



488 Gladstone Ave.  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1R 5N8

📞 613-237-3315  
📠 613-237-3845

Building 622, Suite 100  
PO Box 2230  
Iqaluit, NU  
Canada X0A 0H0

📞 867-979-2089  
📠 867-979-2091

[www.nvisiongroup.ca](http://www.nvisiongroup.ca)

## **REPORT ON PUBLIC HOUSING RENT SCALE**

### **NUNAVUT HOUSING CORPORATION**

**Revised April 2021**

# REPORT ON PUBLIC HOUSING RENT SCALE NUNAVUT HOUSING CORPORATION

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## Executive Summary

Housing is a major issue with many complexities. There is no one simple solution to addressing housing in Nunavut. As one of its programs, the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) uses the Rent-Scale to “determine Public Housing rent and Primary Tenant Status”.

The NHC Rent-Scale was due for a review to determine whether amendments and enhancements could be made to further community and territorial economic wealth. The focus of the NHC Request for Proposals, announced in the Spring of 2020, stipulated that the review determine how Nunavummiut could better understand the intent of the Rent-Scale, as well as, address perceived misconceptions around employment and rent-geared-to-income. NVision was engaged to complete the work stipulated in the RFP in August 2020.

The scope of this Review included a literature review of relevant materials, confidential telephone interviews with NHC and LHO staff, and the distribution of surveys for confidential completion by members of the public. Through these means, information was collected and analyzed to clarify factors contributing to the:

- a) Possible disincentives to work based on the current rent-scale;
- b) Public understanding of the current rent-scale;
- c) Rent-scale mechanism and process; and,
- d) Communications.

This independent review helps to assess whether the rent-geared-to-income sliding scale is perceived as fair and affordable, by all parties.

The findings derived from analyzing the documentation during the literature review and feedback obtained from the interviews and surveys, were further examined to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of the Rent-Scale. These are as follows:

1. In order to overcome any possible disincentives to work based on the current Rent-Scale, NHC may explore: moving to a unit-based rent assessment system; and undertake a comprehensive Rent-Scale training and education program for stakeholders.
2. To influence the public’s understanding of the current Rent-Scale, NHC may explore:
  - simplifying the current Rent-Scale rent assessment language;
  - institute a tenant education program;
  - Provide LHOs with a basic, simplified communication tool to more easily explain rent assessments;
  - provide an online resource and flyer with Frequently Asked Questions;
  - develop an easy to implement, standard orientation process for new tenants. Videos and social media could be leveraged as appropriate.

3. In relation to the Rent-Scale mechanism and process, NHC may explore:
  - improving the administration of the Rent-Scale by integrating systems, standardizing processes and updating and organizing reference manuals to be more user-friendly;
  - provide easy access to orientation and training on the Rent-Scale for all stakeholders.
4. NHC may explore avoiding misconceptions about the Rent-Scale by developing a Rent-Scale communications strategy that considers the individual needs in each community, through the use of several types of communication.

Some of the recommendations and/or suggestions identified above, can be implemented immediately. Others will require a longer-term strategy. The key to a successful implementation regardless of timeframe will be the strong partnerships and regular collaboration between NHC and LHOs.

In closing, NVision Insight Group Inc. (NVision) would like to thank those who filled out the general survey, took the time to be interviewed, and, especially, assisted in reaching out to get surveys completed. NVision also acknowledges the direction, support, and advice provided by the NHC Directorate Policy and Communications Divisions.

## Introduction to Public Housing Rent-Scale Review Study

### Background

Housing, in general, is a major issue in Nunavut. The availability, or lack thereof, along with overcrowding and condition of existing housing units, and their impacts on physical and mental health of Nunavummiut are all factors that exert pressures in communities across Nunavut. NVision highlights that housing issues, concerns, and questions are deeply rooted with a colonial history.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) provides social (public) housing to over 20,000 tenants in approximately 5,600 public housing units across Nunavut. NHC's Public Housing Program is based on the Public Housing Rent-Scale (the Rent-Scale), which is a rent-g geared-to-income sliding scale designed to ensure that public housing rental rates remain fair and affordable. The current Rent-Scale was introduced to Nunavummiut in 2013 and implemented in 2014 and is just one part of Nunavut's solutions to address housing issues.

The NHC has been active in addressing rent-scale issues since it was adopted in 1999. There have been three other reviews. In addition, NHC staff have been engaged with committees such as Poverty Reduction and others to work with government departments to address housing.

The broader housing challenges require multi-faceted approaches and require more stream-lined working relationships among different levels of governments and departments. Issues of intergenerational trauma from forced relocation and residential schools will continue to impact socio-economic conditions in Nunavut. Incorporating trauma-informed policies and programs can also positively contribute to alleviating some of these conditions. While the current NHC efforts of providing fairness and affordability on the rent-scale cannot alone address the broader housing issues in Nunavut, it has the potential for significantly contributing towards addressing these housing challenges.

### Purpose of the Review

The current NHC Rent-Scale was introduced to Nunavummiut in 2013 and implemented in 2014. The NHC Rent-Scale was due for a review to determine whether amendments and enhancements could be made to further community and territorial economic wealth. Reflecting on a range of feedback received about the program's implementation, it was determined by the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation that there appeared to be perceived misinformation about the Rent-Scale administration and confusion about its fairness to Nunavummiut who benefit from public housing. The timing of the review also presented an opportunity to address the noted misperceptions, with the Minister committing to undertake an independent review of the Rent-Scale.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued by the NHC in the Spring of 2020, as a transparent means of soliciting consulting expertise to conduct the independent review of the Rent-Scale. The RFP required that the scope of the review determine the:

1. Possible disincentives to work based on the current Rent-Scale;
2. Public understanding of the current Rent-Scale;
3. Rent-Scale mechanism and process; and
4. Communications.

In the Summer of 2020, NVision Insight Group Inc. (NVision) was chosen from amongst the firms who submitted proposals in this competitive procurement process, to conduct this independent review. A primary focus of this review was to determine how Nunavummiut could better understand the intent of the Rent-Scale in addressing the perceived misconceptions on being employed and the rent-geared-to-income. NVision held a project kick-off meeting with the NHC project authority and team in August of 2020.

The independent review helps to assess whether rent-geared-to-income sliding scale is perceived as fair and affordable by public housing tenants and the general public.

## Methodology

NVision used a multi-pronged approach to data and information gathering, in support of its analysis and synthesis of information contained in this report. NVision acknowledges the direction, support, and advice provided by the NHC Directorate Policy and Communications Divisions. NVision completed the independent review by:

1. Conducting a literature review;
2. Conducting targeted interviews; and
3. Asking Nunavummiut to complete a general survey.

NVision worked through the summer, fall, and winter developing a background paper and questionnaires targeting different audiences as well as reviewing housing-related material internal and external to NHC.

NVision experienced major challenges in reaching Nunavummiut willing to complete the General Survey and committing to telephone interviews. NVision had hoped to do media outreach to solicit interest, however, different factors did not allow this.

COVID-19 placed undue challenge in reaching Nunavummiut and interest in answering the survey was limited. The feedback received provides NHC, the GN, and Nunavummiut a broad foundation in terms of needing to translate, interpret, communicate, educate, train, and understand the NHC Public Housing Rent-Scale.

The consulting team undertook the following major steps:

A. **Data Collection:** the NVision team used three primary methods to collect the information required to meet the purpose of the study. These three methods were:

1. **Literature Review:** the NVision team reviewed in detail more than 40 documents supplied

by NHC. A list of the most relevant (i.e. no redundancies) for the review are contained in *Appendix C* of this document. The documentation included:

- a. Legislative Assembly Hansard(s) related to the subject topic (housing, Rent-Scale), dating back to 2014;
  - b. Internal NHC policies;
  - c. Internal NHC Briefing Notes;
  - d. NHC research materials;
  - e. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) research materials;
  - f. Legislation and regulations applicable to procurement by NHC, particularly the Financial Administration Act, the Financial Administration Manual, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation Act.
2. Interviews: NHC provided contact information for a compendium of individuals involved in the delivery of the Rent-Scale. NVision developed interview guides (these and associated materials may be found in *Appendix I* of this report) to confidentially solicit the most relevant input to the Review study; these were vetted by NHC Review project authority(ies), and then used by the consulting team to solicit input from the following groups:
- a. NHC staff at Directorate (program and policy staff);
  - b. NHC staff at District level (District Program Managers or delegate);
  - c. LHO Managers or Tenant Relations Officers (TROs);
  - d. MLAs.

NVision reached out to Nunavummiut from December 2020 through to March 2021, focusing on NHC Directorate staff, Local Housing Authorities (LHOs), Tenant Relations Officers (TROs), and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). NVision utilized the offices of the LHOs to promote the participation of community members interested in contributing to the survey by sharing the background paper with the community. The input from community members, Elders, social housing tenants, and program recipients was solicited through a survey (see below).

The Minister's objective of having a neutral third-party gather information for this review and analysis project were met. All individuals identified by NHC were contacted. All LHOs were contacted at least three times to request their participation and/or assistance in reaching out to Nunavummiut for the review. All information from the interviews was aggregated and non-attributable in order to respect the objectivity of this information gathering phase.

Respondents were given the option of being interviewed in either Inuktitut or English. The following completed interviews with NVision:

- Four (4) NHC employees: 2 in management and 2 in management/administrative positions in the directorate and the regional district level;
- Twelve (12) LHO Managers and/or Tenant Relations Officers (these individuals were from the following regions: 2 communities in the Kivalliq; 3 communities in Kitikmeot; and 4 communities in Qikiqtaaluk);
- One (1) Board of director from an LHO;



- Three (3) MLAs.
- 3. **Survey:** A survey was developed by the NVision consulting team and vetted by the NHC project authority to solicit input from community members, Elders, social housing tenants, and program recipients. NVision utilized the offices of the LHOs, via email, to promote the participation of community members interested in contributing to the survey by sharing the background paper with the community. Assistance received from the LHOs was limited due to other competing work-related priorities.

NVision made the survey accessible through its social media sites. The consulting team solicited community-based radio and media outlets to promote the survey and increase participation. The team reached out to local-based community contacts to help generate interest in the process. While no target number of respondents was identified by the NHC project authority, the total of 10 surveys (including one Elder) completed represents a small fraction of the overall number of potential respondents, and is recognized as being a non-statistically representative sampling of the overall population.

- B. **Analysis:** Information from each stream (literature review, interviews) was reviewed individually, with findings identified under each. In addition to the themes forming the findings of the Literature Review, *Appendices E through H*, this document captures specific wording changes which may be applied with the goal of making each document easier to use (e.g. provide greater clarity, etc.). In subsequent sections of this report, detailed information is provided regarding the feedback from the interviews and survey phases (e.g. % of respondents answering in a certain way). Themes or salient points emerged from these sources. A further analysis identified major themes and inter-dependencies between or among the themes/findings. The qualitative and quantitative information from all information sources provided the basis of the detailed and major findings. Each identifies possible ways to address any gaps or areas for potential improvement. It is important to note that great care was taken in the presentation of all the findings, to ensure the confidential nature of the information provided.

