


Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC)

Apr. 22, 2014

In this Toronto Star article titled, 'TCHC CEO plunged back into scandal with scathing ombudsman report', Ombudsman Fiona Crean describes what's been happening in the Toronto Community Housing Corporation as "a shocking story about the abject failure of leadership from the top".

In Crean's scathing report that threatens the job of Toronto Community Housing Corp. chief executive Gene Jones, she said Jones and other senior TCHC executives ignored hiring rules and conflicts of interest, gave managers unjustified raises, fired people recklessly and impulsively, and ran the city-owned landlord "as though it was their own personal fiefdom." Crean exposed CHC's CEO as setting the tone, and describing his every move as 'his prerogative', in which "poor management followed." Source.



Barrie and Simcoe County Housing will absolutely not transfer rescued victims of sex-trafficking, even with written requests from Barrie Police saying the tenant's life is in danger because of past rapists frequenting the property to sell drugs.

Feb. 23, 2018

Most board members [of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation] seemed taken aback with Ombudsman Susan Opler's report and claimed they were the "last to know" about her disturbing findings, even though the report also went to city council earlier this month. The TCHC has serious problems with the way their endangered tenants are treated.

On the agenda of the monthly meeting was a thorough and scathing 65-page report by new city Ombudslady Susan Opler on what she called the "broken" and downright arbitrary internal transfer system within Canada's largest housing authority. For the purposes of her report, Opler focussed on "priority transfers" made for safety and security — in this case when a tenant fears for his or her life due to crime in the building — or for medical reasons.

Opler's report was prompted by the cases of two tenants. One was a young mother who had applied for a "priority transfer" — and was denied twice — after witnessing a violent crime outside her home, escaping to a shelter and coming back to find a loaded gun in her child's dresser drawer.

If Barrie Housing tenants start complaining about their unsafe housing, they're evicted, despite letters from Barrie Police requesting their transfer for safety reasons:

The second complaint, she said, came from a family, also denied a transfer, after two shots were fired into their living room and their teenagers were assaulted enroute home from school. Opler, who came to the city one-and-a-half years ago, minced no words that the transfer process is a mess — noting that tenants receive “vastly different amounts of help” applying for a transfer, the requirements for a transfer are “unclear” and the decisions “inconsistent and contradictory.”

“The criteria were being applied arbitrarily,” she said, emphasizing that decisions for denial of an application were often inadequate and in some cases “completely absent.” But the most damning finding is the lengthy priority transfer waiting list comprised of 1,413 tenants, 76% of whom have been on the list for two years or more and a shocking 55% who've waited for a transfer for more than five years. “We see that as a waiting list that is bloated and stagnant,” Opler said, noting, quite rightly, that the priority transfer list is no such thing. “TCHC is giving tenants false hope,” she added.

This describes Barrie Housing staff to a T:

Well yes, I've been writing about this concept for years, along with the fact that, in my view, there are TCHC staff who either simply don't really care about the tenants they are mandated to serve, or worse, abuse their power. The issue with “priority transfer,” believe, although serious considering safety is in question, is just the tip of the iceberg with so many other problems (mishandled or ignored) at the beleaguered housing authority. For instance, new CEO Kathy Milsom mentioned that getting a handle on crime (drug dealers one hopes!) is a huge priority considering they house 4% of the city's population but account for 25% of the violent crimes in the city.

Barrie Housing only ignores complaints . They're never dealt with.

Opler concluded that the transfer process needs to be completely overhauled — suggesting that TCHC not continue to add to the current list and instead create a new category called “crisis” transfers, which can and should be given the utmost priority. Source.



Barrie and Simcoe County's transfer process needs to be completely overhauled as well.

Barrie & Simcoe County Housing's human rights policies are also out of date, and likely haven't been updated since the major changes were made to the Human Rights Code. I've lived in Barrie Housing since 2008 and I've never once had my human rights respected or upheld by the BMNPHC. They don't see me as human. No one employed by Simcoe County or The City of Barrie has the requisite training. If they do, no one knows it because they do not utilize their education, likely because they'll be fired if they do.

Jun. 9, 2023

A new report by the city's ombudsman found that the Toronto Community Housing Corporation failed to properly address human rights complaints made by tenants and has not made human rights and the dignity of residents "a priority." The city's ombudsman Kwame Addo launched an investigation into the TCHC's process for handling tenant human rights complaints last summer after hearing concerning stories from TCHC tenants.

This is called lying.

The report found that the TCHC shared "incorrect, misleading and inaccessible information" about its human rights complaint handling process on both its website and during communication with tenants. The TCHC's website listed its human rights office as the primary place for tenants to take their complaints despite the fact that the office had not been active for several years.

