

Tenant Handbook



**Georgian Bay Native Non Profit Homes
Parry Sound Non Profit Housing Corporation
The Sound Community Hub (PSAHDC)**

Welcome to your new home whether you are a member of the Georgian Bay Native Non Profit Homes, Parry Sound Non Profit Housing or The Sound Community Hub we are excited to have you part of our organization.

This handbook is filled with information about your home and your community. It gives practical information such as, how to pay rent, how to get repairs done and how to recycle. It also shows how you can work with your neighbours and staff at Georgian Bay Native Non Profit Homes, Parry Sound Non Profit Housing, or The Sound Community Hub to build a community you can enjoy and take pride in.

Every tenant has something to contribute to the life and success of their home, building and neighbourhood. I look forward to working with you.

Howard Wesley

General Manager

How to connect:

o For Emergencies

- ❖ Call 911 for emergency help
 - If there is a fire or smoke in your building
 - If a crime is taking place
 - If someone is seriously ill or injured
 - If the carbon monoxide (CO) detector alarm rings
 - Call Crime Stoppers at 222-TIPS to report information about a crime

For Maintenance & Administration

- ❖ Email your non profit or Call 705-746-7474

GBNNPH Email: gbnnp@icloud.com

PSNPHC Email: psnphc@icloud.com

The Hub Email: psahdc@icloud.com

- If there is no heat, electricity or water in your apartment and your provider for these utilities cannot help you
- If you are locked out
- To report a leak, flood or plugged toilet
- To ask for a repair
- To reach staff
- To ask a question, give a compliment or make a complaint

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How the Non Profit Housing in Parry Sound Works

Georgian Bay Native Non Profit Homes (GBNNPH), Parry Sound Non Profit Housing Corporation (PSNPHC), and The Sound Community Hub (PSAHDC) work together to manage 171 units.

GBNNPH has detached homes, row houses, and apartments.

PSNPHC has a seniors apartment building, family apartment buildings, and row housing

PSAHDC is called The Sound Community Hub and is mostly bachelor homes

The buildings are managed directly by the staff that report to the General Manager.

- Questions about your lease, your rent account, or transfers should be emailed to the correct non profit email or visit our shared office at 86 Gibson St. Parry Sound ON

GBNNPH Email: gbnnp@icloud.com

PSNPHC Email: psnphc@icloud.com

The Hub Email: psahdc@icloud.com

Your Rent

Paying Your Rent

Your rent is due on the first day of each month.

You can pay your rent by cheque or cash at the office 14A Parry Sound Rd or 86 Gibson St., or by online banking (e transfer). If you are email transferring money please direct your payment to the correct company email;

GBNNPH Email: gbnnph@icloud.com

PSNPHC Email: psnphc@icloud.com

The Hub Email: psahdc@icloud.com

If you can't pay the rent

We want you to keep your home! If you are having trouble paying your rent, contact the Housing Office right away. If you are in a crisis, we can arrange a payment plan that will work for you. We can also link you with services that can

Rent-geared-to-income (RGI)

Some tenants pay rent-geared-to-income, or RGI. These rents are subsidized to about 30 per cent of the entire household's gross income. That means:

- Your rent is not covered by rent control.
- Generally, households with the same income will pay the same rent, whether they live in an apartment or a townhouse.

REPORTING CHANGES IN YOUR INCOME OR HOUSEHOLD

The Government of Ontario sets the regulations for RGI subsidies. **To keep your subsidy, you must:**

- Report to **District Social Services Administrative Board (DSSAB)** any changes to your income (increases and decreases) right away. **Do not wait until the annual rent review.** If you do not report changes, your rent increase will be back-dated.
- Report to **GBNNPHI, PSNPHC, PSAHDC and DSSAB**, changes to your household right away – a new baby, a student returning from college or university, a long-term guest, or anyone else who joins or leaves your household.

ANNUAL REVIEWS

Annual reviews are conducted by the Parry Sound District Social Services Board, for the RGI Units at PSNPHC and the Affordable units at PSAHDC.

GBNNPH rents are calculated by the Staff of GBNNPH.

Market Rents

These rents are similar to those charged by a private landlord.

Market rents can change once a year to reflect changes in your building's expenses or changes in policy. You will receive 90 days' notice from the first day of the month if your rent is changing. Rents in GBNNPHI., PSNPHC and PSAHDC like all other non-profit housing, are not covered by rent control.

Tenants paying market rent can apply for Rent-geared-to income (RGI) subsidy. You can get an application form at the DSSAB office at 1 Beechwood Drive or on our website at gbtnph.ca or psnphc.ca

Your Home

Appliances

Talk to the Staff before installing an air conditioner. Staff may need to check that the wiring is safe and that the unit is securely mounted so it doesn't fall out. To save energy, look for the Energy Star rating before you buy; you will find it on a sticker on the air conditioning unit. Seal any air leaks around the unit. In the winter, take the unit out of the window.

