

# DSO Housing Navigation



# Developmental Services Ontario

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) is the single point of access and primary contact point for information about Ministry-funded adult developmental services and supports in Ontario

There are nine offices located across the province.

<https://www.dsontario.ca/find-your-dso>

# What are the Functions of the DSO

- Confirm eligibility for those applying for services and supports for the first time
- Complete the DSO Application Package to better understand an individual's service and support needs
- Provide information about and link people to MCCSS-funded services and supports, when they are available
- Provide information about alternative services and non-Ministry funded supports that are available in the individual's area

# History of DSO Housing Navigation



# Role of the DSO Housing Navigator AFTER the One (1) Year Expansion

The expansion of DSO housing navigation is confirmed until March 31, 2023

If the expansion concludes and one (1) Housing Navigator remains, DSO Toronto anticipates that housing navigation duties will continue much as they did prior to the expansion. Individuals, caregivers, and agency representatives will be encouraged to continue to make use of housing navigation resources and consultation services.

# Housing Navigation at the DSO

Provides individuals and those supporting them with information and resources needed to create person-centred housing and support plans

Advocates for the housing needs and inclusion of adults with a developmental disability

Creates and shares tools and resources

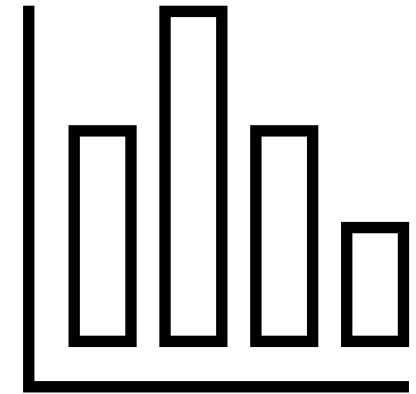


# Developmental Sector Housing Stats

Eligible Individuals who are actively waiting for service of any kind (e.g. Community Participation Supports, Supportive Living, Person Directed Planning, Case Management, etc.) in Toronto: approximately 11,000

Individuals Actively Receiving Supportive Living Service: 1,861

\*Unique Individuals Waiting for Supportive Living (of any kind): 4,825



## Disclaimer:

These numbers are always fluctuating, and **this represents a capture in time from March 31, 2022**

\*These individuals have varied needs and are waiting for services that range from supportive independent living (lower support needs) to intensive support services (highest support needs).

# Housing Navigation Role

Providing resources to agency staff, individuals, their caregivers and informal support teams:

- Consultations
- Webinars
- Sharing existing resources and creating new resources

Support to explore and connect to housing options outside of the developmental service sector

Facilitating connections to family support networks and/or where possible, connections to potential planning partners or roommates





# Housing Navigation Role

Advocacy for the needs of people with Developmental Disabilities within the Housing Sector and Municipality

Work to strengthen existing pathways and forge new connections to support the needs of adults with a developmental disability

- education
- child welfare
- transitional-aged services
- shelter system



# Housing Navigation Does Not Include:

- Providing or securing housing
- Providing funding
- Case management or service coordination
- Step by step planning assistance for the creation of individualized housing and support plans
- Emergency or crisis support services

# Resources We Provide

- Access to the DSO Housing Toolkits
- Lists of services and resources available to people, both ministry and non-ministry funded
- Self-assessments and questionnaires to help people explore their housing goals and preferred housing types
- Success stories from those who have created innovative housing options
- Contact information for support networks and ways to find housing partners



# WELCOME TO THE DSO HOUSING TOOLKIT



## Step 1

Exploring and understanding housing needs and wants, and creating your housing plan



## Step 2

Reviewing housing options and locations



## Step 3

Financing the plan



## Step 4

Managing housing supports



## Step 5

Building a plan that will support change



## Step 6

Learning from others

## My housing and support plan



<https://bit.ly/DSOHousingToolkit>

# Toronto Region Housing Toolkit

Last Updated June 2022



Toronto Region



## Social Housing (Also known as: Rent-Geared-to-Income or Subsidized Housing)

Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI), or subsidized housing, is made available by the City of Toronto to make rent affordable for households. In most cases, the rent for a subsidized unit is 30 per cent of a household's total monthly income. If you receive social assistance the rent is based on the rent benefit set by the Ontario government.



## Affordable Rental Housing Program

As of July 2021, there are 105 active affordable rental housing projects in the development pipeline in Toronto – which is expected to provide approximately 10,400 homes:

- 31 active developments are under construction – which are expected to provide 3,200 affordable rental and supportive homes
- 74 projects are in pre-construction – which are expected to provide 7,200 affordable rental and supportive homes



## Things to Consider Before Renting a Unit



### FOLLOW DIRECTIONS IN THE AD

Some landlords/property managers prefer calls, some use email or the messaging system through the ad site (such as Kijiji messaging). Many ads also ask very specific questions to assess applicants.

### CALLING THE LANDLORD

Prepare your list of questions before you call and keep a pen and paper handy to write down the answers. There are probably others who are interested in the rental, remember to be polite and make a great first impression.



### VIEWING THE RENTAL UNIT

Arrive on time and be well-groomed and well-prepared. Introduce yourself and try to remain calm and confident. Have your references ready to provide to the landlord/property manager.



### PREPARE YOUR DOCUMENTS

To support your rental application, landlords/property manager may ask to see your driver's license or other ID. They may ask where you work, and permission to run a credit check. There are rules about your privacy that must be respected.



### APPLYING FOR THE RENTAL

Make sure you understand the application process, ask questions if something isn't clear. Fill in the application form (paper copy/online). Inquire about the deposit fees and next steps.