The findings from each stream were then reviewed comprehensively, with recommendations and/or suggestions for ways of potentially addressing these presented later in the report.

- C. **Reporting:** The NVision team prepared a series of draft reports, to obtain feedback and input from the NHC review project authority and/or designate(s). This final version of the report incorporates the feedback received up to and including April 2021.

## Review Study Limitations

Since the project's launch at the end of Summer 2020, the study has experienced delays. A variety of factors causing delays included: continuity of NHC study authority(ies) which increased the workloads of these individuals and impacted the timeliness of feedback/input to questions posed and materials provided; serious illness of consulting team members and/or their immediate families, and of some potential interviewees/respondents in the communities.

NVision experienced major challenges in reaching Nunavummiut willing to complete the General Survey and committing to telephone interviews. NVision had hoped to do media outreach to solicit interest, however, different factors did not allow this. As a result, the survey responses do not constitute a statistically representative sample of community members and program recipients. While no target numbers of interviewees or survey respondents were identified by the project authority, the relatively small number of actual responses would not represent more than a very small window into this pool. However, the responses received provided valuable input which has been incorporated.

COVID-19 created a challenge in reaching Nunavummiut as, also, likely, "survey-fatigue". The feedback received, thus, provides NHC, the GN, and Nunavummiut a broad foundation in terms of needing to translate, interpret, communicate, educate, train, and understand the NHC Rent-Scale.

## Summary of Literature Review

NHC identified and provided access to approximately 40 documents, which were reviewed by the NVision team. These documents included annual reports, NHC Manuals, policies, past internal and external reports, NHC briefing notes and Hansards (minutes) from the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. The literature review was conducted to gain an understanding of what has been completed and what may be outstanding from earlier attempts to improve the implementation of the Rent-Scale.

*Appendix C*, Literature Review Documents List, identifies the documents assessed to be the most pertinent material reviewed (e.g. non-duplication of information) for inclusion in the analysis. *Appendices E* through *H* provide detailed suggestions from NVision regarding potential edits to key documents to make them more user-friendly (e.g. by LHOs, etc.).

This section provides details on the information collected through the review of the key documents. The section concludes by providing a summary of the major findings, grouped thematically, arising from analyzing the relative strengths and perceived gaps with the documentation.

### Historical Context

Based on the documents provided, information had been collected going back to 1959. In 1959, rent was set at \$15/month with payments to last 7 to 10 years. \$15/month is now equivalent to \$138 today.<sup>1</sup>

When Nunavut became a territory in 1999, the Honourable Manitok Thompson, then Minister Responsible for the NHC created the Minister's Task Force on Housing in October of that year. The Task Force Report and Recommendations, 2002, called for changes to be made to the rent-scale to address:

- misconceptions to disincentives to work once in a public housing unit;
- created minimum/maximum rent;
- changes to assessments (how, who);
- deductions for situations such as overcrowding and unit conditions.

A detailed history is provided in *Appendix D*.

There have been three reviews and the results summarized with changes throughout the life of the Rent-Scale. Each review has attempted to address the perception of the disincentive to work once in a public housing unit and that, if understood, Nunavummiut would agree that the Rent-Scale is fair and affordable.

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<sup>1</sup> Bank of Canada. *Inflation Calculator*. <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>

A new rent-scale was approved in 2005, which included a sliding-scale (10 to 28%) rent assessments based on gross income. Further work was done in 2007 and from recommendations made by the Auditor General of Canada in 2008. Plans were generated to do a complete review and overhaul of the rent-scale and anticipated to be introduced by 2012. Once completed, its conclusion included that the rent scale at the time had created a disincentive to work.

The current Rent-Scale came into effect in 2014 and included a communications strategy with notices to tenants, letters from the NHC to LHOs and instructions for implementation. The scale includes measures such as:

- *Rent will be assessed on the income of the two primary leaseholders only, (instead of including all inhabitants of a household);*
- *New method for calculating rent is based on a step scale that is similar to federal income tax (to ensure that low-income earners are able to keep a higher percentage of their earnings);*
- *The minimum rent threshold will be indexed to Nunavut's minimum wage, (so those with low-paying jobs are not penalized with steep increases to rent because they took a job);*
- *Elders will only pay rent on the portion of their income over their community's Core Need Income Threshold (CNIT), (so Elders are not unfairly penalized for generating income);*
- *Rent increases due to income increases will be limited to 25% of the new rent assessed per year until the rent assessed total is reached;*
- *Maximum rents are to be reviewed to encourage tenants over-CNIT to transition out of Public Housing.*

*These changes are designed to ensure tenants can start to accumulate wealth and advance in their field of employment. While costing the government in the short term, architects of the new Public Housing Rent Scale believe the economic spinoffs to the community and a reduced social burden are worth the short-term investment for the long-term benefits to poverty reduction.<sup>2</sup>*

The rest of this section provides findings for specific documents analysed which more directly relate to the rent scale.

### Rent Scale Procedures Manual Version 3.75, March 6, 2018

The Rent Scale Procedures Manual (RS Manual) is 46 pages and is one of the primary tools used by the LHOs to implement NHC policy around the Rent-Scale. The manual could be

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<sup>2</sup> Minister's Annual Report on Poverty Reduction, Minister of Family Services, Government of Nunavut, 2013-2014  
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reorganized to achieve greater clarity. For example, there are eligibility criteria that do not appear to be criteria; definitions do not appear until much later in the RS Manual, when they should appear much sooner; and a complete list of enabling legislation could be provided to clarify NHC and LHO authority in management and operations of public housing.

Some examples of useful figures and processes include the Rent-Scale stages on page 33 which could be more prominent. The stages make it clear that the Rent Scale Manual is a well thought out, re: process. Page 37 is helpful because it presents the CNIT by each community.

Specific suggestions to improve the manual are provided in *Appendix E*.

### Tenant Relations Manual

Like the RS Manual, the Tenant Relations Manual (TR Manual) requires some work to achieve clarity. This manual is an important tool for LHOs for community relations and the intent to ensure communication between NHC, LHOs, and tenants are consistent. For example, the purpose of tenant relations could be clarified to provide guidance to applicants and present tenants of processes that could address tenant concerns within the LHO. Also, the manual could spell out what documentation is needed to establish eligibility.

Specific suggestions to improve the manual are provided in *Appendix F*.

### Hansards going back to 2014

Hansards were reviewed going back to 2014 to determine if concerns and issues around the Rent-Scale reach the Nunavut Legislative Assembly and, if they do, how often and, also, to assess if concerns could be addressed in changes to the Rent-Scale. The review found that the majority of the issues brought forward by the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are questions related to overcrowding, housing for elders and Government of Nunavut Staff housing having an impact on social housing.

To summarize, since 2014, there has been one question directly related to the Rent-Scale and its impact on seeking employment. MLAs' concerns with regards housing are more related to rental arrears and how arrears impact the overall NHC budget and operations, therefore, unrelated to the Rent-Scale Review.

### Analysis of 2009-2010 to 2019-2020 NHC Annual Reports

A review of NHC Annual Reports from fiscal years 2009-2010 through to 2019-2020 was undertaken to assess the impact the Rent-Scale has had on the collection of public housing rent in Nunavut, and the potential sustainability of the current Rent-Scale system. Rent and rental arrears collection, are important to highlight because they impact the available funding each LHO has for unit operations and maintenance. The source of all data, tables and figures

presented below is from these Annual Reports. Due to changes in accounting and reporting methods during this time, not all data was available for all fiscal years.

Rent Collection:

Rent collection can be useful data given that 72 to 78% of rent that is payable is paid by Income Support.

While there is no attribution to be made that any one segment of the tenant population is more likely to be in arrears, it is interesting to note that 22 to 28% of all tenants pay above the minimum rent assessment of \$60/month.

The Rent Collection Rate is the percentage of rent charged (assessed) to Public Housing tenants that was collected by the LHO. The rate can vary widely by community and by year. The following collection rates in two communities for two given fiscal years provides an example:

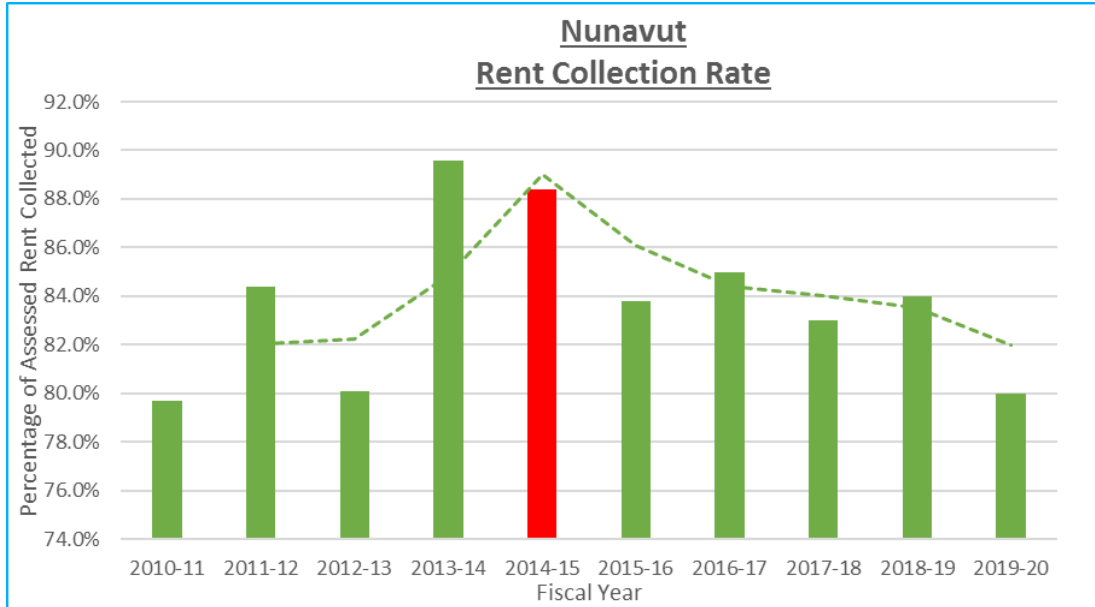
	<u>2011-2012</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>
● Clyde River	40.9%	51%
● Cambridge Bay	106.1%	87%

A rent collection rate higher than 100%, such as experienced by Cambridge Bay in fiscal year 2011-12, indicates that they were able to collect some outstanding rental arrears. An annual rent collection rate below 100% results in an accumulation of arrears.

As shown in Figure 1 below, the overall percentage of Assessed Rent collected in Nunavut has fluctuated. The Rent Collection rate is trending back down to 2010-2011 levels for the past several fiscal years. The red bar denotes the first full year that the Rent Scale was in effect.

The average rent collection rate of 80% Nunavut-wide in fiscal 2019-20 was still almost identical to the 79.7% rate the territory experienced almost ten years earlier in fiscal 2010-11.