Balconies

If you have a balcony, enjoy the fresh air!

Remember:

- Don't put carpet on the balcony. Wet carpets can damage the concrete.
- Don't use your balcony for storage.
- No barbecues are allowed on balconies. They are a fire hazard and a nuisance for your neighbours.
- Supervise young children and pets whenever they are on the balcony.

Cable

Cable is not included in your rent.

Cable can be purchased from Cogeco in some buildings. Satellite services are NOT ALLOWED. Our Staff can tell you which services are available in your building.

Charges

Always report problems right away.

There is no charge for normal maintenance. But, you **can** be charged for damages if:

- Your family, guests or pets damage your unit or common spaces.
- Repairs are needed because you do not take proper care of your apartment or townhouse. This may include emergency work. For example, you might have to pay for water damage from a leak you did not report.
- You lose your keys.
- You ask for service after hours for work that is not an emergency.
- Your unit is in very bad condition (beyond normal wear and tear) when you move out.

Decorating

Enjoy making your home beautiful and comfortable. But remember:

- Permanent changes are not allowed. For example, do not replace floors or remove doors or fixtures.
- Use only adhesive or sticky picture hooks to hang pictures. Do not use nails or hooks because they permanently damage the walls.
- Use double-sided tape if you put down carpet. Do not use nails, staples or glue.
- Use “dry strippable” wallpaper that will not damage walls when it is removed.

Check with Housing Staff if you have any questions.

Garbage

AT BEAUCREST

- Bring all recycling – paper, bottles, cans, and plastic food jars and lids – to a recycling container in your building.
- Regular garbage goes down the chute. To prevent clogs:
 - Tie all garbage in small plastic bags.
 - Double-bag kitty litter and diapers.
 - Don't put glass, aerosol cans or large items down the chute.
- To get rid of furniture or other large items, ask your Building Staff.

IN TOWH HOUSES AND SOME SMALLER BUILDINGS

- Your unit comes with 1 blue recycling bin, for containers and one for paper/fibre.
- Your unit comes with a plastic garbage container. Put garbage in securely tied plastic bags inside the garbage container.
- Oversized items should be brought to the proper location. Contact the Property Manager if you need assistance with oversized items.

Take your recyclables, garbage, yard waste and organics to the curb on the morning of pick-up. Remove bins promptly after garbage pick-up, and keep them in your apartment, on your balcony or by your door/stairway or other suitable area.

Hazardous waste

You are responsible for disposing needles, paint, solvents and batteries. Talk to your staff at the Office for instructions.

Heat and hydro

Housing Staff can advise you who to contact to set up your own utility account.

SAVING ENERGY

You can help keep costs down by following these tips:

- Don't heat the great outdoors! If your unit is too hot in winter, don't open your windows. Turn down the thermostat.
- Save energy in the kitchen. Put lids on cooking pots. Never leave stove elements on after use, or use the oven to heat your apartment. Don't leave the fridge door open, and don't set the fridge temperature at the highest setting.
- As for repairs. A leaking tap can fill a bathtub full of water in one day, and lead to mould problems. Broken windows or faulty sliders can cause drafts and waste energy.
- Get the "green" habit. Turn off lights when you leave a room. Plug electronics into a power bar, and switch off the entire bar when not in use. Turn down the thermostat or air conditioning when you go out for long periods. Close curtains to keep out the heat on summer days, and open them in winter to let the sunshine in.

Insurance – protect your belongings

Housing does not provide insurance for your belongings.

We strongly encourage you to purchase a Tenant Insurance Package. It:

- May help you replace furniture, clothes, kitchenware and other belongings damaged by fire, flood or theft
- May pay for damage you, your family, or guests might cause
- Meets the insurance requirements to book common rooms for parties

Contact local insurance companies for prices and details.

Pests

Unfortunately, cockroaches, mice, and other pests can sometimes get into buildings. They are worst in places that are unclean, cluttered, overcrowded or too warm.

Help control these unwanted visitors.

- Keep your unit clean. Dispose of garbage properly.
- Tell our team if you spot cockroaches or pests. If treatment is needed, follow the preparation instructions exactly to get the best results.
- Do not feed pigeons, squirrels or stray animals. This can attract such pests as mice, rats, skunks and raccoons.

BEDBUGS

Bedbugs have become a problem in Ontario in recent years. Controlling them depends on fast and thorough action.

- Report any infestation to our team right away.
- If treatment is needed, follow instructions exactly. Otherwise, the treatment will not work.

