporary Care Allowance, financial assistance for financially dependent parents or ACSD are not deducted from AFNI in determining non-benefit income.

Where non-benefit income is above the applicable non-benefit income limit in the social assistance scales, this amount is used in the calculation of RGI instead of the full AFNI amount.

Repealed Rules

N/A

Legislative Authority

O. Reg. 316/19 s 3

If there are any questions please contact the Service Manager, Northumberland County Housing Services at 905-372-3329.