



APHAA Family & Special Purpose Housing Framework

A Planning Tool for CAO's to use with their agency board, government and other community representatives to identify and address the needs within the community relating to low income family and special needs clients.

- What will be your role and focus?
- What resources will you need and where can you find them?
- Are you working in isolation or together?

Introduction

The APHAA Family and Special Purpose Housing Framework (Appendix A) has been developed to describe a housing and support service continuum for individuals and families whose needs cannot be met by the market. This Framework clarifies roles and responsibilities which will guide current and future developments.

The Framework illustrates the housing streams from Emergency to near-market Affordable Housing described according to *housing need, building features and support services*. It identifies the necessary housing and support services that allow a tenant to move through the continuum as appropriate. It also recognizes that some tenants will not transition through to market housing.

Family and Special Purpose Housing operators and service providers are expected to comply with relevant legislation, regulations, bylaws and rules established by municipalities, and the Governments of Alberta and Canada. Contract agreements may also include other requirements not in legislation.

Given that the nature of Family and Special Purpose Housing is to respond to individual and family needs and to maximize choice, it is not possible to describe all of the possible combinations of housing and support services that exist now or that will exist in the future. The Framework will provide all key players with a meaningful and useful tool to assist with planning and operations.

Why is a provincial Family and Special Purpose Housing Framework needed?

The Homeless and Affordable Housing crisis is affecting all communities throughout the province. This is placing unprecedented demands on Management Bodies, not-for-profit housing providers, and support service providers.

All orders of government, management bodies, other housing operators, developers, planners, service providers, and potential tenants will benefit from a common approach.

One framework means:

- Common terms and definitions can be referred to when working with partners on developing Family and Special Purpose Housing options.
- Operators will be able to match the tenant's needs with the appropriate housing stream, facility and support services in their communities.

- Plans and programs can be developed based on a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.
- Service coordination guidelines and funding can be clarified and consistently applied.

What is Family and Special Purpose Housing?

This Framework is built on the premise that housing, with appropriate supports, is an essential human need. Equally important is that these needs be met at an affordable rate to all citizens of a community.

In most communities a large portion of the housing need of its citizens is met through the provision of market housing, both ownership and rental, mainly through private sector development. The 2005 Canadian Housing Observer issued by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation suggests that on average 85% of the housing need in most communities is met through market housing.

This Framework will assist a community to identify and respond to those individuals and families (15%) whose housing and support service needs are not met through market housing. Some of the contributing factors to this unmet need are lower than average income, physical and mental disabilities, cultural differences, and discrimination. For some, these factors will be temporary and with appropriate supports they will transition through the streams of the Framework and eventually find housing in the market. The time frame to accomplish this will vary with each household. For others, they will transition back and forth through the streams of the Framework for a variety of reasons. Transition to market housing will not be possible if one or more of the contributing factors mentioned above cannot be overcome; housing and supports for these households will be long term.

Family and Special Purpose Housing options can serve the needs of a wide range of clients, including seniors and adults with developmental or physical disabilities, who need support to live as independently as possible. However, there are also limits to what Family and Special Purpose Housing can provide. For example, individuals who have complex care needs and require access on a 24-hour basis to a registered nurse may require another alternative such as facility living (see the *Alberta Seniors Supportive Living Framework*). Those who can live independently with community-based supports can be accommodated by this Framework.

Examples of clients included in the housing streams are:

- Street youth (Emergency)
- Persons with addictions (Emergency / Transitional)
- Families escaping domestic violence (Emergency / Transitional)
- Mentally/Physically Disabled (Long Term Supportive)
- Singles (50-64) Unemployed / Fixed Income (Long Term Supportive)

- Service Sector Workers (Progressive / Affordable)
- Single Parent Families (Long Term Supportive/Progressive/ Affordable)
- Students, Married / Single (Progressive)
- Employed, near median income Singles / Families (Affordable)

