

Introduction to Rent Supplement

Program Brochure

What is Rent Supplement?

- Rent Supplement offers eligible low income households rent-g geared-to-income (RGI) accommodation in privately owned buildings.
- A rent supplement is paid to landlords to bridge the gap between the full monthly rent for the unit and the amount the tenant pays based on their income.

Different types of Rent Supplement

Commercial Rent Supplement

- Introduced in the 1980's
- Potential tenants are referred to the landlord from the Social Housing Registry
- Tenant's rent payable is geared to their income
- Funding is shared between the federal government and the municipality

Strong Communities Rent Supplement

- Introduced in 1999 and was formerly known as the Homelessness Rent Supplement Program
- The goal of this program is to reduce the pressure on Social Housing wait lists
- Program evolved to also include 'in-situ' tenants (*eligible tenants who currently reside in a unit and are in good standing with their landlord*)
- Tenant's rent payable is geared to their income
- 100% provincially funded

Housing Allowance Rent Supplement

- Introduced in 2007 and is a component of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program
- Designed to provide adults, families and seniors with short-term assistance, while they wait to be placed through the Social Housing Registry
- Rent Supplement is a flat rate based on unit size
- Subsidy is only available to persons moving into a vacant unit (i.e 'in-situ' is not allowed)
- Funded by the federal and provincial governments

| Responsibilities of the Tenant | Responsibilities of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville | Responsibilities of the Landlord |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pay rent on time ■ Remain a tenant in good standing ■ Report changes in income and household composition to the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Human Services Division within 30 days of the change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Determine eligibility of prospective tenants ■ Calculate rent-g geared-to-income payable by tenants ■ Refer prospective tenants to landlord when units are vacant ■ Pay the rent supplement directly to the Landlord by the first of each month | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rent collection ■ Maintenance ■ Repairs and normal services offered to market tenants ■ Respect the tenant's right to confidentiality ■ Serve notices directly to the tenant as well as the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (e.g. rent increase, termination, eviction, arrears, etc.) |

Finding Affordable Housing



The average rental rate within Leeds and Grenville is not affordable for minimum wage earners and other low income households.

An individual must earn \$27,040 per year (\$13/hour) to afford rent of \$700 per month.

Minimum wage in Ontario:

March 31, 2010

\$10.25/hr **OR** \$21,318.36/year (40hrs/wk)

Locally, vacancies are listed within the following ranges:

Bachelor: \$400 to \$650 per month
 1-Bedroom: \$575 to \$800 per month
 2-Bedroom: \$650 to \$900 per month
 3-Bedroom/House: \$900 to \$1,300 per month

(lower end of the scale does not include utilities)

Finding housing that is truly affordable for low-income households is a challenge.

The Faces of Rent Supplement

- Low income seniors
- Low income adults
- Aboriginals
- Recent immigrants
- Victims of domestic violence
- Families
- Persons with disabilities

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is Social Housing?

A. Social Housing refers to rental housing developed with the assistance of government subsidies for people with low to moderate incomes, seniors or persons with special needs who can live with supports, in the community.

There are four types of social housing in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.

- Public Housing (owned and operated by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville)
- Rent supplement units (contractual agreements with private landlords)
- Non-Profit Housing (funded provincially and/or federally)
- Cooperative Housing (funded provincially and/or federally)

Q. How many Social Housing units are within Leeds and Grenville?

A. Within Leeds and Grenville there are approximately 1,248 social housing units.

Q. What is the purpose of Social Housing and the Rent Supplement Program?

A. The goal of social housing is to provide safe and affordable housing for individuals and families within their community.

Rent supplement programs were introduced as a pilot project by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 1974. These programs provide an opportunity for private landlords to be involved in affordable housing by designating units for rent-geared-to-income tenants in the program.

Q. Who pays the rent?

A. The tenant is responsible for paying rent-geared-to-income directly to the landlord on the first day of each month. Rent payable by the tenant(s) is approximately 30% of their gross household income. The balance of the full monthly rent is paid directly to the landlord by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville on the first of each month.

Q. How do people qualify to be placed on the Social Housing Registry?

A. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- At least one (1) member of the household must be 16 years or older and able to live independently
- All household members must be Canadian citizens or have applied for permanent resident status or made claim for refugee status under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada) and no removal order has become enforceable
- No member of the household owes arrears to any social housing provider in Ontario
- The household has not been convicted of misrepresenting their income for the purpose of RGI assistance
- Must have income and assets below the prescribed limits

Q. How does a landlord get new tenants?

A. The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville manages the Social Housing Registry for all rent-geared-to-income units. Applicants choose where they would like to live, and based on eligible unit size are placed on the wait list for those areas. When a landlord advises that a unit is vacant, three eligible households are referred to the landlord. The landlord selects one of the three households for the unit.

Q. May I screen prospective tenants?

A. You are permitted to screen tenants as allowed by the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.

Q. What role does the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville play in rent supplement?

A. The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville determines eligibility of prospective tenants, refers eligible applicants when there is a vacancy, calculates the rent-geared-to-income payable by the tenant(s) and pays the rent supplement to the landlord.

Frequently Asked Questions

The relationship between the landlord and tenant(s) remains unchanged. The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville does not participate in the landlord-tenant relationship.

Q. What happens if there are damages to the unit?

A. All regular maintenance is the responsibility of the landlord. Charges for wilful damage or neglect caused by the tenant(s) are the responsibility of the tenant(s).

If the tenant vacates the unit, and repairs are necessary as a result of undue damage caused by the tenant, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will consider reimbursement of pre-authorized expenses to a maximum of \$500. Certain terms and conditions apply.

Q. Can a landlord charge the tenant first and last month's rent?

A. A landlord is only permitted to charge the tenant first month's rent. Should a vacancy arise while the unit is under an agreement with the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, full monthly rent is paid for the unit during the first month of vacancy. This arrangement negates the need to charge the tenant last month's rent.

Q. Can I raise the rent?

A. Landlords are permitted to increase rent once every 12 months. Rent increases must be in accordance with the rent increase guidelines published by the Ontario government each year.

Q. What happens if a tenant leaves without giving proper notice?

A. If a tenant leaves in the middle of a month we will not pay the rent owing for the month they left. We will pay the full monthly rent for the following month, if that time is required to prepare the unit for the next tenant. If the unit is vacant for more than one month, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville will only pay 50% of the full monthly rent for the second month.

Q. What happens if there is still a tenant in the unit and I want to terminate the agreement with the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville early?

A. Landlords must give a minimum of 60 days notice if they wish to terminate the rent supplement agreement. However, if a tenant is still occupying the unit, the terms of the agreement will remain in effect until the tenant vacates the unit.

Q. What do I do if a tenant informs me that he/she is leaving?

A. Landlords are responsible for notifying the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville immediately. This allows the Case Manager to refer prospective tenants in order to fill the unit in a timely manner.

For More Information:

**The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Human Services Division
Community and Social Services**

Community Support Coordinator

613-342-3840, Extension 2401

Toll Free: 1-800-267-8146