And this is what Barrie & Simcoe County Housing do best: Lie to everyone, including legal courts.

Barrie & Simcoe County Housing must be forced to do this too. And if no one forces them and follows up, they will not do it.

Further, its Human Rights Policy and Human Rights Complaint Procedure were wildly out of date and did not take into account major changes to the Ontario human rights system that went into effect in 2008. "TCHC staff do not have the proper expertise, resources, or training to effectively and proactively address human rights concerns. The cumulative impact of our findings demonstrated that tenants' human rights and dignity have not been priority for TCHC. This is unacceptable."

The ombudsman's office also looked into instances where the TCHC failed to support tenants' needs for medical accommodations. "We were concerned that TCHC did not have a system in place to carefully assess and respond to the human rights needs of its tenants and that TCHC staff were potentially overlooking issues that involved the legal rights of tenants. TCHC tenants did not know where they should take their concerns about human rights and staff were unequipped to address them once they were identified. The TCHC's human rights policy and procedure must be updated "without delay," the ombudsman said. Another recommendation states that all information on the human rights complaints process on the TCHC's website must be up to date and accurate. "Ombudsman Toronto will follow up until we are satisfied that TCHC has implemented our recommendations," the report read. June 9, 2023 Source.

Aug. 17, 2023

The City of Toronto has received applications to transfer land ownership of two east end Toronto Community Housing (TCH) sites to a community land trust. The severance is to facilitate the transfer of this property to a non-profit housing operator, Circle Community Land Trust. The severance application is required due to both properties being owned by TCH.

As part of TCH's Tenants First Initiative – an asset management strategy – Circle Community Land Trust will now take responsibility for these properties as they are better equipped to maintain the sites and deliver quality service to tenants. "Our vision is to provide exceptional service as a landlord by bringing all the homes into a state of good repair, and by working with our tenants and communities to create a culture that is inclusive, engaged, and where tenants can feel secure in knowing that their homes are now protected and permanently affordable," said Abaya.

The timeline to complete the transfers is currently unclear, however, upon approval, Circle Community Land Trust will take over property management and begin "working with tenants to stabilize their homes" by providing necessary repairs as "a lot of them need a lot of work".

"Of course, repairing over 560 houses takes a huge amount of coordination and planning – but we also know that tenants have been waiting a long time. So, I am really happy to report that things are well underway," Abaya stated in Circle's Tenant Newsletter earlier this year. [Source](#).

The units will remain [rent] geared-to-income as Circle Community's mission is to protect affordable housing in the City of Toronto. "We're not a private landlord. We're not raising the rent as a result of the transfer," said Abaya.

Circle Community Land Trust is described as a self-sufficient organization founded with a focus on carrying out its own property management as to avoid underperformance from third party companies. "When we met with tenants in the beginning, a lot of the feedback was that if you use a third party property management service, you can't necessarily guarantee the quality of work," said Abaya.

Although carrying out its own property management, Circle Community Land Trust's website depicts plans to enter into an agreement with WoodGreen Community Services for "back-office services such as IT and property management software, accounting, payroll, and after-hours emergency response services". However, Abaya said that there is currently no connection to the organization apart from WoodGreen CEO Anne Babcock's role as a founding board member of Circle Community Land Trust – a position she no longer holds.

The respondents need this without saying it. It should be obvious that this is one of the minimum remedies their RGI tenants deserve.

New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)

Jan. 31, 2019

The embattled New York City Housing Authority is slated for stricter federal oversight and a leadership shakeup under a new deal aimed at fixing years of mismanagement that has led to deplorable living conditions for the city's tenants.

The tentative agreement—reached by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, NYCHA, and the U.S. attorney's office—will replace NYCHA's interim chairman and CEO Stanely Brezenoff with new leadership and bring in an independent monitor, whom HUD and federal prosecutors will select, to hold the housing authority to strict milestones. "We see this as a partnership to get things done for the residents," Mayor Bill de Blasio.

As part of the deal, the city would agree to invest an additional \$1 billion into the authority's crumbling housing over the next four years and \$200 million per year after that. The funds will go toward addressing systemic issues at the authority including its infamous lead paint scandal, failing heat systems, mold, and rodent infestations in its more than 175,000 apartments.

Under the plan, federal prosecutors will move to dismiss a U.S. Attorney's Office complaint filed against the agency within 14 days of the monitor's appointment. The monitor, who Carson said will be appointed in the coming weeks, will not oversee day-to-day operations at NYCHA, but will have sweeping powers.

Barrie & Simcoe County Housing desperately need this.

