



Family and  
Human Services

Services à la famille  
et à la personne



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April 4, 2017

Ms. B. Jane MacAdam, CPA, CA  
Auditor General  
Office of the Auditor General  
PO Box 2000  
Charlottetown, PE  
C1A 7N8

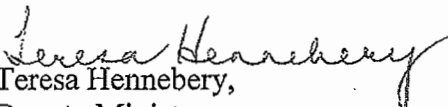
Dear Ms. MacAdam:

Please find enclosed the Department of Family and Human Services' response to your report on the Seniors Housing Program which was received from your office on March 10, 2017.

We have discussed the contents of your report and note that some of the issues identified therein were known to the Department prior to the start of your audit. Management and staff are in the process of identifying and implementing a number of measures to strengthen our policies, processes, and reporting. We will continue our work to address all the concerns in accordance with the timelines noted in the attached document. The Department aims to achieve full compliance with the ten recommendations by the end of 2017/18.

On behalf of Family and Human Services, I would like to thank you and your staff for your work on the Seniors Housing Program. We appreciate the time and attention given to this work by your office; the recommendations are valuable in assisting Housing Services to improve the quality and transparency of services provided to Islanders.

Sincerely,

  
Teresa Hennebery,  
Deputy Minister

TH/

Attachments

cc: Honorable Tina Mundy, Minister of Family and Human Services  
Sonya Cobb, CPA, CA, Director of Housing Services  
Chris Reeves, Provincial Housing Coordinator  
Dan Campbell, CFA, Secretary to Treasury Board

**Auditor General's Report on Seniors Housing Program  
Recommendation and Response Summary  
April 4, 2017**

#	Auditor General's Recommendation	Family and Human Services Response	Timeline to Complete
4.10	The Housing Services Division should prepare a long-term plan to address the current and expected future demand for low income seniors housing.	<p><b>Status: in Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provincial housing strategy was included in Minister Mundy's January 2016 mandate letter in recognition of the importance of having clear direction and plan.</li> <li>• Collaboration with CMHC has occurred to ensure Islander needs are represented in the national housing strategy (NHS) including: direct input, work with other provinces and territories in developing the vision, outcomes, principles and key pillars of the NHS and encouraging PEI stakeholders, and the public in general, to make submissions to the federal process</li> <li>• Statistical and demographic review of PEI environment completed.</li> <li>• Provincial Housing Strategy to be completed by late 2017.</li> </ul>	<p>January 2016</p> <p>Summer / Fall 2016</p> <p>Continuing to Fall 2017</p> <p>January 2017</p>
5.12	The Housing Services Division should establish a process for housing officers to verify income, assets and housing costs at the time of application.	<p><b>Status: in Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes to assess and verify assets are currently under review.</li> <li>• Housing Officers are reviewing standards of what documentation supports housing costs identified by applicants.</li> <li>• CRA Information Sharing Program was implemented in 2016 to verify applicant income; review processes to assess income at the applicant stage as opposed to the placement stage are currently being implemented.</li> </ul>	<p>September 2017</p>

#	Auditor General's Recommendation	Family and Human Services Response	Timeline to Complete
5.13	The Housing Services Division should ensure that housing officers comply with policy in assessing applicants.	<p><b>Status: in Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A management review and sign-off process has been added to the Application and Assessment form to ensure applicant assessments have been reviewed; are completed consistently by all staff; and any issues requiring updated policy, process or guidance are identified and addressed on a timely basis.</li> <li>• The new form will be formally implemented when other initiatives that impact the form are complete.</li> </ul>	September 2017
5.14	The Housing Services Division should implement a quality control review process for assessments.	<p><b>Status: in Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A management review and sign-off process has been added to the Application and Assessment form to ensure applicant assessments have been reviewed; are completed consistently by all staff; and any issues requiring updated policy, process or guidance are identified and addressed on a timely basis.</li> <li>• The new form will be formally implemented when other initiatives that impact the form are complete.</li> </ul>	September 2017
6.10	The Housing Services Division should develop a process to ensure accurate, relevant wait list information is available for the Seniors Housing Program on a timely basis.	<p><b>Status: in Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for a database was identified in November 2014.</li> <li>• Staff has been working on initial specifications for the database including what data fields need to be collected; it is expected that the current database used in the Charlottetown can be updated for use by the entire program.</li> <li>• Management has reviewed current wait list processes and presented findings to both Cabinet Committee on Priorities and Executive Council: direction on next steps has been received.</li> <li>• Direction, effective for new applications, has been implemented as of January 2017.</li> <li>• Policy is in the process of being updated to be consistent with direction provided.</li> </ul>	September 2017

#	Auditor General's Recommendation	Family and Human Services Response	Timeline to Complete
7.18	The Housing Services Division should ensure placements are made based on program policy. Exceptions to policy should be documented and authorized by senior management.	Discussions have occurred with staff regarding the importance of ensuring all documentation is on client files and the reasoning to support decisions is documented.	March 2017
7.19	The Housing Services Division should ensure sufficient documentation is maintained to support placement decisions.	Discussions have occurred with staff regarding the importance of ensuring all documentation is on client files and the reasoning to support decisions is documented.	March 2017
7.20	The Housing Services Division should provide guidance to housing officers regarding challenging applicants.	Processes are already in place to support difficult to place applicants to ensure they access other available services that can support a successful rental placement. Management will review, and improve, these processes as appropriate.	May 2017
8.3	The Housing Services Division should establish performance indicators as a basis to measure and report on program performance.	Performance indicators will be developed as part of both the provincial housing strategy and national housing strategy.	December 2017
8.4	The Housing Services Division should report publicly on the performance of its low income Seniors Housing Program.	Performance indicators developed as part of both the provincial housing strategy and national housing strategy will be reported publicly.	2017/18 Annual Report – Summer 2018