

**Ministry Responsible for Housing
and
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Policy Statement on Class 3 Supportive Housing

Title of Policy: Definition of “Supportive Housing,” Funding Requirements, and Designated Property in the *Assessment Act*

Issuance: Deputy Ministers, Ministry Responsible for Housing and Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Relationship to Previous Class 3 Policy Statement: This policy replaces the previous policy of August 2010

Effective Date: April 15, 2013

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy statement is to administratively define “supportive housing,” funding requirements and designated property for the purposes of the *Assessment Act* (the *Act*).

BACKGROUND

In furtherance of a 2007 Throne Speech commitment, section 19 of the *Act* was amended in 2008 to provide the Lieutenant Governor in Council with the authority to create a new supportive housing property class by designating eligible supportive housing property to this class for a taxation year. This amendment also provided that if the Lieutenant Governor in Council designated property to a new supportive housing property class, the designation would only apply to that portion of the property that is used for the provision of supportive housing or for purposes ancillary to the provision of supportive housing.

While section 19 of the *Act* defines “eligible supportive housing property” in relation to a taxation year, as “property that is used by or on behalf of a person who received funding from the government or a regional health board in the preceding calendar year for the provision of supportive housing on that property,” it does not define the term “supportive housing.”

Due to the fluid nature of housing policy, government decided not to define “supportive housing” in the *Act* but rather to define this term by policy.

DEFINITION OF “SUPPORTIVE HOUSING”

“Supportive Housing” means:

housing that integrates long-term housing units for persons who were previously homeless or persons who are at risk of homelessness, who may also

- have mental illness,
- have or be recovering from drug or alcohol addictions,
- or experience other barriers to housing,

with on-site support services that are available to residents of the housing project.

In the definition of “supportive housing:”

“long-term” means residents are not restricted by policy to occupancies of less than 90 days;

“on-site support services” are physically offered in the building’s offices or common areas, and include but are not limited to:

- a. health and mental health services;
- b. health and community support referrals;
- c. addiction services;
- d. employment and education services;
- e. job and life-skills training;
- f. assistance with meal preparation and housekeeping; or
- g. counselling and outreach services.

“housing unit” means residential sleeping accommodation where the resident:

- a. controls access to the room or rooms the resident or resident’s family sleeps in;
- b. has access to private or shared bathroom facilities; and
- c. has access to private or shared cooking facilities.

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

Supportive housing does not include licensed facilities under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act (CCALA)*.

Supportive housing does not include “group homes.” For the purposes of this policy statement, “group homes” are defined as staffed residential housing for those with a level

of disability that requires continual assistance to complete daily tasks of living (such as taking medication, dressing or bathing).

To be eligible for Class 3 designation, the owner of the property must be one of the following:

- a. a public body (including local governments and regional districts);
- b. a non-profit organization; or
- c. a registered charity.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

As noted, section 19 of the *Act* defines “eligible supportive housing property” as “property that is used by or on behalf of a person who received funding from the government or regional health board in the preceding calendar year for the provision of supportive housing on that property.” The phrase “received funding from the government...for the provision of supportive housing” means that the project must receive ongoing operational funding from government or a regional health board for the provision of supportive housing, and not have been in receipt of capital funding only.

The phrase “funding from the government or a regional health board,” means funding received from the provincial government in accordance with the meaning of “government” in the *Interpretation Act*, or one of the province’s five regional health boards (health authorities).

To be eligible for a taxation year, properties must be in receipt of government or health authority funding on or before October 31 of the preceding year.

Properties (designated in the previous tax year) under renovation on the October 31 deadline, remain eligible if they intend to reopen as supportive housing and meet all other criteria.

Properties under construction (i.e., new buildings) on the October 31 deadline are eligible for designation if they are expected to open as supportive housing that meets these criteria and an occupancy permit is in place by the deadline.

DESIGNATED PROPERTY

A property will not be identified for designation unless it meets the definition of “supportive housing” (i.e., it must contain housing units and must offer on-site support services). However, it is acknowledged that a property that meets the definition of “supportive housing” may also include property used for purposes which may or may not constitute on-site support services (i.e., a retail space where residents may or may not receive job training).

Accordingly, the portion of the property that qualifies to be designated for the purposes of inclusion in Class 3 – Supportive Housing is:

- a. the property actually comprised of the housing units;
- b. the property used for purposes ancillary to the housing units (e.g., shared or private bathroom or kitchen facilities, hallways, etc.); and
- c. the property used for the provision of on-site support services.

ANNUAL TIMELINE

The steps involved in applying this policy and the Class 3 assessment process proceed according to the following annual timeline, to ensure the Order in Council is approved by the October 31 deadline for the following tax year.

By submitting a list of eligible properties, BC Housing and the Health Authorities confirm the properties meet the eligibility criteria for funding and use. BC Assessment confirms the ownership of the properties.

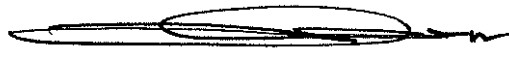
Action	Timeline	Primary Responsibility
Provide initial list of eligible properties	May to June	BC Housing and the Health Authorities
Inspection of eligible properties, and compilation of final list	July to August	BC Assessment
Sign-off of final lists	Late August to Early September	BC Housing and the Health Authorities
Compile final list for Order in Council	Early September	Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Submit Order in Council	Mid-September to early October	Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Approval of Order in Council	By October 31	Lieutenant Governor

POLICY REVISION

This policy is a joint policy of the Ministry Responsible for Housing and the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

This policy applies to the 2014 assessment roll and subsequent assessment rolls, unless amended at the discretion of the two undersigned Ministries. It is understood that direction and advice may be required and/or desired from BC Housing, Ministry of Health Services, the Health Authorities, and BC Assessment during the course of the implementation of the policy.


APPROVALS



Approved
Steve Carr, Deputy Minister
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas
(Ministry Responsible for Housing)

MAR 28 2013

Date



Approved
Don Fast, Deputy Minister
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

April 5, 2013

Date