

Toronto Community Housing

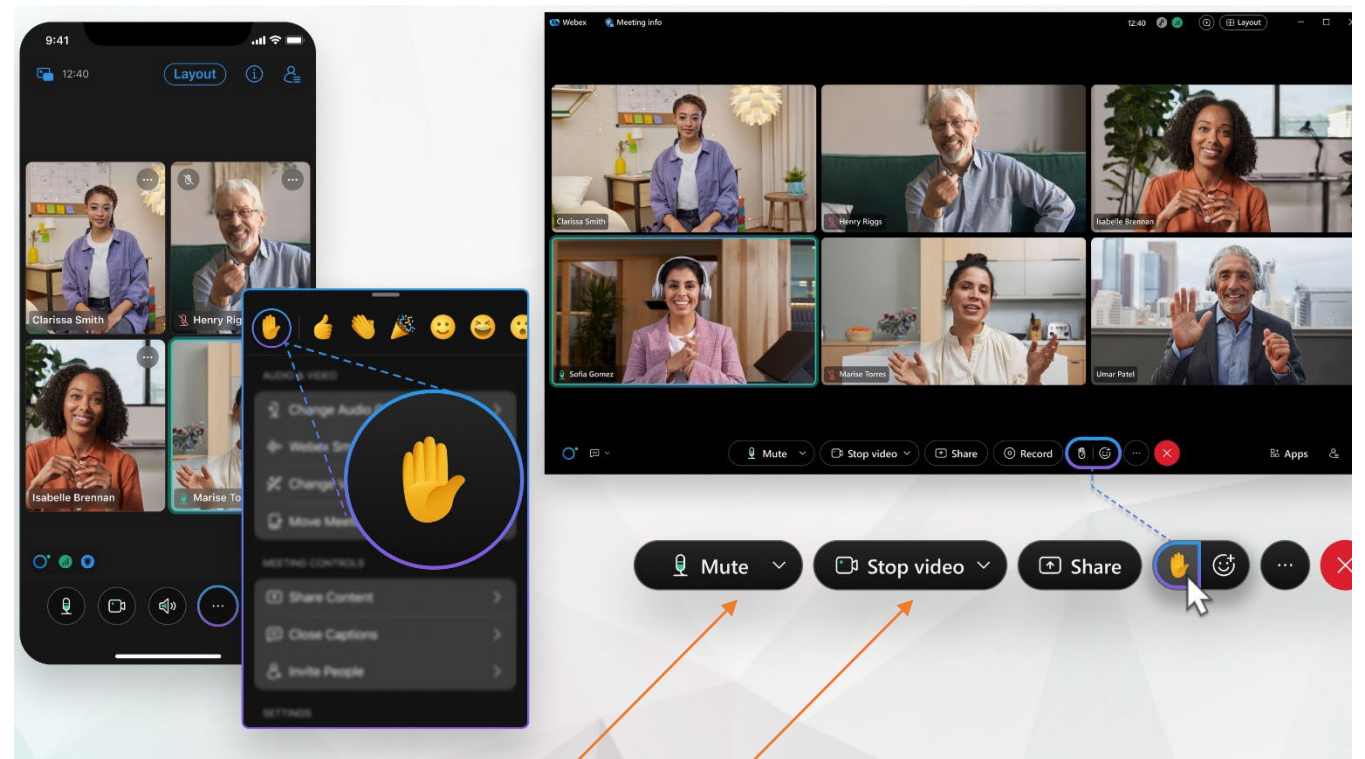


Tenant Human Rights Redesign Project

Virtual Tenant Consultations

August 2023

- Keep your microphone and camera off to maintain good connection
- Mute/Unmute with number “6” on cell phones
- Use the “raised hand” button at the bottom
- Ask questions through chat
- No sound? Leave and re-join



Meeting agenda

1. Introduction
2. Land Acknowledgment & African Ancestral Acknowledgement
3. Housekeeping and Ground Rules
4. Parking lot
5. Project overview
6. Reasons for the project
7. TCHC's Human Rights policies

Meeting agenda (cont'd.)

8. Issues with the current system
9. Ombudsman recommendations
10. Purpose of today's consultations
11. Next steps
12. Facilitated Discussions

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to start by honouring the land that we are on.

This land has been the site of human activity since time immemorial. It is the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Anishnabeg [AH-nish-NAW-bay], the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee [HUD-ne-SHOW-knee] Confederacy and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nation.

Ontario is covered by 46 treaties and other agreements, and is home to many Indigenous Nations from across Turtle Island, including the Inuit and the Métis. These treaties and other agreements, including the One Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, are agreements to peaceably share and care for the land and its resources. Other Indigenous Nations, Europeans and newcomers were invited into this covenant in the spirit of respect, peace, and friendship.

We are mindful of broken covenants and we strive to make this right, with the land and with each other. We are all Treaty people. Many of us have come here as settlers, immigrants or newcomers in this generation or generations past.

African Ancestral Acknowledgement

We acknowledge all Treaty people, including those who came here as settlers – as migrants either in this generation or in generations past – and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.

Housekeeping and Ground Rules

- **Raise** your hand if you would like to ask a question
- **Listen** to others and allow them to speak
- **Respond** respectfully
- **Observe** the Tenant Charter principles
 - **Respect**
 - **Community collaboration**
 - **Accountability**
 - **Integrity**
 - **Accessibility**

Tenant Charter

The purpose of the tenant charter is to communicate Toronto Community Housing's service commitments and set out accountabilities for all tenants and employees. Everyone working at, living in or visiting Toronto Community Housing shares the responsibility of maintaining a culture of respect, safety, equity and inclusiveness.

