

Metro Vancouver Housing Tenant Relocation Strategy

The [Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan](#) (2019) provides a vision and framework to guide how Metro Vancouver Housing will **provide**, **preserve**, and **expand** its portfolio of affordable housing over the next decade. As one of the largest non-market housing providers in the region, Metro Vancouver Housing recognizes the opportunity and need to increase its portfolio of affordable rental housing across the region. One way to do this is through redevelopment of existing housing sites.

While no one wants to move, sometimes it is necessary to relocate tenants for redevelopment or major building renovation that requires units to be vacant. Metro Vancouver Housing will work closely with tenants and member jurisdictions to ensure that our tenants are fully supported in the event they need to relocate.

The Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) regulates all tenancy agreements in residential rental units in British Columbia, and sets minimum requirements that landlords must adhere to when ending a tenancy due to redevelopment or major building renovation that requires units to be vacant.

In addition to RTA requirements, many local governments have also adopted Tenant Relocation Policies, that sometimes involve different requirements for non-market housing providers.

The supports outlined in this strategy do not replace requirements set out in the RTA or municipal policies. They are intended to supplement the provisions outlined in the RTA, complement municipal Tenant Relocation Policies, and provide a clear and consistent approach where municipal policies do not exist.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Provide secure and equitable rehousing options** – Metro Vancouver Housing will provide secure rehousing options that are equitable and appropriate, based on individual housing needs.
- **Limit disruption and preserve community connections** – Metro Vancouver Housing will seek to minimize the disruption of relocation, and strive to meet tenants' preferences, considering access to schools, transit, places of employment, health requirements, and other community connections.
- **Provide coordination and support** – Metro Vancouver Housing will support tenants every step of the way with one-on-one coordination and support.
- **Maintain affordability** – Metro Vancouver Housing will seek to secure alternative housing that is affordable to tenants, based on their household income.
- **Ensure open and ongoing communication** – Metro Vancouver Housing will provide early notice of the intent to redevelop or renovate, and will ensure tenants are well informed with open and ongoing communication that is accessible for all tenants.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies provide a framework for Metro Vancouver Housing's approach to tenant relocation assistance and support where relocation is required as a result of redevelopment or major renovation that requires units to be vacant. Metro Vancouver Housing will work in cooperation with municipalities who have adopted tenant relocation policies or guidelines and will develop project-specific Tenant Relocation Plans in accordance with applicable local government policies.

1. Tenant Relocation Plans

- a) For each project requiring relocation, Metro Vancouver Housing will prepare a detailed Tenant Relocation Plan, clearly outlining specific information regarding the compensation and support that will be provided to each tenant household, in accordance with any municipal Tenant Relocation Policy and the Metro Vancouver Housing Tenant Relocation Strategy, as applicable.
- b) A Tenant Relocation Package will be created and provided to tenants once a formal project submission has been made to the applicable local government. The Tenant Relocation Package will include clear information outlining the process and timing for relocation, specific compensation and assistance that Metro Vancouver Housing will offer, and additional information about tenants' rights under the *Residential Tenancy Act*, municipal policies, and Metro Vancouver Housing policies.

2. Relocation Coordination and Support

- a) Metro Vancouver Housing will facilitate one-on-one meetings with each tenant household and will ensure that tenants are assisted throughout the process in a respectful, equitable, and effective manner.
 - i. Tenant households will be consulted regarding their moving requirements and preferences well in advance of relocation.
 - ii. Metro Vancouver Housing will consider the needs of vulnerable tenants (e.g. for seniors, people with disabilities or mental health issues) and will work with tenants to identify specific housing and support needs.
- b) Tenant households will be provided with a minimum of three offers for relocation; every reasonable effort will be made to match available units with household needs and preferences.
 - i. Offers of housing will be based on household composition.
 - ii. Offers of housing will reasonably accommodate medical requirements.
 - iii. Each tenant household will be provided with offers for relocation within Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio based on availability and suitability, provided that they continue to meet Metro Vancouver Housing's Income and Asset Limits, as set out in the [Tenant Selection Policy](#). Tenants will have the opportunity to view these offers and confirm rental rates before making their relocation decision.
 - iv. Tenants who exceed Metro Vancouver Housing's Income and Asset Limits for Low-End-of-Market will be provided with information on three suitable housing options in the private rental market.