**Figure 1:**



For Figure 2. on the following page, an analysis was conducted to determine if the number of months that rent was outstanding has changed over the years. The average number of months of rent outstanding for Nunavut as a whole, calculated by taking the total rent receivable divided by the average monthly rent assessments, has increased from 20 months in fiscal year 2012-13, the first year that data is available, to 27 months in fiscal year 2019-20. This represents a 35% increase in the length of time rent is in arrears. While it is not possible to determine the exact cause of this increase from the data available, it is safe to assume that the Rent Scale does not appear to have mitigated this upward trend in delinquent rent payments.

**Figure 2:**

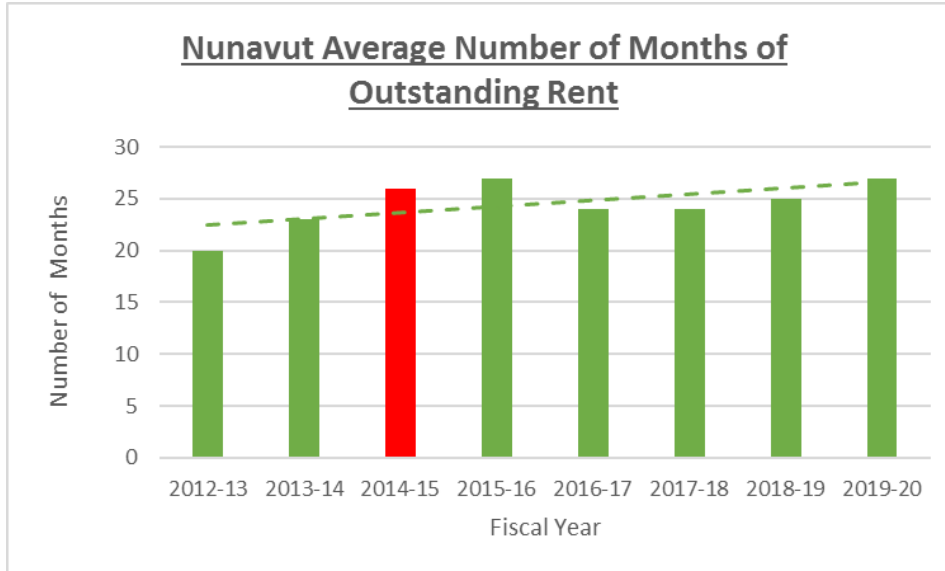
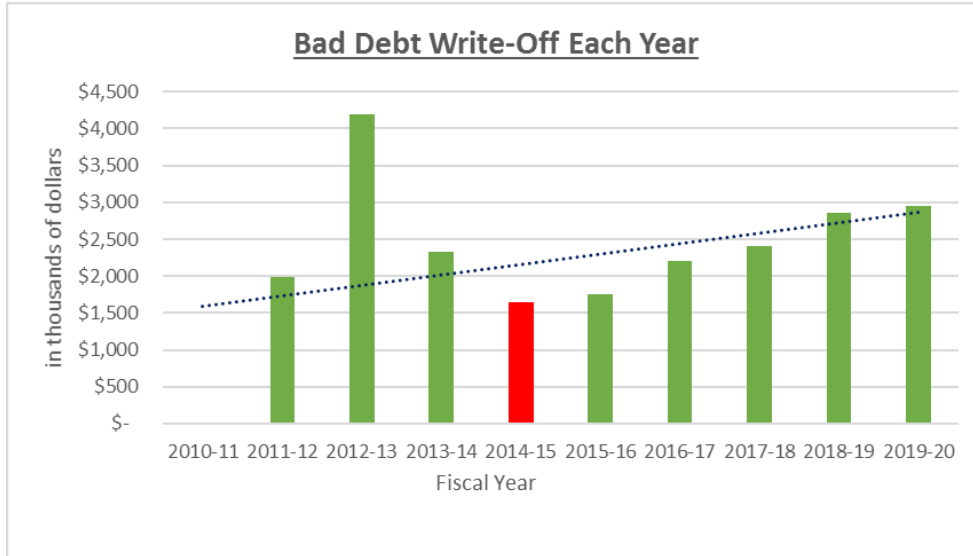


Figure 3. on the following page highlights debt write-offs to determine affordability from the perspective of the NHC. A debt-write off is where long-standing debt is written off, given the lack of prospects for ever collecting on it. The NHC did not start writing off rent deemed uncollectable or “bad debt” until fiscal year 2011-12 when Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS) were adopted for the first time. It appears from Figure 3 that a large write-off was taken in fiscal year 2012-13 so that the Tenant Accounts Receivable amount reflected in the financial statements was brought in line with what could reasonably be expected to be collected by the LHOs.

Bad debt expense has increased steadily since the inception of the Rent Scale in 2014-15.



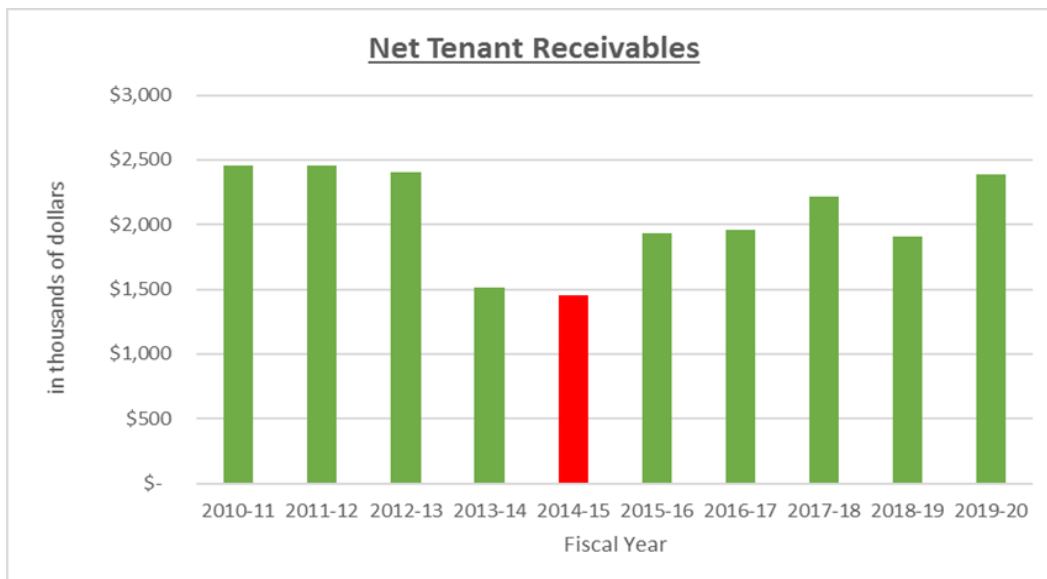
**Figure 3:**



**Figure 4:**

Net Tenant Receivables, which is calculated by subtracting the Allowance for Doubtful Accounts from Total Tenant Rent Receivable, has also been trending upward since the introduction of the Rent-Scale in fiscal year 2014-15 as seen in Figure 4 below. Calculating the Net Tenant Receivables is important as it shows the continued need for collecting rent as necessary to NHC’s operations.

The large decrease seen from fiscal year 2012-13 to 2013-14, is likely due to the change to Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS). The introduction of the Rent-Scale did not result in a decrease in Tenant Account Receivables, indicating that tenants are not paying their rent at a faster/more frequent rate than before.



## Operations and Maintenance Costs

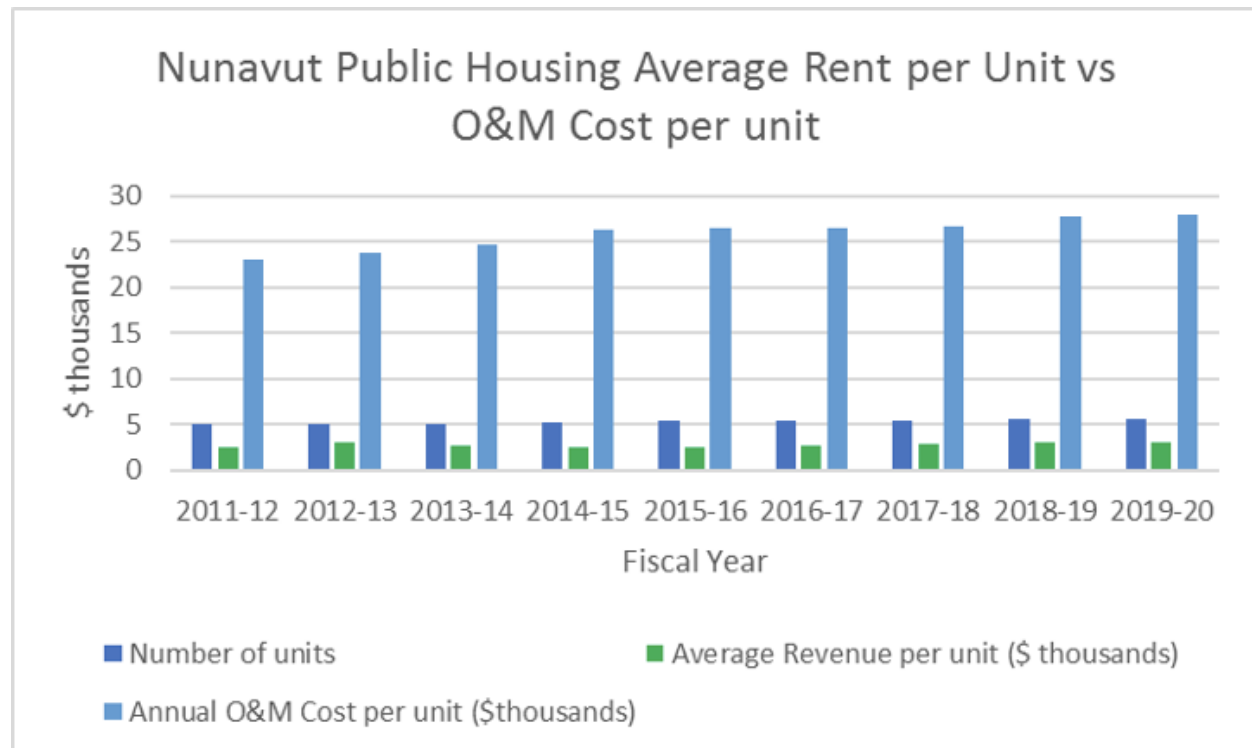
The cost incurred by NHC to operate and maintain a public housing unit averages \$28,000 per annum. The current Rent-Scale is insufficient to cover these costs. As can be seen in Table 1 below, NHC rental assessments cover an average of 11% of the costs to operate and maintain public housing rental units. This percentage has remained consistent both before and after the introduction of the new rent scale in fiscal year 2014-15, with very little deviation.

Average annual rental revenue per unit of public housing has, for the most part, kept pace with the increased cost of operating and maintaining those units. Average revenue increased by 21% per unit over the nine fiscal years ending in 2019/20 with operations and maintenance (O&M) costs increasing just slightly more (22%) over the same time period. While the disparity between rental revenue per unit and the cost to maintain those units remains significant at approximately \$28,000 per unit in fiscal 2019-20, it does not appear to be growing.

