



## **Portable Housing Benefit-Special Priority Policy (PHB-SPP) Information for SPP Applicants**

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The Province of Ontario has introduced a new housing benefit for Special Priority (SPP) applicants called the Portable Housing Benefit-Special Priority Policy (PHB-SPP). The new benefit is an alternative to waiting for rent-gear-to-income (RGI).

### **What is the PHB-SPP?**

The PHB-SPP is a set amount of money paid directly to you to help you pay your rent. It is an alternative to RGI, meaning you will be removed from the DASH wait list when you start to receive the benefit.

Unlike RGI, you do not have to live in social housing to receive the benefit. You can use the benefit to help you pay your rent anywhere in Ontario. It is not based on the amount of rent that you pay. You will receive the same amount even if you move to a place with lower rent.

### **Can I stay on the DASH wait list?**

No. You will only be removed from the wait list when you start to receive the PHB-SPP.

### **How much is the benefit and how does it compare to RGI?**

The PHB-SPP is based on the difference between 30 per cent of your income and 80 per cent of the average market rent in the area where you live. You can use the benefit to live anywhere in Ontario, including where you live now. You are not limited to a social housing unit. You will receive your first benefit payment in July 2018.

RGI is based on 30 per cent of your income. There are long waits for RGI. Most SPP applicants wait at least a year for an RGI unit and many wait much longer. You must move to get RGI because it is only available at certain properties. If you want to move to a different RGI unit, it could take several more years.

The best way to understand if the PHB-SPP or RGI is better for you is to look at the amount of money you will have left after you pay your rent. For example:

If your income is \$1,500 per month and the average market rent in your area is \$1,000, you will receive a PHB-SPP benefit of \$350.

- If your rent is \$1,200, you will have \$650 left after you pay your rent.
- If your rent is \$1,000, you will have \$850 left after you pay your rent.
- If your rent is \$800, you will have 1,050 left after you pay your rent.
- If you choose to wait for RGI instead of the PHB-SPP, you will pay RGI of \$450, which means you will have \$1,050 left after you pay your rent.

If you are receiving Ontario Works or ODSP, the total amount of your PHB-SPP and your shelter allowance from Ontario Works or ODSP cannot be more than your rent and utilities. The PHB-SPP will be reduced to adjust for this.

For more information or to get an idea of how much your PHB-SPP or RGI might be, call or email Raleigh Hughes at 905-668-4113 ext. 2457 or [Raleigh.Hughes@durham.ca](mailto:Raleigh.Hughes@durham.ca).

### **Do I have to move?**

You do not have to move to receive the PHB-SPP. You can use it to pay rent where you are living now.

### **Can I get first and last months' rent?**

If you are granted the PHB-SPP and you want to move, you can apply to the Region of Durham for help with first and last month's rent. Successful applicants will be notified about how to apply.

### **How do I apply for the PHB-SPP?**

Complete the Portable Housing Benefit Application Form and send it with proof of your current income and a copy of your 2017 Notice of Assessment (NOA) for your 2017 Income Tax Return to:

Region of Durham – Housing Services Division  
605 Rossland Road E, Whitby, ON L1N 6A3.

As the PHB-SPP will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, it is important that you send the application back to us as soon as possible.