### SIGNING THE LEASE

A successful applicant will be asked to sign a lease. Upon signing you will usually be required to pay last month's rent. Then first month's rent is due on the 1st day of the month you've rented the apartment for (make sure to get receipts).

## Affordable Home Ownership

Affordable home ownership models use a variety of creative approaches (e.g., down-payment assistance, shared equity mortgages, etc.) to help lower-income people and families, who might not otherwise be able to purchase a home and/or afford the monthly cost of carrying a mortgage.



# DSO Toronto Housing Toolkit

<https://bit.ly/HousingandSupportBudget>

Financial Summary									
Support						Housing and Living			
Total resources for support		0.00				Total resources for housing			0.00
Total expenses for support		0.00				Total expenses for housing			0.00
		0.00							0.00

# Provincial Webinars



## Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan

### Free Virtual Workshop Series

*This three (3) session workshop series is designed to help you begin creating an individualized housing and support plan for you or a family member with a developmental disability.*

#### Topics covered will include:

- Creating your vision and learning from others
- Discovering your strengths and needs
- Creating a record of your support needs
- Investigating how technology can increase independence and fill gaps to independent living
- Building on natural supports and creating community circles
- Exploring generic and disability specific services and supports
- Bricks and mortar – housing options
- Considering opportunities for self-funding and creating a housing and support budget
- Pulling it all together and creating measurable goals

- Creating Your Individualized Housing and Support Plan
- Technology to Support Independence
- Exploring Affordable Rental Housing Options
- Bricks and Mortar – Exploring Home Ownership Options
- Understanding Microboards
- Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Tenant
- How to Apply for Rent Geared to Income
- And more....



# Advocacy Within the Housing Sector



# Developmental Services Provincial Housing Strategy Forum

October 26, 2022


Over 400 people attended

## Featured Speakers and Topics:

- Municipal Leaders, Community Innovators, and Change Makers
- Individual Journeys
- Creative Stories and Replicable Actions

**Developmental Services**  
**Virtual Provincial Housing Strategy Forum**  
October 26, 2022 - 9:30 am to 3:00 pm EST


**Strengthening Partnerships, Building Communities**



**Change happens when we work as a community!**

Everyone wants a home and to belong and live successfully in their community. Historically, people with developmental disabilities have faced numerous barriers to housing. In 2017 people with developmental disabilities were highlighted as a priority group in the National Housing Strategy, recognizing the need for affordable housing and appropriate supports.

This forum will highlight creative stories and replicable actions being taken towards creating housing inclusivity. In partnership we can all work together for housing solutions.



**Featured speakers and topics to include:**

- Event Moderation by **Ron Pruessen**, Chair of the former *Developmental Services Housing Task Force*
- **Christine Kuepfer**, Director, Implementation and Reporting Branch, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)
- **Gary Gladstone**, Lead, Stakeholder Relations at Reena on the National Housing Strategy (NHS) and advocacy work undertaken by DS agencies.
- **Service Managers:**
  - Saide Sayah**, Director of Housing Services, Ottawa and
  - Ruth Noordegraaf**, Director of Housing and Social Services, Kingston who are addressing the housing needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- **Developmental Services Sector Innovators and Change Makers**
  - All Together Housing
  - Cota
  - Journey House
  - Kind Minds
  - Participation House Durham
  - Partners for Community Living
- **Self Advocates and Caregivers**

This virtual event will be hosted by Developmental Services Ontario Housing Navigators. Attendance is free and open to the public.

Please direct questions to: [dsotr.hn@surreyplace.ca](mailto:dsotr.hn@surreyplace.ca)

# New Connections

- Regular check-ins with Children's Aid in order to identify youth under their care who may be interested to live independently
- Completion of a preliminary housing plan for those individuals who are interested in independence
- Sharing with CAS worker:
  - housing options and next steps
  - provincial and Toronto Housing Toolkits

# When Might You Contact Us?

## When you want...

- To learn more about what Housing Navigators do and how they may be able to assist you in your work
- To brainstorm ideas around the people you support and their needs in housing
- Help with navigating the DSO Housing Toolkit and other online resources
- To obtain information about resources that support planning for housing
- To learn about upcoming webcasts that could be of interest to you and the people you support
- To share gaps or ideas about resources we might be able to create

# Connect with DSO Housing Navigation:

Toronto Region Housing Navigator Team

Aaron Firth \* Alexandra Shannan \* Sarah Farsalas  
Zoe Kariunas \* Sarah Winter (Service Navigator Assistant)

Email or call DSO Toronto Housing Navigators at:

[dsotr.hn@surreyplace.ca](mailto:dsotr.hn@surreyplace.ca)

1-855-372-3858

Learn how the DSO housing toolkit can help with the creation of a housing vision: [www.dsontario.ca/resources/housing](http://www.dsontario.ca/resources/housing)

Sign up here to learn of upcoming DSO events:

<https://bit.ly/2JQjxhg>

Connect with us on Facebook:

[Toronto Region](#)

CONNECT WITH US!

[dsontario.ca](http://dsontario.ca)



# Connect with DSOTR Intake

The community is encouraged to continue to reach out to DSO Intake to discuss:

- Situational changes
- Impending and active crisis
- Significant changes to behavioural, medical, or other support needs
- Requests for funded services

DSO Intake: [dsotr@surreyplace.ca](mailto:dsotr@surreyplace.ca) ~ 1-855-372-3858

CONNECT WITH US!

[dsontario.ca](https://dsontario.ca)





Questions?