Table 1

Fiscal Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Number of units	5067	5099	5123	5153	5383	5431	5496	5582	5668
<b>Revenue (\$thousands)</b>									
Rental Revenue	\$ 12,976	\$ 15,346	\$ 14,204	\$ 13,025	\$ 13,533	\$ 15,156	\$ 16,187	\$ 16,941	\$ 17,572
Average Revenue per unit	\$ 2.56	\$ 3.01	\$ 2.77	\$ 2.53	\$ 2.51	\$ 2.79	\$ 2.95	\$ 3.03	\$ 3.10
<b>Costs (\$ thousands)</b>									
Annual O&M Cost per unit	\$ 23.00	\$ 23.80	\$ 24.80	\$ 26.30	\$ 26.50	\$ 26.50	\$ 26.70	\$ 27.80	\$ 28.00
Revenue as a Percentage of O&M Costs	11%	13%	11%	10%	9%	11%	11%	11%	11%

Figure 5



In summary, all metrics of rent collection outlined above show rent collection has declined or remained the same since fiscal year 2014-15, the first full year the Rent-Scale was implemented. This result may be a reflection of the level of tenants' understanding of the revised Rent-Scale and/or their perceptions on the fairness or affordability of their rent assessments. These metrics also show that the Rent-Scale has not decreased the level of resources needed by LHOs and the NHC to collect rent. Again, rent collection deficits impact the dollars available to LHOs for housing programs and maintenance.

## Summary of Major Findings from Literature Review

The major findings identified through the Literature Review phase of this study are:

1. Since 1999, NHC has made administrative, policy, and communication changes to the Rent-Scale to continuously improve this rent-geared-to-income program.
2. The tools available to LHOs, specifically the NHC Public Housing Rent-Scale Manual and the Tenant Relations Manual, are critical to the success of the implementation of the NHC Public Housing Rent-Scale. These could be enhanced by re-organizing the manuals (as suggested in *Appendices E through H*) and updating the information.
3. The Hansards did not indicate that the Rent-Scale or its potential impact on seeking employment were frequent topics of discussion in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. Since 2014, there has only been one question directly related to the Rent-Scale and its impact on seeking employment. MLAs' concerns about housing were more related to rental arrears and how arrears may or may not impact the overall NHC budget and operations.
4. Rent collection metrics show that rent collection has declined or remained the same since Rent-Scale implementation in 2014. These metrics show that the Rent-Scale has not decreased the level of resources needed by LHOs and the NHC to collect rent. Rent collection deficits impact the dollars available to LHOs for housing programs and maintenance.

## Interview and Survey Findings

NVision reached out to Nunavummiut from December 2020 through March 2021, focusing on NHC Directorate and District staff, Local Housing Authorities (LHOs), Tenant Relations Officers (TROs) and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). All LHOs were contacted, with nine (9) LHOs participating: 2 communities in Kivalliq; 3 communities in Kitikmeot; and 4 communities in Qikiqtaaluk. Nine (9) LHO Managers, three (3) Tenant Relations Managers, and one LHO Board Member were interviewed.

In addition to the interviews with the individuals identified above, input from community members, Elders, social housing tenants, and program recipients was solicited through a Survey. All LHOs were contacted, via e-mail, at a minimum of three separate times, to request their participation and/or assistance in reaching out to Nunavummiut for the review. The LHOs were sent Community Member Surveys and background information on the Rent-Scale Review, with the request of having them placed in public places and to ensure the Review was announced on the local radio. A total of 10 community member surveys were completed: seven from Kivalliq and three from Qikiqtaaluk.

This section provides details on the information collected through the completed interviews and survey responses. This section concludes with a summary of the major findings, grouped thematically, which were developed from analysis of feedback, information and suggestions from both the interviews and surveys.

### Detailed Findings

#### 1. Possible Disincentives to Work Based on the Rent Scale

The impact of the Rent-Scale on employment decisions was assessed by two slightly different questions in the interviews and surveys conducted.

Eighty-three percent of NHC and LHO staff and MLAs interviewed stated that they believe the Rent-Scale definitely has an impact on the employment decisions of public housing tenants. The explanation provided is the general understanding that rent increases in relation to income.

One hundred percent of tenant survey respondents are concerned that if their income increases, their rent will increase above what they can afford.

Fifty-four percent of respondents identified rent assessments being based on income rather than unit type as the most significant issue in the Public Housing System affecting employment decisions and sense of fairness. Tenants do not understand the discrepancy in rent for identical units.

For example, an employed person may pay \$1,140 per month for their one-bedroom unit while their next-door neighbour, who does not work, pays \$60 per month for an identical unit. This

creates the appearance of penalizing a tenant for being employed or working to earn a higher income.

Interviewees and survey respondents were asked their opinion regarding the affordability and fairness of rent assessments in relation to income levels as this may have an impact on employment decisions. The answers varied markedly between tenants and LHO/NHC staff:

- 88% of tenants surveyed believe that rent assessments are not fair and affordable in relation to income.
- 41% of LHO/NHC staff believe rents are affordable for all income levels.
- 35% of LHO/NHC staff believe that rents are affordable for some but not all income levels.
- 24% of LHO/NHC staff believe that rents are not affordable in relation to income levels.

### **Interviewee Comments Regarding Possible Disincentives to Work and the Rent-Scale**

A great deal of valuable qualitative data was provided by interviewee and survey respondents. Their comments regarding the rent scale's impact on employment decisions are summarized below:

- The whole system seems geared towards penalizing working unless you take a good job with the GN.
- Several respondents suggested that charging the same rent for a one-bedroom unit regardless of the age of the building was an issue.
- One LHO mentioned having lost employees who did not believe that the additional \$400 they took home each month after childcare expenses and their rent increase of \$1406 (from \$60 to \$1,466 per month) was worth it.
- Several respondents mentioned that tenants working at good jobs who have a unit rent of \$1,200 per month are not convinced they are getting a good deal when their neighbour pays \$60 per month. They both pay the same amount at the Northern Store.
- Some tenants stay on Income Support because their rent is \$60, and all they have to worry about is feeding the family so they go out on the land.
- Interviewees also mentioned that the rent scale encourages tenants to seek being paid “under the table” for their work in order to avoid an increase in rent. A couple of the surveys mentioned the arts and crafts business as a way to earn additional income “under the table”.
- A few interviewees believe that some tenants may not understand they may be better off financially earning a higher income, even if their rent increases.
- It was also mentioned that it may be easier for someone to say they left a job due to a rent increase rather than disclose the real reason such as harassment, etc.
- Several interviewees and survey respondents said tenants who are employed have the perception that their rent is too high, when the actual problem is that their neighbour on Income Support's rent is too low.

## 2. Public Understanding of the Current Rent-Scale

The majority of NHC, LHO and tenant respondents agreed that the public do not understand the Rent-Scale calculation that determines their rent assessment. The responses were broken down as follows:

- 81.25% of NHC and LHO respondents do not believe tenants understand the rent scale.
- 18.75% of NHC and LHO respondents believe the rent scale is understood by some, but not all, tenants.
- 75% of tenant survey respondents do not understand how their rent amount was calculated/derived.

Eighty-eight (88%) of tenant survey respondents do not believe the Rent-Scale is fair and affordable in relation to income. It is possible that this perception is influenced by the tenant survey respondents' understanding of the Rent-Scale.

### **Possible Barriers to Tenant Understanding of the Rent-Scale Identified by respondents**

Interviewees suggested the following as possible barriers to tenant understanding of the Rent-Scale:

- Complexity of the calculation. A belief was expressed that the calculation is too complex for many tenants and even some staff to understand.
- Misinformation in the communities. Individuals who believe they understand the policy/process pass on incorrect information.
- Absence of a rental market in most communities means that tenants do not understand the true cost of rent.
- Some believe that a large percentage of tenants have no interest in understanding the rent scale.
- Staff turnover, particularly at the LHO level, is an issue. There is often no overlap of employment between departing and newly-appointed staff. For example, the last TRO is often gone before the new one starts.
- Staff training material and opportunities. TROs do not usually receive in-person training before they assume their duties. There is a lack of other types of training resources.
- Tenant knowledge of budgeting and how to be a good tenant, overload of information given to tenants when they first move in, or no information being given at all.

## **Interviewee/Survey Respondent Suggestions to Improve Tenant Understanding of the Rent-Scale**

Interview and survey respondents provided the following suggestions on how to improve tenant understanding of the Rent Scale:

- Staff training: make it more timely and meaningful.
- A course at Arctic College for TROs on how to do paperwork and handle tenants.
- Tenant Education Program similar to what is done in other territories.
- Courses on life skills in schools and for tenants on budgeting.
- Would like to see an LHO website where tenants could submit updates online and a newsletter.
- Targeted campaigns about the rent scale through social media, broadcast and print media.
- A newsletter that maintenance staff could distribute to Public Housing units when they do repairs.
- There is too much disparity in rents and tenants do not understand why.

### **3. Rent-Scale Mechanism and Process**

Interviewees and survey respondents were asked about Rent-Scale processes to determine the impact these may have on tenant understanding of the Rent-Scale. An additional area of inquiry was the implementation of and/or participation in cost reduction and other NHC programs. Lastly, interviewees and survey respondents were asked if they had any overall comments or suggestions regarding the Rent-Scale. Their responses are summarized below:

- All LHO employee respondents mentioned that they rely extensively on their District Office or LHO manager to answer rent scale questions rather than reference manuals. None of the TRO respondents use the Rent Scale Procedures Manual or Tenant Relations Manual.
- 33% of TROs mentioned that the manuals are out of date and should be online. This highlights that staff are not aware of many of the features of the Rent Scale Management Software since the manuals are accessible on their dashboards.
- 66% of TROs mentioned that the Rent Scale Procedures Manual needs to be more user-friendly and give detailed step-by-step instructions on some procedures.
- 67% of LHO Managers said they used both the Rent Scale Procedures Manual and the Tenant Relations Manual when needed.
- 11% of LHO Managers specifically mentioned the need to contact the NHC IT department regarding questions on the Rent Scale Management System since there is no manual for it.

