

FAMILY SERVICES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS CIRCULAR

Date: August 2, 2011

CIRCULAR NUMBER: EIA #2011-52

Alternate Program(s):

To: Community Social Service Supervisors/Program Managers

Subject: **The Bell Hotel Supportive Housing Project**

Type: Policy
 Procedure
 Rate
 Information Only

Effective Date: August 1, 2011

The Bell Hotel at 662 Main Street has reopened as a supportive housing project for individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness. The Bell Hotel Supportive Housing Project provides housing partnered with 24-hour on-site supports for up to **42 tenants**. The Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation (WHRC) is the property manager and support services are provided through a partnership between the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (providing clinical services/case management) and Main Street Project (providing **24 hour on-site supports** and tenancy services).

Tenants of the Bell Hotel will be selected from the Winnipeg homeless shelters including Main Street Project, Salvation Army, Siloam Mission, as well as Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY), and the At Home/Chez Soi project (Mental Health Commission of Canada). Individuals must be homeless at the time of application and have been in a shelter for at least 90 consecutive days or demonstrate chronic episodic use of shelters. The referring shelters are expected to send individuals without an income source to EIA intake prior to acceptance into the Bell Hotel project. Many will require EIA **special needs funding for identification** to access banking. The Bell Hotel project case managers or support workers will provide assistance in applying for identification, setting up bank accounts and establishing direct deposit.

Tenants will purchase their own groceries, with staff support if necessary, and will require full basic needs. Laundry facilities are available without cost.

The suites at the Bell Hotel are equipped with basic furnishings and a kitchenette with an induction heat hotplate. Special needs funding of **up to \$150** may be issued for household items. A support worker for the Bell Hotel Project may be present when the funding is issued to assist in the purchase of items.

These funds are not intended to be start-up funds, as individuals may require and qualify for special needs start-up at a later date if successfully transitioned to the community. Special needs funding for household items within the Bell Hotel is intended to cover the following items, where needed:

- Dishes, cutlery and utensils;
- Pots and pans (one induction heat pot is provided; others must be cast iron or recommended for induction heat);
- Kettle and toaster;
- Tea towels, bath towels, hand towels;
- Sheet set and comforter (twin size);
- Pillow.

WHRC has set security deposits at \$200, which includes an additional amount for the electronic key fob that also activates the elevator. Consistent with the At Home/Chez Soi project and the Portable Housing Benefit program, the required security deposit amount will be issued. Current policies regarding any outstanding damage/security deposits will be followed. If the participant has been approved for tenancy at the Bell Hotel, a security deposit is required for **\$200.00** payable to:

Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation
Suite 104 – 60 Frances Street
Winnipeg MB R3A 1B5

Shelter payments of **\$300** per month are payable directly to WHRC. EIA will cover \$285 per month for shelter, plus a \$5 charge for draperies and \$10 for air conditioning. This is consistent with policy regarding rent subsidies, non-profit and co-op housing (dated December 8, 1992). Supervisory approval will be required to allow the amount in excess of guideline.

The Bell Hotel Supportive Housing Project will receive rent subsidies from Manitoba Housing and Community Development to cover the additional rental costs. Participants will not be eligible for RentAid (formerly the Manitoba Shelter Benefit).

Background

Tenancy supports provided by Main Street Project will include assistance to maintain their apartment units, meal supports and life skills development. As a Housing First project, tenants are not required to maintain sobriety to live at The Bell. The project will follow a harm reduction approach as many tenants will have a history of mental health and addictions issues, however, tenants must stay within the law.

Tenants of the Bell Hotel will sign a month-to-month tenancy agreement with WHRC that is renewable annually and tenants are required to abide by specific rules to ensure the safety of all, including a visitor policy. Tenants can be evicted if behaviour impacts others or if they fail to engage with the support staff at least once a week. If individuals are intoxicated and/or disruptive, they may be escorted to the Main Street Project for the night to avoid an eviction warning. Tenants of the Bell Hotel have full tenant rights as established under *The Residential Tenancies Act*.