Accessibility for persons with disabilities

Toronto Community Housing is and will continue to be committed to providing accessible service. This includes meeting its duty to accommodate disabilities under the *Human Rights Code*, and the standards set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Accountability

All employees will:

- Support our mission to provide clean, safe, well-maintained, affordable homes
- Make information about service standards and processes for addressing service requests or complaints readily available
- Take ownership and update tenants in a timely manner on the status of their request or complaint according to the applicable service standard
- Hold service providers working on Toronto Community Housing properties accountable
- Take appropriate tenancy management action to address illegal activity and antisocial behaviour on Toronto Community Housing property
- Provide language interpretation at tenant engagement meetings upon request

All tenants will:

- Be transparent and accountable when they represent other tenants via the Tenant Engagement System
- Maintain their own units, keep common spaces clean and be responsible for their own conduct as well as the conduct of occupants, guests and all pets they bring into the community
- Report safety issues and/or hazardous conditions to staff

Community Collaboration

All employees will:

- Support community engagement by sharing opportunities to participate in activities that help create healthy communities
- Promote and communicate environmentally friendly activities
- Provide access to common spaces in a fair and equitable manner
- Work collaboratively with community partners and provide relevant information to tenants to maintain successful tenancies

All tenants will:

- Have the opportunity to vote for position(s) in Toronto Community Housing's Tenant Engagement System
- Have the opportunity to participate in meetings and community activities
- Have the opportunity to take a leadership role in organizing local initiatives and represent the needs and wishes of their communities

Integrity

All employees will:

- Work to earn, develop and maintain trust of tenants through honest, accountable and transparent service
- Provide service in an unbiased and equitable manner
- Support an inclusive environment that promotes dignity and respect
- Show commitment and dedication to any task being undertaken

All tenants will:

- Support an inclusive environment that promotes dignity and respect

Respect

All employees will:

- Provide respectful, professional and courteous service at all times
- Listen and acknowledge issues and concerns raised by tenants
- Communicate in a clear and open manner

All tenants will:

- Communicate and interact with all persons who live in and work at Toronto Community Housing in a polite and courteous manner

Nothing in this charter should be seen to take away from the rules set out in any laws, such as the Residential Tenancies Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code, Toronto Community Housing policies, or any other legal commitments, such as a lease.

To request this poster in an alternate format or language, please contact us at:
TorontoHousing.ca 416-981-9500 help@torontohousing.ca

Toronto Community Housing

What does human rights mean at TCHC?

- Every person in Ontario has the right to be free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of protected grounds such as race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and family status
- Every person also has the right to be accommodated based on their needs as a member of a protected group
 - Example: a person with a physical disability may need an automatic door opener to their unit

Project overview

- Toronto Community Housing is improving its tenant Human Rights system. This includes:
 - Human Rights complaints
 - Accommodation and accessibility requests
 - Certain requests for transfers
- The project is necessary to address issues in how tenant Human Rights issues at TCHC are received, investigated and resolved.
- Purpose of the project is to move TCHC to a centralized, proactive and equity-focused response that respects the dignity of all our tenants.

Reasons for the project

- Early 2022: TCHC began planning this project. The executive leadership team approved the project charter in October 2022.
- In July 2022, the Ombudsman began an investigation into TCHC's tenant Human Rights complaint process.
- Both TCHC and the Ombudsman found that there were serious issues with the Human Rights system at TCHC that required change.

TCHC's Human Rights policies

- Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy
 - Tenant Complaint Procedure
- Tenant Transfer Policy
 - Rules of Procedure
- Other policies that engage Human Rights
 - Eviction policies
 - Relocation Policy

Issues with the current system

- Both TCHC and the Ombudsman identified several issues with the current system:
 - Policies, procedures and forms are out of date
 - There is not enough public information about how to lodge a complaint and what happens next
 - Tenants and staff are confused about how a complaint or request is investigated and resolved
 - There is no formal way to appeal a decision about Human Rights

Ombudsman recommendations

- The Ombudsman made 14 recommendations for TCHC to improve its tenant Human Rights system, including:
 - Revising policies and procedures to create a clear and consistent complaints process and accountability mechanisms
 - Better communicating about policies and procedures to tenants
 - Strengthening how complaints are documented
 - Better tracking of complaint data
 - An appeal mechanism for Human Rights complaints
 - Staff training
- TCHC will follow all of these recommendations, as we also update the rest of the Human Rights system

If you have a Human Rights issue to report:

- If you have a Human rights issue to report
 - Visit the TCHC website for information about how to
 - make a complaint about human rights
 - request a human rights accommodation
 - Make a complaint or accommodation request through the call centre
- If you are working with someone else at TCHC about your issue, you should contact that staff member to follow up

Purpose of today's consultation

- Understand what tenants think is necessary in the new system in three areas:
 - How tenants get information about the Human Rights system at TCHC
 - Best practices for the complaint intake, resolution and appeals process
 - What staff supports tenants need to access the system
- It is important that today's consultation focus on what can be done to improve the Human Rights system at TCHC from your point of view

Next steps

- Tenant consultations
- Implement interim complaint procedure
- Policy review
- Implement enhanced supports for staff and tenants
- Staff training
- TCHC will provide an update on the project to tenants by end of 2023

Today's Consultation: Break-out groups

- You will be placed in a breakout room facilitated by a TCHC team member
- In each room, you will be asked to provide feedback on what can TCHC do to improve the following?
 1. How do you want to **receive information** about the human rights system? (ie. The website, in print, at your Hub, at your Building, from staff?)
 2. How should we **intake or receive** human rights complaints? (ie. Online form, Client Care, in-person, other ways?)
 3. How should **we resolve** human rights complaints that we receive? (ie. A phone call, meeting, written response, follow-up?)
 4. How do you think the **appeals process** should work after we respond? Who do you expect to appeal or escalate to?
 5. What type of **staff support** do you think should be in place across the whole process?