



## Tenant Complaints Update

Item 6B

July 5, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

**Report:** TSC:2021-48

**To:** Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

**From:** Acting Chief Operating Officer

**Date:** June 23, 2021

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an update on the Solutions program enhancements, and complaints data and trends.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the TSC receive this report for information.

### **BACKGROUND**

Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) is committed to providing a positive experience for our tenants. TCHC has adopted a single-stage escalation model for tenant complaints, which is supported by the Solutions team.

### **PROGRAM UPDATES**

The Solutions team has implemented the following program enhancements to improve service delivery:

**1. Raising Awareness:** The Solutions team, in partnership with Strategic Communications, will develop a communications campaign to further raise awareness on how tenants can file complaints at TCHC. With the

implementation of the communication campaign, it addresses a key recommendation made by the Ombudsman Toronto to TCHC in Q2 2021.

As part of the communication campaign, Solutions will look to share information through different communications channels to disseminate, including direct-to-tenant and through social media. As well, Solutions will partner with Regional Operations and Client Care Centre (“CCC”) to revisit how information regarding the complaints process can be shared through daily interactions and communications with tenants. The communications campaign will be implemented by Q3 2021.

**2. Improving Services:** The Solutions team continues to lead the refresh of the Tenant Complaints policy. The policy will outline the organization’s principles and approach to the management of complaints to resolution. In the recent tenant consultations held, the following highlights key themes identified based on the feedback provided by the tenants:

1. Transparency;
2. Accountability; and
3. Responsiveness.

As a next step, Solutions will integrate the feedback collected into the refresh of the Tenant Complaints policy. In addition, Solutions will engage TCHC leadership for further review and feedback. The updated TCHC Complaints policy will be brought to the TSC in Q4 2021.

## **COMPLAINTS DATA & TRENDS**

In May 2021, Solutions received 151 complaints. Of those complaints, the top complaints categories were: 34% (52) anti-social behaviour, 19% (29) building service, and 11% (16) building maintenance complaints.

Table 1: Total &amp; Top 3 Complaints, May 2020 &amp; 2021

	May 2021	May 2020	YOY Change	2021 YTD	2020 Total
<b>Total Complaints</b>					
Total	151	159	+ 8	937	2,322
<b>Top 3 Complaints</b>					
Anti-Social Behaviour	52	15	+ 37	210	409
Building Service	29	3	+ 26	163	423
Building Maintenance	16	2	+14	71	66

In May 2021, there continues to be an increase in reported anti-social behaviour complaints, as the COVID-19 pandemic stay at home measures have led to complaints that continued to be reported due to more frequent observations by tenants at home. As well, the increase in building services complaints can be attributed to complaints related to delays in services delivery and follow-up. Lastly, the increase in complains related to building maintenance related to a variety of issues including plumbing and pest control.

## LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

To support a culture of learning and continuous improvement, TCHC continues to use complaints data, CCC data and staff feedback to improve tenant services and experience. As a service oriented organization, TCHC views complaints and inquiries as valuable feedback 'gifts' as it represent key opportunities to uncover challenges and take the appropriate actions to strengthen service delivery to our tenants and communities.

### 1. Improving Service Delivery through Better Information Sharing

As service requests are created, they are assigned to staff to action. CCC began to receive complaints from tenants regarding parking inquiries that were not being resolved in a timely manner. A review was conducted and it was discovered that there was a portion of service requests that were not being completed due to incorrect assignment to staff. As a result, CCC partnered with Regional Operations, to conduct a process review of how parking service requests were assigned to the appropriate staff. This led

to the development of a 'Parking Group' distribution group through the EasyTrac system, which enables parking clerks to receive all parking service requests for their respective regions in a centralized manner and take the appropriate actions. Since its implementation, CCC has received less complaints regarding parking related concerns, while improving service delivery to our tenants.

## **2. Addressing Escalations Effectively and Clearly**

Since the inception of Phase 2 of the Air-Conditioner ("AC") replacement program in 2021, CCC has received complaints from tenants who have been advised that they are not eligible to participate, or had not received their AC in Phase 1 (2020). As a result, CCC partnered with the Facilities Management – Smart Building and Energy Management department to review the complaints and potential solutions. This led to the development of an internal escalation process, as well, a tenant frequently asked question ("FAQ") document, providing staff guidance on how to advise tenants on program eligibility, compliance, and warranty. As well, it provided CCC guidance to ensure that complaints raised by tenants for the AC program are addressed immediately and appropriately. Since the implementation, CCC has received fewer escalated calls regarding the AC replacement program as they are now able to educate callers on TCHC processes and procedures regarding the AC replacement program, as well set the appropriate expectations for service. Lastly, this resource document has allowed staff to be better equipped to de-escalate complaints through education.

## **3. Bringing Noise Complaints to Resolution through Collaboration**

As Solutions receive noise complaints, they often have difficulty substantiating and resolving noise complaints, as there is often a time lag between when the incidents occur, when the complaints are submitted, and when staff are able to investigate on-site. As a result, Solutions has partnered with the Community Safety Unit ("CSU") to investigate noise complaints. This has led to greater information sharing and established a process whereby Community Safety Advisors now are involved in noise complaints investigations; they now have access to incident reports and can immediately attend to buildings to determine the root causes of noise complaints and work with site staff to provide ongoing support for tenants.

This has led to a more effective manner in how noise complaints are investigated and brought to a resolution.

#### **4. Ensuring Consistency in Managing Complaints**

As Solutions receives complaints, there are instances where there are repeat or similar complaints from tenants. To ensure consistency in the manner of how responses are provided to tenants, Solutions has created response guidelines for selected complaints category. While each response and resolution is unique to each complaint, the response guidelines ensures that the response and resolution is provided in consistent and clear manner to the tenants. In addition, Solutions has also compiled and provided frequently used resources and procedures to support tenants with their complaints. Through this improvement initiative, tenants are not only are provided clear and consistent responses and resolutions but are also provided resources, as appropriate, which are drawn from the Solutions resource library.

#### **SIGNATURES:**

*“John P. Angkaw”*

---

John P. Angkaw  
Acting Chief Operating Officer

#### **STAFF CONTACT:**

La-Toya Hanchard, Manager, Tenant Relations  
416-981-4318  
Latoya.Hanchard@torontohousing.ca