You can help prevent bedbugs by getting rid of clutter and vacuuming regularly.

Repairs

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Call 705-746-7474 for emergency repairs

ROUTINE REPAIRS

GBNNPH Email: gbnnph@icloud.com

PSNPHC Email: psnphc@icloud.com

The Hub Email: psahdc@icloud.com

Or Contact the office at 705-746-7474 for items including

- Appliances that don't work properly
- Broken plumbing or light fixtures
- Damaged floors, walls, ceiling, doors or windows

Routine repairs will be completed within five working days. If the job will take longer, we will tell you and explain why.

Snow removal

Tenants in row houses and some apartments must remove snow from the public sidewalk in front of their homes, and from their own walk and steps. Tenants with disabilities can contact their ODSP caseworker to arrange for snow removal.

Yard care

Tenants in houses or row houses are responsible for cutting grass, raking leaves, trimming hedges and caring for their yards.

Don't forget to compost your leaves and clippings – to make fertilizer to keep your garden beautiful or to donate to a Community Garden in your neighbourhood.

Your Building

Community services

In some buildings, local agencies provide children's programs, exercise programs, community meals, or other services for both tenants and non-tenants use these convenient services.

Laundry rooms

Most buildings have laundry rooms with washers and dryers. Hours are posted in the laundry room. In some buildings each unit has a locker in the laundry room to house their laundry supplies. Tenants must provide their own lock.

If you see a broken washer or dryer, call 705-746-7474 so that repairs can be made in a timely manner.

To get the cleanest clothes – and stop machines from breaking down – do not over-fill the machines or add extra water. In front load washers, you'll get the cleanest clothes by using cold water and half the soap you normally use.

Parking

Some buildings have assigned parking and some do not. Information about tenant parking and visitor parking can be found by calling the Office at 705-746-7474

If your vehicle is parked on property and it is not working or has an out-of-date license plate, it will be removed at your expense.

Staying Safe

Fire safety

Fire safety is a top priority. Staff test all fire and safety equipment regularly, and test smoke alarms every fall.

Be prepared before fire strikes. Know where the exits are, and plan at least 2 escape routes should an exit be blocked. If you have a disability or know you will need help to leave the building, talk to the Staff/General Manager.

If you suspect fire, sound the nearest alarm and call 911.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors

Your unit has either an electric or battery-operated fire alarm. Check regularly to make sure it is working. If you have a CO detector, ask the Staff to explain how to maintain it.

If your smoke alarm goes off and you are sure there is NO FIRE:

- Open your windows
- Fan the smoke
- Keep your apartment door closed so smoke does not go into the hall.

If the CO detector goes off, call 911.

Never disconnect fire alarms, CO alarms or automatic door closers. If they are a nuisance, talk to the Staff/General Manager.

Community safety

The safest buildings are where people know their neighbours, participate in social activities and work together for the good of their community.

Tenants have helped make their buildings safer through Crime Stoppers. Tenants can also join or start a Neighbourhood Watch group in their building/area.

You can do your part to keep safe.

- Always keep your apartment door locked
- Don't prop open doors
- Don't let in strangers.
- If you have concerns about why someone is in your building, tell your building staff or call 705-746-7474

Personal safety

In many buildings tenants have a "buddy system" to check on each other.

Reporting crimes

Call 911 if you think a crime is taking place in your building, or someone is in danger.

Tell the police if you want to remain anonymous. You can also call Crime Stoppers at 222-TIPS if you want to report a crime and wish to remain anonymous. Crime Stoppers does not use call display.

Tell us about your concerns so we can follow up.

Getting Involved

Every tenant is part of the Housing community. When you work together with other tenants and staff, you help to make your community a friendly and safe place to live.

You also have a voice in the decisions that affect you.

- **Suggest new ideas.** Many of the best programs and activities, and the most workable solutions to problems, come from tenants.

Community Economic Development

Housing is committed to finding ways to build economic opportunities for you and your neighbourhood. Housing has helped students find summer jobs, and others have partnered with community business to provide opportunities for tenants.

Speak to your General Manager to find out more.

Investing in our youth

Housing invests in our children and youth through:

- Co-op education programs
- Youth employment and training programs

Making Buildings Better

Every year, we invest money to make our buildings more environmentally friendly and to repair the buildings that need it most. This includes replaced old light bulbs, improving recycling and garbage disposal areas, and make laundry rooms easier to use.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

This is your home. You can live here as long as you wish, provided you meet your responsibilities set out by law in the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

It is your responsibility to:

- Pay the rent on time every month
- Keep the apartment clean
- Report maintenance or repair problems
- Repair or pay for damage you cause:
 - In the unit or common area
 - By accident or on purpose
 - By you, your household, your pets or anyone you invite into the building
- Give 60 days' notice if you plan to leave your apartment
- Report changes to your income or household composition

As your landlord, Housing has some important responsibilities. We must:

- Supply vital services – fuel, hydro, gas and hot and cold water (where required tenants must still maintain their own accounts for these services)
- Keep the building in good repair
- Comply with local health, safety and property standards and by-laws
- Provide a receipt for any payment, if you ask for one

Eviction

We do not want to evict you. We want to work out problems early so you can keep your home. Please contact our team if you cannot pay your rent, or if you run into other difficulties.

