



Durham Social Housing Directives

Housing Services Division | Financial Housing Services

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Subject:	STANDARDS – PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
Directive Number:	OPR 03-04
Revised Date:	October 2026

Purpose

To establish local property management standards for:

- Property management of community housing projects;
- Procurement of property management services;
- Contracting, oversight, and performance management; and
- Self-management through the hiring of Housing Provider staff.

This Directive ensures compliance with the Housing Services Act, 2011 and promotes accountable, transparent, and effective management of housing projects.

Background

The Housing Services Act, 2011 allows the service manager to make local standards about property management relating to its housing projects including the procurement of, and contracts for, property management services.

Definitions

Housing Provider – A non-profit or co-operative organization that provides subsidized housing.

Housing Project – All or part of the residential accommodation operated by a Housing Provider.

Board of Directors – The governing body responsible for oversight of the Housing Provider.

Property Management Services – Operational, administrative, financial, and maintenance services required to manage a housing project.

General Standards

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Ensuring housing projects are effectively and competently managed;
- Ensuring housing projects are maintained in an adequate state of repair
- Determining the appropriate management model (contracted or self-managed);
- Overseeing financial accountability and operational performance; and
- Ensuring compliance with this Directive and applicable legislation.

Housing Providers shall ensure that:

- Housing projects are well managed, maintained in a satisfactory state of repair, and fit for occupancy;
- All roles and responsibilities are clearly defined through job descriptions and/or contracts; and
- Individuals providing property management services are knowledgeable about:
 - The Housing Services Act, 2011 and applicable regulations;
 - All Durham Housing Directives
 - Program requirements; and
 - Governance structures applicable to the housing project.

Procurement Process

Housing Providers will establish and follow a transparent and competitive practices in tendering and contracting property management services.

Only the Region of Durham as Service Manager may decide if a housing provide may forego the requirement for the competitive process.

The Housing Provider may renew a property management contract at the end of its term without recourse to an open and competitive practice if it:

- is satisfied with the services provided over the course of the previous contract
- has reviewed the provisions of the contract and made any required changes

- has the approval of the Housing Services Division to renew the contract.

Required Contract Provisions

Property management services contracts must be in writing and should satisfy the following requirements:

- set out the term of the contract which cannot exceed a term of 3 years;
- specifically identify the goods and services to be provided, including all associated costs, expected payments, and any additional or additional fees (such as photocopies, gross revenue percentages, tribunal fees, lease-up costs, unit showings, capital expenditure management, mileage, banking fees, and any other related charges), with all costs full disclosed and no additional fees incurred unless explicitly outlined in the contract.
- detail the amount to be paid by the Housing Provider;
- prohibit the property management service from charging additional amounts without re-negotiation of the contract;
- be non-renewable;
- be non-assignable and include a requirement for the property management firm to disclose any changes in ownership or control;
- allow the Housing Provider to terminate the contract on 60 days' written notice any time during the term of the contract, or on 30 days' written notice if the termination is for breach of contract, unless the parties to the contract agree to shorter notice periods;
- include a training plan to ensure property management staff remain current with applicable legislation, as well as Service Manager's local rules, standards, and directives.
- the contract must also confirm that all financial, correspondence, and resident-related records, whether in paper or electronic format, remain the sole property of the Housing Provider and are returned in a timely manner upon termination or completion of the contract.
- to mitigate privacy risks, the contract must include provisions outlining the secure handling and disposal of records, including confirmation of the property management firm's process for deleting electronic information from its systems upon contract termination.

Best Practices

The property management contract or employment agreement shall require the Board of Directors to receive a manager's report at each Board meeting, outlining administrative, maintenance, tenant/member relations, and financial activities, including a complete set of financial statements.

Property managers and any subcontractors must maintain appropriate insurance acceptable to the Housing Provider prior to execution.

The contract must require that all tenant/member and Housing Provider information be treated as confidential and not disclosed or used without proper consent, and that the property manager complies with applicable conflict of interest policies.

In the event of non-compliance or a triggering event, the Service Manager may exercise remedies under the Housing Services Act, 2011, including termination of the contract.

Employment of Housing Provider Board Members

Housing Providers are prohibited from employing, or from entering into a contract for the services of a member of its Board of Directors.

Despite this prohibition, the Housing Services Division may give approval for a Housing Provider to employ a member of its Board of Directors if all of the following apply:

- the Board member is a resident of the Housing Provider
- the employment is to fill a temporary vacancy, and the Housing Provider is actively seeking someone else to perform the role
- the employment is of an on-call or casual nature
- the employment is non-supervisory and non-managerial
- the remuneration is nominal
- the Board Member is employed for no more than 6 months

Compliance

Housing Providers shall develop and maintain job descriptions, contracts, policies, and procedures, which must be available for review by the Service Manager upon request or during an Operational Review.

All property management contracts must be reviewed and approved by the Housing Provider's solicitor and the Service Manager prior to execution.

Housing Providers shall review this Directive with their Board of Directors, with such review documented in Board meeting minutes, and a copy retained with corporate bylaws for reference.

Housing Providers and their Boards are responsible for ensuring compliance with this Directive, and the Service Manager may verify compliance through review of Board meeting minutes.

As a best practice, Housing Providers are encouraged to conduct annual reviews of property management performance and contract compliance.

Effective Date

This local standard comes into effect on November 1, 2026.

Legislative Authority

Housing Services Act, s. 75
Ontario Regulation 367/11, s. 100