- All LHO respondents review rent assessments with tenants in general terms. 87% of LHOs stated that they do not review rent calculations in detail with tenants due to their complexity. A detailed review is only done with most tenants if they question or complain about their rent assessment. 20% of NHC and LHO respondents stated that some staff also do not have a good understanding of rent calculations.
- LHO office systems are not interfaced together which increases workload and has resulted in incorrect rent invoicing to tenants due to data entry errors.
- LHOs do not have access to do a temporary assessment in the software for someone on EI or maternity leave. They cannot remove an assessment for \$60 when a tenant goes back to work, they need to ask the IT department to make this change. IT must then ask for approval before proceeding.
- 75% of tenants surveyed received the keys to their unit and signed their agreements without any kind of orientation or explanation of their rent payment.
- Family breakdowns are a growing concern in communities, and LHOs would like the Rent Scale Procedures Manual to cover this in greater detail.
- An issue of growing concern in communities is tenants moving out of their units for periods of time while having someone else living there. Since the unit is not technically abandoned, the LHO has no recourse but may have families on their waiting list who would benefit from the unit.
- 19% of NHC and LHO respondents mentioned that the policy/system is bureaucratic and requires a lot of resources in the LHOs to administer.
- None of the nine communities that participated had an appeals process and only one LHO Manager was aware of the NHC Special Cases Committee. None of the interviewees and survey respondents were aware of an appeals process. LHOs bring cases for decision to their boards of directors, and two respondents mentioned a high level of turnover at the Board level. The sole board member interviewed stated they did not receive any training on the Rent-Scale.
- 89% of LHOs indicated that they implement NHC cost reduction initiatives. 56% of LHO respondents specifically mentioned that they have been actively taking conservation measures such as installing LED lighting. 78% of LHO respondents felt that their LHO could play a role in promoting NHC programs.
- 88% of tenant survey respondents would work with the NHC and LHO in cost-saving measures and other programs. The breakdown by program was as follows:
  - 75% of tenant survey respondents would participate in a rent-to-own program.
  - 63% of tenant survey respondents would participate in a Unit Maintenance, Unit Condition or Home Ownership programs.
  - 50% of tenant survey respondents would participate in a Rent Reduction program.
  - 25% of tenant survey respondents would participate in an Energy conservation program.



## Comments and Suggestions from Interviewees and Survey Respondents Regarding the Rent-Scale Mechanism and Process

Interviewees and survey respondents provided the following comments and/or suggestions regarding the Rent-Scale mechanism, process:

- The number of dependents the primary tenants have should be taken into account in the Rent-Scale calculation.
- The current system only updates conditions every 2 years. We should do better than this. We did a review in March 2019, and it is still not on the Rent- Scale system. This also creates a disparity in rent.
- We need to get to the core of how we are doing the Rent-Scale. It is very time consuming for the LHO Manager, TRO and finance person who are all involved. A lot of time is spent on administration.
- The Rent-Scale does not account for taking good care of your unit. You should get a rent reduction for looking after your unit.
- What are we going to do with people who are making more money on unemployment due to COVID payments? Their rent will go up even though they are no longer getting those payments.
- The Rent-Scale should be simplified a lot. There should only be three income brackets. The brackets should be wider than they are now. The \$60 per month rent should apply up to \$50,000 or more.
- LHOs should be given more control/authority to run community programs, such as offer work to pay off arrears.
- Some interviewees suggested that “rent/lease to own” arrangements be developed for newer/new units expressing that “once a tenant, then a long-term rent-payer”. That there has to be a better arrangement that can be introduced.
- It was suggested that “rent-to-own” programs be expanded to non-government employees.
- *“NHC needs to give tenants more ownership or control of units and encourage community programming, i.e. offer prizes or vouchers to tenants who offer “best” solutions that can be applied across the territory”.*
- Unless specifically asked by community members for assistance, some LHOs do not generally promote NHC programs due to workload and other priorities.
- *“We are installing low-flow toilets and shower heads. We are testing hot water on demand systems.”*
- *“We can’t keep up with unit maintenance.”*
- *“We have no capacity for promoting NHC programs without more funding for more staff.”*

- “We would need to find out if tenants wanted to take part in a program first and there might have to be an incentive program.” (such as employing people to work off their rent arrears).

#### 4. Communications

Interviewees and survey respondents were asked the following questions regarding communications:

1. How do you communicate information with the community/How do you receive information related to Public Housing?
2. Which is the best means of communication/What is your preferred means of receiving information about public housing/What would be the best means of NHC to communicate with your constituents regarding the Public Housing Rent Scale?
  - LHOs currently communicate information in the following ways:
    - 89% of LHOs communicate by Telephone and Email.
    - 78% of LHOs communicate information In-Person.
    - 67% of LHOs communicate information on Local Radio and Facebook.
    - 33% of LHOs use Posters on Bulletin Boards.
    - 11% of LHOs use A Note on the Tenant’s Door, a Newsletter, LHO Website.
  - Tenants identified the ways they are currently receiving Public Housing information as:
    - 25% of tenants receive information In-Person.
    - 12.5% of tenants receive information by either Local Radio, Telephone, NHC Website, Family Members, Mail, LHO employees.
    - 12.5% of tenants say they have received no information at all.
  - LHOs believe the following means of communicating Public Housing information to be the most effective:
    - 75% believe Radio is the most effective means of communicating.
    - 50% believe In-Person or Facebook is the most effective means of communicating.
    - 12.5% believe newsletters or posters are the most effective means of communicating.
  - Tenants and MLAs had the following views on the preferred means of communicating Public Housing information (may be several for each tenant):
    - 75% prefer Facebook.
    - 58% prefer Radio.
    - 33% prefer In-Person.
    - 25% prefer Mail or Instagram.
    - 8% prefer Email or News.

- As can be seen from the above information, the best means of communicating with tenants varies by community and tenant.
- While Facebook is preferred by the majority of tenants surveyed, it has been discontinued by some LHOs due to the drama and constant complaints posted on their pages.
- Local radio works well for those communities that have it.
- In-person communication is popular and seen as effective but is not always practical.

### **Interviewee and Survey Respondents Comments and Suggestions Regarding Communications**

The following qualitative data regarding communications was provided by interviewees and survey respondents:

- Bulk mailings were found to be an ineffective means of communication for two reasons:
  - The majority come back undeliverable;
  - LHOs lack the resources to send them out.
- Several LHO interviewees believe that a newsletter that could be left in units by maintenance staff and posted on the LHO's website would be an effective communication tool.
- The NHC website was viewed as being difficult to navigate to find information regarding the Rent-Scale.
- It was suggested that better training of LHO staff is needed to improve communication of the Rent-Scale. Staff turnover creates a knowledge and experience deficit in the LHOs. Suggestions for possible vectors for increasing access to training for staff were:
  - YouTube videos;
  - Online training;
  - Nunavut Arctic College course and apprenticeship for TROs.

## Summary of Major Findings from Interviews and Surveys

The major findings identified from qualitative and quantitative information collected through the interviews and survey phases have been grouped thematically, as follows:

### 1. Possible Disincentives to Work Based on the Rent Scale

Results collected from interviews and surveys show that the current Rent-Scale is believed to influence the employment decisions of public housing tenants, and thereby may also provide a disincentive to work.

There is a general understanding amongst the public that rent will increase with income, and all tenant survey respondents expressed concern that their rent will become unaffordable if their income rises.

The majority (83%) of MLA, LHO and NHC interviewees believe that the Rent-Scale influences tenants' employment decisions. Interviewees stated that the disparity in rent assessments between unemployed tenants paying the minimum rent of \$60 per month, and employed tenants paying considerably more, gives the perception that tenants are being penalized for working. Interviewees also indicated the level of tenants' financial budgeting knowledge may impact their employment decisions.

Survey respondents and interviewees also communicated that increasing rent assessments in correlation to income may discourage some tenants from earning higher incomes and may also encourage some to "work under the table".

### 2. Public Understanding of the Current Rent-Scale

The results from interviews and surveys conducted show that the Rent-Scale is generally not well understood by tenants and some staff. Interviewees and survey respondents view the primary barriers to the understanding of the Rent-Scale by public housing tenants and staff as:

- the complexity of the calculation;
- misinformation in the community;
- tenant knowledge of rental markets and budgeting;
- turnover and training of LHO staff.

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of tenant survey respondents perceived the Rent-Scale to be unfair or unaffordable. This perception may be another indication that the Rent-Scale is not well understood by tenants.

### 3. Rent Scale Mechanism and Process

Some systems and processes impact the workflow and resources required by LHOs to administer the Rent-Scale. For example, the need for duplicate entry between financial systems and the RSMS has resulted in incorrect rent invoices being sent to tenants.

LHO Managers and TROs mentioned that resource materials such as the Rent-Scale Procedures Manual and the Tenant Relations Manual are out of date in some areas and are difficult to navigate to find answers to their questions. Instead, they rely heavily on phone calls to their NHC District Office. LHO interviewees noted the need for a manual on the RSMS. They specifically asked if an update to existing manuals could address in greater detail the process for dealing with Family Breakdowns, which is becoming increasingly common among tenants.

### 4. Communications

Interview and survey results show that the best means of communicating with public housing tenants varies by community and tenant. Facebook, local radio and in-person communication were deemed the most effective by interviewees and survey respondents. Bulk mailings and the NHC website were found to be the least effective.

NHC and LHO staff training was found to be an important component of effective communication about the Rent-Scale.

## Recommendations and/or Suggestions

The findings derived from analyzing the documentation during the literature review and feedback from the interviews and surveys, were further examined to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of the Rent-Scale. This section provides recommendations and/or suggestions that NHC may wish to pursue as possible ways to address gaps or areas for potential improvement. The recommendations and/or suggestions also take into account inter-dependencies between findings identified through the course of the comprehensive analysis. The recommendations and/or suggestions are grouped into the four main themes contained in the previous chapters of this report.

### 1. Possible disincentives to work based on the current Rent-Scale

- NHC may wish to explore the relative benefits of moving to a unit-based rather than income-based rent assessment system. It is recognized that this would require working with Government of Nunavut departments, but this would be revenue-neutral for Nunavut overall. The benefits to be derived may include simplifying administration for LHOs and addressing the perception of being penalized for working.
- Undertake a comprehensive Rent-Scale training and education effort for tenants, LHO staff, and LHO Board members. Due to high turnover, this training should be structured to facilitate access throughout the year. This also relates to subsequent recommendations and/or suggestions in this section.

### 2. Public understanding of the current Rent-Scale

- Simplify the current Rent-Scale rent assessment language.
  - Terminology used in the Rent-Scale calculation may not be as easily understood by the general public as it is for staff who are immersed in it daily. An example of possible change in terminology to be more descriptive would be to change “under accommodation allowance” to “deduction for overcrowding” or “deduction for insufficient number of bedrooms”. These types of changes could clearly convey to tenants that their living conditions are being taken into consideration in assessing their rent.
- Institute a tenant education program similar to what is being done in other jurisdictions such as NWT and Nunavik.
  - Education program topics could include:
    - Managing household finances - budgeting.
    - How to be a good tenant - maintaining your unit, etc.
    - How the public housing system works - rent increases, who to contact with issues, etc.
  - Tenants could be given an incentive to participate, such as:
    - Being placed in a draw for new furniture.
    - Given free cleaning supplies, paint, etc.

- Move up the waitlist if they are currently waiting for a unit.
  - This program will require significant resources that LHOs do not currently have.
- Provide LHOs with a basic, simplified communication tool to explain rent assessments to tenants rather than the one currently provided in RSMS or the Rent Scale Procedures Manual.
- Provide an online resource and flyer with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding public housing, Rent-Scale, etc. answered in user-friendly terminology. Videos would be an effective way to communicate this information as well.
- Develop an easy-to-implement, standard orientation process for new tenants. Limited LHO resources for delivering such a process needs to be taken into consideration. The use of videos may be a more entertaining way to convey this information while limiting the impact on LHO staff.