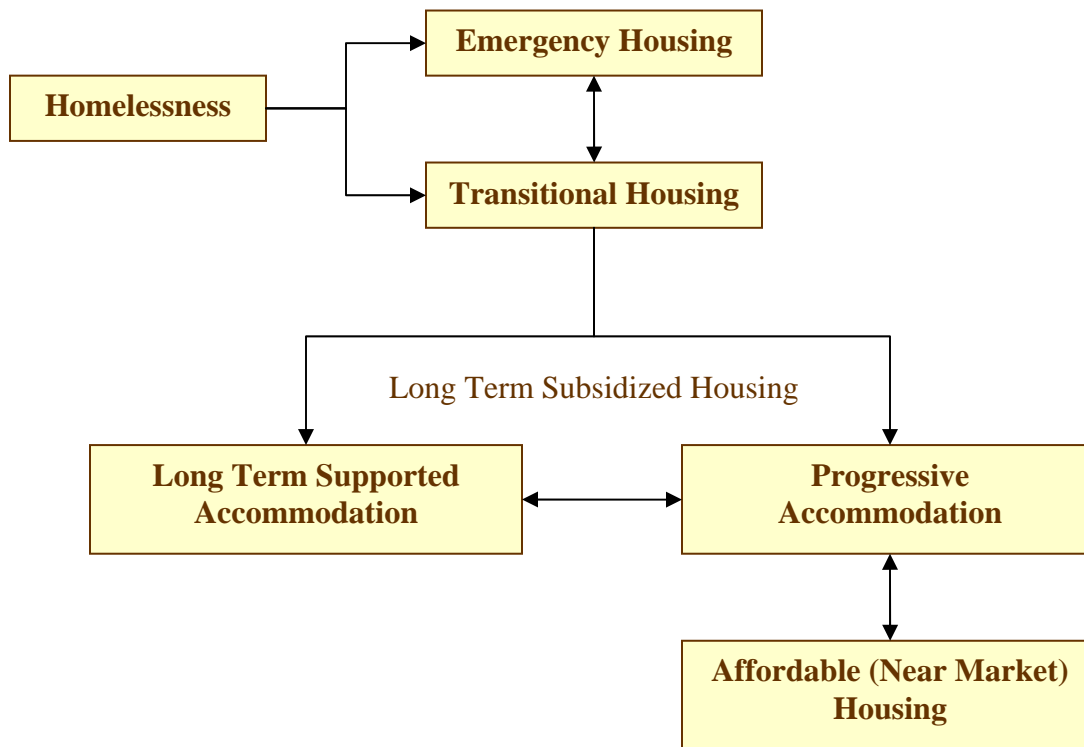
Family and Special Purpose Housing is both a *philosophy* and an *approach* for providing services within a housing environment. It provides a residential setting where people can maintain control over their lives while also receiving the support they need. Buildings and common areas need to be specifically designed to meet tenants' needs and to support their safety and security.

There are a number of benefits for individuals and families who live in Family and Special Purpose Housing. With a range of Family and Special Purpose Housing options available locally, people have the means to stay close to their support network of family and friends. Family and Special Purpose Housing may provide services including meals, activities and social events that can help maintain and improve quality of life and overall health and well-being based on the changing needs of the individual.

Currently, there are an estimated 22,000 Family and Special Purpose Housing spaces in Alberta. These spaces are in emergency shelters, transitional housing projects, long term subsidized housing, and affordable housing projects. They are in buildings owned and/or operated by government-supported management bodies or by not-for-profit and for-profit housing operators.

A 2001 study by the British Columbia Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services demonstrated the cost effectiveness of providing suitable housing with adequate supports. The key to the success of facilities and programs in Alberta's communities is the provision of adequate staffing and funding.

The following chart gives a graphic summary of what Family and Special Purpose Housing includes:



What principles should guide current and future Family and Special Purpose Housing?

Family and Special Purpose Housing developments will be successful when based on the following principles:

1. All orders of government, housing operators, regional health authorities, and other stakeholders work collaboratively to develop, deliver and fund Family and Special Purpose Housing options with operational decisions made at the local level, consistent with government priorities and accountability requirements.
2. Communities have a range of Family and Special Purpose Housing options that are safe, secure, suitable, and adequate (community integration) to meet the support service and affordability needs of their citizens.
3. Family and Special Purpose Housing options recognize the individuality of each tenant. Some tenants will transition to the market, for others this will be their permanent home.

4. Housing and support service providers work together with tenants to coordinate and collaborate on housing and support service options so that choice and flexibility are maximized.
5. Every Albertan is responsible for the costs associated with their housing accommodation to the extent they are able to pay. Funding is available to address the unmet needs across all streams of the Framework.

Conclusion

The Alberta Family and Special Purpose Housing Framework describes a housing and support service continuum for individuals and families whose needs cannot be met by the market. The provision of housing and support services stabilizes individuals and families allowing them to deal with the other issues in their lives. This stabilization will build and maintain healthy communities for all Albertans.

For further information on this framework contact our Association:

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*Alberta Public Housing Administrators' Association
Family & Special Purpose Housing Framework*

HOUSING STREAM	Emergency Housing	Transitional Housing	Subsidized Housing		Affordable Housing
Tenant Need	Safe, Secure overnight accommodation	Interim, stable accommodation	Long Term Supported Accommodation	Progressive Accommodation	Near Market Rate Accommodation
Building Features	may include bed/mat, secure personal belongings, shower/washroom	May include dorm, shared accommodation or single room occupancy	Appropriate sized self-contained housing unit	Appropriate sized self-contained housing unit	Appropriate sized self-contained housing unit
Support Services	May include the following bed/mat, secure personal belongings, medical services, shower / washroom	Will include housing and typically also assessment of needs; provision of basic services; outreach services	Includes interventions to stabilize people in their housing (mental health crisis team, child welfare - parenting, addictions response, etc.)	Includes opportunity and options for households to progress to affordable or market housing	Independently access services as needed
FINANCIAL NEED	Emergency Housing	Transitional Housing	Subsidized Housing		Affordable Housing
Support Services Funding	High	High	Medium	Medium to Low	Low to None
Building Capital Funding	100%	100%	100%	100%	50% to 100%
Building Operating Funding (cost minus household contribution)	High	High	Medium	Medium to Low	Low to None
Household Contribution	None to Low	Low	Low to Medium	Medium	High (up to 90% of market rent)