



Aboriginal Housing Management Association
Over 25 years of Indigenous housing expertise.

For Immediate Release:
January 29, 2024

AHMA Welcomes Long-Awaited Changes to RTA for Supportive Housing Operators

Recent changes to BC's Residential Tenancy Act help enhance risk management for supportive housing operators and safety for their tenants, which the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) strongly advocated for in early 2023.

Unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, Vancouver BC (January 29, 2024) – The Province of BC recently announced amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) to clearly define supportive housing and exempt supportive housing units from sections of the RTA that prohibit guest policies and wellness checks.

“AHMA, our allies, and our housing sector partners have advocated for these specific changes to the RTA as experts in housing and we are grateful for being heard,” said AHMA CEO, Margaret Pfoh. “The inclusion of a supportive housing definition and exemptions for guest policies and wellness checks is an important next step in providing legal certainty and managing risk for supportive housing operators and tenants.”

For providers who operate supportive housing under the RTA, these are welcome changes that give operators the ability to manage guests in their buildings and conduct wellness checks, which are critical elements to protecting the safety of tenants and staff.

“These two areas of the RTA have been the source of numerous challenges in recent years,” adds Pfoh. “The new amendments were long overdue, and the updates reflect recommendations outlined in AHMA’s policy submission on *Supportive Housing and the Residential Tenancy Act*, released in June 2023. AHMA welcomes these historic changes.”

Legislative amendments to the RTA will come into effect on **February 28th, 2024**. The Province and BC Housing will provide materials to support the transition of this regulatory change such as best practices for conducting wellness checks and implementing reasonable guest policies. BC Housing contracted housing operators will also be required to have policies for guest management and wellness checks.

The RTA establishes the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in BC and governs supportive housing. Tenants living in supportive housing can continue to access the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) dispute resolution process for issues related to sections of the RTA that continue to apply to supportive housing.

While the RTB will continue to oversee the dispute resolution process for housing tenants, supportive housing operators are still expected to have internal complaints resolution process available. If the complaint cannot be resolved internally it can be scaled to BC Housing who will assist in resolving the complaint.

Learn more:

To read the BC Governments news release on recent changes to the RTA,

Visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024HOUS0007-000053>

To read documents released by BC Housing that will be useful in understanding how these changes impact the operations of supportive housing,

Visit: <https://letstalkhousingbc.ca/supportive-housing-updates%C2%A0>

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