### 3. Rent-Scale mechanism and process

- Improve the administration of the Rent-Scale by integrating systems, standardizing processes, and update and organize reference manuals to be more-user friendly. Some suggestions include:
  - Standardize computer systems, in the cloud if possible, to allow integration of systems, thereby decreasing workload and rent invoice data entry errors.
  - Allow LHOs greater access to make changes in the Rent Scale Management System (RSMS) rather than requiring them to contact NHC to make these changes for them.
  - Provide more training on the RSMS system. This should be done annually or biannually with access to online or video training as well.
  - Consider taking the number of dependents each primary tenant has into consideration in the Rent-Scale formula.
  - Consider allowing other forms of income verification in certain circumstances such as recent pay stubs, or base income only, rather than including overtime in your total income.
  - Consider implementing an incentive system for tenants who take good care of their units; this could decrease LHO maintenance costs and impact the burden on maintenance staff.
  - Develop an easy to implement, standard orientation process for new tenants. Limited LHO resources for delivering such a process needs to be taken into consideration. The use of videos may be a more entertaining way to convey this information while limiting the impact on LHO staff.
- Make the specific changes for clarity purposes as suggested in *Appendices E* through *H*, and develop a RSMS manual.
  - For example, LHOs have asked if NHC manuals could address in greater detail the process for dealing with family breakdowns, which they are

increasingly having to deal with. They would also like detailed examples of processes in the manuals.

- Provide easy access to a comprehensive staff orientation and training program for LHO staff, particularly TROs who often do not receive training until they have been in their position for some time. This comprehensive staff training initiative could include the following:
  - Possible Arctic College course for TROs and/or apprenticeship program.
  - Once staff manuals are updated, ensure that all staff receive orientation about the changes made in the manuals.
  - Develop training resources that can be used by LHO staff such as videos and other online training.
  - Offer training over Zoom, Microsoft Teams or other collaborative meeting venues until in-person training is available.
  - Institute trauma-informed workshops for all employees to better understand and learn to deal with tenants who may struggle with the effects of intergenerational trauma.
- Develop an orientation and training program for LHO Board members. This could take the form of both multimedia resources such as videos and use of online meeting resources such as Zoom or Google Meet.

#### 4. Communications

- Develop a Rent-Scale communications strategy that considers the need for several types of communication such as:
  - Regular appearance on local/territorial radio.
  - A simple website geared towards tenants. This website should be easy to navigate on a mobile device and provide answers to the most frequently asked questions by tenants in layman's terms. The use of graphics and video would be beneficial.
  - In-person events (such as question and answer, table set-up at local store or soup kitchen, etc.), to be delivered by trained staff.
  - Provide a Quarterly Newsletter with information that could be left in units by LHO maintenance departments.
  - Use of social media such as Facebook.

Some of the recommendations and suggestions identified above can be implemented immediately. Others will require a long-term strategy. The key to a successful implementation regardless of timeframe will be the strong partnerships and regular collaboration between NHC and LHOs.



## Conclusion

NHC has been active in supporting Nunavummiut by administering housing programs across Nunavut since the territory's establishment. During that time, NHC has reviewed and made changes to the Rent-Scale at least three times, as part of its continuous program-improvement activities.

This Rent-Scale Review study has provided a window on current perceptions, some accurate and some otherwise, on the program. This report documents factors that contribute to misconceptions about the Rent-Scale and identifies options to address or minimize the misconceptions.

Ultimately, the information contained within this report can be leveraged by NHC to further the effectiveness of the Rent-Scale, as the organization continues to build on the enhancements it has made into the program.

## Appendices

## Appendix A: Nunavut Housing Corporation Rent Calculation

### Rent Calculation

Senior's over 60 (unless high income): \$0

### Rent Calculation Formula

A minimum rent of \$60.00 a month for annual income under \$33,280 PLUS

20% of annual income between \$33,280 and \$40,000 PLUS

25% of annual income between \$40,000 and \$80,000 PLUS

30% of annual income over \$80,000

Maximum Monthly Rents	
Unit Size	Maximum Monthly Rent
Bachelor	\$814
1 Bedroom	\$1,140
2 Bedroom	\$1,466
3 Bedroom	\$1,792
4 Bedroom	\$2,118
5 Bedroom	\$2,443

Typical Rental Calculation*			
Income	Monthly Rent to Maximum for unit size	% of Income	Notes
\$30,000	\$60	2%	
\$40,000	\$172	5%	
\$50,000	\$380	9%	
\$60,000	\$589	12%	
\$70,000	\$767	13%	
\$80,000	\$1,005	15%	over Bachelor Max Rent
\$90,000	\$1,255	17%	over 1 br. Max Rent
\$100,000	\$1,505	18%	over 2 br. Max Rent
\$110,000	\$1,755	19%	
\$120,000	\$2,005	20%	over 3 br. Max Rent
\$130,000	\$2,255	21%	over 4 br. Max Rent
\$140,000	\$2,443	20%	5 br. Max Rent
\$150,000	\$2,443	20%	5 br. Max Rent

\*Rent increases based on increases in income are phased in over several years.

Rents are increased by a maximum of 25% of the new base rent each year until the maximum is reached. For example, if a tenant paying \$60/month gains employment for \$100,000/year, rents will be increased by approximately \$400/year until the maximum rent of \$1,609/month is reached.

## Appendix B: Nunavut Housing Corporation Public Housing Rent Levels, 2021

RENT		\$0	\$60	\$61 - \$350	\$351 - \$1000	\$1001-\$2000	\$2000 +	Total
ARCTIC BAY	# of clients	13	87	19	10	22	0	151
	% of clients	9%	58%	13%	7%	15%	0%	
KINNGAIT	# of clients	41	158	29	16	22	4	270
	% of clients	15%	59%	11%	6%	8%	1%	
CLYDE RIVER	# of clients	16	92	26	26	30	1	191
	% of clients	8%	48%	14%	14%	16%	1%	
GRISE FIORD	# of clients	5	19	5	5	3	0	37
	% of clients	14%	51%	14%	14%	8%	0%	
HALL BEACH	# of clients	10	82	19	24	21	1	157
	% of clients	6%	52%	12%	15%	13%	1%	
IGLOOLIK	# of clients	38	152	36	23	26	1	276
	% of clients	14%	55%	13%	8%	9%	0%	
IQALUIT	# of clients	101	271	52	26	42	1	493
	% of clients	20%	55%	11%	5%	9%	0%	
KIMMIRUT	# of clients	8	51	7	15	11	0	92
	% of clients	9%	55%	8%	16%	12%	0%	
PANGNIRTUNG	# of clients	50	155	25	26	34	0	290
	% of clients	17%	53%	9%	9%	12%	0%	
POND INLET	# of clients	32	139	19	37	25	3	255
	% of clients	13%	55%	7%	15%	10%	1%	
QIKIQTARJUAQ	# of clients	20	77	16	7	11	0	131
	% of clients	15%	59%	12%	5%	8%	0%	
RESOLUTE BAY	# of clients	6	23	8	3	4	0	44
	% of clients	14%	52%	18%	7%	9%	0%	
SANIKILUAQ	# of clients	29	116	18	12	14	0	189
	% of clients	15%	61%	10%	6%	7%	0%	
QIKIQTAAALUQ	# of clients	<b>369</b>	<b>1422</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2576</b>
	% of clients	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>55.2%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	

ARVIAT	# of clients	47	224	49	54	37	1	412
	% of clients	11%	54%	12%	13%	9%	0%	
BAKER LAKE	# of clients	44	211	50	57	46	0	408
	% of clients	11%	52%	12%	14%	11%	0%	
CHESTERFIELD INLET	# of clients	17	36	16	11	9	1	90
	% of clients	19%	40%	18%	12%	10%	1%	
CORAL HARBOUR	# of clients	14	97	24	18	15	0	168
	% of clients	8%	58%	14%	11%	9%	0%	
NAUJAAT	# of clients	19	89	26	22	17	0	173
	% of clients	11%	51%	15%	13%	10%	0%	
RANKIN INLET	# of clients	51	123	47	46	57	4	328
	% of clients	16%	38%	14%	14%	17%	1%	
WHALE COVE	# of clients	6	46	20	6	6	0	84
	% of clients	7%	55%	24%	7%	7%	0%	
KIVALLIQ	# of clients	<b>198</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1663</b>
	% of clients	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	
CAMBRIDGE BAY	# of clients	43	139	26	28	16	2	254
	% of clients	17%	55%	10%	11%	6%	1%	
GJOA HAVEN	# of clients	16	138	23	20	20	1	218
	% of clients	7%	63%	11%	9%	9%	0%	
KUGLUKTUK	# of clients	41	189	25	16	17	0	288
	% of clients	14%	66%	9%	6%	6%	0%	
KUGAARUK	# of clients	11	85	35	12	11	1	155
	% of clients	7%	55%	23%	8%	7%	1%	
TALOYOAK	# of clients	28	129	11	9	16	0	193
	% of clients	15%	67%	6%	5%	8%	0%	
KITIKMEOT	# of clients	<b>139</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1108</b>
	% of clients	<b>13%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>	
Nunavut	# of clients	<b>706</b>	<b>2928</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5347</b>
	% of clients	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>54.8%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	

## Appendix C: Literature Review Relevant Documents List

1. Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Tenant Relations Manual*, Version 1.4, (January 5, 2015).
2. Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Rent Scale Procedures Manual*, Version 3.7, (November 3, 2013).
3. Nunavut Hansard, Unedited Transcript, Wednesday, (September 23, 2020).
4. Proposal by Gordon Anderson: *A Study of Housing Allocation Practices, Procedures and Outcomes*.
5. Income Support Division, GN Department of Education. (October 2003). *Income Support and Public Housing Rent* [PowerPoint Slides].
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7. Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Public Housing Rent Scale Proposals*. (September 21, 2011).
8. Nunavut Housing Corporation and LHOs. *Draft Summary of April Rent Scale Review*. (July 18, 2007).
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10. Office of the Auditor General of Canada. *Report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut re: Nunavut Housing Corporation*. (May 2008).
11. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Draft redesign of the Tenant Relations Manual. *Your Home and You, A Guide to Living in Public Housing*. (2019).
12. Consulting Matrix. *Review of Communications for the Government of Nunavut*. (2019).
13. Nunavut Housing Corporation. *TRO Manual*. (2018).
14. Nunavut Housing Corporation. *Draft Nunavut Housing Corporation Annual Report 2019/20*. Pg. 27-29.
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17. Nunavut Housing Corporation (2012). *Innovation in Action, Annual Report 2011/2012*. Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Housing Corporation.
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24. Nunavut Housing Corporation (2019). *Annual Report 2018/2019*. Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Housing Corporation
25. Nunavut Housing Corporation (2020). *Annual Report 2019/2020*. Iqaluit, Nunavut: Nunavut Housing Corporation

## Appendix D: History of Rent Scale in Nunavut

Included in our review were documents provided by NHC as well as a history of public housing rent dating back to the Northwest Territories. Provision of public housing appears to date back as far as 1959, when Rigid Frame (16' X16') houses were introduced and sold to Inuit for \$15/month with payment plans of 7 to 10 years.

