TIPS AND TRICKS
Edition Number 1 2025

13 Tips and Tricks (Plus 2)

After five years with the Rental Assistance Program FCHI-2, the Agency for Co-operative Housing has developed some tricks and tips. And we're not keeping all this good stuff for ourselves.

Because we want to share it with you, the rental assistance officers have started a special newsletter. To begin with, we have 13 tips about the Online Calculator and two about the Action Plan. You may already have come up with most of these on your own, but we hope you'll find something here that you can use. Enjoy!

The Online Calculator

Using the Calculator

1. **IMPORTANT TIP:** Use the Online Calculator for all rental assistance calculations. Don't use CMHC's worksheets, unless your co-op does not yet have access to the Calculator.

Privacy

2. When adding a new household to the Online Calculator, use just the last name (and only one name).

3. **TRICK**: Instead of using names when making notes, create a code for yourself and be careful not to misplace it.

4. If you've created a ticket with screenshots for the Agency's Help Desk, block out any sensitive personal information (e.g., income, names).

Ending Assistance

5. As soon as a household's rental-assistance entitlement shows as zero, you'll need to end their assistance.

6. If a household no longer qualifies for assistance, end assistance on the last day the household still qualified, even if that day comes in the middle of the month.

7. **TIP**: Any random amount (e.g., $41, $67 etc.) has likely been pro-rated. This could indicate that the wrong date was used for a move, move-out or assistance cut-off.

Utilities

8. If your co-op's fiscal year begins on 1 April, 1 May or 1 June, you can use either last year's rates or the latest rates for utilities. Whichever you choose will be locked in for that fiscal year.

Annual Review

9. Using the "Annual Income Verification" button, update Step 1 (current housing charges) and Step 2 (utilities). Be sure to complete all steps and certify each calculation. Then print the housing charge reports for assisted households.

Shelter Components

10. Remember to reset all shelter components each year at the approved maximum shelter component for that family size.

11. **SPECIAL TIP:** Never use the member's income stubs to verify the maximum shelter component. They could be wrong.

12. Visit these websites (B.C., Alberta, Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support, PEI) for the latest maximum shelter components before completing your rental assistance calculations. Please note that for Alberta the correct shelter allowances are found under "private housing," not "social housing."

Submitting Your Claim

13. Confirm and submit your annual claim by going to the annual reconciliation page, entering your name and clicking the Submit button. Remember that it's always the **claim amount** in the Calculator that goes to CMHC.

Action Plans

1. During the annual update of your co-op's Action Plan, move former goals to the current or a future year if you haven't started or completed them or delete them if your co-op has decided they're no longer priorities.

2. **TIP:** When you've finished drafting your Action Plan, click the **Review** button for a last look. Then be sure to click the **Submit** button. Sometimes this gets missed.

For more information please contact us at agency.coop.