Additionally, the city and the monitor will hire an outside consultant to take a close look at "NYCHA's systems, policies, procedures, and management and personnel structures, and make recommendations to the city, NYCHA, and the monitor to improve the areas examined," according to the agreement. Afterward, NYCHA and the monitor are meant to craft a plan to overhaul the authority's "management, organizational, and workforce structure (including work rules), and overarching policies." But if NYCHA and the monitor can't agree on a plan, HUD and the U.S. Attorney will decide how the agency should proceed, says the agreement.

Many Barrie and Simcoe County RGI tenants have told me their appliances won't work, and Barrie Housing told them to buy new appliances themselves, despite these people being unemployable due to severe material deprivation. I will provide this evidence when the HRTTO asks for it, and confirms that these tenants will not be illegally evicted for seeking the respondents to oblige to their contractual obligations that they get paid for.

Barrie & Simcoe County Housing should have a Federal Housing Advocate appointed to lead all the overhauling activities that must be taken to ensure their RGI tenant's safety and wellbeing.

The U.S. District Attorney's office and NYCHA reached a settlement agreement last summer that would have imposed similar rules, including a federal monitor and dedicated funding for repairs. But the settlement was rejected by a judge in November, and since then, the idea of receivership—a full federal takeover of NYCHA—had been bandied about as a way to pull the struggling authority out of a hole.

The new agreement stops short of a full takeover, but the deal is a turning point for the mayor, who publicly opposed the receivership of the agency. "We were able to put aside any political differences and think about, what would provide the right kind of environment for the people here," Carson said. Elected officials across the city were quick to weigh in on the arrangement. Comptroller Scott Stringer bashed the idea of a monitor and called for additional federal funds to support the crumbling housing authority. "NYCHA already has monitors—its residents who have suffered from decades of disinvestment," Stringer said in a statement. "The time for talk and political stunts is over. Cut the long overdue check from the federal government to fully fund the needed repairs, listen to the real NYCHA monitors, put a plan in place, and get to work." Source.

Leah Dyck
November 2, 2021 · 🌐
Just got trapped on an elevator. What a wonderful day ... snowing and now trapped in a tiny room.



👍👎👏 Lisa Peterson, Sabrina Deborah and 149 others 63 comments

Our elevators are constantly breaking down, and we're constantly being trapped. I feel so bad for those in wheelchairs, who can't even leave when this happens.

Feb. 27, 2020

Filed in Brooklyn's New York State Supreme Court, the complaint cites tenants' experiences going without gas or a stove for months, living with invasive mold, insect and rodent infestations, as well as persistent elevator outages, which "trap physically challenged or wheelchair-bound NYCHA tenants in their apartments."

The lawsuit seeks monetary damages and rent abatements for residents who are often pushed to spend out of their own pockets for basic services that NYCHA should be legally providing, such as equipment to cook with when there's no gas and traps to deal with infestations. The case comes after a 2018 lawsuit brought by Manhattan federal prosecutors exposed the agency's attempts to cover-up poor living conditions; which culminated, as part of a settlement, in a 2019 partial federal takeover.

"NYCHA has breached its contracts with its tenants and acted with an appalling lack of care, ethics, and empathy," Jenny Kim, a partner at Berg & Androphy, said in a statement. "It is well past time to hold the agency accountable." Source.

No one has ever held the respondents accountable for any of their major crimes.

The HRT0 should expect significant resistance from all City and County officials for positive change.

No one gives two craps about the voices of RGI tenants. Not even the Barrie Police.

Feb. 6, 2024

In the Largest Number of Federal Bribery Charges on a Single Day in DOJ History, 70 current and former employees of the NYCHA have been charged with allegedly accepting cash payments from contractors in exchange for awarding NYCHA contracts. U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said: "Instead of acting in the interests of NYCHA residents, the City of New York, or taxpayers, the 70 defendants charged today allegedly used their jobs at NYCHA to line their own pockets."

NYCHA residents deserve better. My Office is firmly committed to cleaning up the corruption that has plagued NYCHA for far too long so that its residents can be served with integrity and have the high-quality affordable homes that they deserve. The culture of corruption at NYCHA ends today."

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland said: "The Justice Department will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law those who abuse their positions in public service in order to enrich themselves. The crimes alleged in this case are serious violations of the public trust, and I am grateful to the agents and our partners across government who worked on this case, and to the prosecutors for their tireless efforts to root out corruption."

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said: "As charged, these 70 current and former NYCHA supervisors and other staff used their positions of public trust and responsibility to pocket bribes in exchange for doling out no-bid contracts. The extensive bribery and extortion alleged here calls for significant reforms to NYCHA's no-bid contracting process, which DOI has recommended and NYCHA has accepted. I thank the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York and our federal law enforcement partners for their commitment to protect scarce public resources intended to maintain public housing, and to hold accountable public servants who abuse their authority, and NYCHA's senior leadership for its cooperation in this important investigation."