- c) Metro Vancouver Housing will support relocations within and outside of its own housing portfolio.
 - i. Metro Vancouver Housing will provide information on other non-profit housing options in the area that may meet the needs and preferences of tenants, as available.
 - ii. Metro Vancouver Housing will work with other non-profit housing providers to secure appropriate housing for tenants, where applicable.
 - iii. Metro Vancouver Housing will support eligible tenants who are not currently Rent-Geared-to-Income to register on the Housing Registry (administered by BC Housing).
 - iv. For tenants relocating outside Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio, Metro Vancouver Housing will provide landlord references.
- d) Once a redevelopment or major renovation project has been formally submitted to the applicable local government, Metro Vancouver Housing will offer flexibility in terms of standard notice to end tenancy from tenants required to relocate (i.e., will accept less than one month's notice to end tenancy).

3. Moving Expenses and Compensation

- a) Once a redevelopment or major renovation project application has been formally submitted to the applicable local government, Metro Vancouver Housing will provide moving expenses to each tenant household (based on existing unit size) to cover reasonable costs for moving and utilities reconnection (e.g. hydro, telephone, internet) on a flat rate basis.
 - i. This compensation will apply to tenants who relocate within or outside of the Metro Vancouver Housing portfolio.
 - ii. Tenant households returning to a replacement unit in the new building will be provided the same moving assistance (based on existing unit size) upon their return.
- b) Once a redevelopment or major renovation project has been formally submitted to the applicable local government, Metro Vancouver Housing will offer compensation to all tenant households in line with what is required by the *Residential Tenancy Act*. Compensation will be allocated to tenant households following a move-out inspection.
 - i. The equivalent of one-month rent as compensation is required by the *Residential Tenancy Act* if tenancies are being ended with a Four Month Notice to End Tenancy for Demolition, Repair, or Conversion of Rental Unit.
 - ii. An early relocation bonus in the form of one-month rent will also be provided to tenant households who relocate before a Four Month Notice to End Tenancy for Demolition, Repair, or Conversion of Rental Unit is required.
- c) Tenant households in good standing may transfer security and/or pet deposits (including any interest accrued) to a new tenancy agreement when moving into interim units within the Metro Vancouver Housing portfolio and/or a replacement unit in the new building.

4. Affordability

- a) Metro Vancouver Housing will make every reasonable effort to ensure that affordability is maintained for existing tenants. In order to do so, tenants will need to provide information regarding income and household composition to enable Metro Vancouver Housing to provide offers for housing that best meets household needs.

- b) Existing Low-End-of-Market (LEM) tenant households that continue to meet Metro Vancouver Housing's Income and Asset Limits, as set out in the [Tenant Selection Policy](#), will be required to pay the rents that are applicable in their selected interim housing unit.
- c) Existing Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) tenant households that continue to meet Metro Vancouver Housing's Income and Asset Limits, as set out in the [Tenant Selection Policy](#), will be offered interim housing units within Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio based on their gross annual household income.
- d) Rents for replacement units in new buildings will be set at below-market rates as determined by Metro Vancouver Housing on a project-by-project basis.

5. Right of First Refusal

- a) Metro Vancouver Housing will make every reasonable effort to provide tenant households with a Right of First Refusal for a suitable replacement unit in the new building, provided that they do not exceed Metro Vancouver Housing's Income and Asset Limits for Low-End-of-Market and remain eligible for Metro Vancouver Housing.
 - i. Offers for replacement units in the new building will be based on household composition.
 - ii. Tenant households who are required to relocate due to redevelopment will be offered the Right of First Refusal whether they choose interim housing within or outside of Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio. Tenant households who secure interim housing outside of Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio must ensure that up-to-date contact information is provided in order to receive the offer for Right of First Refusal.
- b) Tenant households who choose interim housing within Metro Vancouver Housing's portfolio can elect to remain in their interim housing unit instead if preferred.

6. Communication and Engagement

- a) Tenant households will be provided with notice of a redevelopment or major renovation project at the earliest opportunity (e.g. during the pre-application stage of a redevelopment project), and will receive ongoing communication regarding the redevelopment/renovation and tenant relocation process (e.g. via regular correspondence, in-person or virtual group and one-on-one meetings).
- b) Metro Vancouver Housing will meet one-on-one with tenant households to identify their housing needs and preferences, and will provide each tenant household with a Tenant Relocation Package outlining the compensation and support each household will receive, along with additional information and resources relevant to the relocation process.
- c) Tenants will have opportunities to share ideas and feedback on the design of new buildings (e.g. municipal consultation processes, tenant meetings, or surveys). Metro Vancouver Housing will provide tenant households with notice of these opportunities in writing.
- d) Metro Vancouver Housing will document tenant relocation processes, offers of housing, and compensation for reporting purposes.