However, you *can* be evicted if you:

- Repeatedly pay your rent late
- Misrepresent your household income

- No longer qualify for RGI housing and fail to pay market rent
- Make noise or act in a way that seriously bothers any other tenant or the landlord
- Keep a pet that injures someone, is an unreasonable nuisance, or causes another tenant to suffer a serious allergic reaction, and you do not deal with the problem in the way staff, acting reasonably, ask you to
- Threaten the safety of another tenant
- Have more people in the apartment than local health and safety by-laws or housing standards allow
- Break the law or run illegal business anywhere in the building or on Housing property.

What to expect from Staff

Our staff and contractors have a code of Conduct that includes;

- Accept tips, money or gifts from tenants
- Sell services or items to tenants
- Buy property from tenants or their families
- Accept fees for services from tenants
- Trade services for property with tenants
- Use or take tenants' property, even if it is left in the building
- Borrow money or possessions from tenants
- Witness a will, oath or sworn statement for a tenant (except for a relative), or act as the executor of a tenant's will
- Be on the job while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Abuse tenants in any way
- Discriminate against or harass tenants in any form

If you feel staff has broken this code, please report the incident to the Housing General Manager.

COMPLAINTS WITH STAFF

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received from staff, or from contract personnel and staff, ask to speak with the General Manager.

The General Manager will record your complaint and try to resolve it within 10 business days.

Human Rights

Housing is an inclusive community that treats everyone fairly. We uphold the Ontario Human Rights Code, and all provincial and town policies.

We also have our own Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy. Harassment can include unwelcome or offensive comments or jokes, threats, insulting gestures, spreading false rumours, distributing pornography, threatening to “out” gays or lesbians, refusing to work with persons from a specific group, unwelcome touching, and physical or sexual assault.

Everyone is encouraged to first try to resolve problems themselves directly. If that is not possible, you may file a written complaint with the Housing General Manager.

Privacy

You have the right to privacy in your home. Staff or contractors will only enter your unit if:

- We give you 24-hour written notice; or
- There is an emergency such as a fire or flood, or staff believe a tenant is hurt or ill and needs their help; or
- You are at home, answer the door and give the staff or contractor permission to enter.

Being a good neighbour

SMOKING

Tenants, guests and staff cannot smoke in public areas, including halls, lobbies, offices and common rooms. Your Lease will outline if your unit is smoke free.

PETS

You are responsible for your pet. You must clean up after it, repair any damage it causes, and make sure it does not endanger or disturb other tenants and staff. You are not allowed to keep an illegal pet.

COMPLAINTS WITH NEIGHBOURS

Tenants should try to work out conflicts among themselves. If this is not possible, you may file a written complaint. Contact our office for details.

Transfers to another unit

You may apply to transfer to another unit anywhere in Housing at any time. However, there may be a waiting list.

To apply, talk to your Housing office. Staff will explain the application process. The waiting list is general “first-come, first-served.” However, under very special circumstances, some people with urgent needs may be moved more quickly.

When you transfer, you must not owe rent or be involved in legal action with Housing. Your unit must also pass an inspection for damages.

Inclusive communities

Housing prides itself on the diversity of its communities. We want to make sure everyone can participate fully. We have a strong Human Rights, Harassment and Fair Access Policy.

Moving Out

Give Building Staff 60 days' written notice before you move out. This notice must be given on the first of the month. If you are moving to a care facility, staff can accept less than two months' notice.

Unit inspection

After you give notice, you and a Housing staff member will inspect your apartment.

- You may need to return your apartment to its original condition. (For example, you may have to remove wallpaper you put up.)
- You may also have to pay for repairing serious damage you caused or for cleaning an extremely dirty apartment.

Showing your unit

Once you have given notice, Housing staff may show your unit during reasonable daytime hours, to people who want to move it.

Elevator

Please tell the Housing staff the day and time you are moving so they can reserve the elevator for you, if applicable.

Keys

Please return all keys and gobs to the Housing office

Georgian Bay Native Non Profit Homes Inc.

Parry Sound Non Profit Housing Corporation

Parry Sound Affordable Housing Development Corporation

86 Gibson St., Shared Office
Parry Sound, ON
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