HSI Special Agent in Charge Ivan J. Arvelo said: "These 70 defendants are accused of demanding kickbacks and bribes for access to no-bid contracts and lucrative, under-the-table deals. Make no mistake, this alleged pervasive corruption had the biggest impact on NYCHA residents themselves, who may have been cheated out of better services and programs".

When an investigation is done and reveals the true extent of corruption in Barrie & Simcoe County Housing, I want the Mayor and all the Councillors to thank me for doing their jobs for them. I already know the RGI tenants are thankful for me.

There are no Canadian politicians willing to fight for us.

Although I obviously have no proof of the respondents committing the crimes listed in this page, I'm showing the HRTTO what to look for during their investigations. It is naïve to think the respondents are not waste-deep in every possible perversion.

HUD OIG Inspector General Rae Oliver Davis said: "The pay-to-play bribery schemes alleged in the complaints unsealed today waste millions of dollars and risk residents staying in unacceptable living conditions. The alleged conduct identified during this investigation harms the effectiveness of housing programs that support more than 200,000 residents. It also poses a significant risk to the integrity of the HUD rental assistance programs that support housing assistance in New York City and erodes the trust of NYCHA residents in HUD's programs. We will continue our work with the U.S. Attorney's Office and our law enforcement partners to prevent and detect these and other schemes."

The defendants, all of whom were NYCHA employees during the time of the relevant conduct, demanded and received cash in exchange for NYCHA contracts by either requiring contractors to pay up front in order to be awarded the contracts or requiring payment after the contractor finished the work and needed a NYCHA employee to sign off on the completed job so the contractor could receive payment from NYCHA. As alleged, the defendants typically demanded approximately 10% to 20% of the contract value—between \$500 and \$2,000 depending on the size of the contract—but some defendants demanded even higher amounts. In total, these defendants demanded over \$2 million in corrupt payments from contractors in exchange for awarding over \$13 million worth of no-bid contracts. The article also lists all the employees charged, as well as their charges. [Source](#).

May 1, 2024

While the state provided \$95 million in rent relief for NYCHA in last year's budget, it was only enough to reach 15,000 of the roughly 70,000 public housing households that accumulated rent debt since the pandemic, the lawsuit states.

Torres' group is among the plaintiffs named in the case, alongside three NYCHA tenants who've amassed rent arrears since 2020 but were "unable to benefit from ERAP during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic," either because they didn't know they were eligible and didn't apply, or because their applications were left pending for years. The suit also accuses NYCHA of failing to timely re-rectify tenants' incomes—used to determine their monthly rent payments—to reflect the economic hardships they faced due to COVID-19, meaning they were paying more than they should have.

Many residents who owe back rent now “live in fear of having eviction or consumer debt proceedings brought against them and their families.” The complaint alleges discrimination based on race and national origin, since the vast majority of NYCHA tenants are Black and Hispanic or Latino, and accuses the defendants of violating the Fair Housing Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and New York’s Human Rights Law, which prohibits source of income discrimination. According to the complaint, the defendants’ “explicit de-prioritization of public and subsidized housing tenants disproportionately prevented Black and Hispanic or Latino applicants from receiving critical assistance due to their housing status and source of income.” The lawsuit seeks an injunction to pause NYCHA from evicting and suing tenants over arrears whose ERAP applications were denied, left pending, or who didn’t know they could apply. Source.

May 2, 2024

State law administered by the OTDA de-prioritized public housing residents and recipients of subsidized housing from getting rental assistance through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program during the pandemic, which caused many renters to fall behind in their rent, or lose their housing completely, according to a news release about the lawsuit.

As of April 2024, only 15,000 NYCHA families have been approved for assistance, despite there being closer to 70,000 families who have fallen behind on rent during and following the pandemic. NYCHA is currently filing consumer debt cases and other civil court proceedings against these households that were harmed by OTDA and NYCHA’s discriminatory actions, the lawsuit states.

The lawsuit is seeking an injunction pausing NYCHA’s evictions and lawsuits for back rent, damages for the immense suffering endured by Black and Hispanic renters because of these policies and an order to ensure future housing assistance programs properly comply with discrimination law. “Tenants nationwide received crucial rental assistance during the pandemic, but thousands of Black and Hispanic public housing residents in New York were wrongfully blocked from receiving the help they deserved,” said Professor Norrinda Brown, director of the clinic. “They are still experiencing brutal impacts, and now they are seeking justice.” Source.