



## Tenant Complaints Update

Item 6C

September 14, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

**Report:** TSC:2021-60

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

**From:** Chief Operating Officer

**Date:** August 17, 2021

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with an update on the Solutions team 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 following provides an update on program enhancements that the Solutions team continues to implement to improve service delivery:

- 1. Standardizing 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. As a result of the tenant consultations held

with 55 tenants in April 2021, the feedback provided has been compiled into a summary report, which was published in August 2021.

The Solutions Team continues to integrate the collected feedback into the refresh of the Tenant Complaints policy, which has included targeted engagement with TCHC leadership. The updated TCHC Complaints policy will be brought to the TSC in Q4 2021.

- 2. Raising Awareness:** The Solutions team, in partnership with Strategic Communications, has developed a communications campaign to increase awareness on how tenants can submit complaints at TCHC. This addresses a key recommendation made by the Ombudsman Toronto to TCHC in Q2 2021.

The Solutions communication campaign raises awareness on the different ways tenants can submit their complaints and reaffirms our commitment to service delivery. The communication campaign was launched in August 2021 (e.g. social media, web banner, building posters) and will continue to be delivered through the balance of 2021 through the following channels:

- Social Media;
- Web Banner;
- Building Posters;
- Tenant LOOP (Fall 2021); and
- Digital Screens.

## **COMPLAINTS DATA & TRENDS**

In July 2021, Solutions received 107 complaints, which represents a year-over-year decrease of 94 complaints. Of these complaints, the top complaints categories were: 35% (39) Building Service, 23% (37) Anti-Social Behaviour, and 10% (11) Building Maintenance complaints.

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

	July 2021	July 2020	YOY Change	2021 YTD
<b>Total Complaints</b>				
Total	107	201	- 94*	1044
<b>Top 3 Complaints</b>				
Building Service	39	37	+ 2	239
Anti-Social Behaviour	37	26	+ 11	265
Building Maintenance	11	5	+ 6	80

\*Note: In 2021, Solutions has undertaken a review of complaints reporting data, which has resulted in the streamlining of reporting categories.

## LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS

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

### 1. Improving Services to Commercial Tenants

TCHC commercial tenants call into the Client Care Centre ("CCC") to report maintenance issues. CCC agents are the primary intake point for these requests and they assign maintenance requests to Maintenance Dispatch for vendor dispatch. However, complaints were received from commercial tenants regarding delays associated with vendor responsiveness and communication. In response, a working group was formed between the Commercial Business Unit and the CCC to review the maintenance dispatch process for commercial tenants. As a result, dedicated staff (e.g. Shift Leads) in the CCC were designated to support the appropriate intake and triage of maintenance requests from commercial tenants, which would then inform the appropriate assignment of work orders to vendors.

To support the implementation of this process improvement initiative, a communication strategy was developed that outlines the new process for commercial tenants. Also, the Dispatch Resource Guide in EasyTrac was updated for staff with the new process for dispatching vendors to commercial tenants and staff system profiles were also updated to have the commercial call queue dedicated to the Shift Lead team. This initiative was implemented in August 2021.

## **2. Improving Response to Complaints**

TCHC tenants call into the CCC to report Community Safety Unit (“CSU”) related complaints. While CCC agents would re-direct tenants to contact CSU Dispatch to submit their complaints and have their matter investigated and resolved, the CCC did not document any notes nor did they outline the process for tenants. To make the process easier for tenants to submit CSU related complaints, the CCC partnered with the CSU to improve the documentation and referral process. As a result, CCC agents now use EasyTrac to document and assign any CSU-related complaints received by the CCC. By using EasyTrac, it would allow the CCC to assign the complaint to the Community Safety Advisors (“CSA”) assigned to the specific areas; CSAs would then respond to all CSU related complaints within two business days. With this new process change, the CCC provides tenants a tracking number and they are able to inform tenants on the procedures for addressing CSU related complaints and convey the service timeline. This initiative was implemented in July 2021.

## **3. In-Suite Repairs Evaluation**

TCHC tenants have submitted complaints regarding the service and quality of work provided by vendors conducting repairs in their units. In response to these complaints, an inter-disciplinary group (e.g. maintenance leaders, building services leaders, tenant engagement, performance and quality) was formed to review and improve the in-suite repairs process. In addition, consultations were held with 20 tenants in June 2021; the feedback provided has been compiled into a summary report and will be considered for integration into the new in-suite repairs procedures. As well, an evaluation survey has been developed that will allow tenants to rate in-suite maintenance services provided by vendors

arising from their maintenance request. While a new in-suite repairs procedure is in the process of being finalized, further work is required to refine the in-suite maintenance tenant survey. To that end, a pilot program for the in-suite maintenance survey will be launched in Q4 2021.

#### **4. Delivering After-Hours Maintenance Services**

TCHC tenants have submitted complaints regarding the maintenance services they receive during after-hours. In response to the complaints, a pilot program was established in the West region that involved the deployment of a TCHC after-hours maintenance team, which responded to maintenance requests during the weeknights and weekends. As a result of the pilot program, the after-hours maintenance team was able to achieve a 77% first contact resolution rate and 93% attendance rate within four hours. In addition, site staff have provided feedback that maintenance work is being completed after-hours and there is noticeably less work being left for follow-up for the next day. Based on the result of the pilot program, TCHC is exploring the feasibility of scaling the delivery of after-hours maintenance services to other areas of the portfolio to better serve tenants.

#### **SIGNATURE:**

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