Upon Nunavut's creation in 1999, the Honourable Manitok Thompson, then Minister responsible for the NHC, initiated the Minister's Task Force on Housing in October 1999, which called for changes to be made to the rent-scale. The task force's final report in 2000 called for a new simplified rent-scale to be developed, and ensure the rent-scale not be a disincentive to work.<sup>3</sup>

NHC documents show changes were recommended to the rent scale in 2002, including changes to minimum/maximum, assessments (how, who) and deductions for overcrowding and the condition of the unit.

After consultations and much work by the Government of Nunavut, a new rent-scale was approved in 2005, which included a sliding-scale (10 to 28%) rent assessments based on net income.

In 2007, a three-day meeting was held in Rankin Inlet to review the Public Housing Rent Scale. Participants included NHC staff and Local Housing Authority staff from all communities in Nunavut. Discussions included description, proposals that had been developed, what are needed, impacts on tenants and brainstorming ways to simplify the rent-scale. The review concluded with some of the following recommendations for changes:

1. methods for income verification;
2. timing of verification based on addressing needs of seasonal and casual workers;
3. changing the sliding rent scale to a flat rate;
4. exempting seniors 60 years and older
5. exempting students from paying rent;
6. replacing the National Occupancy Standards with the Nunavut Occupancy Standards;
7. calculating rent based on assessed income and establishing a minimum and maximum;
8. addressing high-income earners.

In 2008, the Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut was published. It reported based on its findings that the NHC spends \$120 million, 75% of NHCs operating budget on more than 4000 units. In its findings, key findings included:

1. "The Corporation does not monitor the activities of its community partners well enough to ensure that they comply with its policies and procedures in delivering the public housing program".<sup>4</sup>
2. Community partners do not fully comply with the Corporations policies;

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<sup>3</sup> The History of Public Housing Rent in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, April 2009 (Not a NHC document)

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut - 2008



3. Managing its own programs is a significant challenge for the Corporation, with 23 of its 89 positions vacant at the end of 2007.
4. NHC acknowledges the report.

In internal documents provided by NHC to cabinet an update is provided to the current mandate which was the Tamapta mandate showing that the Rent Scale had been reviewed in 2003 and 2007. In it, it was anticipated that a new rent scale would be introduced by January 2012. It had been found that the rent scale at the time had created a disincentive to work.

In a progress update a year later, the rent-scale had been reviewed, tasks and recommendations completed with changes being planned. In it, the update provided that:

An immediate focus will be placed on ensuring that the rent scale for public housing clients does not interfere with other social programs such as income support, with a focus on the self-reliance goals being pursued through a Poverty Reduction Strategy. Stronger commitments to homeless shelters and transitional housing are required.

The review found that the NHC has been involved with government departmental initiatives such as the poverty reduction and the Long-Term Housing and Homelessness Strategy. The NHC has developed its own strategies incorporating addressing the rent-scale program such as the Blueprint for Action.

NHC has attempted to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into its decision-making as reported in a Government of Nunavut 2013 report. The NHC reported that establishments of committees, development of Igliuqatigiilauqta and other initiatives were being developed in accordance with IQ principles.

The issue of the rent-scale being considered a disincentive was mentioned in the Minister of Family Service's Annual Report on Poverty Reduction for the year 2013-2014. The revamped Rent-Scale in 2013 came into effect in 2014. It appears there was an effective communications strategy with notices to tenants, letters from the NHC to LHOs and instructions for implementation. In it, the report states

- ... The new scale includes measures such as:
- Rent will be assessed on the income of the two primary leaseholders only, (instead of including all inhabitants of a household);
  - New method for calculating rent is based on a step scale that is similar to federal income tax (to ensure that low income earners are able to keep a higher percentage of their earnings);
  - The minimum rent threshold will be indexed to Nunavut's minimum wage, (so those with low-paying jobs are not penalized with steep increases to rent because they took a job);
  - Elders will only pay rent on the portion of their income over their community's Core Need Income Threshold (CNIT), (so Elders are not unfairly penalized for generating revenue);

- Rent increases due to income increases will be limited to 25% of the new rent assessed per year until the rent assessed total is reached;
- Maximum rents are to be reviewed to encourage tenants over-CNIT to transition out of Public Housing.

These changes are designed to ensure tenants can start to accumulate wealth and advance in their field of employment. While costing the government in the short term, architects of the new Public Housing Rent Scale believe the economic spinoffs to the community and a reduced social burden are worth the short term investment for the long term benefits to poverty reduction.<sup>5</sup>

More recent internal documents provided breakdowns of how the number of bedrooms in a house is used to determine the maximum rent amount.

Max Rent Amount	# of Bedrooms
\$ 814.00	Bachelor
\$ 1,140.00	1 bedroom
\$ 1,466.00	2 bedroom
\$ 1,792.00	3 bedroom
\$ 2,118.00	4 bedroom
\$ 2,443.00	5 bedroom
* These are last updated based on 2018 rate	

A formula was provided showing how monthly rent is to be calculated, using the following scenario.

**Joe** lives in public housing and earns \$75,000 a year at his job with the co-op. His rent would be calculated using the following process:

*Base rent* = \$720

*Stage 1* - 20% of his income that is from \$27,000 up to \$39,999 = \$2,600

*Stage 2* - 25% of his income that is from \$40,000 up to \$79,999 = \$8,750

Joe's **monthly** rent would be \$1,006

Joe's total rent for the year = \$12,070, which is 16.1% of his income.

The same document shows the impact of rent based on income.

For example:

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<sup>5</sup> Minister's Annual Report on Poverty Reduction, Minister of Family Services, Government of Nunavut, 2013-2014  
[www.nvisiongroup.ca](http://www.nvisiongroup.ca)

- If a tenant's rent was \$60 and their income changes in 2020 to a higher amount, the rent based on this increased income will only go up by 25% of the **total new base rent** each year.
- It would take **over 4 years** for this tenant to pay the maximum rent from the minimum rent. The total maximum amount of income tenants would pay for rent would always be less than 30% of total income.

## Appendix E: Suggested Changes to the Rent Scale Manual

The manual may be more helpful if it was organized in this way:

### Section A – Mandate

- 1) Enabling legislation
- 2) Scope
- 3) Other instruments: i.e. National Occupational Standards
- 4) Prerogative of NHC
- 5) Definitions (placement needs to be more strategic)

### Section B – Tenant Responsibilities

- 1) They are confusingly placed everywhere, if they were all in this section it would clarify what a tenant is responsible for.
- 2) Local Housing Authority Responsibilities
  - a) Rent Subsidy Contribution
  - b) Verification of income
  - c) Unit Condition Rating
  - d) Special Cases Committees
- 3) Nunavut Housing Corporation Responsibilities
  - a) District Offices

### Section C – Approval Process

- 1) Eligibility Criteria
- 2) Application considerations
- 3) Assessment of income
- 4) Calculating rent

### Section D – Maintaining Rent

- 1) Verification of income
- 2) Repayment
- 3) Income Re-assessments
- 4) Temporary Leave

### Section E – Leaving Unit

### Appendices

- 1) Sample Rent Calculations Sheet
- 2) Etc

## Appendix F: Suggested Changes to Tenant Relations Manual

Specifically:

1. Simplify page numbers.
2. The tasks and guiding texts need to be separated out, and duplication elimination (also on page 113 and 114).
3. Organizational overview on page 106 is helpful.
4. Forms need to be separated out.
5. Page 107 – should specify that NHC is both landlord and owner.
6. Page 1001 tenant file checklist should be at the beginning of the document.
7. Page 404 – need to look at the purpose of tenant relations. RE: documentation required to establish eligibility.
8. Page 406 – the manual is not organized in a logical way. Application Evaluation does not start until this page (close to middle of manual).
9. Page 406, manual should outline how many stages there are early on.
10. Page 408 – sample letters should all be in one section.
11. Page 409 – needs to be better explained. Sections A to F need to be better explained as to how they work.
12. Page 600 allocating units – difficult navigating among different sections to get the information, relevant information should be consolidated into one section.
13. Page 700 tenancy agreement is helpful.

## Appendix G: Suggested Changes to Tenant's Handbook

1. You and Your Home: A Tenant's Handbook (November, 2004)
  - a. P9 – welcoming, plain language. Change the language to be less negative re RUNNING A HOME COSTS A LOT OF MONEY.
  - b. P9 - Average monthly costs: \$189 for home, \$225 for power and \$444 for water/sewer. Plus maintenance, annual costs are \$18,000. Household members can use book to keep the repair and operating costs down.
  - c. P11. Moving in could be simplified to basic introduction with a basic list.
  - d. P23 – there needs to be better explanation of what geared-to-income.
  - e. P13 – language about tenant relations is kind of negative.
  - f. P14 – might want to add a box to tick to indicate when something has to be completed. i.e. were the 2 keys given?
  - g. P15 – who makes decisions about security deposits? And what criteria are used to decide if a person needs to make a deposit?
  - h. P15 – no boarders or lodgers is an impossible condition. Should consider removing.
  - i. P16 changing homes, can be simplified to be a list of considerations used for changing homes and process used i.e. one month notice.
  - j. Page 17 – can be simplified. (Electricity).
  - k. Page 18 – should be a checklist.
  - l. P19 – part two – caring for home. Should be list of responsibilities. Add check box to see if inspection occurred.
  - m. P20 leave space for phone number of local LHO.
  - n. Helpful
    - i. P21 water and plumbing systems – very helpful
    - ii. P22 – continuation of above
    - iii. P23-26 – common problems
    - iv. P26-27 - furnace and common problems
    - v. P28-29 moisture
    - vi. P30 windows and ventilation
    - vii. P31 – electrical systems and breakers and fuses
    - viii. P32 – lights and appliances
    - ix. P33-34 – kitchen stove
    - x. P35-37 – Fridge and freezers
    - xi. P38-39 – washers and dryers
  - o. P40-41 Other maintenance - Should be listed, re: storms and screens, floors, painted walls and woodwork, alterations).
  - p. P42-46 – Home Safety is helpful.
  - q. Notes pages are fine.

## Appendix H: Suggested NHC Collection Procedures Manual (March 28, 2014)

- a. P4 - Purpose is clearly stated.
- b. P4-5 definitions are clearly stated.
- c. P5-6 NHC roles and responsibilities are clearly stated.
- d. P6 – initial collection process –Should be retitled as responsibilities prior to collection process being initiated. List is responsibilities and indicates 2 different processes in appendices.
- e. P7 – accountability is clearly stated.
- f. P7 – certification of debt process clearly stated.
- g. P8- rental officer process –clearly stated.
- h. P8-10 steps – might be useful to sight legislation and to say process established by Rental Officer. And, that it will need to check with Rental Officer if any changes have been made.
- i. P10-12 – quit claim process – is clearly stated (NHC POV).
- j. P12-14 – Small claims court process – state that process is established by NCJ and will need to check with NCJ if changes were made.
- k. P14 – garnishment process – there is some repetition.... state that process is established by NCJ and will need to check with NCJ if changes were made.
- l. P15 – regular court process – clear.
- m. All of the rest are clearly written.

