

Unit Preparation Policy – Jan 2023

PURPOSE

Niagara Peninsula Homes, Property Management Staff, Maintenance Staff, and client Board of Directors would like to ensure that a high standard for units that are prepared for new households are in good, clean, rentable condition. If this policy is adhered to for each unit that is prepared for rental, our clients are assured and will be satisfied that the unit is given to the new household without any item left undone.

If a unit is rented with a higher standard of care, it ensures that any issues arising, after move in, will likely be caused by the new household. A household cannot say *“it was like that when I moved in”* if staff has the same standard of care for each unit prepared for rental.

**** It is the Property Manager who is the driver of move in dates, maintenance required in the vacant unit and ensuring it is ready for the move in date – in consultation with their maintenance. The Property Manager is responsible for their budget ****

Prior to Move Out of Household in the Unit

- Move out inspection must be done at the time of notice or when moved out.
- Staff to itemize work that needs to be completed by the member.
- Staff to generate a work order to maintenance for items that must be completed.
- Staff to contact contractors for items such as garbage containers, appliances, flooring, painting, furnace care, duct care, electrical, fencing, carpet cleaning pest control, and janitorial etc. All work shall be scheduled while the unit is vacant.
- Property Manager to submit to the Eligibility Administrator (EA), a firm date the unit will be completed. This date will NOT be negotiable with maintenance staff unless something major occurs.
- The date must be a specific date that the keys will be given to the new household. Not - hopefully by the end of the month or sometime early next month. If this happens the EA will bring it to Stella's attention.

Vacant Unit

- A final move-out inspection needs to be completed the first day after move-out. Staff need to ensure there are no additional items needing to be addressed from the pre-move out inspection, ie) plumbing, or flooring.
- Staff (PM) to complete list for maintenance to complete and ensure scheduling of contractors as required.

Scheduling of Work

If maintenance is back logged with work – **move in date should not be pushed.** Look to private contractors to stay on schedule. Often the vacancy loss is higher than the cost of a private contractor.

If there are extenuating circumstances, and the move in date cannot be met, a phone call should first go to the Eligibility Administrator to check where she is in the marketing process to see if a new household has already accepted the unit or not.

- Any belongings or garbage left in the unit must be cleared out immediately.
- Units should be painted in a neutral colour. Trim and interior doors should also be painted white or a colour that has been chosen by the provider with proper trim paint. (except for those Providers who allow the move in household to choose the colour)
- Flooring choices should be of a neutral tone that will co-ordinate with the unit, ie) no more blue carpet!
- A flooring care guide for laminate flooring should be left in the unit for the new household. This can be obtained from flooring contractor.
- Maintenance should ensure that while the unit is vacant, that the furnace/ducts are cleaned if applicable, furnace filter is changed, also leave an extra filter by furnace for new household to change when necessary. Maintenance should install a new battery in thermostat.
- It is suggested that an information guide should be available to new household, how to change furnace filter, what size is required, when you should change the filter and how to change battery in the thermostat, switching unit from heat to cool and even a what to do if I have no heat information. Checklist listing the emergency contact phone number.

Property Managers should consider having an in-suite information guide ready and or left in the unit prior to move in.

- Batteries, if applicable, should be replaced in smoke detectors and noted on work order. Smoke detectors older than 10 years should be replaced.
- Maintenance should ensure carbon monoxide detectors are not expired-plug ins only. If hardwired, your fire inspection contractor will keep date for provider.
- Maintenance to ensure **all** light bulbs are installed in all fixtures in the unit and of the same type/brightness.
- Maintenance should ensure that after painting **all** electrical, cable, and phone cover plates are reinstalled.
- Maintenance should ensure all locks have been changed and key box is updated with new keys for unit and mailbox.
- Maintenance should leave some paint in unit for touch ups for household.
- A final walk-through of the completed unit will be made before the key date, by the Property Manager, to ensure the unit is complete.
- Staff to ensure that all completed work orders, invoices for unit be filed into onsite maintenance file for that unit. By doing this we can keep track of what

we have done in the unit, flooring choices, paint colours, when units painted, when new appliances purchased, upgrades and capital replacements to unit.

Move-In Day / Key Day

- Households should not be given keys unless the unit is ready for move in. Key day and move in day should be the same day. The PM is responsible for testing the fire safety features with the household on the day they move in and completing the move-in inspection sheet. Both documents are to be sent to the EA immediately.
- PM should go over the following as applicable to the unit.
 - ✓ Shut off valves for sinks, toilets and main shut off
 - ✓ Electrical panel – and safety issues around keeping it clear
 - ✓ Thermostat
 - ✓ Furnace – how to change filters and when
 - ✓ Hot water tank – keep the area clear of debris.

Charge backs

- Chargebacks must be completed within three months of the current household moving in. Please see NPH Charge back procedure.
- Charge backs for former households to be completed as soon as invoices are received. Former households must be sent a letter of charges and invoices pertaining to the charges immediately thereafter – within three months of moving out.
- Letters to former household should be sent to the last known address. If it comes back *return to sender*, it should go in the file as proof that you tried to contact them regarding the chargebacks.
- Staff to send any arrears/chargebacks to NRHS Database.
- If you deal with a contractor who regularly sends in his invoicing late or a staff person who does not send in charges within two months of the unit being completed, the PM will need to have a conversation with them. It is unfair to the former household to receive chargeback information later than three months after moving out. It throws the budget off when invoicing is received late, and it is unfair to your EA who must keep following up with chargebacks before they can put the file away.

Janitorial

- All floors to be swept, vacuumed, and mopped.
- All appliances must be cleaned.
- Kitchen cupboards inside and outside to be cleaned.
- Bathrooms, including vanities, must be cleaned.
- All windows must be cleaned.
- All garbage must be removed.

Outside of Unit

- General garbage must be picked up.
- Any trip hazards marked.
- Any repairs to fencing – wired or board
- All gutters are in place.
- Soffits and fascia repaired if needed.
- Quick visual of roof and repairs made if needed.