## Appendix I: Questionnaires and Backgrounder

### Nunavut Housing Corporation Public Housing Rent Scale Review

#### 1. Directorate Questionnaire

Interview is confidential.

#### Background:

The Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation initiated an independent review of the Public Housing Rent Scale in August 2020. This interview should take about half an hour.

NVision Group Inc. was awarded the contract to do the review. Part of this review process is to interview directorate staff who have experience developing, implementing and communicating, to target audiences, policies and programs of the NHC. The scope of the review will be to gain an understanding in:

- a) Possible disincentives to work based on the current rent-scale;
- b) Public understanding of the new rent scale;
- c) The rent scale mechanism and process.

The feedback will be used to find ways to ensure the rent-geared-to-income sliding scale that determines rental rates remain fair and affordable. The results of this interview will be synthesized and included in a report to be submitted to the NHC. If you think of any additional information or want to expand on your answers to the questions, please call the NVision Office at 867 979 2089 by January 22, 2021, or email:

- Lilly Parr at [lparr@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lparr@nvisiongroup.ca) ;
- Okalik Eegeesiak at [oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca); or
- Lori Idlout at [lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca).

A survey will be distributed seeking further responses from Nunavummiut. Telephone interviews, in Inuktitut and English, can be arranged through the NVision office in Iqaluit at the details above.

#### Directorate:

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy      \_\_\_\_\_ Management      \_\_\_\_\_ Administration

1. What type of housing do you live in:

- Public Housing
- Private Housing
- Subsidized or Staff Housing
- Home Owner
- Other

2. How involved are you in the delivery and communications of the Rent Scale?



\_\_\_\_\_ Daily \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_ Periodically

3. Do you think the Rent Scale is well understood by Tenant Relations Officers, Local Housing Organizations, NHC staff, tenants and the public?
4. What do you see as barriers to the above groups understanding the Rent Scale?
5. What do you think could be done to overcome these barriers?
  - Staff training-how to make it more timely, meaningful,
  - Resources – manuals, videos, meetings
  - Tenant Education, etc.

### **Working with LHOs**

6. As a staff person from the Directorate, are you ever been called upon to clarify or provide more information about the Rent Scale to the Local Housing Committee or Board?
7. What are the top 2 questions the committees bring to the NHC?
8. What are the top 2 questions the LHO managers bring to NHC?

### **Rent Scale**

9. Do you believe the current Rent Scale is affordable and sustainable in the long term for the Government of Nunavut?
10. Do you think the rent scale is fair and affordable for tenants?
11. Do you believe that the Rent Scale has impacted employment decisions in Nunavut?
12. Do you have any suggestions regarding the current Rent Scale?
13. Are there any incentives you can think of that NHC can provide to tenants that can be applied across Nunavut for:
  - Energy conservation?
  - Rent reduction?
  - Unit maintenance?
  - Unit condition?
  - Home ownership?

**Communications:**

14. How does the NHC communicate information to the communities regarding the Rent Scale?  
Check all that apply:

- In-person
- Newspaper
- Radio
- TV
- Telephone
- Email
- Nunavut Housing Corporation Website
- Government of Nunavut Website
- Facebook
- Twitter

15. In what ways can information be better communicated regarding the rent scale, rent paid, and income levels?

i.e. communications via website, brochures, videos, commercials, etc?

16. What has been the best way to communicate with/to/from the Directorate with the LHOs and TROs?

- In-person
- Telephone
- Email
- Nunavut Housing Corporation Website
- Government of Nunavut Website
- Facebook
- Twitter

17. Is there anything you want to ensure we include in the Rent Scale review that we did not ask?

Nunavut Housing Corporation  
Public Housing Rent Scale Review  
**2. Local Housing Organizations and  
Tenant Relations Officers**  
Interview is confidential.

**Background:**

The Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation initiated an independent review of the Public Housing Rent Scale in August 2020. This interview should take about half an hour.

NVision Group Inc. was awarded the contract to do the review. Part of this process is to interview staff who have experience implementing and communicating, to target audiences, policies and programs of the NHC. The scope of the review will be to gain an understanding in:

- a) Possible disincentives to work based on the current rent-scale;
- b) Public understanding of the new rent scale;
- c) The rent scale mechanism and process.

The feedback will be used to find ways to ensure the rent-geared-to income sliding scale that determines rental rates remain fair and affordable. The results of this interview will be synthesized and included in a report to be submitted to the NHC.

If you think of any additional information or want to expand on your answers to the questions, please call the NVision Office at 867 979 2089 by January 22, 2021, or email:

- Lilly Parr at [lparr@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lparr@nvisiongroup.ca) ;
- Okalik Eegeesiak at [oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca); or
- Lori Idlout at [lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca).

In addition to this interview, a survey will be distributed seeking further responses from Nunavummiut.

1. **Community:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Check what applies:**

LHO Manager \_\_\_\_\_ TRO \_\_\_\_\_ LHO Board \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Cases Committee \_\_\_\_\_

3. What type of housing do you live in:

- Public Housing
- Private Housing
- Subsidized or Staff Housing
- Home Owner

- Other

4. Were you given an orientation/training as to how the rent scale works?
5. Do you have any suggestions/comments to the orientation/training you received?
6. What resources do you find useful in carrying out your job?  
i.e. TR Manual, Rent Scale Procedures Manual, other.
7. Do you believe the rent scale is well-understood by tenants and members of the community?
8. How do you explain the rent calculation to tenants (Appendix 2 of the Rent Scale Procedures Manual)?
9. How do you explain the need to collect certain information (such as gross income from tenants)?
10. Do you keep records of what tenants share about the rent scale?
11. Are rents paid affordable to tenants in relation to income levels?
12. Do you believe the rent scale has impacted employment decisions in the community?
13. Do you have any suggestions about the Rent Scale Procedures calculation and its application?
14. Do you have any suggestions on how to increase tenant/applicant knowledge and understanding of the Rent Scale Procedures?  
i.e. tenant relations manual, communications via website, brochures, videos, commercials, on-going education campaign, etc?
15. What are the top 2 questions the LHOs bring to NHC?
16. How often do you refer cases to the Special Cases Committee? What kinds of cases are referred to the Committee?
17. When is an appeal process used?
18. Does your office keep records of appeals? If so, can you share summaries of appeals.
19. Do you explain the appeal procedures to potential and existing tenants?
20. Has the LHO worked to promote cost-reduction operations and maintenance of public housing units, such as:  
  - Energy conservation?

- Rent reduction?
- Unit maintenance?
- Unit condition?
- Rent to own?
- Home ownership?
- Other?

21. What role could the LHO and TRO have in promoting NHC programs?

**Communications:**

22. How do you communicate information to the tenants and members of the community?

Check all that apply:

- In-person
- Newspaper
- Radio
- TV
- Telephone
- Email
- Nunavut Housing Corporation Website
- Government of Nunavut Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

23. What works best at the local level?

24. What has been the best way to communicate with/to/from the Directorate with the LHOs and TROs?

- In-person
- Telephone
- Email
- Nunavut Housing Corporation Website
- Government of Nunavut Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

25. Is there anything you want to ensure we include in the review of the Rent Scale you can think of we did not ask?

26. Is there anyone specific you can think of who would be open to being interviewed and provide feedback regarding the rent scale?

Nunavut Housing Corporation  
Public Housing Rent Scale Review  
**3. MLA Survey**  
Survey is confidential.

**Background:**

The Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation initiated an independent review of the Public Housing Rent Scale in August 2020.

NVision Group Inc. was awarded the contract to do the review. Part of this review process is to ask community members interested in contributing to the understanding of the current rent scale. The scope of the review will be to gain an understanding in:

- a) Possible disincentives to work based on the current rent-scale;
- b) Public understanding of the new rent scale;
- c) The rent scale mechanism and process.

The feedback will be used to find ways to ensure the rent-geared-to income sliding scale that determines rental rates remain fair and affordable.

The results of this will be synthesized and included in a report to be submitted to the NHC.

If you think of any additional information or want to expand on your answers to the questions, please call the NVision Office at 867 979 2089 by January 22, 2021, or email:

- Lilly Parr at [lparr@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lparr@nvisiongroup.ca) ;
- Okalik Egeesiak at [oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:oegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca); or
- Lori Idlout at [lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca).

2. Region (Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, Kitikmeot): \_\_\_\_\_

3. What type of housing do you live in:

- Public Housing
- Private Housing
- Subsidized or Staff Housing
- Home Owner
- Other

4. Are you aware and do you think that tenants are aware that the NHC has a Rent Scale Procedures Manual?

5. Do you believe your constituents have a good understanding of the rent scale and rent scale process?

- a) Why?
6. Do you believe your constituents view the rent scale as fair and affordable?
  - a. Why?
7. Do you believe rents paid are fair and affordable, in relation to income levels?
  - a. Why?
8. What are the most common issues that are brought to your attention by constituents regarding housing?
9. Do you believe that the Rent Scale has impacted employment decisions in Nunavut?
10. Are you aware of the Rent Scale Appeals Process?
11. What would be the best means of NHC to communicate with your constituents regarding the Public Housing Rent Scale? Check all that apply:
  - In-person
  - Newspaper
  - Radio
  - TV
  - Telephone
  - Email
  - Nunavut Housing Corporation Website
  - Government of Nunavut Website
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you have any suggestions about the current rent scale?
13. Anything you want to ensure we include in the review of the Rent Scale you can think of we did not ask?
14. Is there anyone specific you can think of who would be open to being interviewed and provide feedback regarding the rent scale?

## Nunavut Housing Corporation Public Housing Rent Scale Review

### Background

The Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation initiated a review of the Public Housing Rent Scale.

NVision Group Inc. was awarded the contract to do the review.

The scope of the Review will be to gain an understanding in:

- a) Possible disincentives to work based on the current rent-scale;
- b) Public understanding of the current rent scale;
- c) The rent scale mechanism and process.

Part of this review process will include interviewing directorate and community staff who have experience in developing, implementing, and/or promoting policies and programs of the NHC. The review includes seeking feedback from tenants, applicants and the general public about their understanding of the rent scale.

The feedback will be used to find ways to ensure the rent-geared-to-income sliding scale that determines rental rates remain fair and affordable.

A general survey is available ([www.nvisiongroup.ca](http://www.nvisiongroup.ca)) for Nunavummiut who want to contribute to the review. The general survey and telephone interviews, 867 979 2089, in Inuktitut and English, can be arranged until January 08, 2021, through the NVision office in Iqaluit:

- Lilly Parr at [lparr@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lparr@nvisiongroup.ca);
- Okalik Eegeesiak at [oeegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:oeegeesiak@nvisiongroup.ca);
- Lori Idlout at [lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca](mailto:lidlout@nvisiongroup.ca).